DMEC

PROJECT REFERENCE NO.: Beltrami Property – APNs 7000010585 and 7000010615	**PROJECT PLANNER:** Debbie Morrissett
DATE: 13 December 2005 Field visits: 27 May, 5 and 29 June 2005	**PROJECT BIOLOGIST:** David L. Magney, Cher Batchelor, and Wendy Cole David Magney Environmental Consulting (DMEC)

PROJECT LOCATION: The Beltrami property is located at the southwest corner of Deals Flat, at the headwaters of Deer Canyon and west of Clark's Peak, in the Santa Monica Mountains.

The project site is located on private property in the Santa Monica Mountains adjacent to Deer Creek and Pacific View Roads in southeastern Ventura County, California. The project site is located at the NE ¼ of the NE¼ of S16, T1S, R20W, Triunfo Pass, California Quadrangle (USGS 7.5-minute Series Topographic Map).

PROJECT ADDRESS: none designated – on Pacific View Road. APNs 7000010585 and 7000010615.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The development would consist of constructing a main house, a guest house, a barn and parking area, and a driveway to provide access to all three structures. Associated structures include an access driveway, patios, pools, sewer lines, septic system, and parking areas. The proposed buildings would occupy approximately 5,377 square feet (sq. ft.) (0.123 acre). The new driveway will occupy approximately 32,711 sq. ft. (0.751 acre). The total area disturbed by grading is estimated at 72,240 sq. ft. (1.66 acres), which represents the total area of earth movement. An additional area of natural vegetation would be disturbed for required fuel modification per Ventura County Fire Department regulations.

The property is currently owned by Marco Beltrami who currently resides at 6561 Wandermere Road, Malibu, CA, 90265.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING: The property is dominated by chaparral vegetation covering rolling slopes, draws, and hilltops. Figure 1, Beltrami Project Site Location, illustrates the location of the project site, and Figure 2, Beltrami Project Site, illustrates the Beltrami parcels and location of the proposed development. A detailed report on the biological resources of the project site has been prepared by David Magney Environmental Consulting (DMEC) (2005) and is attached.

Flora and Vegetation

At least 94 plant species have been either directly observed onsite by DMEC during the field surveys on 27 May and 5 and 29 2005. Of the 94 plant species listed, 13 of them are special-status plant species (at least locally rare or uncommon as determined by the California Native Plant Society). A complete accounting of the flora of the project site is provided in DMEC (2005).

The project site vegetation is comprised of six plant communities (alliances) that fall within three habitat types, and they are discussed in the following paragraphs. Refer to the Biological Resources Assessment for Deals Flat Property on Pacific View Drive (DMEC 2005) for more specific information about the plant associations found within the plant alliances discussed. General plant communities found onsite include: chaparral, coastal sage scrub, grassland, and rock outcrop, with each generally described below and detailed descriptions included in DMEC (2005).

Chaparral habitat on the Beltrami has three Alliances: the *Heteromeles arbutifolia-Cercocarpus betuloides* Alliance (Toyon-Birchleaf Mountain Mahogany Chaparral), the *Malosma laurina* Alliance (Laurel Sumac

Chaparral), and the *Adenostoma fasciculatum* Alliance (Chamise Chaparral). Chaparral vegetation occupies approximately 11.13 acres of the property.

