SECTION B
INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

Job: SD04-0062 with (CC-PM 5533)
Applicant: Dolores Sisson

Requester: Debbie Morrisset
Date: May 31, 2005

Survey Type: Office and field

Rationale: Legalize a 12.9 acre parcel

Site Description: ENSR conducted a field visit of the project site (Parcel no. 694-0-210-540) on December 9, 2004. The 12.9 acre parcel is located in the Santa Monica Mountains, approximately 2 miles northwest of the Mulholland and Little Sycamore Canyon Rd. intersection, between Yerba Buena Road and Vedder Mountain Way. The topography is hilly with some steep rocky cliffs and narrow canyons. Vegetation is typical chaparral with chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), ribbon bush (*Adenostoma sparsifolium*), mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides)*, buckbrush (*Ceanothus megacarpus*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), and laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*). Also present were deer bush (*Ceanothus integerrimus*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), holly-leafed cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*) and occasional big berry manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glauca*). Some areas had been cleared in addition to the road through the property.

SECTION C
DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES

	Project Impacts				Cumulative Impacts			
	Degree of Effect				Degree of Effect			
	N	**LS**	**PS-M**	**PS**	**N**	**LS**	**PS-M**	**PS**
6. Biological Resources								
a. Endangered, threatened or rare species			✓				✓	
b. Wetland Habitat	✓				✓			
c. Coastal Habitat	✓				✓			
d. Migration Corridors	✓				✓			
e. Locally important species/communities	✓				✓			

N: No impact
LS: Less than significant
PS-M: Potentially significant, unless mitigated to a level of insignificance
PS: Potentially significant, even after mitigation

a. Endangered, Threatened or Rare Species

According to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), several special-status species have the potential to occur within the project site. However, none of these species were observed the day ENSR visited the proposed project site.

Plants:

- **Agoura Hills dudleya** (*Dudleya cymosa ssp. agourensis*), a federal threatened species, has been observed within 5 miles of the project site, east of Lake Eleanor on a north facing volcanic rock outcrop with coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), poison oak (*Rhus diversiloba*), and redberry *(Rhamnus crocea*). The Agoura Hills dudleya could be present on the rocky cliffs on the project site. Although no evidence of the plant was seen, its presence cannot be completely ruled out since this survey was not performed at the appropriate time of year to identify the presence of this special status species. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**

- **Verity's dudleya** (*Dudleya verityi*) and **Conejo dudleya** (*Dudleya parva*), federal threatened species, have also been observed within 5 miles of the project site. Both species are found on volcanic rock outcrops and could also potentially be present on the rocky cliffs. Although no evidence of the plant was seen, its presence cannot be completely ruled out since this survey was not performed at the appropriate time of year to identify the presence of this special status species. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**

- **Marcescent dudleya** (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *marcescens*), a federal threatened and state rare species, has been observed within 2 miles of the project site in Little Sycamore Canyon at the junction of Yerba Buena Rd. and Cotharin Road. The location is a north facing rock outcrop with moss, lichens, and associated with Humboldt lily (*Lilium humboldtii*) and Racemed fiesta-flower

(*Pholistoma racemosum*). The marcescent dudleya could be present on the rocky cliffs on the project site. Although, no evidence of the plant was seen, its presence cannot be completely ruled out since this survey was not performed at the appropriate time of year to identify the presence of this special status species. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**

- **Santa Monica Mountains dudleya** (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *ovatifolia*), a threatened species has also been found within 5 miles of the project site. Like marcescent dudleya, the Santa Monica Mountains dudleya could be present on the rocky cliffs on the project site. Although no evidence of the plant was seen, its presence cannot be completely ruled out since this survey was not performed at the appropriate time of year to identify the presence of this special status species. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**

- **Braunton's milk-vetch** (*Astragalus brauntonii*), a federal endangered species, is generally found in recently burned or disturbed areas, on stiff gravelly clay soils overlying granite or limestone. The habitat of the project site is not suitable for Braunton's milk vetch, so it is not expected to be present.

- **California orcutt grass** (*Orcuttia californica*), a federal and state endangered species, has been observed in vernal pools within 5 miles within the project site. No vernal pool habitat was observed on the project site, so the presence of California Orcutt grass is unlikely.

