



REVISED GENERAL BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT&T SITE CSL02626
EVENSON PLUMBING
2780 BLACK WALNUT ROAD
SAN LUIS OBISPO, SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY, CA 93405
FA #13790138

PREPARED FOR:
AT&T
5001 EXECUTIVE PARKWAY
SAN RAMON, CALIFORNIA 94583

DATED: AUGUST 8, 2019

PREPARED BY:
ACE ENVIRONMENTAL, LLC
9976 PEAK LOOKOUT STREET
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89178
WWW.ACEENVIRONMENTALLLC.COM
ACE PROJECT NO. 19-303-132-159

KIDD BIOLOGICAL, INC.

August 6, 2019

Kerry Willoughby
Ace Environmental, LLC
9976 Peak Lookout Street
Las Vegas, NV 89178

Subject: Revised General Biological Evaluation for a New Telecommunication Facility (Site No. CSL02626) near San Luis Obispo, California (APN 076-101-049).

Dear Ms. Willoughby,

As requested, a general biological resources evaluation was conducted by Kidd Biological, Inc. on a proposed cellular communications project in San Luis Obispo County, California. The purpose of this report is to determine if the construction of a new cellular communications facility will result in significant impacts to biologically sensitive resources.

Project Description

AT&T proposes to construct a new cellular communications facility in order to improve service in the area. The proposed project will include the construction of a 150-foot tall mono-pole tower with associated antennas and equipment mounted on it. A new outdoor equipment shelter will be installed as well as an 11.5 foot by 5 foot concrete slab to support an emergency generator. All equipment will be housed within a 27-foot by 27-foot lease area which will be enclosed with an 8-foot high concrete block wall. Power, Telco and fiber will be connected to the site via an approximately 40-foot underground trench to the east of the site to an existing utility pole. Three pine trees will be removed and replaced in order to construct the new facility.

Project Location

The site is located in the unincorporated area of San Luis Obispo County, California, approximately 4.5 miles west of Highway 1 (Cabrillo Highway) and San Luis Obispo City center. Generally the site is 4 miles north of Avila Beach, 7 miles east of the Pacific Ocean and the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Generation Plant and south of Morro Bay. More specifically, the site is located in a rural residential/agricultural property near the northwest corner of the intersection of See Canyon Road and Black Walnut Road with a site address of 2780 Black Walnut Road (See Figure 1).

Ecologically, the site is located 7 miles east of Pacific Ocean and 8 miles southeast of Morro Bay, within See Canyon of the Irish Hills in the Southern Santa Lucia Range of the Central California Foothills and Coastal Mountains ecoregion at an elevation of 393 feet above mean sea level. The project location can

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also be described as being located in Section 13 of Township 31 South, Range 11 East of the Pismo Beach, California U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map (see figure 2). Surrounding land uses include rural residential and agricultural to the south, west with large tracts of open space to the north and also to the south.

