

Appendix I

Updated Biological Resources Survey Report





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Glenn Michitsch, Senior Planner
City of Calabasas
100 Civic Center Way
Calabasas, California 91302

**Subject: Updated Biological Resources Survey for the West Village at Calabasas Project Site,
City of Calabasas, Los Angeles County, California**

Dear Mr. Michitsch:

This letter report documents the findings of a follow-up biological resources survey conducted by Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) for the West Village at Calabasas Project (project) conducted for the City of Calabasas (City). Numerous focused biological studies were conducted for the project between 2010 and 2019, including those for rare plants, coastal California gnatcatcher (*Poliioptila californica californica*) and least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*). The objective of the follow-up biological resources survey was to determine whether biological site conditions within the project remain substantially similar to those previously documented. Previous biological survey reports may be found within Appendix C of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR; City of Calabasas 2019).

Project Location and Description

The 77.22-acre project site (Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APN] 2069-078-009 and 2069-078-011) is located immediately north of the intersection of Agoura Road and Las Virgenes Road and approximately 0.25 mile southeast of U.S. Highway 101 in the city of Calabasas, Los Angeles County, California. The site is bordered by a residential subdivision and Las Virgenes Road to the west, a gas station and undeveloped open space to the north, and open space to the east and south. The parcel is depicted in Township 1 North, Range 17 West, Sections 29 and 30, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian. The site is within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Calabasas, California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle. The project site was fully burned by the November 2018 Woolsey Fire.

Methodology

Prior to the site visit, previous biological survey reports prepared for the project (summarized in Table 1) were reviewed. Rincon Biologists Robin Murray and Carolyn Welch conducted the follow-up biological resources survey of the 77.22-acre project site on April 10, 2020. The study area consisted of the entire project site. During the survey, weather conditions consisted of temperatures ranging between approximately 55 and 60 degrees Fahrenheit, with clear skies and light winds. The survey was conducted on foot, traversing through the study area in a meandering fashion and documenting biological resources encountered. Areas representing all vegetation types were surveyed. Furthermore, the biologists visually confirmed the presence and extent of jurisdictional waters and wetlands within the



study area based on the findings of the project’s Jurisdictional Delineation (JD; Rincon 2019a). No soil test pits were dug. Rare plant occurrences documented in the Rare Plant Survey Report (RPSR), 2019 Update (Rincon 2019b) were visited. A tree inventory was not conducted, and no protocol special-status species surveys were conducted.

Table 1 Biological Survey Reports Reviewed

Report	Preparer	Report Date
Oak Tree Report	Carlberg Associates	June 2017
Jurisdictional Delineation Report, 2019 Update	Rincon	February 2019
Rare Plant Survey Report, 2019 Update	Rincon	April 2019
Coastal California Gnatcatcher Focused Survey Report	Rincon	August 2017
Least Bell’s Vireo Focused Survey Report	Rincon	August 2017
Final Environmental Impact Report	City of Calabasas	June 2019

Summary of Findings

The study area was observed to be undeveloped. As summarized in Table 2, vegetation communities and land cover types were observed to be substantially similar in extent and species composition to those described in the FEIR (City of Calabasas 2019).

Table 2 Plant Communities

Plant Community
Upland Plant Communities
Annual brome grassland - <i>Bromus (diandrus, hordeaceus)</i> – <i>Brachypodium distachyon</i> Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance
Dwarf nettle herbaceous stand - <i>Urtica urens</i> Herbaceous Stand
Upland mustards and other ruderal forbs - <i>Brassica nigra</i> – <i>Raphanus</i> spp. Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance
Coyote brush scrub - <i>Baccharis pilularis</i> Shrubland Alliance
Purple sage scrub - <i>Salvia leucophylla</i> Shrubland Alliance
California brittle bush - ashy buckwheat scrub - <i>Encelia californica</i> – <i>Eriogonum cinereum</i> Shrubland Alliance
Coast live oak - <i>Quercus agrifolia</i> Woodland Alliance
Wetland/Riparian Plant Communities
Stinging nettle herbaceous stand - <i>Urtica dioica</i> Semi-Natural Herbaceous Stand
Cattail marshes - <i>Typha (angustifolia, domingensis, latifolia)</i> Herbaceous Alliance
Yerba mansa - Nuttall’s sunflower - Nevada goldenrod alkaline wet meadows- <i>Anemopsis californica</i> - <i>Helianthus nuttallii</i> - <i>Solidago spectabilis</i> Herbaceous Alliance
American bulrush marsh - <i>Schoenoplectus americanus</i> Herbaceous Alliance
Mulefat thickets - <i>Baccharis salicifolia</i> Shrubland Alliance
Arroyo willow thickets - <i>Salix lasiolepis</i> Shrubland Alliance



Other Land Cover Types

Ornamental

Road/Disturbed Land

Detention Basin

An ephemeral drainage traverses the site from east to west, terminating in a concrete-lined detention basin. Several wetlands are present adjacent to the drainage. The approximate location and extent of these features were consistent with those reported in the JD and are expected to be subject to United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) jurisdiction as reported in the JD and FEIR (Rincon 2019a and City of Calabasas 2019). Applications were submitted and under review in spring 2019 but were put on hold at the time due to project delays.

Catalina mariposa lily (*Calochortus catalinae*, California Rare Plant Rank 4.2), the only special-status plant species documented in the RPSR, was observed during the survey. While approximately 500 individuals were observed in 2019, approximately 100 individuals were observed during the 2020 follow-up survey. This lower detection is likely due to the phenology of the plants at the time of the survey because the majority of Catalina mariposa lilies were not yet in bloom at the time of the follow-up survey and the species is difficult to detect within grasslands when not blooming. Although fewer individuals were observed, the population was similar in geographic extent to that reported in the RPSR and FEIR (Rincon 2019b and City of Calabasas 2019). No additional populations of this species or other rare plant species were observed. While no focused surveys were conducted for California coastal gnatcatcher or least Bell's vireo, no individuals were observed during the survey.

Conclusion

During the April 10, 2020 follow-up biological resources survey, biological conditions of the study area were observed to be consistent with those described in previously prepared biological reports for the project site, including the species composition and geographic distribution of plant communities. Aquatic features potentially subject to the permitting jurisdiction of the CDFW, USACE, and the RWQCB were observed within the study area. No new potential jurisdictional features were identified. Accordingly, Rincon determined the 2020 findings to be consistent with the site conditions described in the 2019 JD, 2019 RPSR, and 2019 FEIR. While focused special-status species surveys were not conducted, habitat conditions remain substantially similar to those reported in the 2017 coastal California gnatcatcher and least Bell's vireo surveys. Therefore, the studies supporting the 2019 FEIR continue to be valid and representative of biological resource conditions on the project site.

Thank you for the opportunity to continue supporting the City of Calabasas with the West Village at Calabasas project. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned if you have any questions regarding the content of this letter.



Sincerely,
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Robin Murray
Robin Murray
Senior Biologist

Steven J. Hongola
Steven J. Hongola
Principal Biologist



References

Calabasas, City of. 2019. Final Environmental Impact Report. West Village at Calabasas Project. City of Calabasas. June 2019.

Carlberg Associates. 2017. Oak Tree Report. West Village at Calabasas Project. City of Calabasas. June 2017.

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_____. 2019b. Rare Plant Survey Report, 2019 Update. West Village at Calabasas Project. City of Calabasas. April 2019.