- **Conejo buckwheat** (*Eriogonum crocatum*), state listed as rare, has been observed in the vicinity of Lake Sherwood on rocky outcrops above the lake. Conejo buckwheat commonly grows on volcanic outcrops, and the rock outcrops on the property site could be a possible habitat for this species. Although no evidence of the plant was seen, its presence cannot be completely ruled out since this survey was not performed at the appropriate time of year to identify the presence of this special status species. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**

- **Lyon's pentachaeta** (*Pentachaeta lyonii*) is state and federal listed as endangered. It has been reported within 5 miles of the project site. Lyon's pentachaeta occurs in chaparral or coastal sage scrub, usually in clearings or exposed areas on compact clay soil. It is not expected that Lyon's pentachaeta would be present in the project area, because the chaparral vegetation is very dense, and the only exposed areas are those areas that have been cleared.

- **Santa Susana tarplant** (*Deinandra minthornii*), has been observed approximately 5 miles from the project site. Santa Susana tarplant, state listed as rare, is usually found adjacent to sandstone rock outcrops. Rock outcrops on the property are volcanic agglomerate and siltstone; therefore the Santa Susana tarplant would not be expected to be present.

Animals:

The following rare or endangered species have been reported within 5 miles of the project site:

- **Southern steelhead** (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*), a federal endangered species, requires a stream with closed canopy in a woodland area. No such stream habitat is present on the project site, so no southern steelhead would be expected.

- **Bank swallow** (*Riparia riparia*), a state threatened species, has been observed in the Sherwood Lake area. The swallow requires vertical banks or cliffs with fine textured sandy soils near streams, rivers, or lakes. No such habitat is present at the project site, so the bank swallow is not expected to be present.

It should be noted that the site visit was not performed at the optimal time for identifying the special status plant species described above. Further, the site visit performed by ENSR was cursory and was not performed at the level of detail necessary to identify both special status plant and animal species that could exist for the entire 12.9 acre property.

b. Wetland Habitat

The parcel does not contain a wetland habitat, so there should be no destruction of a wetland habitat.

c. Coastal Habitat

This project is not located within the coastal zone, thus no impact on a coastal habitat should occur.

d. Migration Corridors

The project site is likely a migration corridor for many animals. The chaparral in some areas is very dense and unsuitable for development, but ideal for migration of animals. However, considering the size of the property, and the small area that a house would be placed, there should be no disturbance of movement of wildlife.

e. Locally Important Species/Communities

No locally important species or communities are present on the parcel, so no impact would occur. While this project has minimal impact to the individual project area it has the potential to contribute cumulatively to impacts to the on biological resources (i.e. chaparral habitat) in the vicinity of the project area.

SECTION D
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Based on the information contained within Sections B and C:	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, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		✓
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one which occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the future).		✓
3. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Several projects may have relatively small individual impacts on two or more resources, but the total of those impacts on the environment is significant).	✓	
4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		✓

SECTION E
DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION should be prepared.

☑ 2 I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measure(s) described below will be applied to the project. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION should be prepared.

☐ 3 I find the proposed project, individually and/or cumulatively MAY have a significant effect on the environment and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Mitigation Measures

The undisturbed areas of the property provides habitat for several federally and state listed special status species, as well as coastal scrub vegetation community. The following mitigation measures (**MM**) should be implemented prior to any construction or grading activities to the proposed project site.

MM-1: Prior to ground disturbing activities (grading, surveying, construction, etc.) in the vicinity of the rocky cliffs, a pre-construction survey for Verity's dudleya, Conejo dudleya, Santa Monica Mountains dudleya, Agoura Hills dudleya, marcescent dudleya and Conejo buckwheat shall be conducted by a Ventura County-approved plant ecologist to ensure that these species are not present or will not be disturbed. These surveys shall be performed at the appropriate time of year to identify the presence of special status plant species (e.g. during florescence). If these species are identified, the Ventura County-approved plant ecologist shall determine the level of protection required for the identified species including the required mitigation ratios for reestablishment of the identified species by the appropriate agencies (Federal: US Fish and Wildlife; State: California Department of Fish and Game; locally important: County of Ventura).

Monitoring:
The County of Ventura will verify inclusion of required mitigation measures on development plans in consultation with a Ventura County-approved plant ecologist.

SIGNATURES AND QUALITY CONTROL

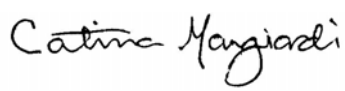
Site Visit and Report Preparation:

By: Barbara Collins, Ph.D.
Title: Contract Botanist
Camarillo, California
Date: May 26, 2005

Signature: _____

Site Visit, Research, and Report Preparation:

By: Catrina Mangiardi, MESM
Title: Environmental Scientist
Camarillo, California
Date: May 20, 2005



Signature: _____

Quality Control Review:

By: Jackie Breese
Title: Senior Program Manager
Camarillo, CA
Date: May 26, 2005

Signature: _____