Appendix H-4

Biological Review



MEMORANDUM

To: Michael Smith
From: Adrian Juncosa
Date: January 28, 2018

Subject: Biological Review of Teichert Boca Quarry Project Site

This memorandum documents a review of current biological conditions at the Teichert Boca Quarry project site, to see if there were any notable changes in vegetation and/or habitats that are relevant to CEQA evaluation of potential project impacts from the proposed expansion.

Activities that contributed to the review include the following:

- · Rerun of the CNDDB query for four pertinent USGS quadrangles (list is appended after page 9);
- · Site reconnaissance within the project Ultimate Disturbed Area; and
- · Reconnaissance of the roadsides along Stampede Meadows Road between the up-road sightline area and the I-80 interchange.

The field reconnaissance was carried out in autumn, and would not be considered to be a complete repeat of the floristic botanical survey (which I do not believe to be necessary), but rather only a review of how similar the conditions are, subjectively, to those that were observed during earlier field work through 2012, with a detailed targeted survey of areas of suitable topography for one recently designated special status plant species. In addition, the discontinuous wetlands along Stampede Meadows Road were examined for surface hydrology indicators and vegetation, and several of the larger topographic valleys up in the Ultimate Disturbed Area (UDA) were examined for the same indicators that were considered in the original biological inventory work.

In keeping with the guidelines for preparation of biological inventory reports within Nevada County, this memorandum also includes evaluation of the potential for significant project impacts on biological resources (or, as it turns out, lack thereof).

CNDDB Query

The study site is unusual in that it lies right on the boundary between two different USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles (Boca and Martis Peak), and the state boundary is located on the eastern side of those quadrangles. Therefore, instead of the customary nine-quadrangle search, a four-quadrangle search was performed. The element list from this query is attached to this letter.

As was noted in the past, many of the species that are returned from the CNDDB query are invertebrate species found near the University of California Sagehen Creek Research Station, in springs or perennial creeks. Perennial water does occur in the spring and associated channel and pond within the project site, but not within the UDA. Species information is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Special-status species recorded by CNDDB in the USGS quadrangles centered on the Teichert Boca Quarry site (only six quadrangles; three eastern ones are in Nevada, outside area covered by CNDDB). Within groups, species are listed alphabetically by genus name (so that related species appear near one another). Table provides information on suitable habitat within UDA, Project Site, and Addendum Study Area. With the exception of the wetland (within the Project Site but outside the UDA), suitable habitat

Species	Status (Fed/ State or RPR)	Microhabitat/Occurrence	Suitable Habitat Present in UDA?	Other Information
MAMMALS				
Sierra Nevada mountain beaver Aplodontia rufa californica	-/SSC	Wet areas with forb-rich wetland vegetation; streamsides and wetland seeps.	No	No wetlands within UDA.
North American porcupine Erethizon dorsatum	-/-	Wide variety of habitats in most of California; most common in montane conifer, Douglasfir, alpine shrub, and wet meadow. Less common in arid habitats.	Marginal in some seasons; No in others	Believed to be somewhat restricted to riparian habitats in arid regions.
California wolverine Gulo gulo	-/T	Densely forested habitat. One individual (same animal) observed in 2008-2010 about 10-15 miles from site; only confirmed state record in many years.	No	Observed individual is genetically related to northern Rocky Mountain population of wolverines.
Silver-haired bat Lasionycteris noctivagans		Migratory, roosts in trees (especially large ones) during day when present.	Marginal	Widespread species, common in most regions. Generally, but not exclusively, associated with dense, mesic forests.
Sierra Nevada showshoe hare Lepus americanus tahoensis		Coniferous forest.	No	No regional occurrences reported from eastside pine/bitterbrush.
Sierra marten Martes caurina (=americana) sierrae		High-canopy-cover coniferous forest.	No	No record from arid eastside shrub habitat such as that of project site.
Pacific fisher Pekania (formerly Martes) pennanti		Dense forest and other woody habitats in northern Sierra foothills and southern Sierra Nevada.	No	Area of project is no longer believed to be within geographic range (Zielinski, 1995).