Figure 1. Beltrami Project Site Location

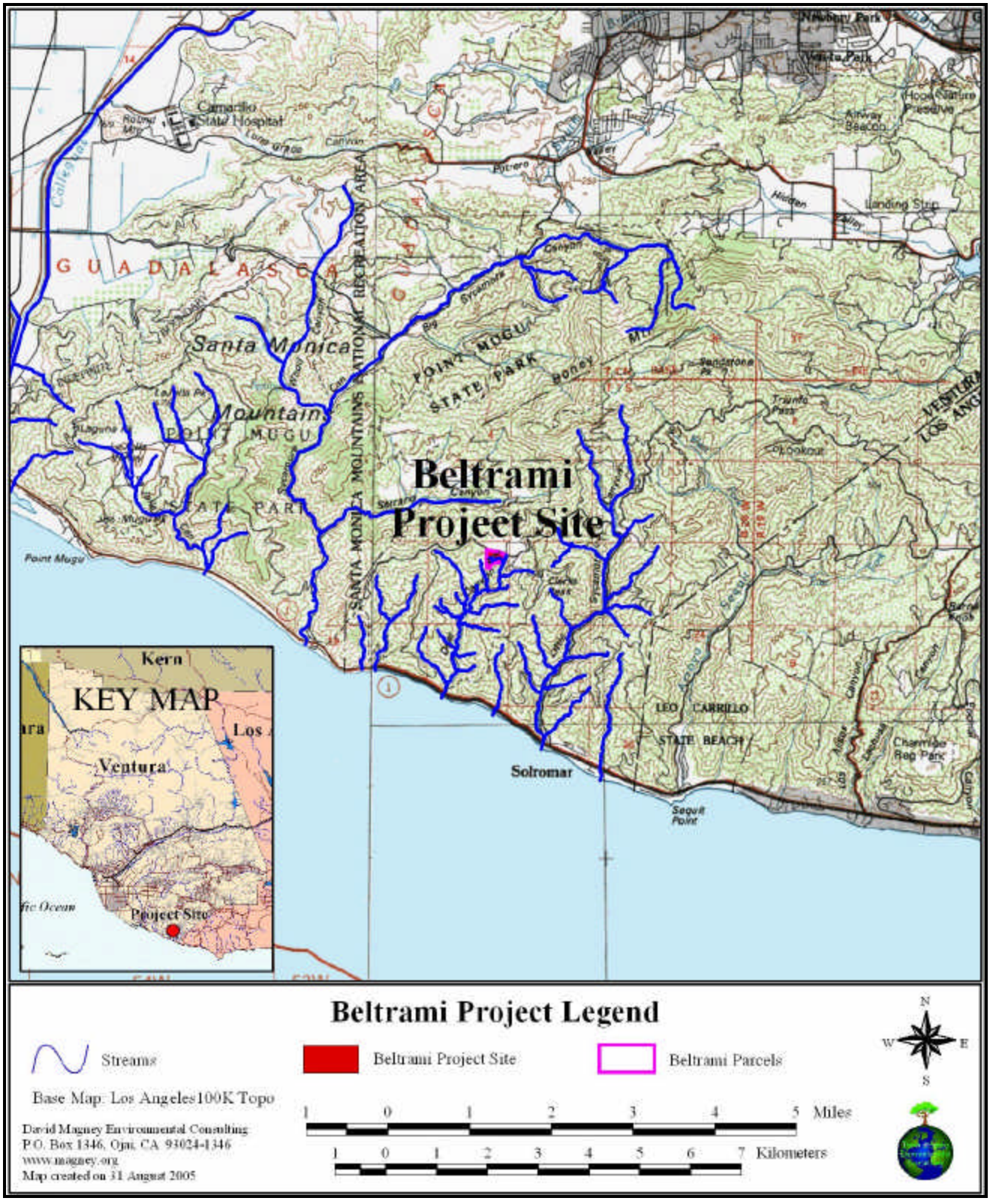
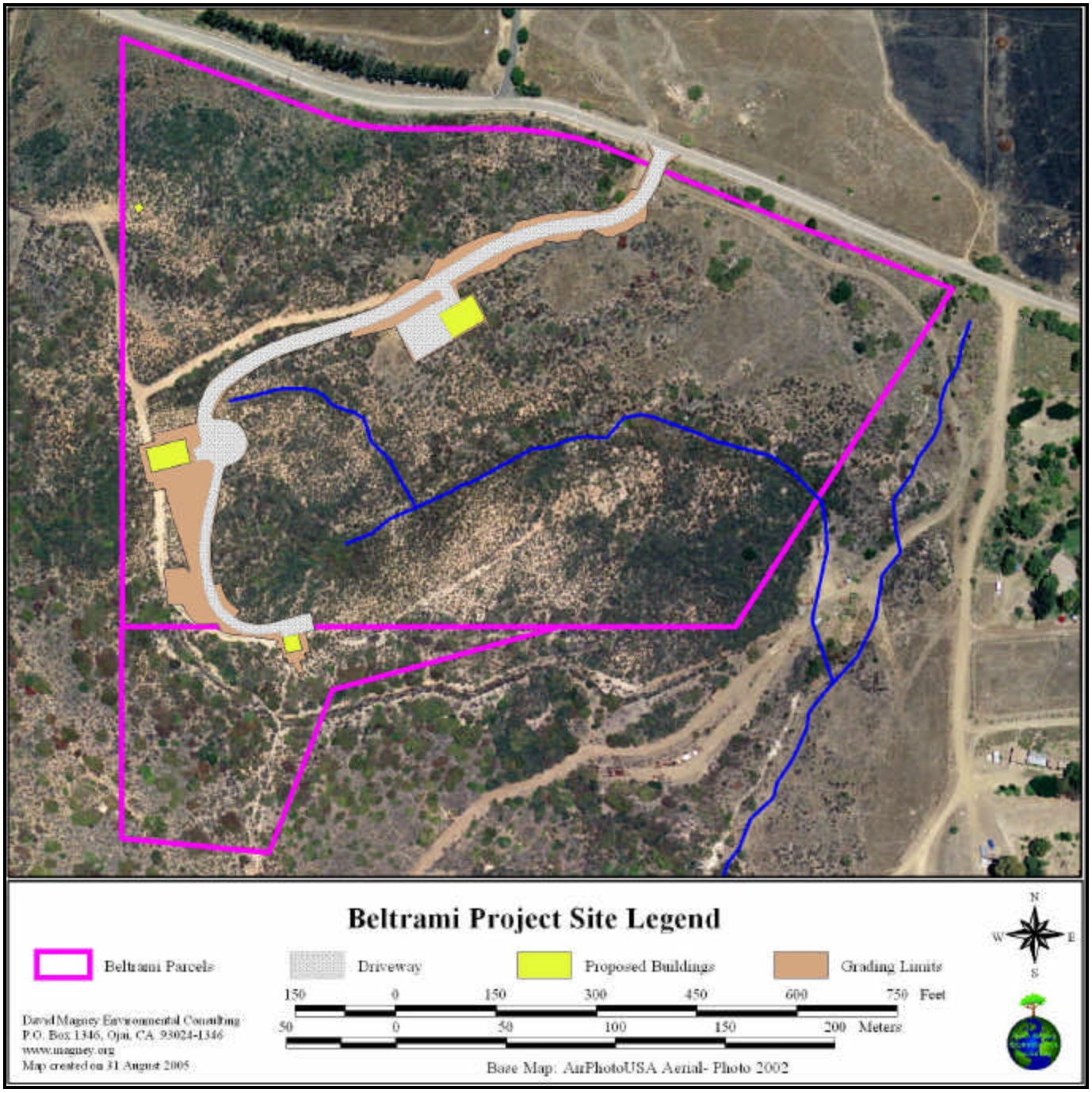


