



February 8, 2019

(2018-200)

Mr. Nolan Leggio
Project Manager
Diversified Pacific Communities
10621 Civic Center Drive
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730
Via Email: NLeggio@diversifiedpacific.com

**Subject: Results of a Biological Reconnaissance Survey conducted at the Approximately
10-acre Palm Property, in Redlands, California**

Dear Mr. Leggio:

This letter report presents the results of a biological reconnaissance survey conducted by ECORP Consulting, Inc (ECORP) at the request of Diversified Pacific Communities at an approximately 10-acre property known as the Palm Property (Project) in Redlands, San Bernardino County, California. The literature review and biological reconnaissance survey of the Project site was conducted to identify biological resources that could be affected by the Proposed Project for the purposes of identifying any biological constraints that would affect the site plan for the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would be subject to county, state, and federal regulations regarding compliance with the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), California ESA, Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), and California Fish and Game Code. Included in this letter report is a site description, description of the methods used to conduct the survey, and a discussion of the survey results.

Project Description and Location

The project site consists of an approximately 10-acre property located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Alvarado Street and Palm Avenue in the City of Redlands (Attachment A and Attachment B). The project site is bounded by Palm Avenue to the north, residential properties to the east and south, and Alvarado Avenue to the west. The project site is located within the southeast portion of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Redlands 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle in Section 34, Township 1 South, Range 3 West.

Methods

Literature Review

Prior to conducting the biological reconnaissance survey, ECorp biologists performed a literature review using the CDFW's California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB; CDFW 2019a) and the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Electronic Inventory (CNPSEI; CNPS 2019) to determine the special-status plant and wildlife species that have been documented near the Project Site. ECorp searched CNDDB and CNPSEI records within the Project site boundaries as depicted on USGS 7.5-minute Redlands topographic quadrangle, plus the surrounding eight topographic quadrangles, including El Casco, Harrison Mountain, Keller Peak, Riverside East, San Bernardino North, San Bernardino South, Sunnymead, and Yucaipa. The CNDDB and CNPSEI contain records of reported occurrences of federally or state-listed endangered, threatened, proposed endangered or threatened species, California Species of Special Concern (SSC), and/or other special-status species or habitat that may occur within or near the Project site. Using this information and observations in the field, a list of special-status plant and animal species that have potential to occur on or near the Project site was generated.

Biological Reconnaissance Survey

The biological reconnaissance survey was conducted by walking the entire Project site to determine the vegetation communities and wildlife habitats in the Project site. The biologist documented the plant and animal species present on the Project site, and the location and condition of the Project site were assessed for the potential to provide habitat for special-status plant and wildlife species. Data were recorded on a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit, field notebooks, and/or maps. Photographs were also taken during the survey to provide visual representation of the various vegetation communities within the Project site. In addition, the biologist mapped the vegetation communities present on the Project site.

Plant and wildlife species, including any special-status species that were observed during the survey, were recorded. In instances where a special-status species was observed, the date, species, location and habitat, and GPS coordinates were recorded. The locations of special-status species observations were recorded using a handheld GPS in NAD 83, Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates, Zone 11S.

Jurisdictional Drainages

A desktop review was conducted to identify potential streams and hydric soils on the Project site. This entailed examination of the NRCS Soil Mapper (2018), National Wetland Inventory (NWI) mapping, and the USGS topographic mapping of the Project site to aid in identifying potential biological constraints to the Proposed Project due to jurisdictional streams. A preliminary jurisdictional delineation of the Project site was conducted in the field. The property was walked to look for signs of Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM) as defined by the *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual* (Environmental Laboratory 1987) and the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of*

Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (Arid West Region Supplement) (USACE 2008). The desktop review included a review of aerial photographs to identify boundaries of potential Waters of the U.S. and Waters of the State. During the site visit, standard field methods were used including identification of water sources and examination of topography.

Results

Literature Review

The literature review and database searches identified 50 special-status plant species and 46 special-status wildlife species that occur near the Project site. A list was generated from the results of the literature review and the Project site was evaluated for suitable habitat that could support any of the special-status plant or wildlife species on the list.

Biological Reconnaissance Survey

The biological reconnaissance survey was conducted on January 22, 2019, by ECORP senior wildlife biologist, Phillip Wasz. Mr. Wasz has more than eight years of experience conducting surveys and habitat assessments for special-status plant and wildlife species of San Bernardino County. Summarized below are the results of the biological reconnaissance survey, including site characteristics, plant communities, wildlife, special-status species, and special-status habitats (including any potential wildlife corridors).

Property Characteristics

The Project site consists of disturbed and developed land containing two houses, three outbuildings, and an active citrus orchard. The Project site is in a residential area with the surrounding land use consisting mostly of residential buildings. The Project site was relatively flat consisting of mostly sandy loam soils. One vegetation community, active orchard, was identified on the Project site. The plant species observed on the Project site were typical of the residential setting and included ornamental trees and shrubs, palm trees (*Washingtonia robusta*), rose bush (*Rosa* sp.), citrus trees (*Citrus sinensis*), black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* ssp. *officinale*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*).

The wildlife observed on the Project site were typical of the residential setting and the habitat present. Wildlife species observed during the biological reconnaissance survey included California towhee (*Melospiza crissalis*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), Anna's humming bird (*Calypte anna*), mourning dove (*Zenaidura macroura*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) and American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*).

