# County of San Mateo - Planning and Building Department

# **PAUMENT**

### **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES EVALUATION**

# Skylonda Equipment APNs 082-120-050, 082-120-040, and 082-160-040 San Mateo County, California

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# Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

This report is a biological resources evaluation for two parcels and an easement on the south side of La Honda Road (Highway 84) near San Gregorio, in San Mateo County, California. It has been prepared for Skylonda Equipment, owned by Rick Rogers (Applicant), in response to a violation order issued by the San Mateo County District Attorney's office for grading and operations on the parcels. The Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) are 082-120-050 (114 acres owned by the applicant), 082-120-040 (easement), and 082-160-040 (94 acres leased by the applicant). There are called "the properties" in this report.

The San Mateo County District Attorney and Planning Department (County) require mandatory erosion control measures and a biological report. The purpose and need of this report is to describe the following in support of the response to the violation order issued by the County, and in support of a PAD application for project activities on these parcels:

- the biological resources within the study area;
- the applicable regulations and permits; and
- the avoidance and minimization measures necessary to protect biological resources in the study area

Project figures are included in Appendix A.

### 1.2 Environmental Setting

The project parcels are at 4488 and 4646 La Honda Road (Highway 84), approximately 4 miles east of Highway 1. They lie within the watershed of San Gregorio Creek, which extends from the Santa Cruz Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. The San Gregorio Creek watershed is the second largest drainage in coastal San Mateo County, with approximately 45 miles of blue line streams. Tributaries to San Gregorio Creek generally drain to the southwest through steep canyons and redwood-Douglas Fir and tanoak forests. The tributaries join in the valley floor, where San Gregorio Creek flows through rolling grasslands, coastal shrub, and agricultural areas before emptying into a coastal lagoon at the Pacific Ocean.

San Gregorio Creek is listed as a high priority creek by various state and federal agencies in California for a range of reasons. San Gregorio Creek is considered a Critical Coastal Area (CCA) by the California Coastal Commission (Stillwater Sciences et. Al, 2010). Of the 101 CCAs in California, San Gregorio Creek is one of the ten highest priority watersheds based on existing water quality conditions, value and sensitivity of coastal resources, new or expanding threats to beneficial uses, and degree of local support for watershed-based planning efforts.

### 1.3 Study Area

The study area for this report includes the entire parcel, but focuses on the areas described in the County violation order. These areas include activities adjacent to the creek corridor, the road grading on the site, and a marijuana grow-house site at the west end of the property.

### 1.4 Project Description

The Applicant uses a portion of the properties for operations related to the Skylonda Equipment company, including equipment and vehicle storage, materials storage, and a small-scale lumber mill. Other portions of the properties are used for hayfield cultivation, residences and associated barns. Water storage tanks are located adjacent to a spring on site, and there are pumps adjacent to San Gregorio Creek reported to be associated with water rights.

The western edge of the property is not fenced or marked, and an adjacent property owner established a greenhouse and a growhouse (seedling production) in this location.

San Mateo County identified several areas in a violation order, and requested that a biological resources evaluation be prepared to identify sensitive biological resources on the property. The areas in the violation order are associated with the creek, roads, a pad where equipment is stored and used, a house and barn, and the growhouse. This Biological Resources Evaluation describes the biological resources on the property and recommends ways to avoid significant impacts to those resources while implementing measures to comply with the County's violation order.

# **Chapter 2** Regulatory Setting

Biological resources in California are protected under federal and state laws. The laws that pertain to the biological resources found at the project site include the following.

- U.S. Endangered Species Act (protecting species listed by the federal government as threatened or endangered);
- U.S. Migratory Bird Treaty Act (protecting most U.S. birds);
- U.S. Clean Water Act (protecting water quality and wetland habitat);
- California Environmental Quality Act (mitigating the environmental effects of human-initiated development);
- California Endangered Species Act (protecting species listed by the state as rare, threatened, or endangered under Fish and Game Code 2050 et seq);
- California Department of Fish and Game Code (Sections 1600-1607 that protect stream bed, bank and channel; 3500-3516 that protect nesting birds and fully-protected birds; 4700 and 5050 that protect fully-protected mammals, reptiles and amphibians).
- California Coastal Act and California Coastal Commission

### 2.1 Federal Endangered Species Act

The United States Endangered Species Act (ESA) is administered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for all species but fish and the National Marine Fisheries Service for fish species. The federal ESA provides protection for species included on the endangered species list (known as "listed species"). In particular, the federal act prohibits "take". "Take" is defined by the ESA as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect a federally listed, endangered species of wildlife, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." Federal regulations also define take to include the incidental destruction of animals in the course of an otherwise lawful activity, such as habitat loss due to development. Under those rules the definition of take includes significant habitat modification or degradation that actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding, or shelter (50 CFR Section 17.3).

Take may be allowed under a permit by either Section 7 or Section 10(a) of the ESA. The permit is issued under Section 7 if another federal agency funds or issues a permit for the project (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for example). The permit is issued under Section 10(a) if there is no federal involvement in the project.

Federally listed species that may occur in the study area or in waters that flow downstream from the study area include California red-legged frog, San Francisco garter snake, steelhead and coho salmon.

### 2.2 Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act implements various treaties and conventions between the U.S. and Canada, Japan, Mexico and the former Soviet Union for the protection of migratory birds. Unless permitted by regulations, the Act provides that it is unlawful to pursue, hunt, take, capture or kill; attempt to take, capture or kill; possess, offer to or sell, barter, purchase, deliver or cause to be shipped, exported, imported, transported, carried or received any migratory bird, part, nest, egg or product, manufactured or not, except as authorized under a valid permit (50 CFR 21.11).

In short, under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act it is illegal to remove vegetation containing nests that are in active use, since this could result in killing a bird or destroying an egg. This would also be a violation of California Fish and Game Code (see below). Most, but not all bird species are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Birds that are considered non-native, human-introduced species (whether they were deliberately or unintentionally introduced) are not protected. Furthermore, native birds that are members of unprotected bird families are also not protected. Invasive birds such as the house sparrow and European starling are not protected, but neither are many game birds such as wild turkeys, different types of grouse and different ptarmigan species.

### 2.3 Clean Water Act

The Federal Clean Water Act is the primary federal law regulating water quality. The implementation of the Clean Water Act is the responsibility of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). That agency depends on other agencies, such as the individual states and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), to assist in implementing the Act. The objective of the Clean Water Act is to "restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." Section 404 and 401 apply to project activities that would impact waters of the U.S. (creeks, ponds, wetlands, etc). The USACE enforces Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and the California State Water Resources Control Board enforces section 401.

### Clean Water Act, Section 404:

As part of its mandate under the Clean Water Act, the EPA regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into "Waters of the U.S." under Section 404 of the Act. "Waters of the U.S." include territorial seas, tidal waters, and non-tidal waters in addition to wetlands and drainages that support wetland vegetation, exhibit ponding or scouring, show obvious signs of channeling, or have discernible banks and high water marks. The EPA also regulates excavation and changes in drainage. The discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. is prohibited under the Clean Water Act except when it is in compliance with Section 404 of the Act. Enforcement authority for Section 404 was given to the USACE, which it accomplishes through its regulatory branch.

### Clean Water Act, Section 401:

Any applicant for a Federal permit to impact waters of the U.S. under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, including Nationwide Permits where pre-construction notification is required, must also provide to the USACE a certification from the State of California. The "401 Certification" is provided by the State Water Resources Control Board through the local Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

The State Water Resources Control Board sets statewide policy related to water quality, coordinates and supports regional water quality control boards, and reviews petitions that contest regional board actions. The RWQCB sets water quality standards, waste discharge requirements for its region, determines compliance with those standards, and takes enforcement action. The RWQCB issues and enforces permits for discharge of treated water, landfills, stormwater runoff, filling of any surface waters or wetlands, dredging, agricultural activities and wastewater recycling.

The RWQCB recommends the application be made at the same time that any applications are provided to other agencies, such as the USACE, USFWS, NOAA Fisheries, or CDFW. An application is not final until completion of environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (i.e., CEQA certification). The application to the RWQCB is similar to the pre-construction notification that is required by the USACE (see discussion of Section 404, below). It must include a description of the habitat that is being impacted, a description of how the impact is proposed to be minimized and proposed mitigation measures with goals, schedules, and performance standards. Mitigation must include a replacement of functions and values, and replacement of wetland at a minimum ratio of 2:1, or twice as many acres of wetlands provided as are removed. The RWQCB looks for mitigation that is on site and in-kind, with functions and values as good as or better than the water-based habitat that is being removed.

### 2.4 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA (Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et. seq.) requires public agencies to review activities which may affect the quality of the environment so that consideration is given to preventing damage to the environment. When a lead agency issues a permit for development that could affect the environment, it must disclose the potential environmental effects of the project. This is done with an "Initial Study and Negative Declaration" (or Mitigated Negative Declaration) or with an "Environmental Impact Report". Certain classes of projects are exempt from detailed analysis under CEQA. The County will take responsibility, as lead agency, for the CEQA analysis. If permits are required from the RWQCB or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, they are also required to provide a CEQA analysis and will rely on the County's document. If the County does not complete CEQA review, the other agencies will be required to complete that review, and additional application fees will apply.

