

WEST COAST
ENVIRONMENTAL
AND ENGINEERING

1838 Eastman Ave., Ste 200
Ventura, CA 93003-5753
Phone 805/644-7976 Fax 805/644-5929

21550 Oxnard Street, Suite 300
Woodland Hills, CA 91367-2901
Phone 818/224-6628 Fax 818/224-6629

www.wcenviro.com

July 21, 2006

Mr. Dan Klemann
County of Ventura
Resource Management Agency – Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, L#1740
Ventura, California 93009

Subject: Initial Biological Study
Wildwood Stable Estates
Project Order Number ZN06-0005/SD06-0033/TT 5688

VEN200-004-06

Dear Mr. Klemann:

Per your request an initial biological study was begun for the Wildwood Stable Estates housing development project. West Coast Environmental (WCE) is unable to complete the study without additional information. This includes a spring time plant survey for the proposed project site, analysis of proposed construction impacts to raptor species related to the removal of the fallow agriculture field and information on the proposed construction impacts to the Arroyo Santa Rosa. This request for additional information is based on the results of an on-site preliminary biological assessment conducted on July 11, 2006 which is listed below:

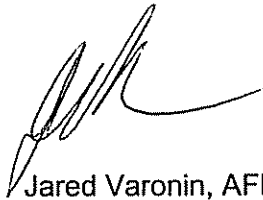
- The project site north of the Arroyo Santa Rosa Creek is occupied by what appears to be a fallow agriculture field consisting mostly of non-native grasses and invasive weedy species. There are a large number of trees on the northern portions of the site in which the Impact Sciences report has indicated will be protected under the Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance. The protected trees, with the exception of the Peruvian pepper tree (*Schinus molle*), are native to California. During the site visit on July 11, 2006 numerous ground squirrels and rabbits were observed in the dense vegetation located on this portion of the site. Several red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and two other unidentified raptor species were observed in the area. The red-tailed hawks were observed actively foraging in the field. Other avian life was also observed utilizing the field for cover and foraging. In order to complete the Initial Study Checklist an analysis of the impacts of the removal of the field as they relate to local raptor species is needed.
- The Arroyo Santa Rosa, which runs through the northern portion of the project site, was actively flowing at the time of the field survey. The riparian corridor running along this drainage appeared to provide much cover for birds and reptiles on the site. One tadpole of unknown species was observed in a pooled area along the drainage. American robin (*Turdus migratorious*), California quail (*Callipepla californica*) and western fence lizards (*Sceloporus occidentalis*) were very active along banks of the

July 21, 2006

- drainage. In order to complete the Initial Study Checklist an analysis of potential impacts of the proposed project on this drainage is needed.
- The project site south of the Arroyo Santa Rosa consists of open flat areas in the northern section and a steep sloped area to the south. Portions of the sloped area are occupied by coastal sage scrub habitat which is considered sensitive. The raptor species observed foraging and occupying other areas of the site were also seen perched in some of the higher elevations of this section of the project site. Rabbits and ground squirrels were also observed using the flat sections of the site especially along the road running parallel to the Arroyo Santa Rosa.
 - A spring time plant survey should be conducted in all areas of the project site to determine the presence/absence of potential special status species during their respective flowering periods.

If you have any additional questions or comments, please call me at (805) 644-7976.

Sincerely,



Jared Varonin, AFP
Staff Biologist II
West Coast Environmental and Engineering