

JUL 15 2003

COUNTY OF VENTURA BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES INITIAL STUDY

Date: July 11, 2003

Requestor: Janie King

Project: PD 1228-1

Field Study: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Justification: Work Area on an existing disturbed hillside, no native habitats present.

A. CHECKLIST

Biological Resources Issues	Project Impact Degree of Effect				Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect			
	N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
a. endangered, threatened, or rare species	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. wetland habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. coastal habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. migration corridors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. locally important species/communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Degree of Effect Explanation

N= None

LS = Less than significant effect

PS-M = Significant effect; Mitigation incorporated for a ND

PS = Potentially Significant effect; EIR required

B. DISCUSSION

The proposed action involves the grading of 875 cubic yards of cut and 875 cubic yards of fill to repair a slope for stabilization. This will occur on a portion of the property located at 9998 Yerba Buena Lane within the community of Santa Monica Mountains-Malibu. The applicant requests a Development Permit for the above action.

USGS topographic maps were reviewed utilizing computer topographic maps (National Geographic, 2001) and available aerial photography was also reviewed (GlobeXplorer, 2003). The proposed work area lies within a larger property with an elevation range from approximately 1,000 to 1,400 feet above mean sea level. The property is generally undeveloped with native chaparral habitats on the western portion, but contains a large house and associated facilities and access roads on the east side of the property. A fire clearance buffer zone lies between the native habitat area and the residential facility. The proposed area of slope repair lies within the fire clearance buffer zone and ranges in elevation from approximately 1,210 to 1,300 feet above mean sea level. The worksite and property slope downhill to Yerba Buena Road approximately a half a mile to the west.

The western portion of the site appears to be dominated by native chaparral with pockets of coastal sage, rock outcrops and individual coast live oak trees. The chaparral community in this area is generally dominated by ceanothus (*Ceanothus* spp.) and mountain mahogany

(*Cercocarpus betuloides*), with other common species including chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), black sage (*Salvia melifera*), buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum* and *E. cinereum*), and laurel sumac (*Rhus laurina*). Associated species often include toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*), white and purple sage (*Salvia apiana* and *S. leucophylla*), wild cucumber (*Marah macrocarpus*), gooseberry (*Ribes* sp.), and coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*).

No blueline streams are shown on the USGS quadrangle within the proposed area of slope repair. A blueline stream does occur on the north side of the property, but is located approximately 500 feet away from the work area.

A search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) via the RAREFIND2 software (January 2003) listed several special-status species that could be present within native chaparral and coastal sage areas of the property. However, none of these species are expected to occur within the proposed work area that lies within the fire control zone.

Special-status species that can occur within chaparral and coastal sage habitats in this area include:

- Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), a wide ranging species found in mountains, foothills, and adjacent grasslands. A State species of concern.
Ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*), a wide ranging species found in open grasslands, sagebrush flats, and foothill areas. A State species of concern.
Coastal western whiptail (*Cnemidophorus tigris multiscutatus*), found in deserts, semi-arid areas, and in woodland and riparian habitats. A Federal species of concern.
- San Diego horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*), found in coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitats. A State species of concern.
- Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), occurs in coastal scrub and rocky outcrops. A State species of concern.
Plummer's Mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*), found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub (potentially located on west and south portions of the property). A CNPS List 1B species that blooms from May to July.
- Santa Susana tarplant (*Deinandra minthornii*), a deciduous shrub species that occurs primarily on sandstone substrates with a single known occurrence in the Santa Monica Mountains in chaparral habitat. A State Rare and CNPS List 1B species that blooms from July to November.
- Blochman's dudleya (*Dudleya blochmaniae* ssp *blochmaniae*), a perennial herb that occurs in bluff scrub, chaparral, coastal scrub from 15 to 1,476 feet elevation. This plant is a CNPS List 1B species that blooms from April to June and is found in more open areas, potentially on the west and south sides of the property.
Santa Monica Mountains dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp *agourensis*), a perennial herb found in chaparral cismontane woodland/volcanic habitats. This plant is a Federal threatened and a CNPS List 1B species that blooms from May to June.
Marescent dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp *marcescens*), a perennial herb found in chaparral/volcanic habitats. This plant is a Federal threatened, a State rare, and a CNPS List 1B species that blooms from April to June.