Special-Status Plants and Wildlife Species

There were 50 special-status plant species and 46 special-status wildlife species that appeared in the literature review and database searches for the project site. However, due to the project site's long history of being heavily disturbed and developed and the current lack of suitable habitat for special-status plant and wildlife species within the residential property and surrounding citrus orchard, all the special-status species identified in the literature review were presumed absent from the project site.

Raptors and Migratory Birds

Potential nesting habitat for migratory birds and raptors protected by the MBTA and CDFG Code was present on the Project site within the citrus orchard and within the ornamental trees and shrubs that surround the property. Other areas adjacent to the Project site that could also provide nesting habitat for migratory birds and raptors including the adjacent scrubs, trees, adjacent power poles, and buildings. Raptors typically breed between February and August, while song birds and other passerines generally nest between March and August.

Jurisdictional Drainages

The desktop review of the NRCS (2018), NWI, and the USGS topographic map did not identify any potentially jurisdictional features, hydric soils, or wetlands present on the Project site. No hydric soils, jurisdictional drainages, stream courses, and/or other water features were identified on the Project site during the biological reconnaissance surveys. Therefore, a formal delineation was not conducted.

Discussion

The Project site consists of disturbed and developed land containing two houses, three outbuildings, and an active citrus orchard. No special-status plant or wildlife species were observed during the biological reconnaissance survey of the Project site. There were 50 special-status plant species and 46 special-status wildlife species that appeared in the literature review and database searches for the project site. However, due to the project site's long history of being heavily disturbed and developed and the current lack of suitable habitat for special-status plant and wildlife species within the residential property and surrounding citrus orchard, all the special-status species identified in the literature review were presumed absent from the project site.

The vegetation on the Project site could provide nesting habitat for songbirds protected by the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code. If construction of the Proposed Project occurs during the bird breeding season (typically February 1 through August 31), ground-disturbing construction activities could directly affect birds protected by the MBTA and their nests through the removal of habitat on the Project site and indirectly through increased noise, vibrations, and increased human activity. Therefore, if construction is initiated between February 1 and August 31, it is recommended that a pre-construction nesting bird survey be conducted prior to construction.

The special-status plant and wildlife species with high potential to occur do not include any federally or state-listed species. Therefore, it is not likely that the Proposed Project would need to acquire a mechanism for "take" of federally or state-listed plant or wildlife species.

The Project site does not support riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, wetlands, or trees that would need to be preserved and no Project related impacts are anticipated for these resources. Additionally, no jurisdictional drainages were observed on or adjacent to the Project site.


Recommendations

The following are recommended prior to Project implementation:

Pre-construction Nesting Bird Survey: If construction or other Project activities are scheduled to occur during the bird breeding season (February through August for raptors and March through August for most migratory bird species), a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that active bird nests, including those for the loggerhead shrike, will not be disturbed or destroyed. The survey shall be completed no more than three days prior to initial ground disturbance. The nesting bird survey shall include the Project area and adjacent areas where Proposed Project activities have the potential to affect active nests, either directly or indirectly due to construction activity or noise. If an active nest is identified, a qualified biologist shall establish an appropriate disturbance limit buffer around the nest using flagging or staking. Construction activities shall not occur within any disturbance limit buffer zones until the nest is deemed inactive by the qualified biologist.

Thank you for the opportunity to work on your project. If you have any questions regarding the contents of this letter report, please contact me at (909) 307-0046/pwasz@ecorpconsulting.com.

CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present data and information required for this biological evaluation, and the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

SIGNED: 
Phillip Wasz
Senior Wildlife Biologist
ECORP Consulting, Inc.
215 N. 5th Street
Redlands, CA 92374

DATE: February 8, 2019

Attachments:

Attachment A: Project Vicinity Map
Attachment B: Project Location Map
Attachment C: Representative Project Site Photographs

Literature Cited

- CDFW. 2018a. RareFind California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). California. Sacramento, CA, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Biogeographic Data Branch.
- CNPS. 2018. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (online edition, v8-02). California Native Plant Society, Rare Plant Program. Sacramento, CA. Website <http://www.rareplants.cnps.org>. Accessed: November 2018.
- Environmental Laboratory. 1987. Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual. Technical Report Y-87-1. U. S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station. Vicksburg, Mississippi.
- NRCS. 2018. "Web Soil Survey" from <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>. Accessed: November 2018.
- USACE. 2008. *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region*. ed. J.S. Wakeley, R.W. Lichvar, and C.V. Noble. ERDC/EL TR-06-16. Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2008. Revised critical habitat for the San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*); Final Rule. Fed. Reg. 73:61936-62002.



Attachment A. Project Vicinity

2019-016 Palm Property

ATTACHMENT C

Representative Project Site Photographs



Photo 1: Primary residence on the property.



Photo 2: Second residence on the property.



Photo 3: Northeast corner of Project site looking west.



Photo 4: Northeast corner of Project site looking south.



Photo 5: Northwest corner of Project site looking east.



Photo 6: Northwest corner of Project site looking south.



Photo 6: Southeast corner of Project site looking west.



Photo 7: Southeast corner of Project site looking north.



Photo 8: Representative photo of the existing citrus orchard.