



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Bay Delta Region
2825 Cordelia Road, Suite 100
Fairfield, CA 94534
(707) 428-2002
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



February 14, 2020

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

FEB 14 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Mr. Mike Mathiesen
Mountain View/Los Altos Union High School District
1299 Bryant Avenue
Mountain View, CA 94040
mike.mathiesen@mvla.net

Subject: Los Altos High School Stadium Lights & Public Address System, Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report, SCH #2020010295, City of Los Altos, Santa Clara County

Dear Mr. Mathiesen:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) from the Mountain View/Los Altos Union High School District (District) for the Los Altos High School Stadium Lights & Public Address System (Project) pursuant the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.¹ The deadline to submit comments on the NOP is February 20, 2020.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish and wildlife resources. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is expected to be a Trustee Agency with regards to this Project. As a Trustee Agency, CDFW has a responsibility pursuant to CEQA for commenting on projects that could directly or indirectly impact biological resources. CDFW has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (i.e. biological resources). As a Trustee Agency, CDFW is responsible for providing, as available, biological expertise to review and comment upon environmental documents and impacts arising from project activities (CEQA Guidelines, § 15386; Fish and Game Code, § 1802).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Proponent: Mountain View/Los Altos Union High School District

Objective: The Project includes installation of lighting and public address system speakers around an existing sports track and field at the Los Altos High School.

¹ CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

Location: 201 Almond Avenue, Los Altos, Santa Clara County, CA 94022; APN#170-60-001.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the District in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources.

Trees are present within the Project boundary and in adjacent residential areas. Both native and non-native trees provide nesting habitat for birds. CDFW recommends that the following measures be included in the draft EIR:

1. Nesting Bird Surveys: If Project-related work is scheduled during the nesting season (typically February 15 to August 30 for small bird species such as passerines; January 15 to September 15 for owls; and February 15 to September 15 for other raptors), CDFW recommends that a qualified biologist conduct two surveys for active nests of such birds within 14 days prior to the beginning of Project construction, with a final survey conducted within 48 hours prior to construction. Appropriate minimum survey radii surrounding the work area are typically the following: i) 250 feet for passerines; ii) 500 feet for small raptors such as accipiters; and iii) 1,000 feet for larger raptors such as buteos. Surveys should be conducted at the appropriate times of day and during appropriate nesting times.
2. Active Nest Buffers: If the qualified biologist documents active nests within the Project area or in nearby surrounding areas, an appropriate buffer between the nest and active construction should be established. The buffer should be clearly marked and maintained until the young have fledged and are foraging independently. Prior to construction, the qualified biologist should conduct baseline monitoring of the nest to characterize "normal" bird behavior and establish a buffer distance which allows the birds to exhibit normal behavior. The qualified biologist should monitor the nesting birds daily during construction activities and increase the buffer if the birds show signs of unusual or distressed behavior (e.g. defensive flights and vocalizations, standing up from a brooding position, and/or flying away from the nest). If buffer establishment is not possible, the qualified biologist or construction foreman should have the authority to cease all construction work in the area until the young have fledged and the nest is no longer active.
3. Hooded Lighting: Project lighting to be installed should be hooded or shielded to direct light downwards and to minimize the spillage of light outwards into adjacent areas where trees are present.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in draft environmental impact reports be incorporated into a data base which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations. [Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e)]. Accordingly, please report any special-status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to CNDDDB. The CNDDDB field survey form can be found at the following link:

Mr. Mike Mathiesen
Mountain View/Los Altos Union High School District
February 14, 2020
Page 3

<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Submitting-Data#44524420-pdf-field-survey-form>. The completed form can be mailed electronically to CNDDB at the following email address: CNDDB@wildlife.ca.gov. The types of information reported to CNDDB can be found at the following link: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Plants-and-Animals>.

FILING FEES

CDFW anticipates that the Project will have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary (Fish and Game Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089). Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW.

CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NOP to assist the Mountain View/Los Altos Union High School District in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources.

Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Ms. Kristin Garrison, Environmental Scientist, at (707) 944-5534 or Kristin.Garrison@wildlife.ca.gov; or Ms. Brenda Blinn, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), at (707) 944-5541 or Brenda.Blinn@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Gregg Erickson
Regional Manager
Bay Delta Region

cc: Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, Sacramento