



October 25, 2024

Attn: Ms. Kirsty Shelton
Principal Land Use Planner
Palisades Land Use Consultancy

RE: Biological Resources Assessment Letter Report for 2010-2012 Humboldt Project, (APNs 036-054-022 and 036-054-023), Yountville, CA

Dear Ms. Shelton,

The purpose of this letter report is to provide you the results of the habitat assessment survey conducted at the site of the 2010-2012 Humboldt Project (Project) a proposed development located on APNs 036-054-022 and 036-054-023, in the Town of Yountville, Napa County, California (Study Area; Attachment 1). The Study Area consists of approximately 0.25 acre in a residential area in the Town of Yountville. Surrounding land uses include commercial and residential development with associated infrastructure. Onsite conditions are characterized as a small fallow field.

The purpose of this assessment is to provide information necessary to complete a review of biological resources under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and also to specifically evaluate whether the project site has value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species to assess whether the Project qualifies for the Class 32 "Infill" exemption (CEQA Guidelines § 15332). Under § 15332, species are considered threatened or endangered if their survival or reproduction in the wild is in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes. Rare is defined as "Although not presently threatened with extinction, the species is existing in such small numbers throughout all or a significant portion of its range that it may become endangered if its environment worsens or the species is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range and may be considered "threatened" as that term is used in the Federal Endangered Species Act."

The habitat assessment site visit was conducted on October 16, 2024 by WRA senior biologist, Aaron Arthur. This assessment is based on information available at the time of the study and on-site conditions that were observed on the date of the site visit.

1.0 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

The following natural resources are protected under one or more of several Federal, State and/or local regulations, and were considered when analyzing the Project.

Waters of the U.S.: protected under the Clean Water Act (CWA), administered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps):

- Includes wetlands, streams, rivers, and other aquatic habitats meeting the guidance issued by the Corps



Waters of the State: protected under the Porter-Cologne Act, administered by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB):

- Includes surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state, and are generally delineated following the guidance issued by the Corps.

Streams, Lakes, and Riparian Habitat: protected under the California Fish and Game Code (CFGF), administered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):

- Includes creeks and rivers (bodies where water flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and supports fish or other aquatic life), and vegetation adjacent to associated with such (riparian habitat).

Sensitive Natural Communities: protected under the CFGF, administered by the CDFW:

- Includes terrestrial vegetation or plant communities that are ranked by NatureServe and considered “threatened” or “endangered” by the CDFW, lists of such are included in *List of Vegetation Alliances and Associations* (CDFG 2010).

Special-status Plant and Wildlife Species including Critical Habitat: protected under one or more of the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), California Endangered Species Act (CESA), California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and/or CDFW:

- Includes plant listed under the ESA and/or CESA, or those plants ranked by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) as Rank 1, 2, and (occasionally) 3, and 4.
- Includes wildlife listed under the ESA and/or CESA, and wildlife listed by CDFW as Species of Special Concern or Fully Protected Species, as well as bats listed as Medium or High Priority by the Western Bat Working Group (WBWG).
- In addition to regulations for special-status species, most birds, including non-status species, have baseline legal protections under both the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and CFGF. Under these laws/codes, the unauthorized and deliberate “take” (essentially, injury/harm or collection) of covered species is illegal; this protection includes active nests (those with eggs or young).

Town of Yountville Tree Ordinance: A tree removal permit is required prior to removing any protected tree in town. Protected trees are any trees that meet at least one of the following criteria: A Heritage Tree • Any native oak with a trunk that measures 10 inches DBH (diameter at breast height) or 31 inches circumference, or more • Any tree with a trunk that measures 12 inches DBH (38 inches circumference) or more • Any multi-stemmed perennial plant having an aggregate DBH of 20 inches (63 inches circumference) or more.

2.0 METHODS

Prior to the site visit, WRA reviewed background literature to determine potential presence of sensitive vegetation types, aquatic communities, as well as special-status plant and wildlife species. Resources reviewed for sensitive vegetation communities and aquatic features include aerial photography, mapped soil types (CSRL 2024), the California Department of Fish and



Wildlife's (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB; CDFW 2023), and the National Wetland Inventory (NWI; USFWS 2023). Background information regarding special-status plant and wildlife species was obtained through review of the CNDDDB, California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Online Database (CNPS 2024), available aerial photography, and species habitat requirements as noted in available literature.

WRA conducted an assessment of the Study Area on October 16, 2024 to determine whether the Project will have a significant impact on land that has value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species, and/or whether these species would be affected by the development. The Study Area was examined for indicators of wetlands, streams, and areas with an Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) (i.e., streams, rivers, ponds) potentially under the jurisdiction of the Corps, RWQCB, and CDFW, as well as other sensitive biological communities.

3.0 ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The Study Area is a flat property predominantly composed of a fallow field. It is bounded to the northeast and northwest by developed residential properties, and to the southeast and southwest by sidewalks and the streets of Humboldt and Jefferson, respectively. The vegetation is a mix of planted native trees, ornamental trees, and ruderal herbs. The land cover is not considered sensitive biological communities. Biological communities observed within the Study Area are described in greater detail below.

