Historic Biological Reports
Scan Control Sheet

County Project Number(s): CUP-5001

Report Type (check one):
- ☒ *Initial Study*
- ☐ Species Inventory/Survey
- ☐ Focused Study
- ☐ EIR
- ☐ Draft EIR
- ☐ EIS
- ☐ ND
- ☐ MND
- ☐ Other

Report Date (Month/Day/Year): 10/26/1997

Check if the following apply to the report:
- ☒ Wetland and/or aquatic habitat
- ☒ Within designated Coastal Zone
- ☐ Potential movement corridor for fish and/or wildlife

ENSR
ENSR Consulting and Engineering

Letter of Transmittal

ATTENTION:

Becky Linder
County of Ventura
Resource Management Agency
Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, L#1740
Ventura, CA 93009

DATE:

October 27, 1997

PROJECT REFERENCE:

Biology Initial Study

PROJECT NUMBER:

7020-014

WE ARE SENDING YOU THE FOLLOWING:

NO. ORIG	NO. COPIES	DESCRIPTION
1	0	Initial Study Checklist CUP 5001

REMARKS:

SIGNATURE:

Bill Gorham
Program Manager, Senior Scientist.

1220 Avenida Acaso
Camarillo, CA 93012
(805) 388-3775

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SECTION B
INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

Job: CUP 5001 **Requester:** Becky Linder

Applicant: World Soils Corporation **Date:** October 26, 1997

Survey Type: Field **Rationale:** Composting project

Site Description: A field visit was conducted to the project site on October 26, 1997. The site is located at 6859 Arnold Rd, about 1.5 miles south of Hueneme Rd. The coastal zone runs through the southwestern portion of the property. The major portion of the property has been cleared. Several existing buildings are present, surrounded by mowed grass on the north and by a cement flat, or a gravel bed in the central and southern portion. Bordering the property on the east is a drainage ditch with a permanent source of water. On the southern border of the property is a narrow strip about 10 to 15 feet wide with a poorly developed saltmarsh community containing saltbush (*Atriplex patula*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), and patches of pickleweed (*Salicornia virginica*). A small sandy area about 10 feet wide occurs just north of the saltmarsh strip and south of the existing supply shop building.

	Project Impact Degree of Effect*				Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect*			
	N	LS	S	U	N	LS	S	U
6. Biological Resources								
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
S Significant
U Unknown

SECTION C
DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES

a. Several endangered, rare, or threatened species occur within a mile of the project site. The endangered light footed clapper rail (*Rallus longirostris levipes*) is found in salt marshes and requires a dense growth of either pickleweed or cordgrass. Although pickleweed was found on the property, it was sparse and would not be a suitable habitat for the clapper rail. The threatened western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*), is found on sandy beaches or on the levees of salt ponds. No such habitat exists on the project site.

The endangered California least tern (*Sterna antillarum browni*) nests along the coast from San Francisco Bay to northern Baja California and breeds on bare or sparsely vegetated, flat substrates, such as sand beaches or alkali flats. Very little area of the project site is undisturbed and the site would not be a likely breeding place for the least tern. However, if terns were to use the site during construction, they may be disturbed. Depending upon the timing of the construction, the disturbance may result in the harassment of the birds which is prohibited under the Endangered Species Act. Therefore, based on the, albeit low, potential for California least terns to occur in the area, there is a significant potential for impacts to special status species.

The southwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata pallida*) is a Federal species of concern. It requires a permanent or nearly permanent body of water and partially submerged vegetation mats or open mud banks for basking sites. It would be possible for the pond turtle to inhabit the irrigation ditch on the eastern boundary of the project site. However, there are no plans to disturb this area, so there should be no adverse impact on the turtle.

The endangered plant, salt marsh bird's-beak (*Cordylanthus maritimus* ssp. *maritimus*), grows on coastal dunes or on the higher zones of the salt marsh habitat. Although there was a strip of salt marsh and an area of sand at the southern portion of the property, these were too narrow and too much disturbed to be a habitat for the salt marsh bird's beak. In addition, there are no plans to disturb the saltmarsh strip.

Three federally listed insects also have been found within a mile of the project site. The tiger beetle (*Cicindela gabbii*) inhabits estuaries and mudflats along the coast. No such habitat occurs on the property. The globose dune beetle (*Coelus globosus*) inhabits coastal sand dunes, burrowing beneath the dune vegetation. Although there was a small sandy area on the property, this would not be a sufficient habitat for the dune beetle. Lastly, the saltmarsh skipper, *Panoquina errans*, requires moist saltgrass for larval development and is found on coastal salt marshes. There are no plans to disturb the narrow strip of saltmarsh. Also, it is poorly developed and would not be a likely habitat for the skipper.

b. There is a narrow wetland habitat at the southeastern border of the property. There are no plans to destroy this. The propsed greenhouse should be sufficiently removed from this and from the narrow salt marsh community on the southern border. 50 feet or more.

c. Although the southwestern corner of the project site is within the coastal zone, no activities are planned within this area. The proposed development is not expected to adversely impact coastal resources.

d. Because much of the area under consideration is disturbed and either paved or vegetated with low, weedy annuals and perennials, it is not likely that this is a wildlife corridor or that movement of animals would be affected.

e. The salt marsh community is a locally important community and occurs southwest of the project area. The proposed development on the project site should not adversely impact this community. The narrow salt marsh strip on the property is not continguous with the larger community, nor are there any plans to disrupt this.

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?	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 which 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 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).		X
4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		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.

☐ 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

1. To determine the presence of least terns adjacent to the project site, a survey for least terns will be completed by a qualified ornithologist prior to construction at the site. (30 days)

2. In the event that breeding least terns occur within 500 feet of the site, construction will be delayed until either the birds are relocated or young birds fledge the nest. Any relocation will be accomplished in by a qualified ornithologist and in full consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game.

3. Prior to any action wherein the birds would be directly disturbed, a plan will be prepared to minimize or avoid impacts to the birds. Such a plan may include methods for relocating nests and assessing impacts from relocations of the terns as well as the identification of sites to which the birds could be relocated.

William John for Barbara Collins — 27 Oct 97

Signature of Preparer — Date