American badger		Meadows (including brushy meadows) with	No	No meadows or open shrublands with
Taxidea taxus		friable soils for burrowing.		deep and friable soils.
Sierra Nevada red fox		Meadows with friable soils for burrowing.	No	All recent verified records are on the
Vulpes vulpes necator				western Sierra Nevada slopes.
BIRDS				
Northern goshawk	-/SSC	In the project region, high-canopy-cover	No	Some large trees present at site, but
Accipiter gentilis		coniferous forest.		woodland is too sparse for this species.
Yellow warbler		Riparian forest and shrubland, nesting	Not within	Birds observed in shrubs near wetland
Setophaga (Dendroica) petechia		records in region are close to water.	UDA	north of access road.
Willow flycatcher	-/E	Willow thickets near perennial or near-	Not within	Possible, but very marginal, habitat within
Empidonax traillii		perennial surface water.	UDA	site but outside UDA.
Greater sandhill crane	-/T	Open meadows and wetlands. Not found in	No	
Grus canadensis tabida		dense shrublands or rocky areas.		
Bald eagle		Nests and winters in large trees or snags at	No	Occurrences at Boca and Stampede
Haliaeetus leucocephala		large bodies of water; forages for fish and		reservoirs.
		waterfowl.		
REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS				
Sierra Nevada yellow-legged	T/T	Lakes, ponds, and other aquatic areas close	Not within	Possible habitat within site (spring-fed
frog		to standing water.	UDA	pond) but outside UDA, however, site is
Rana sierrae				outside the geographic range of the
				species.
Southern long-toed	-/SSC	Aquatic breeding and larvae; adults remain	Not within	
salamander		mostly in moist places such as rotten logs or	UDA	
Ambystoma macrodactylum		other animal burrows.		
sigillatum				
FISH				
Lahontan cutthroat trout	T/-	Perennial streams.	No	No streams within site.
Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi				

INVERTEBRATES				
Morrison bumble bee Bombus morrisoni		Open dry scrub.	Yes in lower part of site	Only collection in region is in "general vicinity of Truckee" in 1915.
Western bumble bee Bombus occidentalis		Variety of habitats with continuous sources of flowers.	Marginal	Decline is believed to be due to disease.
King's Canyon cryptochian caddisfly Cryptochia excella		Perennial streams.	No	No streams within UDA.
Amphibious caddisfly Desmona bethula		Perennial streams.	No	No streams within UDA.
King's Creek ecclysomyian caddisfly <i>Ecclisomyia bilera</i>		Perennial streams.	No	No streams within UDA.
Sagehen Creek goeracean caddisfly Goeracea oregona		Perennial streams.	No	No streams within UDA.
Cold Spring caddisfly Lepidostoma ermanae		Perennial streams.	No	No streams within UDA.
, Western pearlshell <i>Margaritacea falcata</i>		Truckee River; prefers lower velocity waters.	No	
PLANTS				
Galena Creek rock-cress Arabis rigidissima var. demota	n.a.	Mesic areas of conifer forest, sometimes close to but not within riparian areas. Taxon is no longer valid; merged into common, widespread <i>Boechera rigidissima</i> .	No	See Flora North America, Vol. 7 (2010).
Three-tip sagebrush Artemisia tripartita ssp. tripartita		Rocky montane ridges	Yes	Theoretically suitable habitat found within Project Site but species is not present.
Upswept moonwort Botrychium ascendens		Grassy areas (dry to mesic meadows?) near springs and creeks.	No	
Scalloped moonwort Botrychium crenulatum		Bogs, fens, wet meadows, seeps, marshes, swamps.	No	Possibly within Project Site but not within UDA.

