

SECTION B

INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

Job: PM-5246, PD-1802

Requester: Kim Prillhart

Applicant: Jeff Douglas

Date: December 10, 1999

Survey Type: Field

Rationale: Rare Plants

Site Description: A field visit of the site (Parcel nos. 080-0-020-17, -34, 138-0-050-09,-17) was conducted on December 10, 1999. The parcel is located on the coastal margin of the Oxnard Plain, mostly within the historic floodplain of the Santa Clara River. Arundell Barranca, a flood control channel flows through the site, forming the boundary between Parcel 080-0-020-34 and 138-0-050-17. Only Parcel 138-0-050-09 supports native or naturalized vegetation, the remainder of the parcels are in agricultural production. Arundell Barranca is entirely concrete-lined and does not support vegetation. Parcel 138-0-050-09 supports a unique community dominated by cudweed aster (*Lessingia filaginifolia*), telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*) and deer weed (*Lotus scoparius*). In addition, patches of coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) scrub and arroyo willows (*Salix lasiolepis*) occur on this Parcel.

	Project Impact Degree of Effect*				Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect*			
	N	LS	S	U	N	LS	S	U
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
 S Significant impact
 U Impact unknown

SECTION C
DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES

- a. Plant or animal species listed under either the Federal or California Endangered Species Acts reported by the California Natural Diversity Data Base (RAREFIND 2 Output for the Oxnard 7.5' Quadrangle maps) within 5 miles of the Parcels include:

- Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo belli pusillus* - State and Federal Endangered);
- Ventura marsh milk vetch (*Astragalus pycnocephalus* var. *lanosissimus* - Proposed Federal Endangered); and
- Saltmarsh birds-beak (*Cordylanthus maritimus* ssp. *maritimus* - State and Federal Endangered).

Based on biological surveys conducted on Parcel 138-0-050-09 as part of the City's expansion plans for the Olivas Park Golf Course, and lack of suitable habitat, no impacts to threatened or endangered species would occur with implementation of the proposed Parcel Map.

- b. The Ventura County General Plan Goals, Policies and Programs document defines wetlands as:

“...lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. The frequency of occurrence of water is sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetative or aquatic life that requires saturated or seasonally saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Wetlands include marshes, bogs, sloughs, vernal pools, wet meadows, river and stream overflows, mudflats, ponds, springs and seeps.”

Therefore, Ventura County-defined wetlands were considered present in areas dominated by wetland plants. Parcel 138-0-050-09 supports two patches of arroyo willows and several individual willow trees. These areas are considered County-defined wetlands.

General Plan Policy 1.5.2.3 requires a minimum 100 foot setback from “significant” wetland habitats. Arroyo willow riparian forest (such as on Parcel 138-0-050-09) provides habitat for several special-status species and is considered a sensitive habitat (see e. below). However, these willows are removed from a drainage course and are rarely inundated; therefore, the only wetland function they provide is habitat value. These patches of arroyo willows on Parcel 138-0-050-09 are not considered significant wetlands.

The patches of arroyo willows on Parcel 138-0-050-09 would be removed by commercial development associated with approval of PM-5246. Impacts to wetlands associated with this loss are considered less than significant.

- c. The Parcels are located within the Coastal Zone. Local coastal issues associated with agricultural land uses involve sedimentation of the Ventura Keys and Ventura Harbor associated with run-off from the Arundell Barranca. Sedimentation would adversely affect fish and invertebrates occurring in the Harbor. The proposed Parcel Map would include grading of Parcel 138-0-050-09, with storm water likely discharged to the agricultural ditch located immediately north of Olivas Park Drive, which apparently discharges to the Ventura Harbor. However, due to the relatively small size of the Parcel and soil composition (loamy sand), storm water run-off from this site would not significantly increase the existing sedimentation problem.
- d. The Santa Clara River is a regional wildlife movement corridor. However, the affected Parcels are sufficiently removed from the River that development would not adversely affect wildlife movement.
- e. Special-status species reported from within 5 miles of the Parcels include Coulter's goldfields (*Lasthenia glabrata* ssp. *coulteri*), Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), arroyo chub (*Gila orcuttii*), southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida*), San Diego horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*), two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*), yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*), yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) and white-tailed kite (*Elanus caeruleus*).

Parcel 138-0-050-09 provides suitable habitat and prey (native ants) for San Diego horned lizard, and foraging habitat for Cooper's hawk, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted chat, loggerhead shrike and white-tailed kite. Given the presence of suitable habitat and lack of disturbance in the last few decades, Parcel 138-0-050-09 may support a breeding population of San Diego horned lizard. Loss of this population would be considered a significant impact.

Cooper's hawk has been observed perched on telephone poles adjacent to this Parcel, and loggerhead shrike and white-tailed kite have been observed foraging immediately to the south. However, suitable breeding habitat for these bird species does not occur on this Parcel, and the amount of foraging resources is very small in comparison to adjacent habitat to the south and that nearby along the Santa Clara River. Therefore, potential impacts to special-status bird species is considered less than significant.

The patches of arroyo willow on Parcel 138-0-050-09 are considered a locally important habitat, and development of this Parcel would result in the loss of this habitat. However, this impact is considered less than significant due to relatively low habitat value associated the small area involved, isolated nature of these small trees and proximity of major roadways.

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?
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?

 X

 X

 X

 X

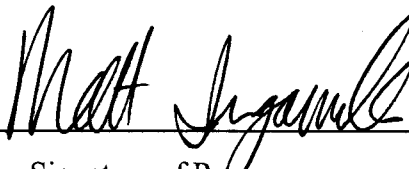
SECTION E
DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

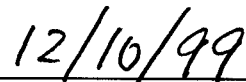
- ☐ I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION should be prepared.
- ☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measure(s) described below will be applied to the project. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION should be prepared, unless the recommended biological survey yields negative results.
- ☐ 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 survey shall be conducted of Parcel 138-0-050-09 by a qualified herpetologist to determine the status of San Diego horned lizard. If this species is found on the Parcel, a mitigation plan shall be prepared and implemented. Mitigation measures may include avoidance of suitable habitat, relocation to other permanently protected suitable habitat, or other measures deemed appropriate by the herpetologist and the County.



Signature of Preparer



Date