The CEQA Guidelines contain a checklist of questions to gauge whether a project will result in significant impacts. The questions that pertain to biological resources are as

follows. If a project will have no impact related to these questions, no further CEQA action related to biological resources would be necessary:

### Would the project:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or USFWS?
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS?
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

### 2.5 California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA; Fish and Game Code 2050 et seq.) establishes the policy of the state to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance threatened or endangered species and their habitats. CESA mandates that State agencies shall not approve projects that would jeopardize the continued existence of threatened or endangered species if reasonable and prudent alternatives are available that would avoid jeopardy.

State listed species that may occur in the study area include the San Francisco garter snake.

### 2.6 California Fish and Game Code

The CDFW is authorized under the California Fish and Game Code, Sections 1600-1607 to develop mitigation measures and enter into Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreements with applicants who propose projects that would obstruct the flow of, or alter the bed, channel, or bank of a river or stream in which there is a fish or wildlife resource, including perennial, intermittent and ephemeral streams.

Sections 3500-3516, 4700, 5050 and 5515 address Fully Protected species. Prior to the passage of CESA, the classification of Fully Protected was the State's initial effort to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction. Subsequently, many Fully Protected species have been listed under the state and/or federal endangered species acts. The only exceptions are golden eagle, white-tailed kite, trumpeter swan, northern elephant seal, and ringtail. Fully Protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except for collecting these species for necessary scientific research and relocation of the bird species for the protection of livestock.

Nesting birds, including raptors, are protected by California Fish and Game Code section 3503, which reads, "It is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto." In addition, under Fish and Game Code section 3503.5, "it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto". Passerines and non-passerine landbirds are further protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. As such, the CDFW typically recommends surveys for nesting birds that could potentially be directly (actual removal of trees/vegetation) or indirectly (noise disturbance) impacted by project-related activities. Disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered "taking" by the CDFW.

# 2.7 California Coastal Commission, the California Coastal Act of 1976 (PRC Division 20), and the federal Coastal Zone Management Act.

The following overview is excerpted from the California Coastal Commission website (www.coastal.ca.gov/whoweare.html accessed 5/4/2016):

The California Coastal Commission was established by voter initiative in 1972 and later made permanent by the Legislature through adoption of the California Coastal Act of 1976.

In partnership with coastal cities and counties, the California Coastal Commission plans and regulates the use of land and water in the coastal zone. Development activities, which are broadly defined by the Coastal Act to include (among others) construction of buildings, divisions of land, and activities that change the intensity of use of land or public access to coastal waters, generally require a coastal development permit from either the Coastal Commission or the local government.

The Coastal Act includes specific policies that address issues such as shoreline public access and recreation, lower cost visitor accommodations, terrestrial and marine habitat protection, visual resources, landform alteration, agricultural lands, commercial fisheries, industrial uses, water quality, offshore oil and gas development, transportation, development design, power plants, ports, and public

works. The policies of the Coastal Act constitute the statutory standards applied to planning and regulatory decisions made by the Commission and by local governments, pursuant to the Coastal Act.

The Coastal Commission is one of California's three designated coastal management agencies for the purpose of administering the federal Coastal Zone Management Act in California. Under California's federally-approved Coastal Management Program, the California Coastal Commission manages development along the California coast except for San Francisco Bay.

California's coastal management program is carried out through a partnership between state and local governments. Implementation of the Coastal Act policies is accomplished primarily through local coastal programs (LCP) that are required to be completed by each of the 15 counties and 61 cities located in whole or in part in the coastal zone.... Each LCP is certified by the Coastal Commission, and is reviewed at least once every five years.... After certification of an LCP, coastal development permit authority is delegated to the appropriate local government, but the Commission retains original permit jurisdiction over certain specified lands (such as tidelands and public trust lands). The Commission also has appellate authority over development approved by local governments in specified geographic areas as well as certain other developments.

The project site is within the coastal zone. San Mateo County has a certified LCP which governs the project and will issue the development permit. The Sensitive Habitats component of the San Mateo County LCP is described below.

### 2.8 San Mateo County Local Coastal Program Sensitive Habitats Component

Sensitive habitats are defined in the San Mateo Local Coastal Program Sensitive Habitats Component as "any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable and any area which meets one of the following criteria:

- (1) habitats containing or supporting rare and endangered species as defined by the State Fish and Game Commission,
- (2) all perennial and intermittent streams and their tributaries,
- (3) coastal tide lands and marshes,
- (4) coastal and offshore areas containing breeding or nesting sites and coastal areas used by migratory and resident water-associated birds for resting areas and feeding,
- (5) areas used for scientific study and research concerning fish and wildlife,
- (6) lakes and ponds and adjacent shore habitat,
- (7) existing game and wildlife refuges and reserves, and
- (8) sand dunes."

San Gregorio Creek starts on the slopes of the east side of the Santa Cruz Mountains east of the property and flows west to enter the Pacific Ocean at San Gregorio Beach. It enters

the property on the east side, flows in a horseshoe shape around historic landslides, and exits the property on the west side. It is a perennial stream with a riparian corridor, and meets the definition of sensitive habitat under the LCP. All tributaries to San Gregorio Creek are also defined as sensitive habitat. The property does not contain coastal tide lands, sand dunes, marshes, lakes, ponds, or any areas used for scientific study concerning fish and wildlife or as wildlife refuges.

Policy 7.9 identifies permitted uses in riparian corridors, and policy 7.10 includes the performance standards required for the permitted uses to be in compliance with the LCP. With regard to this project, policy 7.9 identifies the following permitted uses, when no feasible or practicable alternative exists:

"Policy 7.9 ...(5) repair and maintenance of roadways or road crossings...(7) agricultural uses, provided not existing riparian vegetation is removed and not soil is allowed to enter stream channels"

Policy 7.10 identifies the following performance standards:

Require development permitted in corridors to:

- (1) minimize removal of vegetation,
- (2) minimize land exposure during construction and use temporary vegetation or mulching to protect crucial areas,
- (3) minimize erosion, sedimentation, and runoff by appropriately grading and replanting modified areas
- (4) use only adapted native or non-invasive exotic plant species when replanting,
- (5) provide sufficient passage for native and anadromous fish as specified by the State Department of Fish and Game [Wildlife],
- (6) minimize adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment,
- (7) prevent depletion of groundwater supplies and substantial interference with surface and subsurface water flows,
- (8) encourage waste water reclamation,
- (9) maintain natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and
- (10) minimize alteration of natural streams.

The LCP also identifies a buffer zone of 50 feet from the limit of riparian vegetation on perennial streams, and 30 feet for intermittent streams.

The LCP allows repair and maintenance of roads and road crossings and crop growing and grazing in the buffer zone provided the uses:

- (1) minimize removal of vegetation,
- (2) conform to natural topography to minimize erosion potential,
- (3) make provisions (i.e., catch basins) to keep runoff and sedimentation from exceeding pre-development levels,
- (4) replant where appropriate with native and non-invasive exotics,

- (5) prevent discharge of toxic substances, such as fertilizers and pesticides into the riparian corridor,
- (6) remove vegetation in or adjacent to man-made ponds...,
- (7) limit the sound emitted from motorized machinery to be kept to less than 45 dBA at any riparian buffer zone boundary except for farm machinery and motorboats.

# **Chapter 3** Methodology

### 3.1 Database Searches and Literature Review

MIG|TRA reviewed the information listed below to determine what special-status species are documented to occur in the project region and that may occur within the study area.

- A records search of CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) for the San Gregorio and La Honda USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles (CNDDB 2016, Appendix D);
- USFWS California Natural Diversity Database (IPaC) resource list for the project area (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2016, Appendix D); and,
- California Native Plant Society (CNPS) 8<sup>th</sup> update of the *Online Inventory of Rare* and *Endangered Plants of California* (CNPS 2016, Appendix D).
- La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve Master Plan IS/MND (MROSD 2012)

### 3.2 Field Survey

A survey of the study area was conducted by Autumn Meisel, Senior Biologist, and Tay Peterson, Director of Biological Analysis of MIG|TRA Environmental Sciences on April 8, 2016. A reconnaissance-level survey was conducted of the areas within the properties where violations were noted (Appendix B). Precise locations of violation features were provided by San Mateo County in *The People of the State of California v. Rick Rogers*, *Skylonda Equipment, Inc.* power point presentation.

# Chapter 4 Results

This section describes vegetation communities present on site, common wildlife expected, special-status species present or potentially present on site, and regulated waters. Photos of the study area are provided in Appendix C.

### 4.1 Hydrology

The study area includes a portion of perennial San Gregorio Creek, with the creek winding along three oxbows within the property boundaries. San Gregorio Creek is the second largest watershed in coastal San Mateo County, draining an area of approximately 33,290 acres in five primary sub-basins comprising approximately 45 miles of stream channel. The highest mean monthly flows occur in February and are generally high from December to March, typical for watersheds in this geographic area. The lowest flows occur between July and October, and are frequently below 1 cubic foot per second in August and September (Stillwater Sciences et. al. 2010).

The creek is bordered by a well-developed riparian zone (see Vegetation, below). There are two bridges over the creek within the study area. Several unnamed seasonal drainages on the properties direct surface flow from the hillsides to San Gregorio Creek.