Figure 2. Beltrami Project Site



The plant community observed representing Coastal Sage Scrub at the Beltrami project site is *Lotus scoparius* Alliance (Deerweed Scrub), which is described below. Coastal Sage Scrub occupies approximately 4.54 acres of the project site.

The two grassland plant communities observed at the Beltrami site include: *Nassella lepida* Alliance (Perennial Grassland), which is predominantly native and is dominated by native perennial bunchgrass species and native

forbs; and Ruderal Grassland Alliance, which is typically a result of disturbance and is dominated by nonnative and often invasive grass and forb species. Grassland occupies approximately 2.38 acres of the project site.

Lichen Rock Outcrop is described as a grassy or sparse scrub field with substantial amounts of exposed parent material, in the form of large and moderately sized boulders and exposed bedrock, on which generally lacks soil. The large and small sandstone or conglomerate boulders and exposed bedrock of Lichen Rock Outcrop are covered, or partially covered, with little other plant species except for a diverse population of crustose (crust-like) and foliose (leaf-like) lichens, and mosses (one species observed onsite). The only other vegetation associated with this habitat is the species typical of the adjacent areas of Chaparral and Coastal Sage Scrub. Lichen Rock Outcrop habitat intergrades and is associates with these two plant communities. Lichen Rock Outcrop occupies approximately 0.32 acre of the project site.

Lichens are pioneer plants that are adapted to mineral or generally nonsoil substrates and help the decomposition process. The lichen flora of these boulders is distributed on each boulder according to aspect, light intensity, and moisture availability, all of which are related. Certain species of lichens are usually found only on the most exposed, south-facing surfaces, requiring direct sunlight, while others are typically found on protected, north-facing aspects with little or no direct sunlight.

Wildlife

Wildlife species that were observed or detected onsite include: San Diego Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*) (a special-status species), Western Fence Lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), Coastal Whiptail (*Cnemidophorus tigris multiscutatus*), California Gull (*Larus californicus*) Wrentit (*Chamaea fasciata*), Common Bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), California Thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*), California Towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*), Audubon's Cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), and Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*).