FIGURE 1. AERIAL PHOTO OF SITE

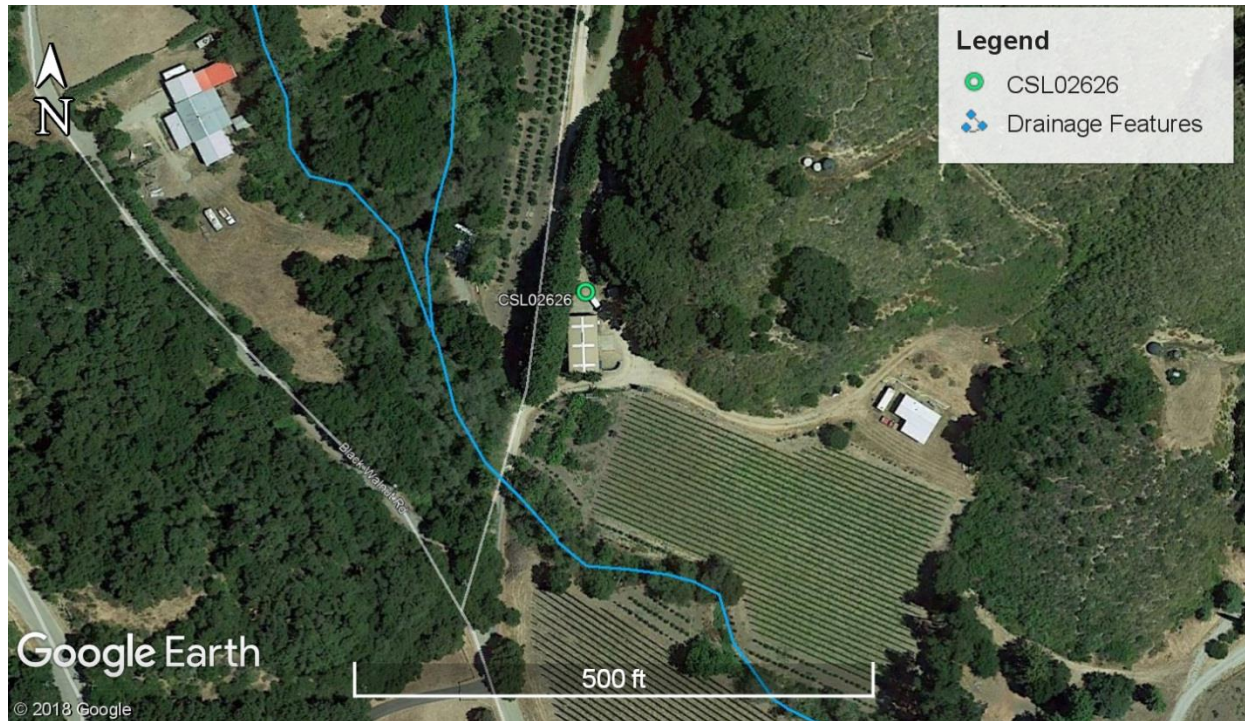
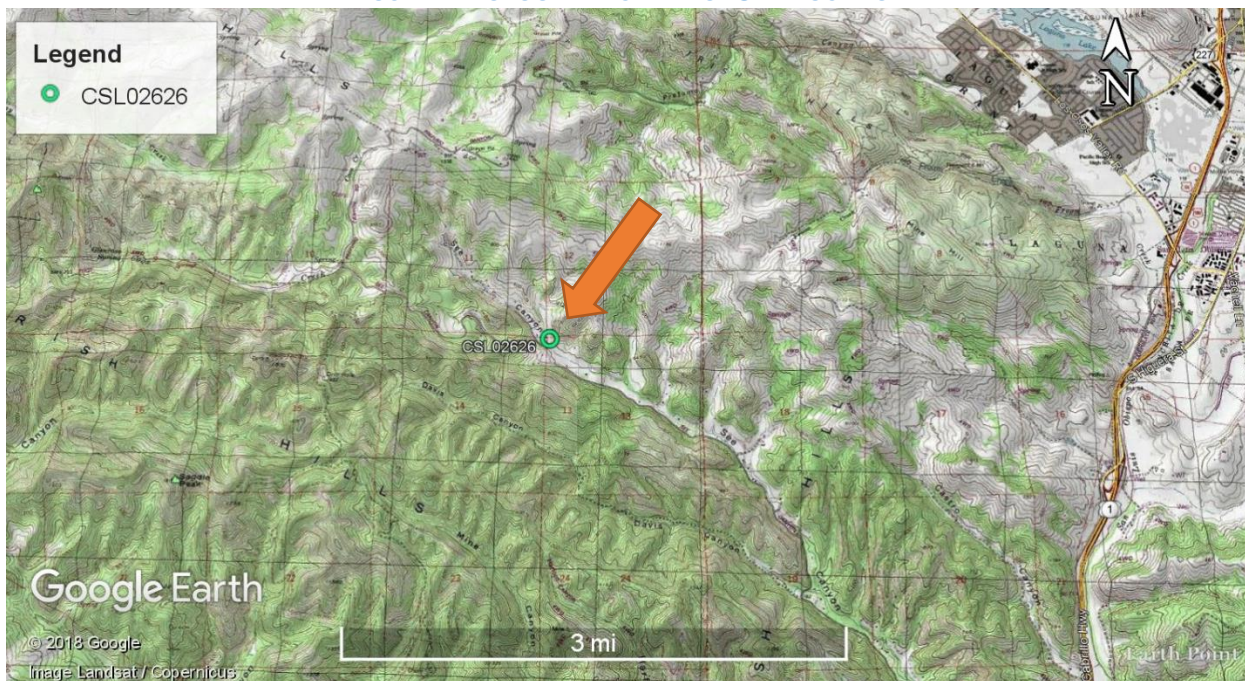