3.1 Sensitive Biological Communities

The Study Area was investigated for potential wetlands and waters of the U.S. and State, riparian habitat, and other sensitive biological communities. No potentially sensitive biological communities were observed in the Study Area.

3.2 Protected Native Trees

The Study Area does not contain trees covered by the Town's tree ordinance.

3.3 Special-status Plant Species

Based upon a search of the databases described above, dozens of special-status plant species have documented occurrences within the vicinity of the Study Area, defined to include the Yountville and eight surrounding 7.5' USGS quadrangles. Of these special-status species, all are either unlikely or have no potential to occur within the Study Area for one or more of the following reasons:

- The Study Area does not contain hydrologic conditions (e.g., freshwater, brackish, or salt marsh) necessary to support the special-status plant(s);
- The Study Area does not contain edaphic (soil) conditions (e.g., serpentine or volcanics) necessary to support the special-status plant(s);
- The Study Area does not contain vegetation communities (e.g., chaparral, vernal pools) associated with the special-status plant(s);
- The Study Area and surrounding area is developed and habitat for special-status plant species is limited;
- The species was not observed during the site visit which was conducted during the bloom period of the species.



3.4 Special-status Wildlife Species

Based upon a search of the databases described above, more than 50 special-status wildlife species have documented occurrences within the vicinity of the Study Area, defined to include the Yountville and eight surrounding 7.5' USGS quadrangles. The term special-status species include species that are considered rare, endangered and threatened under CEQA, but also include species that do not meet this standard, such as CDFW species of special concern or other animals that are monitored by biological interest groups such as the Western Bat Working Group. Of these special-status wildlife species documented in the region, no species have a moderate or greater potential to occur.

3.5 Non-status Nesting Birds and Maternity Roosting Bats

Non-status native birds may utilize the vegetation and structures in the Project Area for nesting and thus could be disturbed by Project activities if they occur during the nesting season. The nesting season is typically defined as approximately February 1 to August 31. Avoidance of impacts to nesting birds, including any actions that cause birds to abandon nests and/or hatchlings, is required by California Fish and Game Code. No habitat for roosting bats is present.

4.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Sensitive Biological Communities

The Study Area is composed of a single, non-sensitive, land cover type developed/fallow field. Consequently, there are no potentially sensitive biological communities present within the Study Area. No impacts to sensitive biological communities are anticipated; therefore, no further studies or recommendations are warranted for sensitive biological communities.

4.2 Protected Native Trees

There are no protected trees on the site and as such, no recommendations for protected native trees are indicated.

4.3 Special-status Plant Species

The Study Area does not contain special-status plant habitat. No special-status plants were observed in the Study Area during the site visit, nor have any special-status plants been documented in the Study Area previously. There is a documented occurrence of Jepson's coyote-thistle (*Eryngium jepsonii*; CRPR 1B) from approximately 900 feet southeast of the Study Area (CDFW 2024). This occurrence is from 1923 and is likely extirpated from Yountville. More importantly this species occurs in seasonal wetlands and requires several weeks of inundation (ponding) to promote germination. The Study Area does not support seasonal wetlands; therefore, it would not occur. No impacts to special-status plants are anticipated; therefore, no further studies or recommendations are warranted for special-status plants.



4.4 Special-status and Non-status Wildlife Species

4.4.1 Recommendations to Avoid Non-status Birds

COMMON NESTING BIRDS

If project work is scheduled to occur between September 1 and January 31, which is considered to be outside of the nesting bird season, impacts to nesting birds will not occur. If work will occur between February 1 and August 31, conditions of approval requiring the following would avoid impacts to active nests are recommended:

A survey for active bird nests will be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than 14 days prior to the start of Project activities (vegetation removal, grading, tree removal, building demolition or other initial ground-disturbing activities) if they commence during the nesting season (February 1 through August 31). The survey will be conducted in a sufficient area around the Study Area to identify the location and status of any nests that could potentially be directly or indirectly affected by project activities. Upon completion of the surveys, any nests discovered will be avoided through a work exclusion buffer determined by a qualified biologist to avoid impacts. Buffers will be sufficiently large and long in duration such that nest abandonment is avoided. The qualified biologist will determine the buffer based on the species and the type of disturbance anticipated to result from Project activities.

5.0 Conclusions Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines

Based on this assessment, and with implementation of the above recommendations, the Project should be considered exempt from further environmental review because with implementation of the above-described avoidance measures and observance of existing standards, potential impacts to biological resources would be less than significant without mitigation. The site does not have any habitat value for endangered, rare or threatened species and as such is eligible for exemption under CEQA Guidelines § 15332 (Class 32 Infill Exemption).

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Aaron Arthur



Senior Biologist
WRA, Inc.

List of Attachments

Attachment A. Parcel Map

Attachment B. Observed Species



5.0 REFERENCES

[CDFW] California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2024. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), Wildlife and Habitat Data Analysis Branch. Sacramento, CA. Accessed: October.

