

# COUNTY OF VENTURA

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES INITIAL STUDY

Date: May 7, 1998  
 Requestor: Jane King  
 Project: CUP-5026

Field Study: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Justification: Field survey to determine if native grassland elements were present at the site per March 18, 1998 recommendation.

### A. CHECKLIST

Biological Resources Issues	Project Impact Degree of Effect				Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect			
	N	LS	S	U	N	LS	S	U
a. endangered, threatened, or rare species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. wetland habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. coastal habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. migration corridors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. locally important species/communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Degree of Effect Explanation

**N = None**

**LS = Less than significant effect**

**S = Significant effect; MND or EIR required**

**U = Unknown; EIR required**

### B. DISCUSSION

Aerial photography of the project site (PW VEN 12-299 [January 12, 1996] and an undated oblique photo of the Lake Piru recreational facilities) indicate that the area proposed for disturbance is grassland used for grazing. The western portion of the site formerly contained several structures, including a barn and an apparent manger shed, that are no longer present. Based on the field survey, the site contains non-native grassland dominated by foxtail (*Hordeum murinum*), brome grasses (*Bromus* sp.), cudweed (*Gnaphalium beneolens*), and slender wild oat (*Avena sativa*). Other species present included yellow star thistle (*Centaurea melitensis*), bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), shortpod mustard (*Brassica geniculata*), and storksbill (*Erodium* sp.). Wildflowers present include the non-native vetch (*Vicia dasycarpa*), purple owl's clover (*Castilleja exserta*), sky lupine (*Lupinus bicolor*), and the exotic common catchfly (*Silene gallica*). A few scattered shrubs were present, including coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), and saw-toothed goldenbush (*Hazardia squarrosa*).

Animals seen within the site included California thrasher, raven, common crow, California towhee, lesser goldfinch, mourning dove, turkey vulture, white-tailed kite, Anna's hummingbird, and ash-throated flycatcher. No reptiles were seen, but western fence lizard,

western rattlesnake, common kingsnake, and California whipsnake would be expected. Numerous California ground squirrel holes were noted, as well as mule deer bedding areas.

No rare, threatened, or endangered plant species are recorded as being present in the vicinity of Lake Piru by the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Data Base (Piru Quadrangle database information, August 12, 1997). In addition, those listed plants that occur within Ventura County would not be expected to occur within the habitat present within the proposed project site. The endangered California Condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) is known to occur in the vicinity of Lake Piru (the Sespe Condor Sanctuary is located about 3 miles west of Lake Piru), but these birds would not be expected to use the habitats present at the proposed corral sites because of the existing level of human disturbance. The federally listed endangered southwestern arroyo toad (*Bufo microscaphus californicus*) is known to occur along Piru Creek upstream of Lake Piru, but no habitat for this species is present within the project disturbance area. The white-tailed kite seen at the site is a fully protected species that uses the site for foraging, but would not nest within the disturbance area.

Sensitive communities listed by the California Natural Diversity Data Base as occurring in the region include southern coast live oak riparian forest, southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, sycamore alder riparian woodland, southern willow scrub, southern walnut woodland, walnut forest, and valley oak woodland. Oak woodland is located in the drainages adjacent to the site, but no grading is proposed to occur in that area and no effect to this community is expected. No wetland habitat is located within the disturbance area and no significant effects on wetland habitat are anticipated. The project site is not within the coastal zone and no effects on coastal resources would occur.

The proposed arenas would not create a barrier to the movement of wildlife in the project vicinity. Adequate alternative routes wildlife movement are present within the drainages to the south and north of the proposed disturbance area.

### C. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	<u>Yes/Maybe</u>	<u>No</u>
1. Does the project have the potential to significantly degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



**D. MITIGATION MEASURES**

Recommended ☐

Required for Negative Declaration ☐

No mitigation measures for effects to biological resources are necessary.

**E. DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FROM A BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

EIR Required ☐

Negative Declaration ☒

Reviewer:

  
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Date:

5/19/98

Phone: 641-1000

**F. REFERENCES**

California Department of Fish and Game (July 1997a). *Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Plants of California*. 14 pgs. Natural Heritage Division, Plant Conservation Program

California Department of Fish and Game (July 1997b). *Endangered and Threatened Animals of California*. 11 pgs. Natural Heritage Division, Natural Diversity Data Base.

California Department of Fish and Game (July 1997c). *Special Plants List*. 112 pgs. Natural Heritage Division, Natural Diversity Data Base.

California Department of Fish and Game (August 1994). *Special Animals*. 28 pgs.

Holland, Robert F. (October 1986). *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California*. California Department of Fish and Game, Nongame Heritage Program. 156 pgs.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (January 31, 1997). *US Listed Flowering Plant Species Index by Lead Region and Status, as of January 31, 1997*.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (February 28, 1996). *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Review of Plant and Animal Taxa That Are Candidates for Listing as Endangered or Threatened Species*.

Zeiner, D., W.F. Laudenslayer, Jr., and K.E. Mayer (May 1988). *California's Wildlife*. California Statewide Wildlife Habitat Relationship System, Volumes I, II, & III. California Department of Fish and Game.