### 4.2 Vegetation

### **4.2.1** Mixed Evergreen Forest

The site supports primarily mixed evergreen forest. Dominant tree species include Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), and to a lesser extent, tan oak (*Notholithocarpus densiflorus*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*). The understory is dominated by thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*), and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*). Ferns, such as common lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina var. cyclosorum*) and California wood fern (*Dryopteris arguta*), are also common in the understory.

### 4.2.2 Riparian

Riparian vegetation requires or tolerates soil moisture levels in excess of that available in adjacent terrestrial areas, and is typically associated with the banks, edges, and or terrestrial limits of freshwater bodies and watercourses. Typically, riparian vegetation can be distinguished from adjacent upland vegetation as it forms a visually distinct and structurally separate linear plant assemblage. Within the study area, riparian forest occurs along San Gregorio Creek, with dominant species including white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*) and willow (*Salix* spp.). The riparian corridor provides critical ecosystem services for the San Gregorio watershed, such as filtering runoff and moderating stream temperatures, which is important for aquatic wildlife.

### 4.2.3 Coastal Scrub

Coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) is the dominant species in coastal scrub. Poison oak, California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*) and sticky monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) are other common shrubs and vines in this community. Common herbs include mugwort (*Artemisia douglasii*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and California cudweed (*Gnaphalium californicum*).

### 4.2.4 Ruderal Grassland

Ruderal grassland is found in areas that have been disturbed, allowing non-native annual grasses and forbs to dominate. The vast majority is dominated by non-native species that are now considered naturalized, such as wild oat (*Avena fatua*), soft chess (*Bromus hordeacous*), and rip-gut brome (*Bromus diandrus*). Both native and non-native forbs, such as California cudweed, California aster (*Aster chilensis*), bristly oxtongue (*Picris echioides*) and Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*) may form a significant component of this community.

### 4.2.5 Agriculture

Areas labeled as agriculture are either under active agricultural use, such as hay farming, or are fallow but may be farmed again.

### 4.2.6 Developed

Developed areas include all areas occupied by facilities associated with Skylonda Equipment as well as residential structures. Included in developed areas are parking and staging areas, such as equipment and material storage sites.

### 4.3 Wildlife

The study area is primarily forested and provides habitat for a variety of common birds, insects, reptiles, and amphibians. Numerous species of passerine birds and raptors common in the region may forage or nest in shrubs and trees on site, with the riparian corridor along San Gregorio Creek providing high value habitat for nesting and foraging. Several mammals such as coyote (*Canis latrans*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), and northern raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) may also forage or move through the site. Snakes and amphibians such as California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*, discussed in the following section), Santa Cruz garter snake (*Thamnophis atratus atratus*), Northern Pacific treefrog (*Pseudacris regilla*), slender salamander (*Batrachoseps attenuatus*) and arboreal salamander (*Aneides lugubris*) are expected to occur on site. Bats such as hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*) and little brown myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*) may roost within trees on site as the presence of a year round water source within the creek is an attraction for roosting bats.

Native fish that may occur in San Gregorio Creek include steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*, discussed in the following section), three-spined stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*), California roach (*Hesperoleucus symmetricus*), and hitch (*Lavinia* 

exilicauda), among others. Non-native fish that have been observed in the creek include green sunfish (*Lepomis cyanellus*), largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), black bullhead (*Ameiurus melas*), carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) and mosquito fish (*Gambusia affinis*) (San Gregorio Creek Watershed Management Plan 2010).

### 4.4 Special-Status Species

Special-status species are plants and animals that are legally protected under the ESA, CESA, or other such regulations, as well as species considered sufficiently rare by the scientific community to qualify for such listing. For the purposes of this report, special-status species comprise species in one or more of the categories listed below.

- Species listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under the ESA.
- Species that are candidates for possible future listing as threatened or endangered under the ESA.
- Species listed or proposed for listing by the state of California as threatened or endangered under CESA.
- Species that meet the definitions of rare or endangered under CEQA.
- Plants listed as rare under the California Native Plant Protection Act.
- Plants considered by CNPS to be "rare, threatened, or endangered in California" (Lists 1B and 2).
- Animal species listed as of special concern by CDFW.
- Animals fully protected in California.

### 4.4.1 Animals

Numerous species included in the database lists in Appendix D have no potential to occur in the study area due to local range restrictions or lack of suitable habitat. Based on a review of the database lists and the preparer's knowledge of other sensitive species that may occur in the region, 14 special-status wildlife species were determined to occur or have potential to occur in the study area or in downstream waters. This determination is based on the presence of suitable habitat or the location of the study area within the species' known range. Each of these species is discussed below.

# **4.4.1.1** California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*, State Species of Special Concern and Federal Threatened)

California red-legged frog (CRF) breeds in slow-moving or still water, preferably ponds, pools and marshes that support vegetation such as cattail, bulrush and willows. This species often breeds in man-made pools such as stock ponds. During the non-breeding season, it may use a variety of aquatic habitats including streams, springs, springs and water traps. However, the species is not restricted to aquatic habitats. It will use upland areas, especially during the winter months when it is wet, sometimes for weeks or months at a time. Red-legged frog is capable of moving long distances overland when conditions

are appropriate. It will also seek shelter in moist areas such as leaf litter or mammal burrows when waters recede.

CRF oviposits its eggs in ponds and pools in slow-moving creeks during the winter and early spring. Tadpoles hatch after one to two weeks and transform into frogs after four to seven months. Young frogs do not mature into breeding adults for three to four years. Tadpoles are thought to feed on algae, while adults feed on insects and small vertebrates. CRF is vulnerable to predators during its aquatic development and thus it is usually absent from suitable habitat that contains introduced aquatic predators such as bullfrogs and various fish.

San Gregorio Creek provides potential habitat for California red-legged frog, and the species may also forage and disperse through the drainages on site. The nearest CNDDB record of CRF is 1.3 miles upstream of the study area, in San Gregorio Creek (CNDDB 2016). The project site is within Critical Habitat (SNM-2) for CRF.

### 4.4.1.2 Foothill vellow-legged frog (*Rana boylii*, State Species of Special Concern)

Foothill yellow-legged frogs (FYF) are found near rocky streams in a variety of habitats, including valley-foothill riparian, mixed conifer, coastal scrub, chaparral, and wet meadow types. Within these habitats, the FYF requires shallow, flowing water in small to moderate-sized streams containing some cobble-sized or larger substrate. The microhabitat provided by the cobble substrate is utilized for ovipositing eggs and as a significant refuge for larvae and post metamorphosis frogs. Like CRF, because FYF are vulnerable to predators during their aquatic development, they are often absent from suitable habitat that contains introduced aquatic predators such as bullfrogs and various fish.

Between late March and early June, FYF oviposit egg masses on the downstream side of cobbles and boulders in slow moving water. It is speculated that FYF take two years from egg laying to reach adult size. The adult diet consists of aquatic and terrestrial insects. Significant seasonal movements or migrations from breeding areas have not been reported, however FYF have been documented underground and beneath surface objects more than 155 feet from water.

San Gregorio Creek provides suitable habitat for FYF, although there are no records of FYF occurring in the San Gregorio Watershed. The nearest record of foothill yellow-legged frog is in Pescadero Creek (CNDDB 2016).

# **4.4.1.3** Western Pond Turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*, State species of special concern)

Western pond turtle is often seen basking above the water, but will quickly slide into the water when it feels threatened. The species is active from around February to November and may be active during warm periods in winter. Western pond turtle hibernates underwater, often in the muddy bottom of a pool and may estivate during summer droughts by burying itself in soft bottom mud. When creeks and ponds dry up in summer, some turtles that inhabit creeks will travel along the creek until they find an isolated deep

pool, others stay within moist mats of algae in shallow pools while many turtles move to woodlands above the creek or pond and bury themselves in loose soil where they will overwinter.

San Gregorio Creek provides suitable habitat for western pond turtle, however, there are no records of this species occurring in San Gregorio Creek in the CNDDB. The species is known to occur in the San Gregorio Watershed and has been documented on the La Honda Open Space Preserve (MROSD 2012). The Preserve is located on the north side of La Honda Road from the study area.

# 4.4.1.4 San Francisco garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*, State and Federal Endangered and State Fully Protected)

The preferred habitat of San Francisco garter snake (SFGS) is a densely vegetated pond near an open hillside where they can sun themselves, feed, and find cover in rodent burrows; however, considerably less ideal habitats can be successfully occupied. Temporary ponds and other seasonal freshwater bodies are also used. Emergent and bankside vegetation such as cattails (*Typha* spp.), bulrushes (*Scirpus* spp.) and spike rushes (*Juncus* spp. and *Eleocharis* spp.) are preferred and used for cover. The area between stream and pond habitats and grasslands or banks is used for basking; while nearby dense vegetation or water often provide escape cover. Snakes also use floating algal or rush mats, if available.