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:	**PROJECT IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT[1]**				**CUMULATIVE IMPACT DEGREE OF EFFECT**			
What level of impact will the proposal have on:	**N**	**LS**	**PS-M**	**PS**	**N**	**LS**	**PS-M**	**PS**
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**	
Will the proposal:								
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			**X**				**X**	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			**X**				**X**	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetland as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	**X**				**X**			
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?		**X**				**X**		
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			**X**				**X**	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	**X**				**X**			

[1] N = No Impact; LS = Less Than Significant; PS-M = Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigation Incorporated; PS = Potentially Significant Impact.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR EXPLANATIONS:

DMEC conducted a literature search of California Native Plant Society's *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California* (CNPS 2001) and the *Checklist of Ventura County Rare Plants* (Magney 2005a) to account for all special-status plant species with potential to occur in the vicinity of the proposed project site. The Ventura County occurrences are cited from the manuscript: *A Flora of Ventura County, California* (Magney 2005b). DMEC also conducted a search of the CDFG's CNDDB RareFind3 (CDFG 2005) for the Triunfo Pass, California Quadrangle (USGS 7.5-minute Series Topographic Map), and all surrounding quads (Point Mugu, Camarillo, Newbury Park, Thousand Oaks, and Point Dume), to account for all special-status plant and wildlife species and habitats with potential to occur onsite.

At least thirteen plant taxa of the 94 plants observed onsite (project site) on the graded pads are considered locally rare in Ventura County. These species are listed in Table 1, Locally Rare Vascular Plants of the Beltrami Property.

Table 1. Locally Rare Vascular Plants of the Beltrami Property

Scientific Name	Common Name
Antirrhinum nuttallianum ssp. *subsessile*	Lesser Nuttall Snapdragon
Calochortus catalinae	Catalina Mariposa Lily
Calochortus plummerae	Plummer's Mariposa Lily
Chaenactis artemisiifolia	White Pincushion
Cryptantha decipiens	Gravel Forget-Me-Not
Galium nuttallii ssp. *nuttallii*	Climbing Bedstraw
Helianthemum scoparium	Peak Rushrose
Lomatium lucidum	Shiny Lomatium
Navarretia jaredii	Paso Robles Navarretia
Phacelia parryi	Parry Phacelia
Rhus ovata X *R. integrifolia*	Hybrid Sugar Bush
Stylocline gnaphaloides	Everlasting Nest Straw
Zigadenus brevibracteatus	Death Camas

The project area is known to be inhabited by one **special-status plant species** tracked by the CNDDB**,** *Calochortus plummerae*. The CNDDB-tracked special-status plant species reported in the immediate vicinity of the project site include: *Astragalus brauntonii* (Braunton's Milkvetch), *Atriplex coulteri*, (Coulter's Saltbush), *Baccharis malibuensis* (Malibu Baccharis), *Calochortus plummerae* (Plummer's Mariposa Lily), *Centromadia parryi* ssp. *australis*, (Southern Tarplant), *Cercocarpus traskiae*, (Catalina Island Mountain Mahogany), *Chaenactis glabriuscula* var. *orcuttiana* (Orcutt's Pincushion), *Chorizanthe parryi* var. *parryi* (Parry's Spineflower), *Cordylanthus maritimus* ssp. *maritimus*, (Salt Marsh Bird's-beak), *Deinandra minthornii* (Santa Susana Tarplant), *Dudleya blochmaniae* ssp. *blochmaniae*, (Blochman's Dudleya), *Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *agourensis* (Agoura Hills Dudleya), *Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *marcescens* (Marcescent Dudleya [reported in Little Sycamore Canyon]), *Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *ovatifolia* (Santa Monica Mountains Dudleya), *Dudleya parva* (Conejo Dudleya), *Dudleya verityi* (Verity's Dudleya), *Eriogonum crocatum* (Conejo Buckwheat), *Erodium macrophyllum* (Round-leaved Filaree), *Lasthenia glabrata* ssp. *coulteri* (Coulter's Goldfields), *Nolina cismontana* (Chaparral Nolina), *Orcuttia californica* (California Orcutt Grass),

Pentachaeta lyonii (Lyon's Pentachaeta), *Senecio aphanactis* (Rayless Ragwort), *Suaeda esteroa* (Estuary Seablite), *Texosporium sancti-jacobi* (Woven-spored Lichen), and *Thelypteris puberula* var. *sonorensis* (Sonoran Maiden Fern). Only one of these CNDDB-tracked special-status plant species was observed onsite (*Calochortus plummerae*). Impacts to any of these reported taxa would be considered a significant impact. Several individual special-status plant species and portions of Chamise Chaparral and Coastal Sage Scrub will be directly lost by the development. Several more sensitive resources could be indirectly impacted after implementation of fuel modification as required by the Ventura County Fire Department, which currently requires natural vegetation to be removed or significantly thinned for 100 feet from all structures over 100 square feet. The loss of Chamise Chaparral habitat from direct and indirect impacts amount to 3.41 acres, which would be a significant impact according to the California Coastal Commission.

