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October 16, 2006

Ms. Andrea Ozdy
Case Planner
Resource Management Agency – Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, L#1740
Ventura, California 93009

Subject: Initial Biological Study
6063 Los Angeles Avenue, Somis
Discussion of Responses to Checklist

VEN200-005-06

Dear Ms. Ozdy:

The following details the results of an initial biological study conducted by West Coast Environmental and Engineering (WCE) for 6063 Los Angeles Avenue in Somis. The scope of work is defined in the Consulting Services Contract for CEQA Initial Studies on Private Property between the County of Ventura (County) and WCE. In this contract, WCE is responsible for the following, as indicated in the County's Administrative Supplement to State CEQA Guidelines:

- Completion of Section "B-6", subsections (a) through (e), of the Ventura County Initial Study Checklist;
- Section "C", Discussion of Responses to Checklist; and
- Section "D", Mandatory Findings of Significance.

State CEQA Guidelines, the County Administrative Supplement to State CEQA Guidelines, the County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, and the Coastal Area Plan of the County General Plan were consulted to determine the potential for this project to impact local biological resources.

In addition to the review of this documentation, on October 10, 2006 an on-site preliminary biological assessment was conducted by a WCE Biologist at the project site in Somis, CA. The purpose of this reconnaissance-level survey was to observe for wildlife and plant species present within the project area, and to determine the nature of the on-site habitat. The field survey revealed the following:

- The two locations upon which guest houses are to be built consist of previously disturbed habitat comprised of mostly non-native grasses and invasive shrubs. Construction in these areas will not significantly impact the surrounding habitat.
- The northwest corner of the property, upon which a large residential unit is to be built, consists of two habitat types. The first habitat type, occupying the lower portion

of this area, is made up of non-native grasses and invasive shrubs. Numerous small mammal and/ rodent burrows were present in this area. The upper portions however, near the property boundary, consist of riparian vegetation dominated by mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) and willows (*Salix sp.*). A drainage exists in this area and runs parallel to the northwestern property boundary. The drainage appears to be fed by sheet flow from the surrounding areas.

Discussion of responses to the checklist (Section B-6) is as follows and pertains only to the impacts of the proposed entrance as the status of the other areas has already been discussed:

B-6(a) – Endangered, Threatened, or Rare Species:

Project Impact Degree of Effect: PS-M

Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect: PS-M

A standard nine-quadrangle California Natural Diversity Data Base/Rarefind 3 Report was generated for the Project site (i.e., query of the USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle in which the Project site is located as well as the eight surrounding topographic quadrangles. The California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) contains records for special-status species, as well as sensitive natural communities, which have been reported to the CDFG. The database also addresses wildlife listed as species of concern identified by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and vegetation identified as threatened by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS).

- The CNDDDB report did not indicate that any federal, state, or otherwise listed species have been identified in the immediate vicinity of the project site.
- No species identified in the CNDDDB report were observed within the project area. Wildlife species observed on the site included the following common species: northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*) and western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*). The potential removal of riparian vegetation in the northwest corner of the property may impact surrounding wildlife in general however the project is not likely to significantly impact any state or federally listed endangered, threatened, or rare species.
- The riparian habitat present in the northwest corner of the site could potentially provide habitat for listed species of birds.

Proposed Mitigation Measures: No removal of riparian vegetation or enhancement and restoration of surrounding areas if removal is unavoidable.

B-6(b) – Wetland Habitat:

Project Impact Degree of Effect: PS-M

Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect: PS-M

The project area was inspected for plant communities associated with lands that are transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems. These areas, known as wetlands, 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.

- Potential wetland habitat was observed along the drainage northeast of the proposed residential unit. Prior to vegetation removal a wetland delineation should be conducted to determine the presence/absence of wetland areas.

Proposed Mitigation Measures: No removal of wetland habitat or enhancement and restoration of surrounding areas if removal is unavoidable.

B-6(c) – Coastal Habitat:

Project Impact Degree of Effect: N

Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect: N

The project area was inspected for sensitive coastal areas, including coastal waters, intertidal areas, estuaries, lakes, wetlands, and sand dunes which support plant or animal life.

- No coastal habitat was identified on-site.