Adult snakes sometimes estivate (enter a dormant state) in rodent burrows during summer months when ponds dry. On the coast, snakes hibernate during the winter in upland small mammal burrows, but further inland, if the weather is suitable, snakes may be active year-round. San Francisco garter snakes forage extensively in aquatic habitats. Adult snakes feed primarily on California red-legged frogs. They may also feed on juvenile bullfrogs, but they are unable to feed on the larger adults. Adult bullfrogs likely prey on smaller SFGS, and may be a contributing factor in their decline. Newborn and juvenile SFGS depend heavily upon Pacific tree frogs as prey.

San Francisco garter snake has been recorded in San Gregorio Creek, approximately 2.25 miles downstream from the study site. This record comes from surveys conducted from 1971 to 1983 (CNDDB 2016).

# **4.4.1.5** Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*, Federal Threatened and State Endangered)

A chunky Pacific seabird, the marbled murrelet is unique among alcids (puffin relatives) in nesting high up in large trees in coastal forests. Marbled murrelets are long-lived and spend most of their life in the marine environment, but use old-growth forests for nesting. Courtship, foraging, loafing, molting, and preening occur in near-shore marine waters. Throughout their range, marbled murrelets are opportunistic feeders and utilize prey of diverse sizes and species. They feed primarily on fish and invertebrates in near-shore marine waters although they have also been detected on rivers and inland lakes.

Marbled murrelets spend the majority of their lives on the ocean, but come inland to nest. They generally nest in old-growth forests, characterized by large trees, multiple canopy layers, and moderate to high canopy closure. The marbled murrelet usually nests in trees greater than 200 years in age. In California, nests are typically found in coastal redwood and Douglas-fir forests. These forests are located close enough to the marine environment for the birds to fly to and from nest sites. Nests are not built, but rather the egg is placed in a small depression or cup made in moss or other debris on the limb. The amount of suitable habitat has continued to decline throughout the range of the marbled murrelet, primarily due to commercial timber harvest.

If old growth trees occur on any of the parcels associated with the violations, there is potential for marbled murrelet to nest on site. Nesting sites are typically selected in trees located in closer proximity to the coast. The nearest CNDDB occurrence of the species is located 2.6 miles away from the study area (CNDDB 2016).

### 4.4.1.6 Long-eared Owl (Asio otus, State species of special concern)

Long-eared Owls require a combination of grassland or other open country for foraging, and dense tall shrubs or trees for nesting and roosting. The long-eared owl nests in evergreen trees, particularly conifers, and uses the old stick nests of other birds such as crows and ravens. Pine stands and windbreaks or shelterbelts are favored winter roost habitat. The long-eared owl hunts over open country by night. It is very long winged, like the similar short-eared owl, and glides slowly on stiff wings when hunting. Its food is mainly rodents, small mammals, and birds. The long-eared owl's breeding season is from February to July.

Long-eared owl may nest in dense vegetation on site and forage in nearby agricultural areas.

### 4.4.1.7 White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*, State Fully Protected)

The white-tailed kite is a yearlong resident in coastal and valley lowlands, rarely found away from agricultural areas or open grasslands. The species inhabits herbaceous and open stages of most habitats mostly in cismontane California. White-tailed kite preys mostly on voles and other small, diurnal mammals, occasionally on birds, insects, reptiles, and amphibians. The raptor forages in undisturbed, open grasslands, meadows, farmlands and emergent wetlands and soars, glides, and hovers less than 100 feet above ground in search of prey. The species slowly descends vertically upon prey with wings held high, and legs extended.

White-tailed kite uses trees with dense canopies for cover. Breeding pairs make a nest of loosely piled sticks and twigs lined with grass, straw, or rootlets. Nests are placed near top of dense oak, willow, or other tree stand; usually 20-100 ft above ground. Nests are located near open foraging area.

White-tailed kite could nest in the study area as suitable nesting habitat is found within riparian habitat and foraging habitat can be found in nearby agricultural and grassland fields.

# 4.4.1.8 San Francisco Dusky-Footed Woodrat, (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*, State Species of Special Concern)

The San Francisco woodrat is one of eleven described subspecies of the dusky-footed woodrat found in forest and shrubland communities throughout much of California. They consume a wide variety of nuts and fruits, fungi, foliage and some forbs. Many species are good climbers and rock dwellers, and dusky-footed woodrats are highly arboreal. Evergreen or live oaks and other thick-leaved trees and shrubs are important habitat components for the species.

San Francisco Dusky-footed woodrats are nocturnal species that are well known for their large terrestrial stick houses, some of which can last for twenty or more years. Houses typically are placed on the ground against or straddling a log or exposed roots of a standing tree, and, are often located in dense brush. Nests are also placed in the crotches and cavities of trees and in hollow logs. Sometimes arboreal nests are constructed in habitat with evergreen trees such as live oak.

A San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat was observed during the site survey, and woodrat houses may occur on site.

### 4.4.1.9 Pallid bat (Antrozous pallidus, State Species of Special Concern)

The pallid bat is a species of bat that ranges from western Canada to central Mexico. Pallid bats are typically found in arid or semi-arid habitats, often in mountainous or rocky areas near water. They are also found over open, sparsely vegetated grasslands. During the day time, pallid bats typically roost in caves, cracks and crevices, which may include tile roofs, exfoliating bark of trees, or rocky outcrops. A night roost is usually less protected than a day roost; open porches may be used as night roosts by this species. In the winter time, this species may dip into shallow bouts of torpor, often in buildings, caves, or cracks in rocks.

Pallid bats are insectivores that feed on arthropods such as crickets, and are capable of consuming up to half their weight in insect every night. Pallid bats are gleaners, capturing prey from the ground and transporting it to their night roost for consumption. Like the majority of bat species, pallid bats are capable of using echolocation while foraging and traveling from their roost sites to foraging grounds. However, they may also opt to not echolocate while foraging, and instead use their large ears to locate insects on the ground. This species is sensitive to noise disturbance when roosting.

Pallid bat is known to occur in the San Gregorio Watershed and has been documented on the La Honda Open Space Preserve (MROSD 2012). The species may roost on site within tree bark or roof structures.

# 4.4.1.10 Townsend's Big-Eared Bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*, State Candidate Threatened, State Species of Special Concern)

Townsend's big-eared bat is a medium-sized bat with extremely long, flexible ears, and small yet noticeable lumps on each side of the snout. The distribution of this bat is correlated largely with rocky situations where their preferred roosting habitat, caves and abandoned mine tunnels, are available. Townsend's big-eared bats will use a variety of habitats, almost always near caves or other roosting areas. They can be found in pine forests and arid desert scrub habitats. When roosting they do not tuck themselves into cracks and crevices like many bat species do, but prefer large open areas. This species is sensitive to disturbance and it has been documented that they will abandon roost sites after human interference.

Townsend's big-eared bat hibernates throughout its range during winter months when temperatures are between 0°C and 11.5°C. While hibernating it hangs alone or in small groups in the open, with fur erect to provide maximum insulation and with ears coiled back. These bats emerge late in the evening to forage and are swift, highly maneuverable fliers. Prey items include small moths, flies, lacewings, dung beetles, and sawflies.

Townsend's big-eared bat is known to occur in the San Gregorio Creek watershed and has been documented on the La Honda Open Space Preserve (MROSD 2012). Townsend's big-eared bat may forage within the study area, but is unlikely to roost due to the absence of caves or mines. There is a small potential that the species would roost within structures that receive no to little human disturbance.

### 4.4.1.11 Western Red Bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*, State Species of Special Concern)

The western red bat roosts primarily in tree foliage, especially in cottonwood, sycamore, and other riparian trees or orchards. The bat prefers habitat edges and mosaics with trees that are protected from above and open below with open areas for foraging, including grasslands, shrublands, and open woodlands. They are solitary by nature, but will gather in larger nursery roosts during the summer.

Western red bat is known to occur in the San Gregorio Watershed and has been documented on the La Honda Open Space Preserve (MROSD 2012). The species may roost in riparian vegetation within the study area.

### 4.4.1.12 Steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss), Federal Threatened

Steelhead are anadromous forms of *O. mykiss*, spending some time in both fresh- and saltwater. The older juvenile and adult life stages occur in the ocean, until the adults ascend freshwater streams to spawn. Eggs (laid in gravel nests), alevins (gravel dwelling hatchlings), fry (juveniles newly emerged from stream gravels) and young juveniles all rear in freshwater until they become large enough to migrate to the ocean to finish rearing and maturing to adults. Coastal California steelhead usually live in freshwater for 2 years, then spend 1 or 2 years in the ocean before returning to their natal stream to spawn.

Steelhead may spawn one to four times over their life. Steelhead are known to occur in San Gregorio Creek and may occur within the study area. The creek is designated as Critical Habitat for the species (NOAA 2010a).

### 4.4.1.13 Coho salmon (Oncorhynchus kisutch), Federal Endangered

Coho salmon is an anadromous fish, meaning it spends approximately the first half of its life cycle rearing and feeding in streams and small freshwater tributaries, and the second half of its life foraging in estuarine and marine waters of the Pacific Ocean. Streams with stable gravel substrates provide spawning habitat for this species.

Adults return to their stream of origin to spawn and die, usually at around three years old. Young coho spend one to two years in their freshwater natal streams, often spending the first winter in off-channel sloughs, before undergoing a transformation to the smolt life-stage. Smolts migrate to the ocean in late March through July. Some fish leave fresh water in the spring, spend the summer in brackish estuarine ponds and then migrate back into fresh water in the fall. Coho salmon live in the salt water for one to three years before returning to spawn. Some precocious males known as "jacks" return as two-year-old spawners. Food sources include insects, plankton, and small fish.