FIGURE 2. TOPOGRAPHIC MAP OF SITE LOCATION



METHODS

This assessment focused on reviewing documented sensitive biological resources onsite and to use the information found in the literature review to determine the potential for these species to occur onsite. Prior to visiting the site, a literature review was done using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Natural Diversity Database¹ and California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants² as well as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) IPaC reporting³. A report was prepared for sensitive species recorded within three miles of the project site. This information was used to help determine if any sensitive resources were previously reported on, or adjacent, to the subject property based on the existing conditions. Information from other resources such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service, telecommunication site plans, aerial photography and photographs provided by Ace Environmental, LLC were also reviewed.

Based on an initial review of the site, it was determined there was a potential for the federally threatened California Red-legged frog to occur within an adjacent creek; therefore focused surveys for that species were conducted during the summer of 2019 to determine presence or absence.

RESULTS

The CNDDB and other sources identified 32 sensitive species as having been previously reported within 3 miles of the project site. A discussion of the potential for these sensitive species to occur onsite is included below in Table 1 as well as in the discussion below.

The project site is located at 393 feet above mean sea level (120 meters) within a sparsely populated residential and agricultural area outside of the City of San Luis Obispo. The site is within a storage area of a vineyard property and heavily disturbed and mostly devoid of vegetation. Surrounding areas are comprised of oak woodlands and coastal sage scrub communities dominated by various oak species (*Quercus* sp.) and manzanita (*Acrostaphylos* sp.), California sage brush (*Artimisia californica*), black sage (*Salvia melifera*) and coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*). See Canyon Creek is located within 150 feet west of the site. This creek is comprised of western sycamores (*Platanus racemosa*), willow species (*Salix* sp.), oak (*Quercus* sp.) mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), poison oak (*Toxicodendrum diversilobum*) and horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*).

Soils onsite are mapped as Salinas silty clay loam (0-2% slopes) and Lopez very shaly clay loam (30-75% slopes). Salina silty clay loam is associated with alluvial fans and flood plains. Lopez shaly clay loam is an excessively drained shallow, gravelly soil associated with mountains and steep slopes.

¹ California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). 2019. [Internet]. California Department of Fish and Wildlife Version 5.2.14. Accessed March 20, 2019

² California Native Plant Society, Rare Plant Program. 2019. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (online edition, v8-03 0.39). Website <http://www.rareplants.cnps.org> [accessed 20 March 2019].

*Indicates non-native species

³ <https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/location/46MM6KW3UZHEVGU6QBJ7TT6FEY/resources#endangered-species>

Sensitive Resources

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species that have special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, or rare. The CDFW, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and groups like the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) maintain special watch lists of such resources. After reviewing aerial photos, maps and various documents, it was determined from several criteria, which sensitive resources have a low, moderate or high potential to occur on site. Criteria used to determine potentials of occupancy include, but are not limited to, soil types and conditions, habitat types and quality, disturbance, site history, adjacent land uses and proximity to nearest known extant populations of each respective species.

TABLE 1 – Sensitive Species Occurring in the Area

Species		Status			Potential for Impact from Project Implementation ⁴
Scientific Name	Common Name	USFWS	CDFG	CNPS	
PLANTS					
<i>Agrostis hooveri</i>	Hoover's bent grass	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. No suitable habitat in area.
<i>Arctostaphylos morroensis</i>	Morro Manzanita	FT	None	1B.1	No Effect. No suitable soils on site.
<i>Arctostaphylos pechoensis</i>	Pecho manzanita	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. Not present on site.
<i>Arctostaphylos pilosula</i>	Santa Margarita manzanita	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. Not present on site.
<i>Arenaria paludicola</i>	Marsh sandwort	FE	SE	1B.1	No Effect. No suitable habitat/soils in area.
<i>Calochortus obispoensis</i>	San Luis mariposa-lily	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. No suitable habitat/soils in area.
<i>Calochortus simulans</i>	La Panza mariposa-lily	None	None	1B.3	No Effect. No suitable habitat in area.
<i>Calystegia subacaulis ssp. episcopalis</i>	Cambria morning-glory	None	None	4.2	No Effect. No suitable soils on site.
<i>Carex obispoensis</i>	San Luis Obispo sedge	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. No seeps or other wetlands on site.
<i>Castilleja densiflora var. obispoensis</i>	San Luis Obispo owl's-clover	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. Unlikely to occur on site.