The CNDDB search resulted in eight **sensitive habitat types** as occurring in the region of the project onsite, including:

- Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest
- Southern Coastal Salt Marsh
- Southern Riparian Forest
- Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland
- Valley Needlegrass Grassland
- Valley Oak Woodland
- Coastal Sage Scrub (Coastal Sage Chaparral Scrub)
- Chaparral (Coastal Sage Chaparral Scrub)

Two of the sensitive habitat types were observed on the Beltrami property, Coastal Sage Scrub and Chaparral.

Several **special-status wildlife** species are known or reported to occur in the region of the project site. Twenty-six (26) special-status wildlife species (including invertebrates) were reported to occur in the vicinity of the project site by the CNDDB. (Refer to Table 11, Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur Onsite for a complete list in the DMEC 2005 report). No federally or state listed wildlife species was observed onsite; however, one special-status wildlife species was observed onsite, *Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei* (San Diego Horned Lizard). Only one (of three) wildlife species is CNDDB-tracked specifically within the Triunfo Pass Quadrangle, that has habitat requirements similar to the habitats onsite, and that species is Santa Monica Grasshopper). Habitat exists onsite for many of the other CNDDB-tracked special-status species for the surrounding quads. DMEC expects that some of these sensitive species may inhabit or frequent the project site.

The Beltrami project will result in direct and indirect impacts to biological resources, some of which are significant. The project will result in the permanent loss of 4.393 acres of natural vegetation due to direct and indirect impacts. The project will also result in permanently lost individuals of rare plants and a loss of habitat for common and sensitive wildlife species. Loss of individual rare plants is considered a significant and unavoidable impact, even after the project has been redesigned to minimize impacts and meet project objectives. However, these impacts can likely by mitigated onsite to a less than significant level. The proposed project will reduce occupied habitat onsite for San Diego Coast Horned Lizard, resulting in a potentially significant habitat impact to this species.

Recommendations:

To mitigate and minimize the loss of rare individual plants onsite that are not currently planned to be avoided by the project design, field surveys will be conducted by a qualified botanist for each impacted rare plant species to mark all individuals within or immediately adjacent to proposed grading sites. Seed and bulb collecting and salvage is recommended for those species, with replanting elsewhere onsite as mitigation. Mitigation areas, rare plant populations, and remaining sensitive habitats should be avoided to the maximum extent possible, and should be protected onsite from future development or disturbance. Perennial plants that will be impacted should be salvaged and grown in a nursery for replanting onsite, or to propagate for future planting material. DMEC recommends planting 10 plants onsite for each individual rare plant directly impacted by the project. The mitigation goal is to have an equal number of impacted plants surviving after completing the 5-year monitoring period.

An area of approximately 0.92 acre that is currently in use as a dirt road can be used as a habitat mitigation area. Other habitat mitigation areas are shown on Figure 7 in the DMEC 2005 report, to mitigate the permanent and partial loss of 4.19 acres of sensitive plant communities. Sensitive chaparral vegetation can be mitigated, at least in part, by revegetating, or allowing natural succession to occur, in those areas made barren by humans.

Citations/References Cited:

California Department of Fish and Game. 2005. California Natural Diversity Database search of RareFind3. (Updated 2005) The Resource Agency, State of California, Sacramento, California.

California Native Plants Society (CNPS). 2001. *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California*. Sixth Edition. (Special Publication No. 1.) Sacramento, California.

David Magney Environmental Consulting. 2005. Biological Resources Assessment for Deals Flat Property on Pacific View Drive. December, 2005. (PN 05-0171.) Ojai, California. Prepared for Ventura County Planning Division, Ventura, California, on behalf of Marco Beltrami, Malibu, California.

Magney, D.L. 2005a. *Checklist of Ventura County Rare Plants.* 6 April 2005. California Native Plant Society, Channel Islands Chapter, Ojai, California. Available at www.cnpsci.org.

Magney, D.L. 2005b manuscript. A Flora of Ventura County, California. Draft. David Magney Environmental Consulting, Ojai, California.

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE Based on the information contained with Section B6:	**Yes/Maybe**	**No**
1. Does the project have the potential to 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 major periods of California's history or prehistory?	X	
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 that occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the future.)		**X**
3. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effect of other current projects, and the effect of probable future projects. (Several projects may have relatively small individual impacts on two or more resources, but that total of those impacts on the environment is significant.)	X	
4. Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		**X**

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.
[**X**]	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environmental, there would not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measure(s) described in section C of the Initial Study 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 environmental, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
[ ]	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environmental, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in and earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
[ ]	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Biological Resources Initial Study Preparer

13 December 2005
Date