Coho salmon are known to occur in San Gregorio Creek (NOAA 2010b) and may occur within the study area.

# 4.4.1.14 Tidewater Goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*, Federal Endangered, State Species of Special Concern)

The tidewater goby, a fish species endemic to California, is found primarily in waters of coastal lagoons, estuaries, and marshes where brackish water conditions occur. The tidewater goby is typically an annual species, although some variation has been documented. Tidewater gobies may occur in loose aggregations of a few to several hundreds or thousands of individuals.

Tidewater goby is benthic in nature, living at the bottom of shallow bodies of water. Its habitat is characterized by brackish (somewhat salty) water in shallow lagoons and in lower stream reaches where the water is fairly still but not stagnant. Vegetation within tidewater goby habitat generally is sparse, consisting of several species of submerged or emergent aquatic plants. Reproduction occurs nearly year-round, especially in warmer waters in the southern portion of the species' range. Distinct peaks in spawning may occur in spring and late summer.

Tidewater goby would not occur in the study are as the species would not travel upstream into fresh water. However, the species has been recorded in the San Gregorio lagoon, and impacts to water quality in the study area could impact tidewater goby habitat downstream.

### 4.4.2 Special-Status Plants

Numerous special-status plant species ranked by CNPS were found through database searches to have a potential to occur in the region (Appendix D). No plant species protected under the federal or state ESA have potential to occur on site due to a lack of suitable habitat or local range restrictions.

Several special-status plant species occur in the region and could occur onsite based on the habitats present. A focused survey for rare plants or microhabitats was not conducted for preparation of this report. Four special-status plants, King's Mountain manzanita (*Arctostaphylos regismontana*), western leatherwood (*Dirca occidentalis*), California bottle-brush grass (*Hystrix californica*), and Choris's popcornflower (*Plagiobothrys chorisianus* var. *chorisianus*), are documented to occur within the La Honda Creek Preserve (MROSD 2012), approximately 1.5 miles from the properties, and could occur on site based on habitats present.

King's Mountain manzanita (CNPS 1.B) grows in manzanita chaparral and Douglas-fir forest.

Western leatherwood (CNPS 1.B) is a shrub that grows on cool, moist slopes in woodland and creek/riparian habitat. It grows in mixed evergreen forest dominated by madrone, black oak, coast live oak, poison oak, and bay laurel. It grows in association with coffeeberry, manzanita, bay laurel, buckeye, elderberry, tan oak, bitter cherry, gooseberry and toyon.

California bottle-brush grass (CNPS 4.3) grows in coniferous forest and moist woodlands, and has been found growing in association with douglas fir, bedstraw, melic grass, blackberry, poison oak, nettles, and forget-me-not.

Choris' popcorn flower (CNPS 1B), grows in grassland patches in chaparral and coastal scrub, and has also been found in moist meadows surrounded by oaks and madrones.

### 4.5 Wildlife Corridors

The study area is part of an extensive agricultural and open space area, most of which is privately held and used for farming and cattle grazing. Wildlife movement occurs across the study area and along San Gregorio creek and its riparian corridor, but the study area does not contain a locally unique or restricted movement corridor for wildlife. The creek is a critical movement corridor for spawning steelhead and coho salmon.

### 4.6 Jurisdictional Waters

San Gregorio Creek and on-site tributaries to the creek would qualify as Jurisdictional Waters. A formal wetland delineation was not conducted as part of this study. As addressed in *The People of the State of California v. Rick Rogers, Skylonda Equipment, Inc.*, permits from the regulatory agencies, including the California Coastal Commission, are required for impacts to jurisdictional waters.

# Chapter 5 Recommended Measures for Protection of Biological Resources

# 5.1 Protection of the Riparian Corridor in Compliance with the Local Coastal Program Sensitive Habitats Component

The Local Coastal Program provides specific guidance for protection of the riparian corridor, and identifies allowable uses in the corridor and within 30-50 feet of the edge of riparian vegetation. The 30 foot and 50 foot buffers are shown on Figure 5 (30 feet applies to intermittent streams and 50 feet applies to perennial streams). The applicable provisions of the LCP Sensitive Habitats Component are summarized in section 2.8, above.

Project activities must minimize the removal of vegetation from the riparian corridor and the buffer zone, and take measures to protect water quality and minimize erosion, sedimentation, and runoff. The repair and maintenance of roads and road crossings are allowed in the riparian zone and buffer; crop growing and grazing are allowed in the buffer as long as they do not impact riparian vegetation or pollute the creek.

It is recommended that equipment and stored materials be moved out of the 50-foot buffer adjacent to San Gregorio Creek.

Any future activities that require action in the riparian zone, in any creek, or on the creek bank must comply with the LCP and will likely require approval from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

### 5.2 Protection of Water Quality and Fish Habitat

This is a geologically dynamic site and water quality protection measures are recommended for any activities that could result in discharge to San Gregorio Creek or tributaries. A water quality protection plan is under preparation. Examples of typical measures are:

- Erosion controls (hydraulic mulch, tackifiers, and straw mulches)
- Sediment Controls (Fiber rolls, silt fence, perimeter controls, stockpile management, dissipators, sediment basins)
- Non-storm water Best Management Practices (scheduling, tracking controls, dust abatement, waste management, containment of portable toilets, and vehicle fueling and maintenance)
- Re-seeding graded areas

It is recommended that water quality protection measures be installed to protect the water quality of the creek, which provides fish habitat, including habitat for steelhead and coho

salmon that occurs within the study area, and tidewater goby, that occurs downstream at the mouth of San Gregorio Creek.

### 5.3 Special-status Amphibians and Reptiles

California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, San Francisco garter snake, and western pond turtle all use aquatic habitat and have some potential to occur within the creek or drainages on site. If any work to the creek, creek bank, drainages or associated riparian vegetation is proposed, a pre-construction survey for these aquatic species should be performed by a qualified biologist on the same day that work is to begin and immediately prior to work. If construction starts in a new aquatic area, a new survey should be performed in that area before the start of work. If a species is found, work should be stopped, the animal visually monitored and allowed to move out of the disturbance area, and the USFWS and CDFW contacted for directions on how to proceed.

It is recommended that a biological monitor remain onsite to monitor all work within the stream corridor.

### 5.4 Roosting Bats

Bat surveys are recommended prior to the removal or modification of any structure or removal or trimming of any tree that provides suitable roosting habitat for bats. The surveys for roosting bats will be conducted by a qualified biologist. Surveys will consist of a daytime pedestrian survey looking for evidence of bat use (e.g., guano) and/or an evening emergence survey to note the presence or absence of bats. If no bat roosts are found, then no further study is required. If evidence of bat use is observed, the number and species of bats using the roost will be determined. Bat detectors may be used to supplement survey efforts, but are not required.

If bat roosts are determined to be present and must be removed, the bats will be excluded from the roosting site before the structure or tree is removed. A program addressing compensation, exclusion methods, and roost removal procedures will be developed in consultation with CDFW before implementation. Exclusion methods may include use of one-way doors at roost entrances (bats may leave but not reenter), or sealing roost entrances when the site can be confirmed to contain no bats. Exclusion efforts may be restricted during periods of sensitive activity (e.g., during hibernation or while females in maternity colonies are nursing young). The loss of each roost (if any) will be replaced in consultation with CDFW and may include construction and installation of bat boxes suitable to the bat species and colony size that was excluded from the original roosting site. Roost replacement will be implemented before bats are excluded from the original roost sites. Once the replacement roosts are constructed and it is confirmed that bats are not present in the original roost site, the structures may be removed or sealed.

### 5.5 Nesting Birds

Birds nest on structures, in trees and shrubs, and on the ground. It is a violation of California Fish and Game Code and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act to destroy

active nests. To avoid or minimize impacts to nesting birds, including special-status species, it is strongly recommended that ground disturbance, removal or modification of structures or trimming or removal of vegetation will be scheduled to take place in the fall and winter, outside of the breeding season (the breeding season is from February 15 to August 31). However, if it is necessary to conduct activities during the breeding season, it is recommended that a qualified biologist conduct a survey for nesting birds within five days prior to the proposed start of activities. If active nests are not present, activities can take place as scheduled.

If activities are ongoing, it is recommended that the qualified biologist visit the site daily to search for nests until all nesting substrates are removed. This will avoid impacts to any birds that may have moved into the site and initiated nest-building activity after the start of activities. Additionally, if more than 5 days elapse between the initial nest search and the vegetation/building removal it is possible for new birds to move into the area and begin building a nest. If there is such a delay, another nest survey will be conducted. If any active nests are detected, CDFW will be contacted on how to proceed. Typically, a buffer will be established around the nest, ranging from 50 feet to 1,000 feet depending on the type of bird, and the nesting activity will be monitored regularly until the birds have fledged. Once the birds have fledged the work activity can proceed.

In the unlikely event that a marbled murrelet nest is discovered, activities within 250 feet of the nest will be stopped and the USFWS will be contacted immediately.