⁴ "Adjacent" indicates within 500 feet of the project site.

<i>Chlorogalum pomeridianum</i> var. <i>minus</i>	dwarf soaproot	None	None	1B.2	May affect, not likely to adversely affect.
<i>Chorizanthe breweri</i>	Brewer's spineflower	None	None	1B.3	May affect, not likely to adversely affect.
<i>Cirsium fontinale</i> var. <i>obispoense</i>	Chorro Creek bog thistle	FE	SE	1B.2	No Effect. No seeps or serpentine soils in area.
<i>Clarkia Speciose</i> ssp. <i>immaculata</i>	Pismo clarkia	FE	SR	1B.1	No Effect. No suitable habitat in area.
<i>Cordylanthus maritimus</i> ssp. <i>maritimus</i>	Salt marsh birds-beak	FE	SE	1B.2	No Effect. No suitable habitat in area.
<i>Delphinium parryi</i> ssp. <i>eastwoodiae</i>	Eastwood's larkspur	None	None	1B.2	May affect, not likely to adversely affect.
<i>Delphinium umbraculorum</i>	umbrella larkspur	None	None	1B.3	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
<i>Dudleya abramsii</i> ssp. <i>murina</i>	mouse-gray dudleya	None	None	1B.3	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
<i>Eriodictyon altissimum</i>	Indian Knob mountainbalm	FE	SE	1B.1	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
<i>Eryngium aristulatum</i> var. <i>hooveri</i>	Hoover's button-celery	None	None	1B.1	No Effect. No suitable soils or vernal pools in area.
<i>Fritillaria ojaiensis</i>	Ojai fritillary	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
<i>Horkelia cuneata</i> var. <i>puberula</i>	mesa horkelia	None	None	1B.2	May affect, not likely to adversely affect.
<i>Layia jonesii</i>	Jones' layia	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
<i>Monardella palmeri</i>	Palmer's monardella	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
<i>Monolopia gracilens</i>	woodland woolly threads	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
<i>Navarretia fossalis</i>	Spreading navarretia	FT	None	1B.1	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
<i>Streptanthus albidus</i> ssp. <i>peramoenus</i>	most beautiful jewelflower	None	None	1B.2	No Effect. No suitable habitat on site.
WILDLIFE					

<i>Empidonax taillii extimus</i>	Southwestern willow flycatcher	FE	SE	-	No Effect. No suitable nesting habitat onsite.
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	western pond turtle	None	SSC	-	May affect, not likely to adversely affect.
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus pop. 9</i>	steelhead - south-central Calif. coast DPS	FT	None	-	No effect. Creek will not be impacted.
<i>Rana draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	FT	SSC	-	No effect. Absent from adjacent creek.
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	Least Bell's vireo	FE	SE	-	No Effect. Not reported to breed in area for 30+ yrs.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service FT- Federal Threatened FE- Federally Endangered Candidate-Proposed for listing as threatened BCC- Birds of Conservation Concern California Department of Fish and Game SE- State Endangered ST- State Threatened SSC State Species of Special Concern Candidate- Proposed for listing as threatened FP- Fully Protected CNDDDB- Experts consider the species to be declining or imperiled, but no formal listing.		California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Rankings 1B Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere 4 Plants of limited distribution (a watch list) .1 Seriously threatened in California (> 80% of occurrences threatened) .2 Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate threat) .3 Not very threatened in California (< 20% of occurrences threatened / low threat or no current threats known)			

Impact Analysis

Of the list of 32 sensitive species having been reported in the area, six (6) have a potential to occur on or immediately adjacent to the site. Four of these are plants: dwarf soap root, Brewer's spine flower, Eastwood's larkspur and mesa horkelia. None of these species are listed as federally threatened or endangered, however these species are tolerant of some disturbance. Although the site is disturbed, there is a very slight potential for these species to occur within the immediate area, and to a lesser extent, the project footprint. Due to the previous disturbance within the project footprint and the small size of the project, the impacts to this species (if they do in fact occur on site) will not cause the species to trend toward becoming threatened or endangered.