Proposed Mitigation Measures: None

B-6(d) – Migration Corridors:

Project Impact Degree of Effect: N

Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect: N

The project area was inspected to determine if it is likely to experience frequent and substantial wildlife movement of species seeking to move from one habitat area to another.

- The location of the site and immediate surroundings is not conducive to substantial wildlife migration as a result of surrounding activities and land uses. Therefore, it is unlikely that the area functions as a migration corridor.

Proposed Mitigation Measures: None

B-6(e) – Locally Important Species/Community:

Project Impact Degree of Effect: PS-M

Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect: PS-M

The project area was inspected to determine the presence of plants, animals or ecological communities that, while not listed as endangered, threatened, or rare, could be considered to be quality examples of characteristic or unique species or communities within the County or region.

- No locally important species or communities were identified on-site however the areas of riparian vegetation in the northwest corner of the property provide habitat for local wildlife.
- The riparian habitat present in the northwest corner of the site could potentially provide habitat for listed species of birds.

Proposed Mitigation Measures: No removal of riparian vegetation or enhancement and restoration of surrounding areas if removal is unavoidable.

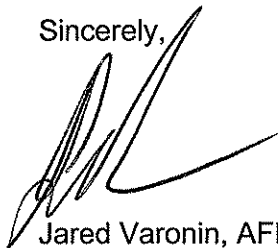
October 16, 2006

Based on the results of the field investigation and the review of the applicable guidance documents, the proposed project will not adversely impact the area's biological resources in the short term or cumulatively and the previously discussed mitigation measures are recommended. In addition, it is recommended that a qualified biologist survey the project site for special status plant and animal species immediately prior to any grading activities related to the construction of residential structures, due to the presence of small mammal and/or rodent burrows and the use of the site by other wildlife species. If any species are found in the path of construction activities, the biologist shall relocate the species to a safe location. Exclusionary fencing should be erected to prevent the migration into or the return of wildlife species into the work site.

Attached are the Section B Checklist and Section D "Mandatory Findings of Significance" which were completed as they pertain to the information presented in this initial biological study.

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

Sincerely,



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

enc: Administrative Supplement to State CEQA Guidelines (Sections B-6, D)

Section B Initial Study Checklist

Project No. SD06-0054 (PM 5676)

	Issue (Responsible Department)	Project Impact Degree Of Effect*				Cumulative Impact Degree Of Effect*			
		N	LS	PS - M	PS	N	LS	PS - M	PS
General:	1. General Plan Environmental Goals and Policies (PIng.)								
Land Use:	2. Land Use (PIng.):								
	a. Community Character								
	b. Housing								
	c. Growth Inducement								
Resources:	3. Air Quality (APCD):								
	a. Regional								
	b. Local								
	4. Water Resources (PWA):								
	a. Groundwater Quantity								
	b. Groundwater Quality								
	c. Surface Water Quantity								
	d. Surface Water Quality								
	5. Mineral Resources (PIng.):								
	a. Aggregate								
	b. Petroleum								
	6. Biological Resources:								
	a. Endangered, Threatened, or Rare Species			✓					
	b. Wetland Habitat			✓					
	c. Coastal Habitat	✓							
	d. Migration Corridors	✓							
	e. Locally Important Species/Communities			✓					
	7. Agricultural Resources (Ag. Dept.):								
	a. Soils								
	b. Water								
	c. Air Quality/Micro-Climate								
	d. Pests/Diseases								
	e. Land Use Incompatibility								
	8. Visual Resources:								
	a. Scenic Highway (PIng.)								
	b. Scenic Area/Feature								
	9. Paleontological Resources								
	10. Cultural Resources:								
	a. Archaeological								
	b. Historical (PIng.)								
	c. Ethnic, Social or Religious								
	11. Energy Resources								
	12. Coastal Beaches & Sand Dunes								

D. Mandatory Findings Of Significance	Yes/Maybe	No
Based on the information contained within Sections B and C:		
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 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 that occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the		✓
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 the total of those impacts on the environment is significant).		✓
4. Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		✓

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 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 environment 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 environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an 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.		

Signature of Person Responsible for Administering the Project:

Date:

*EIR Issues of Focus: