

COUNTY OF VENTURA
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES INITIAL STUDY

Date: September 3, 1999
Requestor: Ron Allen
Project: CUP-5078

Field Study: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Justification: Sensitive species analysis and field study performed by Impact Sciences, August 23, 1999.

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	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. wetland habitat	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
c. coastal habitat	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
d. migration corridors	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
e. locally important species/communities	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

Degree of Effect Explanation

N= None

LS = Less than significant effect

S = Significant effect; MND or EIR required

U = Unknown; EIR required

B. DISCUSSION

The Impact Sciences report (August 23, 1999) indicates that the site contains largely non-native grassland with coastal sage scrub vegetation located in two small canyons. Coastal sage scrub is considered by the California Department of Fish and Game as a sensitive habitat because of its declining status in southern California and its use by several animal species with declining populations, including the federally-listed threatened California gnatcatcher. The gnatcatcher was recently rediscovered in the Moorpark area and the habitat at the site contained the potential for its presence. The Impact Sciences report indicated that it is unlikely for the gnatcatcher to be present within the residual coastal sage scrub present, and the project has been redesigned to avoid impacts to this sensitive habitat. While this redesign would eliminate direct impacts, the potential for eventual deterioration of the coastal sage scrub habitat exists as golfers may enter into the habitat. In addition, excessive irrigation of the coastal scrub could cause it to be invaded by non-native species. This is considered a potentially significant cumulative effect.



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?	☐	☒
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?	☐	☒
3. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?	☒	☐

D. MITIGATION MEASURES

Recommended ☒

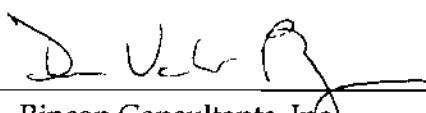
Required for Negative Declaration ☐

The following measures are recommended to further ensure that the onsite coastal sage scrub community is protected.

1. The edge of the coastal sage scrub area adjacent to the golf course area (specifically at Holes 3, 5, & 7 and the golf cart path) shall be posted as sensitive habitat. In addition, the area shall be posted with warnings for rattlesnakes. If after one year of operation, it is apparent that golfers are not obeying the signage, the coastal sage scrub edge shall be fenced to exclude access.
2. The irrigation system shall be designed to prevent accidental irrigation of the coastal sage scrub. After installation of the irrigation system, the system shall be turned on and inspected for overspraying of the coastal sage scrub.

E. DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FROM A BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Negative Declaration ☐ Mitigated Negative Declaration ☒ EIR Required ☐

Reviewer: 
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Date: 10/4/99

Phone: 641-1000

F. REFERENCES

Impact Sciences, August 23, 1999. Results of Special-Status Species Habitat-Based Evaluation of the Mahan Glen Arie Golf Course Site (APN #500-0-360-38).

Impact Sciences, September 10, 1997. Coastal California Gnatcatcher Survey, letter report to Mary-Beth Woulfe, US Fish and Wildlife Service.



- 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.

COUNTY OF VENTURA
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES INITIAL STUDY

Date: July 8, 1999
Requestor: Ron Allen
Project: CUP-5078

Field Study: ☐ Yes ☒ No
Justification: Additional detailed field surveys will be needed to determine the potential for significant effects.

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	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. wetland habitat	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. coastal habitat	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
d. migration corridors	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
e. locally important species/communities	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒

Degree of Effect Explanation
N = None
LS = Less than significant effect
S = Significant effect; MND or EIR required
U = Unknown; EIR required

B. DISCUSSION

The project site is a mixture of non-native grassland in the lower portions toward Tierra Rejada Road and native coastal sage scrub on the upper slopes based on previous experience in the area and recent "drive-bys" along the State Route 23 freeway. While the non-native grassland would not be considered sensitive, any removal of coastal sage scrub may have a significant impact on rare plant and animal species. A California gnatcatcher survey was done on the adjacent parcel to the west in 1997 with negative results (Impact Sciences, September 10, 1997). Nonetheless, given the habitat available and the known occurrence of the federally-listed threatened California gnatcatcher within approximately one mile, the potential for this species residing at the site needs to be investigated. This will require a species specific survey based on the US Fish and Wildlife protocol. In addition, other sensitive animal species that may be present include the coastal cactus wren and the Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, both California species of special concern. Both of these species possibly breed at the project site, the wren within cactus patches, and the sparrow within the sparse coastal sage scrub shrubs on the upper slopes of the site. Other sensitive species potentially at the site include the coastal western whiptail, loggerhead shrike, and coast patch-nosed snake. Potential impacts on these species need to be addressed. Sensitive plant species known to be in the area include the endangered Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*) and threatened Conejo live-forever



(*Dudleya abramsii* spp. *parva*); however, soils at this location are not expected to be suitable for these species. Catalina mariposa-lily (*Calochortus catalinae*), a List 4 plant as indicated in the CDFG Special Plant List, may also be present scattered through the grassland. A floristic survey should be conducted of the proposed construction area and all portions of land to be modified by either direct grading or irrigation to fully assess the potential for significant effects.

Based on the topographic map, several small drainages cross the site, the largest two in the eastern portion. Also, internal plateaus are apparently present along the 8th fairway and 6th tees. These topographic conditions are conducive to the formation of vernal pools, such as exist one mile west of the project site. As part of the floristic survey, these areas should be checked for potential wetland species, and the need for permitting under Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act determined.

C. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Yes/Maybe	No
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?	☒	☐
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals?	☒	☐
3. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?	☒	☐

D. MITIGATION MEASURES

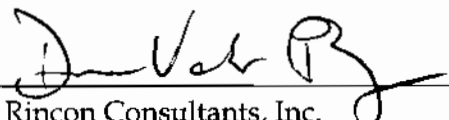
Recommended ☐ Required for Negative Declaration ☐

At this time, the type or need for mitigation measures cannot be determined until the actual nature of the biological resources present at the site are fully known. A floristic survey of the project site should be done to determine the potential for sensitive species and the possibility of wetland vegetation. A specific California gnatcatcher survey should also be done at the site unless the US Fish and Wildlife Service indicates otherwise.

E. DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FROM A BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Negative Declaration ☐ Mitigated Negative Declaration ☐ EIR Required ☐

Cannot be determined at this time.

Reviewer: 
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Date: 7/8/99

Phone: 641-1000

F. REFERENCES

Impact Sciences, September 10, 1997. Coastal California Gnatcher Survey, letter report to Mary-Beth Woulfe, US Fish and Wildlife Service.

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

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