The two additional species include the western pond turtle (WPT), a California sensitive species, and the red-legged frog (RLF), a federally threatened species. Both species occupy similar aquatic habitats, requiring freshwater ponds or slow moving streams for breeding and open upland areas to allow for movement between ponds for dispersing and finding water sources during dry periods.

The RLF carries both state and/or federal listings due to habitat loss, and fragmentation of habitats. The closest recently reported occurrence of RLF is 2 miles northeast of the site. Although this observation is not within the same watershed, it was assumed that this species had a potential to occur within the creek

adjacent to the site. To ensure no inadvertent “take” of this species occurs during the project, focused surveys were conducted to determine if the RLF occurred within the area. Based on eight surveys over the course of 6 weeks no RLF were observed or otherwise detected. The surveys were conducted during the breeding season when the frogs would have been using the ponded areas in the creek, therefore it is concluded that the species is absent from the area and no further mitigation or minimization efforts are required for this species.

The WPT has been reported within a deep pool ½ mile downstream from the site. For this reason, it is assumed that the majority of the watershed is suitable for this species. Pond turtles use upland habitat for egg laying and also for hibernating. Terrestrial overwintering habitat consists of burrows in leaf litter or soil. The presence of a duff layer seems to be a general characteristic of overwintering habitat. They can lay their nests usually within 100 feet (but as far as 1,300 feet) from their aquatic habitats and in a variety of sunny habitats, including forests/woodlands, grasslands, including grazed pastures. Egg laying occurs between May and July. To ensure no inadvertent impacts to this species occurs during the project, prudent minimization measures are presented below.

Indirect Impacts

Temporary indirect impacts include impacts that are incurred during construction such as noise, dust, night-lighting and pollutants. After construction is complete, on-going indirect impacts include night-lighting from permanent fixtures, radio microwaves from the tower and on-going maintenance noise. Plants are generally not significantly impacted by indirect impacts. Wildlife may be negatively impacted in their behavior by noise and artificial lighting. Other species have a potential to occur adjacent to the site. These are indicated in bold in the table above. Although there is a potential for some sensitive plants and animals to occur within the area (mostly associated with the nearby Creek), there are no significant impacts expected to occur to these species from this project from indirect impacts.

It should be noted, however, that nesting birds may abandon nests to escape from noise or lighting. Adjacent ornamental landscaping as well as the trees within the drainage feature and even the grasslands may support nesting birds that are protected by CDFW codes and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA).

No critical habitat nor wildlife corridors will be impacted by this project. No drainage features occur within the project footprint, however See Canyon Creek is located within 200 feet of the site and prudent avoidance measures/ Best Management Practices are recommended.

Other considerations

There are no drainage features within the project site; however, See Canyon Creek is located within 150 feet of the site. Although the site is in close proximity to the creek, no direct impacts or modifications to the creek are expected from this project. No further studies or mitigation are necessary for Waters of the U.S. or Section 1600 of the DFG Code, however Best Management Practices (BMP) are recommended during the construction phase of the project.

Although the drainage feature near the site may function as a wildlife corridor, the proposed project will not impede this area or have any significant impact on any wildlife movement corridors. The site does

not fall within any designated critical habitat, however the adjacent creek is designated as critical habitat for the steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus* pop. 9). For this reason BMPs should be followed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Of the list of 22 sensitive species having been reported to the CNDDB, one wildlife species as well as four sensitive plant species have a potential to within the project site or project's zone of influence.

To ensure no direct take to sensitive species during the construction process the following are recommended:

RM1-The adjacent woodland, riparian and scrub habitats are very likely be used by nesting birds during the spring time. Due to the potential for birds to nest in the vicinity of this project site, if construction should occur during the bird nesting season which is generally considered February 15- September 1st, a preconstruction clearance survey of the site and the surrounding habitats within 500 feet of the site should be surveyed no more than 10 days prior to the start of construction. If and active nest is found within the project's zone of influence avoidance measures will be recommended. Delay of the project may be recommended if impacts from construction could cause a nest failure. If during future maintenance, the crew encounters a nest on or immediately adjacent to the project site, work should stop until a biologist can be contacted to determine the status of the nest and when the project site can be accessed without significantly impacting the nesting birds.