Common moonwort		Wet meadows and seeps.	No	Possibly within Project Site but not within
Botrychium lunaria				UDA.
Mingan moonwort		Creek banks or similarly wet areas in mixed	No	
Botrychium minganense		conifer forest.		
Davy's sedge		Meadows (mostly wet/mesic but may be	No	No meadows within site.
Carex davyi		dryish).		
Mud sedge		Wetland species; occurs where surface water	No	Possibly within Project Site but not within
Carex limosa		or saturation to the surface is perennial.		UDA.
English sundew		Obligate wetland species found in nutrient	No	Possibly within Project Site but not within
Drosera anglica		poor wetlands (usually fens).		UDA.
Donner Pass buckwheat		Open areas on specific type of volcanic soils	Yes	Potentially suitable habitat was surveyed;
Eriogonum umbellatum var.		substrate.		species was not found.
torreyanum				
Alkali hymenoxys		Roadsides, open areas, meadows, slopes,	Possibly	Site descriptions on herbarium labels do
Hymenoxys lemmonii		drainage areas, stream banks.		not match Boca site. No species of
				Hymenoxys found within site.
Sierra Valley ivesia		Dry (actually vernally moist) rocky meadows,	No	No species of <i>Ivesia</i> found within site.
lvesia aperta var. aperta		flat terrain.		
Dog Valley ivesia		Dry (actually vernally moist) rocky meadows,	No	No species of <i>Ivesia</i> found within site.
lvesia aperta var. canina		flat terrain.		
Plumas ivesia		Vernally moist flats and areas just outside	No	No suitable habitat; no species of Ivesia
lvesia sericoleuca		meadow wetlands.		encountered anywhere in UDA.
Webber's ivesia		Rocky clay, sagebrush flats; vernally moist.	No	No species of <i>Ivesia</i> found within site.
Ivesia webberi				
Santa Lucia dwarf rush		Wetland species.	No	Possibly within Project Site but not within
Juncus luciensis				UDA.
Three-ranked hump moss		Wetland species; occurs where surface water	No	Possibly within Project Site but not within
Meesia triquetra		or saturation to the surface is perennial.		UDA.
Broad-nerved hump moss		Wetland species; occurs where surface water	No	Possibly within Project Site but not within
Meesia uliginosa		or saturation to the surface is perennial.		UDA.
Robbins' pondweed	-/2B	Ponds (submerged aquatic species).	Not within	
Potamogeton robbinsii			UDA	

Alder buckthorn Rhamnus alnifolia	-/2B	Wet meadow edges, seeps, stream sides; obligate wetland species in California.	No	No species of <i>Rhamnus</i> was found anywhere within UDA.
Tahoe yellow cress Rorippa subumbellata	-/E, 1B	Wetland species, known only from sandy lakeshore habitat (Lake Tahoe).	No	Truckee record is probably erroneous; no suitable habitat there and no one has been able to find the plant in the area of the CNDDB record.
Marsh skullcap Scutellaria galericulata	-/2B	Wet meadows.	No	Marginal habitat within Project Site but not within UDA.
NATURAL COMMUNITIES				
Fen	n.a.	Fen is defined as a wetland habitat supported by groundwater, usually meaning areas with little or no flow.	Not in UDA	Wetlands outside UDA are supported by flowing surface water.
Great Basin Cutthroat Trout/Paiute Sculpin Stream	n.a.		No	No streams within Project Site.
Great Basin Sucker/Dace/Redside Stream With Cutthroat Trout	n.a.		No	No streams within Project Site.

Discussion of several additional species has been provided in previous documentation. However, there remain several species that were not previously tracked by the CNDDB which appear on the element list and in Table 1. A summary of some additional relevant biological information on these is provided below, in the order in which the species are found in the Table.

North American porcupine is a very large, slow-moving rodent known for its protective quills, with a geographic distribution including woodland areas of the entire United States and much of Canada (Ingalls, 1965); USFS-TNF, 2016). In California, porcupines are most common in montane conifer and wet meadow habitats and are present in the Coast Ranges, Klamath Mountains, southern Cascades, Modoc Plateau, Sierra Nevada, and Transverse Ranges (CDFW, 2017). The species is generally nocturnal and solitary and spends most of its time in trees. Porcupines live in forest and woodland areas, feeding on vegetation, frequently including the bark of trees, especially during winter. For this reason, they are considered to be pests in areas of reforestation and were (formerly?) exterminated (Appel et al., 2017). Consequently, observations of the species (which were probably never very numerous, due to their nocturnal habits) have become relatively uncommon.

