

Job:	CCC-0208/PM-5373	Requester:	Todd Militello
Applicant:	Michael Parker	Date:	August 23, 2002
Survey Type:	Field	Rationale:	Adjacent Stream

Site Description: A field visit of the site (Parcel nos. 032-0-201-155) was conducted on August 22, 2002. The site is located in the Ventura River valley, about one mile north-northwest of Oak View. The eastern one-third of the Parcel supports pasture, and the western two-thirds supports big-pod ceanothus chaparral. Live Oak Creek bisects the Parcel in a north-south direction. Dominant vegetation along Live Oak Creek includes coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), red willow (*Salix laevigata*) and black walnut (*Juglans californica*). 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:
- Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo belli pusillus*, Federal and State Endangered)- reported from the S.P. Milling mitigation site, but breeding has not been confirmed, 9 miles to the south (URS Corporation, 2000).
 - Southern steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*, Federal Endangered)-reported from the Ventura River, 500 feet to the east (Entrix, Inc. and Woodward Clyde Consultants, 1997).
 - California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytoni*, Federal Threatened)- reported from Ventura River/San Antonio Creek confluence, 2 miles to the south (Padre, 2002).

The parcel does not provide suitable habitat for these or other rare, threatened, or endangered species known from the region and the proposed project would not adversely affect rare, threatened or endangered species. In particular, the lack of suitable habitat for southern steelhead in Live Oak Creek was documented by Impact Sciences (1998).

- b. Based on the site visit conducted by Padre and the wetland delineation conducted by Impact Sciences (1998) immediately downstream of the site, Live Oak Creek is expected to support Federally jurisdictional wetlands and State and County-defined wetlands. Most of the streambed on the Parcel is dominated by peppermint (*Mentha Xpiperita*), which is designated an obligate wetland species. Although no direct impacts to wetlands are proposed, subsequent ministerial development may result in vegetation clearing and installation of bank protection. Indirect impacts may include erosion of creek banks and water quality degradation associated with run-off from potential future equestrian or agricultural development.
- c. The site is located approximately two miles northeast of the coastal zone and coastal resources do not occur in the vicinity of the site. Coastal resources are not expected to be adversely affected by subdivision and subsequent development of the site.
- d. Live Oak Creek may be used as a local wildlife movement corridor, linking the Ventura River to Santa Ana Valley. Future ministerial development is unlikely to alter habitat sufficiently such that the value of this potential local wildlife movement corridor is significantly reduced.

- e. Special-status species known to occur on the Parcel include coast live oak (many hundreds) and western sycamore (several dozen) trees protected under the Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance. In addition, black walnut occurs along Live Oak Creek and is considered a plant of limited distribution by the California Native Plant Society. Other special-status species that have a moderate to high potential of occurring on the Parcel include Plummer's baccharis (*Baccharis plummerae*), Catalina mariposa lily (*Calochortus catalinae*), Davidson's bush mallow (*Malacothamnus davisonsonii*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperi*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) and yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia*).

Plummer's baccharis and Davidson's bush mallow may occur in chaparral in the western portion of the Parcel. Catalina mariposa lily may occur in openings in chaparral or in grasslands on the Parcel. Cooper's hawk and yellow warbler may occur within the riparian forest along Live Oak Creek. Loggerhead shrike may forage in pasture and breed in adjacent chaparral. Future ministerial development may result in significant impacts to special-status species due to direct loss of individuals and/or suitable habitat or indirect effects associated with erosion and siltation. Future ministerial development may also result in the loss of a sensitive community (black walnut woodland) along Live Oak Creek.

Future ministerial development may also result in the loss of protected trees (coast live oak and sycamore); however, significant losses of these trees would be prevented by the Tree Protection Ordinance.

References:

- California Natural Diversity Data Base. 2002. RAREFIND 2 Output for the Matilija 7.5' Quadrangle map.
- Entrix, Inc. and Woodward Clyde Consultants. 1997. *Ventura River Steelhead Restoration and Recovery Plan*. Prepared for Casitas Municipal Water Agency, City of San Buenaventura, County of Ventura, Ventura County Flood Control District, Ojai Valley Sanitary District, Meiners Oaks County Water Agency, Ventura County Water Agency, Southern California Water Company, Ojai Basin GMA.
- Impact Sciences, Inc. 1998. *Live Oak Creek Diversion Project Final Environmental Impact Report*. Prepared for the Ventura County Flood Control District.
- Padre Associates, Inc. 2002. *Draft Biological Impact Assessment for the State Route 33 Corridor Study*. Prepared for the Ventura County Transportation Commission.
- URS Corporation. 2000. *Preliminary Assessment: Occurrence of Listed Wildlife Species in the Ventura River Habitat Conservation Plan Study Area*. Prepared for Casitas Municipal Water District, City of San Buenaventura, County of Ventura, Ventura County Flood Control District, Ojai Valley Sanitary District, Meiners Oaks County Water Agency, Ventura County Water Agency, Southern California Water Company, Ojai Basin GMA.

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. A comprehensive biological impact assessment shall be completed for any proposed development west of, or within 200 feet of Live Oak Creek. The assessment shall include spring botanical surveys, protected tree survey, focused wildlife surveys, wetland delineation, impact analysis and mitigation measures. All feasible mitigation measures shall be fully implemented to reduce impacts to biological resources to a level of less than significant. This measure should be enforced through a deed restriction, which would apply to all future development, including that exempt from CEQA.

Signature of Preparer

Date