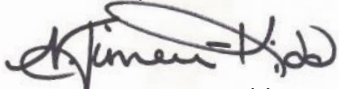
RM2- Due to the potential for WPT to occur within the project footprint, the following specific avoidance measures are highly recommended.

- No work will occur during any rain events, or within 24 hours after a rain event to minimize impacts to western pond turtles (WPT). A rain event is considered any precipitation forecast or resulting in 0.10 inches of rain. To avoid delays in construction, it is recommended that the work on this project be conducted between August and October when there is a lower chance of major rain events and will also minimize impacts to nesting birds as well as WPTs nesting activities in upland areas.
- Prior to any ground disturbing activities, all work areas will be clearly delineated. Exclusion fencing (silt-fencing) will be erected and maintained around the perimeter of the project's impact areas and project staging areas to prevent pond turtles from entering the project site. Fencing will extend a minimum of 36-inches above ground level and will have sand bags laid against it to hold it in place and deter turtles from burrowing under the fence. Exclusion fencing will be checked a minimum of one time per week by onsite personnel for the duration of the proposed action to identify problems or weaknesses in fence integrity and function. All compromised portions will be repaired and/or replaced immediately. Upon completion of the proposed action, all fencing material will be removed from the site and disposed of properly.
- To reduce indirect impacts from dust, speed limits on access roads will be limited to 15 mph or less.
- If any wildlife are encountered during the construction phase of the project work should stop until the animal has left the site on their own accord. Handling of any wildlife could result in "take" of a sensitive species and result in fines or imprisonment.

- All best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented to the full extent.
- The project site will be kept as clean as possible to avoid attracting predators or small insects (i.e., RLF prey items). All food-related trash will be placed in sealed bins immediately upon disposal and removed from the site daily.
- Ingress and egress of construction equipment and personnel will be kept to a minimum within the action area and will be restricted to existing roads and will use a single access point to the site where possible.
- Dirt/sand piles left overnight will be covered with tarps or plastic with the edges sealed with sandbags, bricks, or boards to prevent pond turtles from burrowing into the dirt.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please do not hesitate to contact me at (949) 632-2756.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nina Jimerson-Kidd", written over a light blue rectangular background.

Nina Jimerson-Kidd
Wildlife biologist

ATTACHMENT A: PHOTOS (Provided by Ace Environmental, LLC)



Photo 1. Looking east at lease area.



Photo 2. Looking west at lease area.



Photo 3. Creek south of Project site, east side of Black Walnut Road, facing east.



Photo 4. Vegetation at creek from bridge on west side of road, facing west.

ATTACHMENT B: BIOLOGIST'S QUALIFICATIONS

Mrs. Jimerson-Kidd has over 15 years' experience in conducting herpetological, entomological, avian and botanical surveys. Her experience includes inventorying both plants and wildlife of southern and central and northwest California. She has experience in raptor trapping, handling, survey techniques, and nest monitoring, as well as some experience with mammal trapping. She also has extensive experience with small mammal identification. Mrs. Jimerson-Kidd has conducted numerous focused surveys or habitat assessments for California gnatcatcher, desert tortoise, least bell's vireo, flat-tailed horned lizard, burrowing owls, western spadefoot toad, Delhi-sands flower-loving fly, Arroyo toad, and Quino checkerspot butterfly. Additionally, her experience includes habitat assessments and focused for sensitive plants species, particularly desert species.