Based upon habitat information, it is highly unlikely that porcupines inhabit the Boca Quarry UDA, so it seems unlikely that the project could have a significant direct or indirect impact on the species.

Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog is a state- and federally listed species found in aquatic habitats in the Cascade and Sierra Nevada mountains. Although perennial aquatic habitat is present within the Project Site, it is outside the known and modeled potential range of the species (Bonham, 2011), and is also outside the UDA. Finally, the project is located many miles from the nearest designated critical habitat. For these reasons, the project is not expected to have a significant direct or indirect impact upon the species or upon designated critical habitat.

Southern long-toed salamander breeds in aquatic habitat but adults inhabit moist places such as rotting logs or animal burrows in mesic areas. The only known regional locality is in Coldstream Valley, Donner State Park, in much more mesic habitat than any that occurs within the Project Site with the exception of the spring and pond (outside the UDA and not significantly affected by the project). Since there is not suitable habitat within the UDA, the project would not result in a significant direct or indirect impact on the species.

Morrison bumble bee and western bumble bee do not have any formal status, but are tracked by the CNDDB due to known recent steep declines in population (indeed, disappearance from some areas where they were formerly known to be present). Both species depend on availability of flowers for food, and nest usually in abandoned rodent burrows or under grassy thatch.

Morrison bumble bee is recorded in the CNDDB from a single 1915 collection from somewhere in the "general vicinity of Truckee" which in old specimen records does not necessarily mean the Town of Truckee. (Even today, Reno and Sparks are commonly referred to as "Truckee Meadows.") It is primarily a species of arid regions, from cool sagebrush deserts and Great Basin montane areas southward to warm southwestern deserts though occurrences are known in transmontane California (Thorp et al., 1983; Williams et al., 2014).

Western bumble bee formerly ranged widely through much of California. Potentially suitable habitat is found in the lower elevation part of the Project Site and UDA, with marginal foraging habitat also present higher up.

For the western bumble bee (and possibly Morrison's bumble bee as well), the cause of population decline is almost certainly due to disease introduced from Europe (Evans et al., 2008). Habitat fragmentation also has adverse impacts where remaining habitat is reduced to a minority of the land area and small suitable patches are separated from one another by unsuitable habitat. In the case of the proposed quarry project, mined areas would be rendered unsuitable until reclaimed, but the extensive, and mostly much more suitable, habitats that are near the project site are not expected to be subject to alteration by any reasonably anticipated projects. Accordingly, the project would not be expected to result in significant direct or indirect impact on either of these species.

Threetip sagebrush was not considered to be part of the California flora at the time of publication of the second edition of the Jepson Manual (Baldwin, 2012), and therefore had no rare plant rank. However, review of herbarium records and my own extensive field work in the northern Sierra reveals that the species occurs in many locations from the high ridges west of Lake Tahoe northward to at least the vicinity of Castle Peak, north of Interstate 80. Almost all of these occurrences are in loamy soils on exposed volcanic ridges. The one major ridge within the UDA is indeed composed of volcanic rock, but there is very scanty soil present on it.

Nevertheless, the entire ridge area was resurveyed in autumn of 2017, and no plants of threetip sagebrush were found. I am very familiar with the species from numerous other regional locations, and it is very readily and definitively identified during the entire growing season. I revisited three other occurrences within less than two weeks of the Boca survey, and the plant was easy to find and identify at those reference sites. Accordingly, I am confident that the species does not occur within the Project Site.

Wetland and Tributary Review

Previous site studies had determined that no wetlands or other waters of the U.S. occur within the UDA, and no wetlands or other waters occur within the Project Site except for the spring and areas into which the spring water flows. Apparent wetlands were found in places along Stampede Meadows Road, though these appear not to be directly or indirectly tributary, or hydrologically adjacent, to a navigable or interstate water of the U.S. (namely, the Truckee River). To the best of my current understanding, the road improvements that are being contemplated in connection with the project are proposed to avoid any direct impact on those apparent wetlands. In this case, the project would not result in any direct impact on wetlands, and indirect impacts could easily be avoided by implementation of standard during-construction best management practices.