### 5.6 San Francisco Dusky-footed Woodrat

If activities that would result in ground disturbance or removal of woody vegetation are proposed, it is recommended that not more than thirty days before such activities, a qualified biologist identify all woodrat houses in the vicinity of disturbance areas. All identified woodrat houses will be avoided by activities if possible. The project will maintain a five-foot buffer around the houses to avoid impacts to woodrats. If avoidance is not feasible, CDFW will be consulted regarding currently accepted methods for moving woodrats. This usually requires trapping the woodrats, dismantling their houses, and relocating woodrats to constructed artificial houses in nearby suitable habitat that will not be disturbed. Woodrat relocation would occur outside of the rat maternity season and when there is no rain and nighttime temperatures are greater than 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

### 5.7 Special-Status Plants

If ground disturbance within areas mapped as mixed evergreen forest, riparian, or coastal scrub habitat is proposed, it is recommended that a survey for rare plants be completed prior to disturbance. The survey shall be done at the time of year that the plants are identifiable (such as the bloom period). If any special-status plants are found to occur on site, the area around the plants will be flagged for avoidance and protected with orange construction fence. If avoidance is not possible, CDFW shall be consulted on how to proceed.

# Chapter 6 References

- California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2016. Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California 8th Edition. Sacramento, California. Viewed at <a href="http://cnps.web.aplus.net/cgi-bin/inv/inventory.cgi">http://cnps.web.aplus.net/cgi-bin/inv/inventory.cgi</a>.
- California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). 2016. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Biogeographic Data Branch. April.
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD). 2012. La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve Master Plan. Draft IS/MND. July.
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). 2010a. North-Central California Coast Recovery Domain. 5-Year Review: Summary and Evaluation of Central California Coastal Steelhead DPS. NOAA Fisheries Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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- Stillwater Sciences, Stockholm Environmental Institute, and San Gregorio Environmental Resource Center. 2010. San Gregorio Creek Watershed Management Plan. Prepared for the Natural Heritage Institute. June.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2016. IPaC Trust Resource Report, prepared for Skylonda Equipment project area on May 2, 2016.

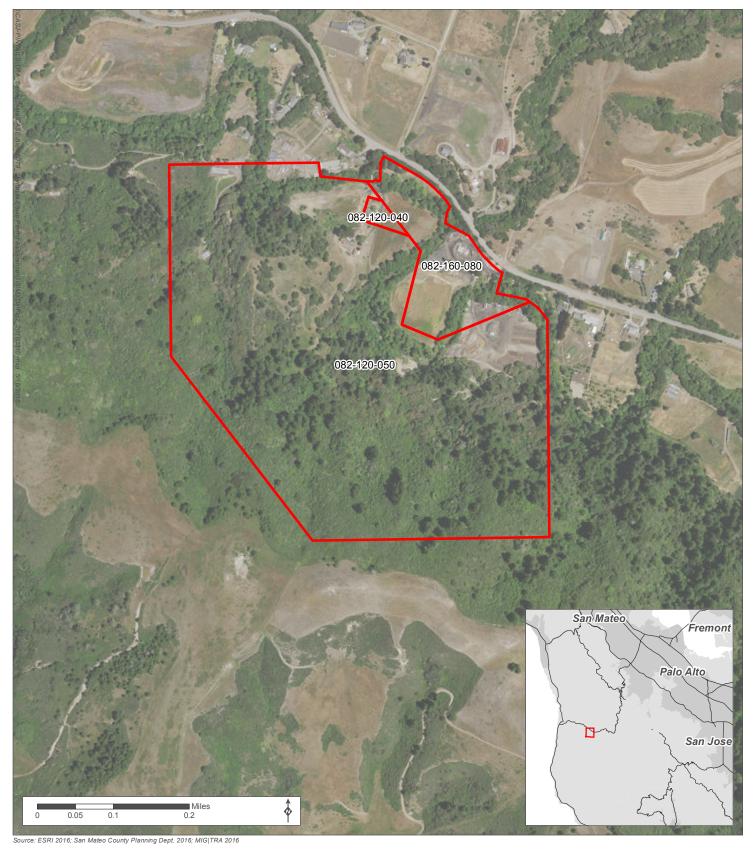
- A. Figures
- B. San Mateo County Map of Violation Areas
- C. Photographs
- D. Special-status Species Lists (CNDDB, IPac, CNPS)

Appendix A Figures



--- Major Road

County Boundary



Property Boundary

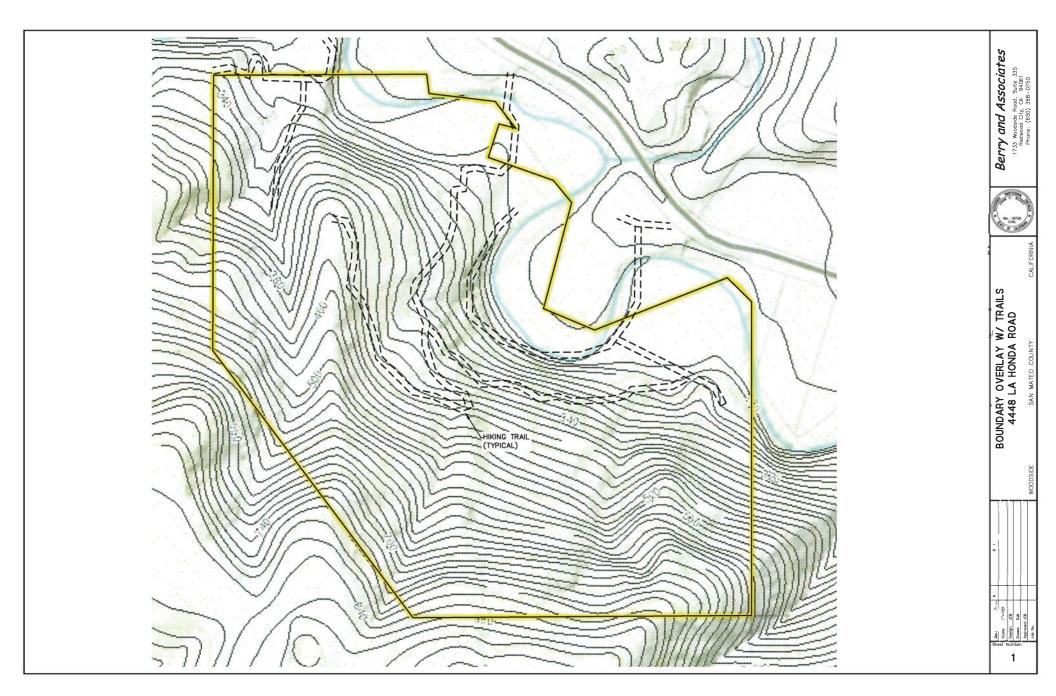
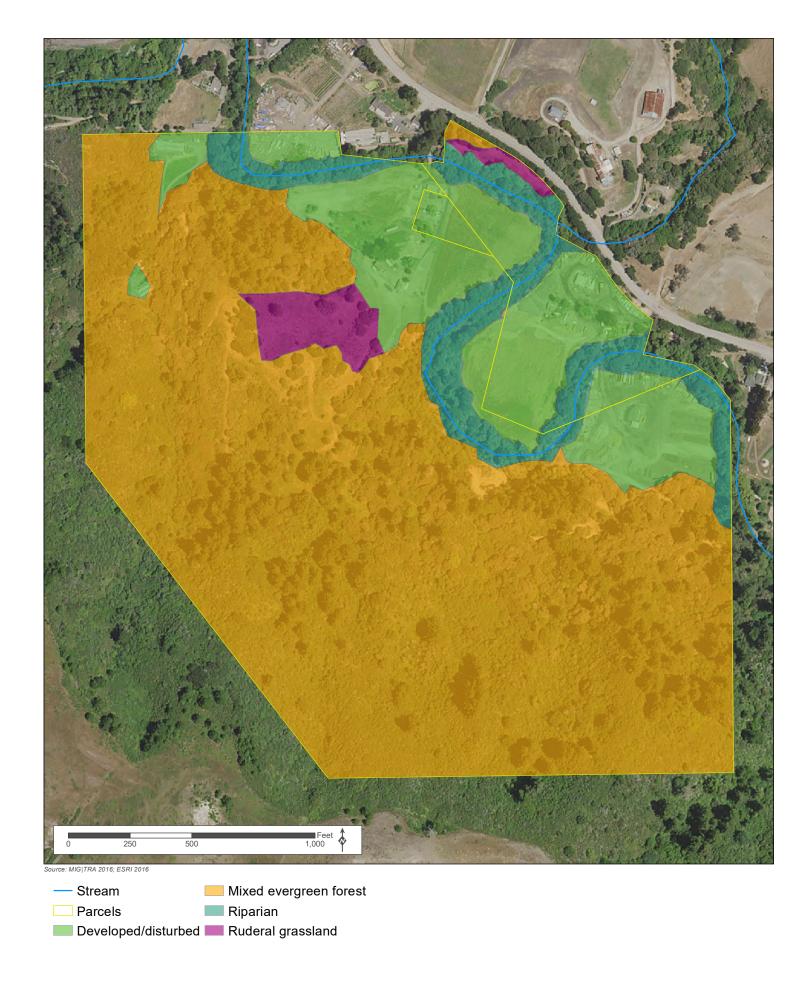