[CNPS] California Native Plant Society. 2024. Online Inventory of Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants of California. Available at: <http://www.rareplants.cnps.org/>. Accessed: October.

[CNPS] California Native Plant Society. 2024. A Manual of California Vegetation, Online Edition. Sacramento, California. Online at: <http://vegetation.cnps.org/>; Accessed: October.

[CSRL] California Soil Resources Lab. 2024. Online Soil Survey. Online at: <http://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/drupal>. Accessed: October.

Google Earth. 2024. Aerial Imagery 1993-2024. Accessed: October.

[USGS] U.S. Geological Survey. 1951. 7.5-minute Quadrangle Series: Napa, California. Photorevised 1980.

[USFWS] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2024. National Wetlands Inventory website. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. Online at: <http://www.fws.gov/nwi/>; most recently accessed: October.



Attachment A.

Parcel Map



Attachment B.

Observed Species



Table B-1. Plant species observed in the Study Area: October 16, 2024

FAMILY	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	LIFE FORM	ORIGIN	RARE STATUS ¹	INVASIVE STATUS ²	WETLAND INDICATOR ³
Asteraceae	<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	chicory	perennial forb	non-native	--	--	FACU
Asteraceae	<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	prickly lettuce	annual forb	non-native	--	assessed	FACU
Asteraceae	<i>Leontodon saxatilis ssp. longirostris</i>	hawkbit	annual forb	non-native	--	--	FACU
Caryophyllaceae	<i>Spergularia rubra</i>	red sandspurry	perennial forb	non-native	--	--	FAC
Convolvulaceae	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	field bindweed	perennial forb	non-native	--	assessed	NL
Fagaceae	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	coast live oak	evergreen tree	native	--	--	NL
Fagaceae	<i>Quercus lobata</i>	valley oak	deciduous tree	native	--	--	FACU
Juglandaceae	<i>Juglans hindsii</i>	black walnut	deciduous tree	native	--	--	FAC
Oleaceae	<i>Olea europaea</i>	olive	evergreen tree	non-native	--	limited	NL
Papaveraceae	<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	California poppy	perennial forb	native	--	--	NL
Poaceae	<i>Avena barbata</i>	wild oat	annual graminoid	non-native	--	moderate	NL
Poaceae	<i>Bromus diandrus</i>	rip-gut brome	annual graminoid	non-native	--	moderate	NL
Poaceae	<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	soft chess	annual graminoid	non-native	--	limited	FACU
Poaceae	<i>Festuca bromoides</i>	brome fescue	perennial graminoid	non-native	--	--	FACU
Poaceae	<i>Festuca perennis</i>	Italian rye grass	annual graminoid	non-native	--	moderate	FAC
Polygonaceae	<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	sheep sorrel	perennial forb	non-native	--	moderate	FACU
Polygonaceae	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	curly dock	perennial forb	non-native	--	limited	FAC
Rosaceae	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	Callery pear	deciduous tree	non-native	--	--	NL

All species identified using the *Jepson Manual, 2nd Edition* (Baldwin et al. 2012), *The Jepson Flora Project* (eFlora 2024), and *A Flora of Napa County* (Ruygt 2020); nomenclature follows *The Jepson Flora Project* (eFlora 2024) unless otherwise noted

Sp.: “species”, intended to indicate that the observer was confident in the identity of the genus but uncertain which species

Cf.: “confer” or “compared with”, intended to indicate a species appeared to the observer to be specific, but was not identified based on diagnostic characters

¹Rare Status: The CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (CNPS 2024a)

FE:	Federal Endangered
FT:	Federal Threatened
SE:	State Endangered
ST:	State Threatened
SR:	State Rare
LR	Locally Rare
CRPR 1A:	Plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere
CRPR 1B:	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
CRPR 2A:	Plants presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere
CRPR 2B:	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
CRPR 3:	Plants about which we need more information – a review list
CRPR 4:	Plants of limited distribution – a watch list

²Invasive Status: California Invasive Plant Inventory (Cal-IPC 2006)

High:	Severe ecological impacts; high rates of dispersal and establishment; most are widely distributed ecologically.
Moderate:	Substantial and apparent ecological impacts; moderate-high rates of dispersal, establishment dependent on disturbance; limited moderate distribution ecologically
Limited:	Minor or not well documented ecological impacts; low-moderate rate of invasiveness; limited distribution ecologically
Assessed:	Assessed by Cal-IPC and determined to not be an existing current threat

³Wetland Status: National List of Plant Species that Occur in Wetlands, Arid West Region (Corps 2022)

OBL:	Almost always a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands
FACW:	Usually a hydrophyte, but occasionally found in uplands
FAC:	Commonly either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte
FACU:	Occasionally a hydrophyte, but usually found in uplands
UPL:	Rarely a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands
NL:	Rarely a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands
NI:	No information; not factored during wetland delineation

Table B-2. Wildlife species observed in and around the Study Area: October 16, 2024

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Birds	
<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	American crow
<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	American robin
<i>Melospiza crissalis</i>	California towhee
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	European starling