

SECTION B
INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

Job: SD04-0064
Applicant: Bedford and Russell Berkley

Requester: Terry Newman
Date: December 16, 2004

Survey Type: Field

Rationale: Large parcel subdivision

Site Description: ENSR conducted a field visit of the project site (Parcel no. 004-0-010-150) on December 16, 2004. The 72 acre parcel is located in Lockwood Valley, on the south side of Lockwood Valley Road, about 2 miles southwest of Frazier Park Mountain Road. The project, as outlined in application SD04-0064, requests authorization to permit the subdivision of the parcel into three 20-plus acre parcels for use as single family dwelling sites. Photographs taken of the subject property during ENSR's site visit are provided in **Appendix A**.

The topography is hilly with about a 300-foot change in elevation. The alluvial soil is sandy and friable. At the eastern end of the parcel is a drainage channel carrying rain water into Cuddy Creek. Slopes are mainly vegetated with singleleaf pinyon pine (*Pinus monophylla*) with occasional sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), California juniper (*Juniperus californica*), and Tucker's oak (*Quercus john-tuckeri*). Sagebrush and rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) dominate valley floors along with occasional buckwheat (*Eriogonum kennedyi* var. *kennedyi*).

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. <u>Biological Resources</u>								
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 (CNDDDB), several special-status species have the potential to occur within the project site. However, none of the species described below were observed the day ENSR visited the proposed project site.

Plants:

- **Abram's oxytheca** (*Oxytheca parishii* var. *abramsii*), a state species of special concern, has been found in Lockwood Valley and Cuddy Valley, in sandy places. Abram's oxytheca could be present on the property. However, it would be necessary to do a survey at the proper blooming time to determine if it is present. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**
- **Big Bear Valley woolly pod** (*Astragalus leucolobu*), a state species of special concern, also grows in pinyon juniper woodlands. It has been found in Cuddy Valley, and is often found among gravelly knolls amidst sagebrush. Although no signs of the Big Bear woolly pod were observed, its presence, likewise, cannot be ruled out. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**
- **Flax-like monardella** (*Monardella linoides* ssp. *Oblonga*), a state species of special concern, grows in pinyon juniper woodlands or on dry slopes of yellow pine forest on decomposed granitic soil. Because the habitat could support the flax-like monardella, its presence cannot be ruled out. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**
- **Mt. Pinos onion** (*Allium howellii* var. *clokeyi*), a state species of special concern, grows in pinyon juniper woodlands, and has been observed in Cuddy Valley. Because blooming time for the onion is in early summer, it was not possible to determine if it were present or not. However, the habitat is appropriate for the growth of the onion. **See Mitigation Measure MM-1.**

- **Salt spring checkerbloom** (*Sidalcea neomexicana*), a state species of special concern, has been found in Cuddy Valley and on the NE slope of Mt. Pinos. It grows on alkali springs and brackish marshes. No such habitat is present on the project site, so the presence of the salt spring checkerbloom would not be expected.

Animals:

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

- **The Southern rubber boa** (*Charina bottae umbratica*), a state threatened species, is usually found in the vicinity of streams or wet meadows. The rubber boa requires loose moist soil for burrowing, and seeks cover in rotting logs. It is not likely that the rubber boa inhabits the area, because there were no wet meadows or streams in the vicinity. Most of the parcel is very dry, and the drainage ditch at the eastern edge of the property was also extremely dry. **See Mitigation Measure MM-2.**
- **Tehachapi pocket mouse** (*Perognathus alticola inexpectatus*), a state species of special concern, is usually found in arid annual grassland and desert shrub communities. The pocket mouse burrows for cover and nesting, and aestivates and hibernates during extreme weather. It is possible that the mouse does inhabit areas of the parcel. However, the amount of land disturbed by the proposed development is small and the mouse could probably easily relocate. **See Mitigation Measure MM-2.**

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 were not performed at the level of detail necessary to identify both special status plant and animal species that could exist for the entire 72 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 animals. However, considering the size of the property, and the small area that houses would be placed, there should be no disturbance of movement of wildlife.

e. Locally Important Species/Communities

One locally important species, **Mt. Pinos chipmunk** (*Tamias speciosus callipeplus*), might be present

on the parcel. The Mt. Pinos chipmunk has been found in Cuddy Valley and in the vicinity of Mt. Pinos. It is usually found in open forests with a mix of shrubs and trees. It is possible that the chipmunk is present on the property. **See Mitigation Measure MM2.**

SECTION D
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	YES/ MAYBE	NO
Based on the information contained within Sections B and C:		
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.
- ☒ 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.
- ☐ 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 state listed special status species. 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.), a pre-construction survey for federal, state, or local special status species including locally important plant species shall be conducted by a Ventura County-approved botanist. 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 special status species are identified, the Ventura County-approved botanist 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 Service; 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 botanist.

MM-2: Prior to ground disturbing activities (grading, surveying, construction, etc.), a pre-construction survey for federal, state or local special status species including locally important animal species shall be conducted by a Ventura County-approved wildlife biologist. These surveys shall be performed at the appropriate time of year to identify the presence of special status animal species. If special status species are identified, the Ventura County-approved wildlife biologist 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 service; 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 wildlife biologist.

Catrina Mangiardi

Signature of Preparer

December 20, 2004

Date

APPENDIX A

ENSR

PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG



Client Name: Ventura County Planning Division		Site Location: Lockwood Valley Road	Project No. 07020-019-009
Photo No. 1	Date: 12/16/04		
Direction Photo Taken: South east			
Description: Pinyon Pine Forest			

Photo No. 2	Date: 12/16/04	
Direction Photo Taken: South East		
Description: Pinyon Pine Forest		

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PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG

Client Name: Ventura County Planning Division		Site Location: Lockwood Valley Road	Project No. 07020-019-009
Photo No. 3	Date: 12/16/04		
Direction Photo Taken: North			
Description: North eastern edge of the property along Lockwood Valley Road			

Photo No. 4	Date: 12/16/04	
Direction Photo Taken: North east		
Description: Sagebrush and Rabbit brush Habitat on valley floor		