Figure 3 Boundary Overlay with Trails





Intermittent stream

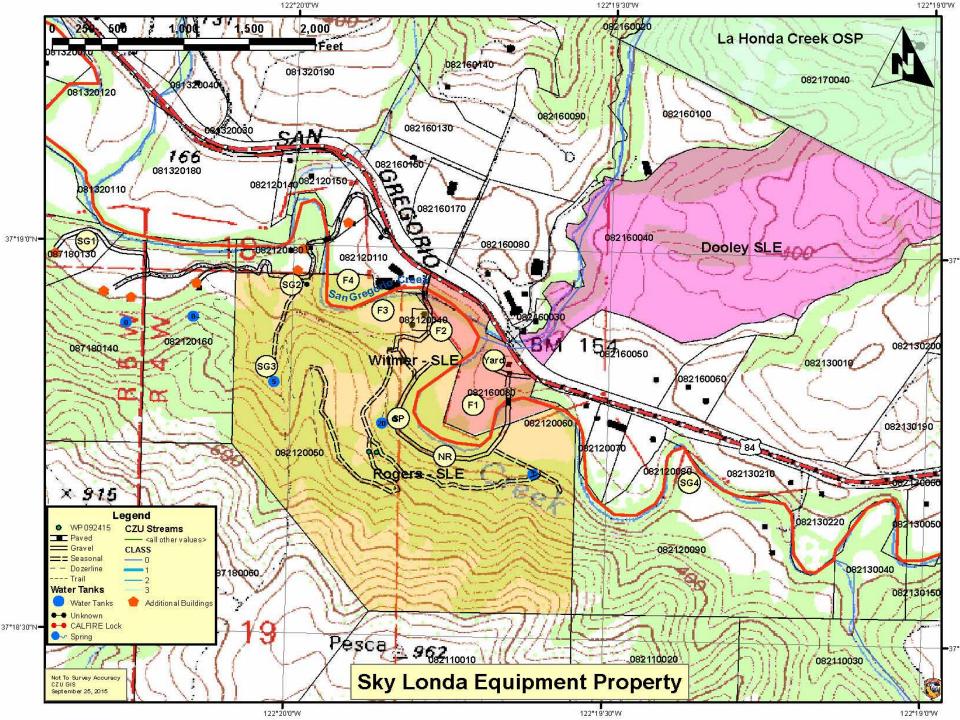
Perennial stream

Parcels

LCP 30-foot riparian buffer for intermittent streams

LCP 50-foot riparian buffer for perennial streams

Appendix B Violation Map



Appendix C Photographs



Landslide area adjacent to San Gregorio Creek



San Gregorio Creek bank stabilzation



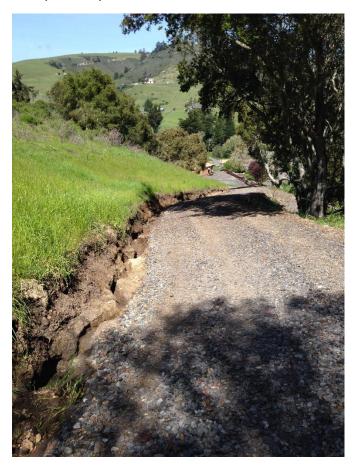
Vegetation and typical roads



Material stored next to San Gregorio Creek riparian zone



Example of slope stabilization



Erosion to be addressed in management plan



Agricultural use adjacent to creek corridor



Vegetation and typical road on property



Slope instability to be addressed in management plan



Equipment area requiring 50-foot setback from edge of riparian vegetation.



Equipment adjacent to San Gregorio Creek

# Appendix D Special Status Species Lists



## **Selected Elements by Scientific Name**

# California Department of Fish and Wildlife California Natural Diversity Database



Query Criteria: Quad<span style='color:Red'> IS </span>(La Honda (3712233)<span style='color:Red'> OR </span>San Gregorio (3712234))

Chaoine	Flowert Code	Fodovol Status	State Status	Clabal Bank	State Dank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW
Species Antrozous pallidus	AMACC10010	Federal Status None	State Status None	Global Rank G5	State Rank	SSC or FP
pallid bat	AMACCIOOTO	None	None	GS	33	330
Arctostaphylos andersonii	PDERI04030	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
Anderson's manzanita	1 DEI (104030	None	None	02	02	10.2
Arctostaphylos regismontana	PDERI041C0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
Kings Mountain manzanita	1 BEIGHTOO	None	None	02	02	10.2
Ardea herodias	ABNGA04010	None	None	G5	S4	
great blue heron						
Astragalus pycnostachyus var. pycnostachyus	PDFAB0F7B2	None	None	G2T2	S2	1B.2
coastal marsh milk-vetch	. 2.7.20 22			02.2	<u>-</u>	
Bombus caliginosus	IIHYM24380	None	None	G4?	S1S2	
obscure bumble bee						
Bombus occidentalis	IIHYM24250	None	None	G2G3	S1	
western bumble bee				0200	•	
Brachyramphus marmoratus	ABNNN06010	Threatened	Endangered	G3G4	S1	
marbled murrelet			3			
California macrophylla	PDGER01070	None	None	G3?	S3?	1B.2
round-leaved filaree						
Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus	ABNNB03031	Threatened	None	G3T3	S2	SSC
western snowy plover						
Corynorhinus townsendii	AMACC08010	None	Candidate	G3G4	S2	SSC
Townsend's big-eared bat			Threatened			
Dicamptodon ensatus	AAAAH01020	None	None	G3	S2S3	
California giant salamander						
Dirca occidentalis	PDTHY03010	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
western leatherwood						
Eriophyllum latilobum	PDAST3N060	Endangered	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1
San Mateo woolly sunflower						
Eucyclogobius newberryi	AFCQN04010	Endangered	None	G3	S3	SSC
tidewater goby						
Fissidens pauperculus	NBMUS2W0U0	None	None	G3?	S2	1B.2
minute pocket moss						
Geothlypis trichas sinuosa	ABPBX1201A	None	None	G5T3	S3	SSC
saltmarsh common yellowthroat						
Lasiurus cinereus	AMACC05030	None	None	G5	S4	
hoary bat						
Lasthenia californica ssp. macrantha	PDAST5L0C5	None	None	G3T2	S2	1B.2
perennial goldfields						
Leptosiphon rosaceus	PDPLM09180	None	None	G1	S1	1B.1
rose leptosiphon						



## **Selected Elements by Scientific Name**

# California Department of Fish and Wildlife California Natural Diversity Database



Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFV SSC or FP
Malacothamnus arcuatus	PDMAL0Q0E0	None	None	G2Q	S2	1B.2
arcuate bush-mallow						
Microseris paludosa	PDAST6E0D0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
marsh microseris						
Monolopia gracilens	PDAST6G010	None	None	G3	S3	1B.2
woodland woollythreads						
N. Central Coast Calif. Roach/Stickleback/Steelhead Stream	CARA2633CA	None	None	GNR	SNR	
N. Central Coast Calif. Roach/Stickleback/Steelhead Stream						
North Central Coast Steelhead/Sculpin Stream	CARA2637CA	None	None	GNR	SNR	
North Central Coast Steelhead/Sculpin Stream						
Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus	AFCHA0209G	Threatened	None	G5T2T3Q	S2S3	
steelhead - central California coast DPS						
Plagiobothrys chorisianus var. chorisianus Choris' popcornflower	PDBOR0V061	None	None	G3T2Q	S2	1B.2
Rana boylii	AAABH01050	None	None	G3	S3	SSC
foothill yellow-legged frog						
Rana draytonii	AAABH01022	Threatened	None	G2G3	S2S3	SSC
California red-legged frog						
Riparia riparia	ABPAU08010	None	Threatened	G5	S2	
bank swallow						
Sacramento-San Joaquin Coastal Lagoon Sacramento-San Joaquin Coastal Lagoon	CALA1360CA	None	None	GNR	SNR	
Speyeria zerene myrtleae Myrtle's silverspot butterfly	IILEPJ608C	Endangered	None	G5T1	S1	
Spirinchus thaleichthys	AFCHB03010	Candidate	Threatened	G5	S1	SSC
longfin smelt						
Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia San Francisco garter snake	ARADB3613B	Endangered	Endangered	G5T2Q	S2	FP
Tryonia imitator	IMGASJ7040	None	None	G2	S2	
mimic tryonia (=California brackishwater snail)						
Valley Needlegrass Grassland Valley Needlegrass Grassland	CTT42110CA	None	None	G3	S3.1	

**Record Count: 36** 

# Skylonda Eqiupment

# IPaC Trust Resources Report

Generated May 02, 2016 12:26 PM MDT, IPaC v3.0.2

This report is for informational purposes only and should not be used for planning or analyzing project level impacts. For project reviews that require U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service review or concurrence, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list from the Regulatory Documents page.



IPaC - Information for Planning and Conservation (<a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/">https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/</a>): A project planning tool to help streamline the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service environmental review process.