Education

BS, Natural Resources Planning & interpretation/ Ecology, Humboldt State University- 1998

Permits

- Federal Bird Marking sub-permit: 22951-C
- Flat-tailed Horned Lizard handling MOU (BLM)
- Scientific Collection Permit: 801128-03
- Federal 10A(1)a permit #036550-4
Coastal California Gnatcatcher
Quino Checkerspot Butterfly

Professional affiliations

- Wildlife Society
- Association of Field Ornithologists
- Raptor Research Foundation
- Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles
- California Native Plant Society

Continued Education

Desert Tortoise Council Workshop 10/01
Tortoise Egg Handling and Burrow Construction Certificate 10/01
South Western Willow Flycatcher Workshop 5/01
So. Coast Missing Linkages Project Symposium 8/02
Bats of the Southwestern Desert 5/02
Burrowing Owl Symposium 10/03
California Tiger Salamander Workshop 4/13
California Manual of Vegetation CNPS workshop 1/15
Rapid Assessment/Releve Training (CNPS) 6/15

Job History

Kidd Biological, Inc. 2000- Present. Principle Biologist. Conduct Biological; assessments, focused surveys for sensitive species, project management, mitigation monitoring, restoration monitoring. On-going research of bird of prey in California.

Michael Brandman Associates. 2002- 2005. Project manager/Ecologist. Project Management, biological assessments, focused surveys, mitigation monitoring. Supervised 3-5 employees as well as sub-contractors. Assisted with Community outreach and education programs.

Humboldt State Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. 1996-1998. Assistant Curator. Managed and maintained museum specimens and catalogs, prepared new specimens, assisted researchers in locating relevant specimens from within the museum as well as locating and obtaining loans from other museums world-wide.

Humboldt County museum of Natural History. 1996-1998. Museum Assistant. Designed and created displays, managed collection, assisted with newsletter, created and taught children's classes and summer day camp, manned museum gift shop, organized and trained volunteers.

Select Professional Experience

Focused Surveys, California Gnatcatcher. Assisted in conducting a focused survey for the California gnatcatcher. The survey was conducted to determine the presence and location of any individuals or pairs of gnatcatchers within a 1000-acre parcel located in San Mateo County Park, Orange County, CA. Twenty-nine pairs of gnatcatchers were identified during the 2001 surveys. Participated in 2010 census surveys on Marine Corp Base Camp Pendleton.

Prepared an RMP for County of San Bernardino. Resource Management Plan was prepared for 13,000 acres in the Mojave Desert. During the surveys of the lands, numerous desert tortoise and burrowing owls as well as other sensitive species were observed. The plan focused on the minimizing efforts of a low-density housing project on sensitive species in the Mojave Desert. (2003)

Burrowing Owl Relocation. Coordinated with CDFG and USFWS to actively translocate one pair of burrowing owls from a project site in the City of Fontana to a conservation site on U.S. Naval Station, Seal Beach. Assisted in the trapping and release efforts as well as monitoring of the site during grading.

Assist in on-going Burrowing Owl research. Assists annually in capturing and banding of juvenile burrowing owls on a conservation site on U.S. Naval Station Seal Beach. Data is used to calculate nest success rates, particularly of translocated birds.

Managed biological studies for proposed wind turbine project. Managed 10 biologists and conducted migratory bird surveys, plant surveys and desert tortoise surveys for a 7 square mile proposed wind farm in the Mojave Desert. 2004-2005

Construction monitoring. Has monitored grading and other construction activity on numerous projects including cellular communications towers, military training facilities, County road maintenance, linear fiber-optics lines, park trails, large housing developments, and restoration activities. Species monitored include California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, arroyo toad, desert tortoise, burrowing owl, nesting birds, flat-tailed horned lizard, and general wildlife.

Focused Surveys, Arroyo Toad. Conducted presence/absence surveys as well as pit-fall trapping in Camp Pendleton USMCB and San Mateo County Park in San Diego County, CA. Over 1000 Arroyo Toads were detected as well as egg strands, tadpoles and metamorphs during the 2001 surveys. Since then numerous surveys have been conducted for the toad in San Diego and Orange Counties.

Consultation with CDFG. Successfully completed 2081 permit applications for take of desert tortoise on a project in the Mojave Desert as well as a take permit for Mohave ground Squirrel in Victorville. 2003-2005.

Quino Checkerspot butterfly Surveys. Over the past decade, approximately 12 sites have been surveyed for the endangered butterfly. Survey areas included Northwestern Riverside County to southeastern San Diego County. Two power line projects were part of these surveys and required extensive area surveys. Additional surveys have been conducted for the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service for fire maintenance. In 2010, QCB were observed near Mount Palomar.