For the present review, I examined the scanty roadside ditch wetlands that occur in discontinuous linear patches along Stampede Meadows Road, and if anything they appear to be even drier and more marginal than they did before, despite the high precipitation totals for the previous water year (2016-2017). Nevertheless, some patches of vegetation dominated by hydrophytic plant species were present, in exactly the same spots as mapped in previous GPS survey work.

I also walked up and down three major valleys within the UDA, which had previously been studied, photographed, and determined not to contain any tributary waters of the U.S. These features also appeared to be in exactly the same condition as previously documented: there were no hydrophytic plant species or indicators of surface flow.

There was one small area within the Project Site but outside the UDA and therefore outside the area of project impacts where the canal emanating from the spring had become blocked by vegetative

debris, and, at the time of the field visit, some minor flow over the sidewall was persisting across the access road from Hirschdale. However, with maintenance of the longstanding manmade canal, the normal circumstances would return to the conditions observed previously.

In summary, in the areas to be affected by the project, there was no change in conditions with respect to wetlands or (non)tributaries. Accordingly, previous conclusions that the project would not have any significant direct or indirect impact on these resources are supported by the present site review.

Conclusions

Biological conditions within the study site seemed to be almost entirely unchanged from my most recent visit in 2012 with the exception that there is more ruderal and native plant growth on disturbed areas.

Observations support the previous studies' conclusions that no special status species depend on the area within the UDA for breeding or substantial foraging support.

References

Appel, C.L., W.J. Zielinski, F.V. Schlexer, R. Callas, and W.T. Bean. 2017. Distribution of the North American Porcupine (Erethizon dorsatum) in Northern California. Western Wildlife 4:17-28.

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Selected Elements by Scientific Name

California Department of Fish and Wildlife California Natural Diversity Database



Query Criteria:

 $\label{lem:quad} Quad < span style='color:Red' > OR Martis Peak (3912031) < span style='color:Red' > OR Martis Peak (3912031) < span style='color:Red' > OR Boca (3912041)) \\$

Cassian	Element Orde	Fodoval Status	State Status	Clabel Part	Ctate David	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW
Species Accipiter gentilis	ABNKC12060	Federal Status None	State Status None	Global Rank G5	State Rank	SSC or FP
northern goshawk	ABINKC 12000	None	None	GS	33	330
Ambystoma macrodactylum sigillatum	AAAAA01085	None	None	G5T4	S3	SSC
southern long-toed salamander	700000	140110	140110	0014	Co	000
Aplodontia rufa californica	AMAFA01013	None	None	G5T3T4	S2S3	SSC
Sierra Nevada mountain beaver						
Arabis rigidissima var. demota	PDBRA061R1	None	None	G3T3Q	S1	1B.2
Galena Creek rockcress						
Artemisia tripartita ssp. tripartita	PDAST0S1S2	None	None	G5T4T5	S2	2B.3
threetip sagebrush						
Bombus morrisoni	IIHYM24460	None	None	G4G5	S1S2	
Morrison bumble bee						
Bombus occidentalis	IIHYM24250	None	None	G2G3	S1	
western bumble bee						
Botrychium ascendens	PPOPH010S0	None	None	G3G4	S2	2B.3
upswept moonwort						
Botrychium crenulatum	PPOPH010L0	None	None	G4	S3	2B.2
scalloped moonwort						
Botrychium lunaria	PPOPH01080	None	None	G5	S2	2B.3
common moonwort						
Botrychium minganense	PPOPH010R0	None	None	G4G5	S3	2B.2
Mingan moonwort						
Carex davyi	PMCYP033H0	None	None	G3	S3	1B.3
Davy's sedge						
Carex limosa	PMCYP037K0	None	None	G5	S3	2B.2
mud sedge						
Cryptochia excella	IITRI11010	None	None	G1G2	S1S2	
Kings Canyon cryptochian caddisfly				0.00	0000	
Desmona bethula	IITRI77010	None	None	G2G3	S2S3	
amphibious caddisfly	DDDD00040	Mana	Nicos	0.5	00	00.0
Drosera anglica English sundew	PDDRO02010	None	None	G5	S2	2B.3
	UTD142040	None	None	C1C2	0400	
Ecclisomyia bilera Kings Creek ecclysomyian caddisfly	IITRI12010	None	None	G1G2	S1S2	
Empidonax traillii	ABPAE33040	None	Endangered	G5	S1S2	
willow flycatcher	ADFAE33040	NOTIC	Liluarigered	33	3132	
Erethizon dorsatum	AMAFJ01010	None	None	G5	S 3	
North American porcupine	AIVIAI JUTUTU	NOTIC	INOIIG	55	00	
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Selected Elements by Scientific Name