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#### U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# IPaC Trust Resources Report

FISH A WILDLIFE
SERVICE

NAME

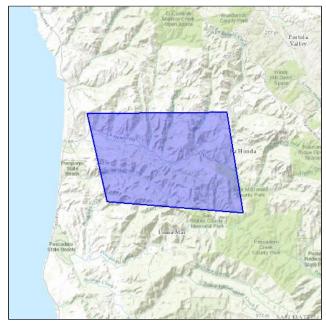
Skylonda Eqiupment

LOCATION

San Mateo County, California

IPAC LINK

https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/project/ MSEUK-WV3X5-ASFKE-SLHGT-BZU7M4



# U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Contact Information

Trust resources in this location are managed by:

#### **Sacramento Fish And Wildlife Office**

Federal Building 2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605 Sacramento, CA 95825-1846 (916) 414-6600

# **Endangered Species**

Proposed, candidate, threatened, and endangered species are managed by the <u>Endangered Species Program</u> of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

This USFWS trust resource report is for informational purposes only and should not be used for planning or analyzing project level impacts.

For project evaluations that require USFWS concurrence/review, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list from the Regulatory Documents section.

<u>Section 7</u> of the Endangered Species Act **requires** Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of such proposed action" for any project that is conducted, permitted, funded, or licensed by any Federal agency.

A letter from the local office and a species list which fulfills this requirement can only be obtained by requesting an official species list either from the Regulatory Documents section in IPaC or from the local field office directly.

The list of species below are those that may occur or could potentially be affected by activities in this location:

## **Amphibians**

California Red-legged Frog Rana draytonii

Threatened

**CRITICAL HABITAT** 

There is **final** critical habitat designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=D02D

### **Birds**

California Least Tern Sterna antillarum browni

Endangered

**CRITICAL HABITAT** 

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B03X

Marbled Murrelet Brachyramphus marmoratus

Threatened

CRITICAL HABITAT

There is final critical habitat designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B08C

Short-tailed Albatross Phoebastria (=Diomedea) albatrus

Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B00Y

Western Snowy Plover Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus

Threatened

CRITICAL HABITAT

There is **final** critical habitat designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B07C

## **Fishes**

Delta Smelt Hypomesus transpacificus

Threatened

CRITICAL HABITAT

There is **final** critical habitat designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=E070

Steelhead Oncorhynchus (=Salmo) mykiss

Threatened

CRITICAL HABITAT

There is final critical habitat designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=E08D

Tidewater Goby Eucyclogobius newberryi

Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT

There is final critical habitat designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=E071

## Flowering Plants

San Mateo Woolly Sunflower Eriophyllum latilobum

Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=Q2TK

#### Insects

#### San Bruno Elfin Butterfly Callophrys mossii bayensis

Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=I00Q

### **Mammals**

#### Southern Sea Otter Enhydra lutris nereis

Threatened

CRITICAL HABITAT

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=A0A7

# Reptiles

#### San Francisco Garter Snake Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia

Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=C002

### **Critical Habitats**

This location overlaps all or part of the critical habitat for the following species:

#### California Red-legged Frog Rana draytonii

Final designated critical habitat

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=D02D#crithab

#### Marbled Murrelet Brachyramphus marmoratus

Final designated critical habitat

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B08C#crithab

#### Steelhead Oncorhynchus (=Salmo) mykiss

Final designated critical habitat

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=E08D#crithab

# Migratory Birds

Birds are protected by the <u>Migratory Bird Treaty Act</u> and the <u>Bald and Golden Eagle</u> <u>Protection Act</u>.

Any activity that results in the take of migratory birds or eagles is prohibited unless authorized by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.<sup>[1]</sup> There are no provisions for allowing the take of migratory birds that are unintentionally killed or injured.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in the take of migratory birds is responsible for complying with the appropriate regulations and implementing appropriate conservation measures.

1. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern
   <a href="http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/birds-of-conservation-concern.php">http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/birds-of-conservation-concern.php</a>
- Conservation measures for birds
   http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/conservation-measures.php
- Year-round bird occurrence data <a href="http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/akn-histogram-tools.php">http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/akn-histogram-tools.php</a>

The following species of migratory birds could potentially be affected by activities in this location:

Allen's Hummingbird Selasphorus sasin	Bird of conservation concern
Season: Breeding http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0LI	
Bald Eagle Haliaeetus leucocephalus Year-round <a href="http://ecos.fws.gov/tess-public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B008">http://ecos.fws.gov/tess-public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B008</a>	Bird of conservation concern
Bell's Sparrow Amphispiza belli	Bird of conservation concern

Black Oystercatcher Haematopus bachmani

Bird of conservation concern

Year-round

Year-round

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0KJ

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HE

Black Skimmer Rynchops niger

Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0EO

Black Swift Cypseloides niger

Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FW

**Burrowing Owl** Athene cunicularia

Year-round

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0NC

Common Yellowthroat Geothlypis trichas sinuosa

Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B080

Costa's Hummingbird Calypte costae

Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0JE

Fox Sparrow Passerella iliaca

Season: Wintering

Lawrence's Goldfinch Carduelis lawrencei

Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0J8

Lesser Yellowlegs Tringa flavipes

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0MD

Lewis's Woodpecker Melanerpes lewis

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HQ

Long-billed Curlew Numenius americanus

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B06S

Marbled Godwit Limosa fedoa

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0JL

Nuttall's Woodpecker Picoides nuttallii

Year-round

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HT

Oak Titmouse Baeolophus inornatus

Year-round

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0MJ

Bird of conservation concern

Olive-sided Flycatcher Contopus cooperi

Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0AN

Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus

Year-round

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FU

Rufous-crowned Sparrow Aimophila ruficeps

Year-round

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0MX

Short-billed Dowitcher Limnodromus griseus

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0JK

Short-eared Owl Asio flammeus

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HD

Snowy Plover Charadrius alexandrinus

Season: Breeding

Western Grebe aechmophorus occidentalis

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0EA

Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0JN

Yellow Warbler dendroica petechia ssp. brewsteri

Season: Breeding

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0EN

Red Knot Calidris canutus ssp. roselaari

Season: Wintering

http://ecos.fws.gov/tess\_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0G6

Bird of conservation concern



### **Plant List**

11 matches found. Click on scientific name for details

#### Search Criteria

Found in Quad 37122C3

Scientific Name	Common Name	Family	Lifeform	Rare Plant Rank	State Rank	Global Rank
Arctostaphylos andersonii	Anderson's manzanita	Ericaceae	perennial evergreen shrub	1B.2	S2	G2
Arctostaphylos regismontana	Kings Mountain manzanita	Ericaceae	perennial evergreen shrub	1B.2	S2	G2
Astragalus pycnostachyus var. pycnostachyus	coastal marsh milk- vetch	Fabaceae	perennial herb	1B.2	S2	G2T2
Cypripedium montanum	mountain lady's- slipper	Orchidaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	4.2	S4	G4
Dirca occidentalis	western leatherwood	Thymelaeaceae	perennial deciduous shrub	1B.2	S2	G2
Elymus californicus	California bottle- brush grass	Poaceae	perennial herb	4.3	S4	G4
Eriophyllum latilobum	San Mateo woolly sunflower	Asteraceae	perennial herb	1B.1	S1	G1
Fissidens pauperculus	minute pocket moss	Fissidentaceae	moss	1B.2	S2	G3?
Malacothamnus arcuatus	arcuate bush-mallow	Malvaceae	perennial evergreen shrub	1B.2	S2	G2Q
Monolopia gracilens	woodland woolythreads	Asteraceae	annual herb	1B.2	S3	G3
<u>Plagiobothrys chorisianus var.</u> <u>chorisianus</u>	Choris' popcornflower	Boraginaceae	annual herb	1B.2	S2	G3T2Q

#### **Suggested Citation**

CNPS, Rare Plant Program. 2016. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (online edition, v8-02). California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, CA. Website http://www.rareplants.cnps.org [accessed 02 May 2016].

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### **Plant List**

10 matches found. Click on scientific name for details

#### Search Criteria

Found in Quad 37122C4

Scientific Name	Common Name	Family	Lifeform	Rare Plant Rank	State Rank	Global Rank
Astragalus nuttallii var. nuttallii	ocean bluff milk- vetch	Fabaceae	perennial herb	4.2	S4	G4T4
Astragalus pycnostachyus var. pycnostachyus	coastal marsh milk- vetch	Fabaceae	perennial herb	1B.2	S2	G2T2
California macrophylla	round-leaved filaree	Geraniaceae	annual herb	1B.2	S3?	G3?
Fritillaria liliacea	fragrant fritillary	Liliaceae	perennial bulbiferous herb	1B.2	S2	G2
Grindelia hirsutula var. maritima	San Francisco gumplant	Asteraceae	perennial herb	3.2	S1	G5T1Q
Iris longipetala	coast iris	Iridaceae	perennial rhizomatous herb	4.2	S3	G3
<u>Lasthenia californica ssp.</u> macrantha	perennial goldfields	Asteraceae	perennial herb	1B.2	S2	G3T2
Leptosiphon rosaceus	rose leptosiphon	Polemoniaceae	annual herb	1B.1	S1	G1
Microseris paludosa	marsh microseris	Asteraceae	perennial herb	1B.2	S2	G2
Plagiobothrys chorisianus var. chorisianus	Choris' popcornflower	Boraginaceae	annual herb	1B.2	S2	G3T2Q

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