

SECTION B

INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

Job: CCC-0104/PM-5341 **Requester:** Debbie Morrisset
Applicant: Guernsey and Wilde **Date:** October 15, 2002
Survey Type: Field **Rationale:** Adjacent Stream

Site Description: A field visit of the site (Parcel no. 030-0-190-060) was conducted on October 15, 2002. The site is located in the Upper Ojai Valley, about three miles east of the City of Ojai. The northern and eastern portion of the Parcel supports purple sage scrub, and the southern and western portion supports annual grassland. However, a patch of chamise chaparral occurs along the north-central property boundary, and a patch of California walnut woodland occurs immediately north of the existing unpaved access road in the northeastern corner of the Parcel. Based on charred shrub root crowns, the Parcel has been burned several times in the past few decades. The dominance of deer weed (*Lotus scoparius*) within the purple sage scrub community also indicates frequent fires. Currently, there are no plans for development of the Parcel. However, non-discretionary development may occur in the absence of further CEQA review.

	Project Impact Degree of Effect*				Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect*			
	N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
6. <u>Biological Resources</u>								
a. endangered, threatened, or rare species	X				X			
b. wetland habitat	X				X			
c. coastal habitat	X				X			
d. migration corridors		X				X		
e. locally important species/communities			X				X	

*N No Impact

LS Less Than Significant Impact

PS-M Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigation Incorporated

PS Potentially Significant Impact

SECTION C

DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES

- a. Plant or animal species listed under either the Federal or California Endangered Species Acts reported within 10 miles of the Parcel include:

- Southern steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*, Federal Endangered) - reported from Soule Park Golf Course, San Antonio Creek, 3.8 miles to the east.
- California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytoni*, Federal Threatened) – found by Padre biologists in San Antonio Creek by Hermosa Road, 5.4 miles to the east.

The parcel does not provide suitable habitat for these or other rare, threatened, or endangered species known from the region and future development (if any) would not adversely affect rare, threatened or endangered species.

- b. The Parcel is located immediately south and west of an unnamed tributary of Lion Creek. It is unknown if this tributary supports wetlands. However, run-off from the Parcel primarily flows south (away from the tributary), such that impacts to wetlands (if present) are not expected.
- c. The Parcel is located approximately 13 miles northeast of the coastal zone and coastal resources do not occur in the vicinity of the Parcel. Coastal resources are not expected to be adversely affected future development (if any) of the Parcel.
- d. An informal hiking/equestrian trail is located along the ridge that forms the northern boundary of the Parcel. This trail appears to link open space areas of the Ojai Foundation to Sycamore Creek and other open space east of the Parcel. Abundant black-tailed deer and coyote tracks were observed along this trail. This trail appears to serve as a link from Ojai Valley to Upper Ojai Valley. However, several other links are available to serve the same purpose, including:
- Reeves Creek-Wilsie Canyon;
 - Casitas MWD Tank Road; and
 - Fire roads (2) from Reeves Road to Ojai Valley School Road.

The presence of alternate movement corridors and abundant wildlife habitat north of the Parcel allows for free wildlife movement, such that the trail on the Parcel is not considered an important feature for the preservation and maintenance of wildlife populations in the region. Therefore, the loss of this trail from the Parcel would be considered a less than significant impact.

- e. Special-status species known to occur on the Parcel include coast live oak (protected under the Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance), and southern California black walnut (considered a plant of limited distribution by the California Native Plant Society). Based on the lack of suitable habitat, and frequent fire disturbance of the Parcel, no other special-status species are expected to occur on the Parcel. However, about 0.7 acres of California walnut woodland occurs on the parcel, and is considered a sensitive community by the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Data Base.

Future ministerial development may result in the loss of protected trees (coast live oak) and California walnut woodland. However, significant losses of coast live oak trees would be prevented by the Tree Protection Ordinance. Loss of California walnut woodland would be considered a potentially significant impact.

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?	<u>X</u>	_____
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).	_____	<u>X</u>
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).	_____	<u>X</u>
4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	_____	<u>X</u>

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

- a. The California walnut woodland shall be protected by a deed restriction, which would apply to all future development, including that exempt from CEQA. The limits of the deed restriction are shown on the attached Parcel Map. Alternatively, the loss of this community may be mitigated by the preparation and implementation of a Restoration Plan by a qualified biologist/native plant specialist that would result in the establishment of 1.4 acres of California walnut woodland on the Parcel.

Signature of Preparer

Date