California Department of Fish and Wildlife California Natural Diversity Database



Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
Eriogonum umbellatum var. torreyanum	PDPGN086U9	None	None	G5T2	S2	1B.2
Donner Pass buckwheat	1 D1 01400003	None	NOTIC	0012	O2	10.2
Fen	CTT51200CA	None	None	G2	S1.2	
Fen	01101200071			<u>-</u>	· · · -	
Goeracea oregona	IITRI0X010	None	None	G3	S1S2	
Sagehen Creek goeracean caddisfly						
Great Basin Cutthroat Trout/Paiute Sculpin Stream	CARC2320CA	None	None	GNR	SNR	
Great Basin Cutthroat Trout/Paiute Sculpin Stream						
Great Basin Sucker/Dace/Redside Stream With Cutthroat Trout	CARC2331CA	None	None	GNR	SNR	
Great Basin Sucker/Dace/Redside Stream With Cutthroat Trout						
Grus canadensis tabida	ABNMK01014	None	Threatened	G5T4	S2	FP
greater sandhill crane						
Gulo gulo California wolverine	AMAJF03010	Proposed Threatened	Threatened	G4	S1	FP
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	ABNKC10010	Delisted	Endangered	G5	S3	FP
bald eagle						
Ivesia sericoleuca	PDROS0X0K0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
Plumas ivesia						
Juncus luciensis	PMJUN013J0	None	None	G3	S3	1B.2
Santa Lucia dwarf rush						
Lasionycteris noctivagans	AMACC02010	None	None	G5	S3S4	
silver-haired bat						
Lepidostoma ermanae Cold Spring caddisfly	IITRI01050	None	None	G1G2	S1S2	
Lepus americanus tahoensis	AMAEB03012	None	None	G5T3T4Q	S2	SSC
Sierra Nevada snowshoe hare						
Margaritifera falcata	IMBIV27020	None	None	G4G5	S1S2	
western pearlshell						
Martes caurina sierrae	AMAJF01014	None	None	G5T3	S3	
Sierra marten						
Meesia triquetra	NBMUS4L020	None	None	G5	S4	4.2
three-ranked hump moss						
Meesia uliginosa	NBMUS4L030	None	None	G5	S3	2B.2
broad-nerved hump moss	A F.O. I A 00004	Therestees	Mana	0.470	00	
Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi Lahontan cutthroat trout	AFCHA02081	Threatened	None	G4T3	S2	
Pekania pennanti	AMAJF01021	None	Candidate	G5T2T3Q	S2S3	SSC
fisher - West Coast DPS			Threatened			
Potamogeton robbinsii Robbins' pondweed	PMPOT030Z0	None	None	G5	S3	2B.3
Rana sierrae	AAABH01340	Endangered	Threatened	G1	S1	WL
Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog	-	3				



Selected Elements by Scientific Name

California Department of Fish and Wildlife California Natural Diversity Database



Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
Rhamnus alnifolia	PDRHA0C010	None	None	G5	S3	2B.2
alder buckthorn						
Rorippa subumbellata	PDBRA270M0	None	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1
Tahoe yellow cress						
Scutellaria galericulata	PDLAM1U0J0	None	None	G5	S2	2B.2
marsh skullcap						
Setophaga petechia	ABPBX03010	None	None	G5	S3S4	SSC
yellow warbler						
Vulpes vulpes necator	AMAJA03012	Candidate	Threatened	G5T1T2	S1	
Sierra Nevada red fox						

Record Count: 45