Santa Monica Mountains dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp *ovatifolia*), a perennial herb found in chaparral or coastal scrub/ volcanic habitats. This plant is a Federal threatened and a CNPS List 1B species that blooms from March to June.

Conejo dudleya (*Dudleya parva*), a perennial herb found in coastal scrub and valley and foothill grassland/ rocky or gravelly habitats. A Federal threatened and CNPS List 1B species that blooms from May to June.

Conejo buckwheat (*Eriogonum crocatum*), a perennial herb that is found in chaparral, coastal scrub, and valley/ foothill grasslands. A State Rare and CNPS List 1B species that blooms from April to July.

- Rayless ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*), an annual herb found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub. A CNPS List 2 species that blooms from January to April.

In addition, mature oak trees that occur on the property are considered a locally important species by Ventura County.

Biological resources issues:

- Endangered, threatened, or rare species.** The proposed grading and slope repair would have no direct impacts to endangered, threatened, or rare species located within the proposed work area within the fire control zone. Special-status species may occur in adjacent native habitats, but the completion of this project would not impact those areas. Some of the special-status species may forage over the proposed work area (golden eagle and ferruginous hawk), but would not be directly impacted by these work actions. No mitigation would be required.
- Wetland Habitat.** No wetland habitat occurs within the delineated work area for the slope repair. Wetland areas may occur on the property within a blue-line drainage (as denoted on the USGS Quadrangle) located on the north side of the property, but these potential wetland areas would not be impacted by the proposed construction.
- Coastal Habitat.** Environmentally sensitive habitats listed within the Ventura County Coastal Area Plan (January, 2002) include a designation for creek corridors found within the coastal zone on the South Coast. Although no designated creek corridors occur on the parcel site, Little Sycamore Canyon has been designated as an environmentally sensitive habitat by Ventura County. This resource lies across Yerba Buena Road approximately 1,700 feet from the proposed work area. No coastal habitats will be impacted by the proposed construction.
- Migration Corridors.** The parcel is currently only developed on the eastern portion. A majority of the property is currently native chaparral habitat. The proposed work will occur within the existing disturbed area and will not impact any of the native habitats which may provide for wildlife movement and migration.
- Locally Important Species/Communities.** Native oak trees exist on the site. Native trees are protected by the Ventura County Zoning Ordinance and loss of these trees would result in a potentially significant impact. Upon review of aerial photographs of the area, no oak trees appear to be located within the project work area. However,

if any oak trees were to be taken or impacted as a result of this project, compliance with the Ventura County Tree Protection Regulations (8107-25) would be required.

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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does the project have impacts, which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

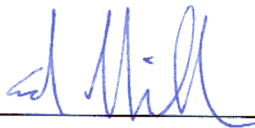
D. MITIGATION MEASURES

After review of USGS topographic maps, aerial photographs, and the construction plans provided by the applicant it appears that no biological resources would be impacted as a result of this action. Thus, no mitigation is required.

E. DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FROM A BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Negative Declaration ☒ Mitigated Negative Declaration ☐ EIR Required ☐

Reviewer: _____



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Date: July 14, 2003

July 11, 2003

F. REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

California Department of Fish and Game (January 2003). Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Plants of California. 14 pgs. Habitat Conservation Division, Wildlife and Habitat Data Analysis Branch.

California Department of Fish and Game (January 2003). Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Animals of California. 10 pgs. Habitat Conservation Division, Wildlife and Habitat Data Analysis Branch.

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California Department of Fish and Game, California Natural Diversity Database. January 2003. RAREFIND2 software.

GlobeXplorer (2003). Aerial photographs AirPhotoUSA.

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.

National Geographic (2001). USGS Topographic Maps on CD-ROM. San Francisco, California.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (December 1999). Endangered and Threatened Plants as published in *Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants 50 CFR 17.11 and 17.12*, December 1999.

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Ventura County General Plan, January 2002. Area Plan for the Coastal Zone.

