

From:

Subject:

[Non-DoD Source] Miramonte Residential & Commercial Development

Date:

Tuesday, December 1, 2020 10:35:29 AM

Hi Megan/Andrea,

Thank you for providing the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Proposed Easement Exchange Associated with the Rancho Miramonte Residential and Commercial Development (Project), located at the southeast corner of Chino-Corona Road and Cucamonga Avenue, in the City of Chino. Without modification of the Existing Flowage Easement, the development project cannot be implemented. The project proposes to subdivide approximately 273 acres into 24 numbered lots and 19 lettered lots for future development of a master planned community consisting of 823 residential units, a private recreation center, a neighborhood park, seven pocket parks, perimeter trail system and designated open space/habitat conversation area (APNs#: 1057-211-03, 04; 1057-212-01, 02, 03, 04, and 25).

As the owner and operator of the State Highway System (SHS), it is our responsibility to coordinate and consult with local jurisdictions when a proposed development may impact our facilities. As the responsible agency under the California Environmental Quality Act, it is also our responsibility to make recommendations to offset associated impacts with the proposed project. Although the project is under the jurisdiction of the City of Chino and the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District (Corps), due to the project's potential impact to the State facilities, including State Route 83 and State Route 71, it is also subject to the policies and regulations that govern the SHS. We offer the following comments:

1. We recommend a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) be prepared to accurately evaluate the extent of potential impacts of the project to the operational characteristics of the existing State facilities by the project area. The data used in the TIA should not be more than 2 years old, and shall be based on the Southern California Association of Governments 2016 Regional Transportation Plan Model. Use the Highway Capacity Manual 6 methodology for all traffic analyses. The TIA be submitted to ensure timely review of the submitted materials to address any potential issues. Please submit a copy of the TIA and the traffic related documents for our review.

DOT-1

Caltrans is committed to providing a safe transportation system for all users. We encourage the City to embark a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system and complete street to enhance California's economy and livability. A pedestrian/bike-friendly environment served by multimodal transportation would reduce traffic congestion prevalent in the surrounding areas. (See Complete Street Implementation Action Plan 2.0 at http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ocp/docs/CSIAP2_rpt.pdf).

DOT-2

2. Design the local streets to serve vehicular and pedestrian circulation equally, and for safe pedestrian friendly environment. Consider both Americans with Disability Act and California Highway Design Manual standards and requirements to provide transportation routes for all users and modes, including pedestrian and bicyclists. Provide a continuous multi-modal circulation system throughout the City, specifically for pedestrians, allowing current/future residents, employees, and guests to access the attraction places.

3) Relegate the parking spaces to the back of the buildings and locate preferential parking for vanpools and carpools, along with, secure, visible, and convenient bicycle parking/racks accessible to retail and office locations. Consider installing electric vehicle charging stations, and locate parking space for low-emitting, fuel-efficient, alternative-fueled vehicle visitor parking in commercial and office uses.

DOT-3

< [REDACTED] >
[REDACTED]
>>

Subject: Draft Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Easement Exchange Associated with the Rancho Miramonte Residential and Commercial Development Project

EXTERNAL EMAIL. Links/attachments may not be safe.

Dear Interested Parties:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) announces the availability of and is requesting comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the "Proposed Easement Exchange Associated with the Rancho Miramonte Residential and Commercial Development Project." The Corps has prepared the Draft EA to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with approving TH Miramonte Investors, LLC's request to modify an Existing Flowage Easement within the Prado Dam Flood Control Basin to facilitate the development of the Rancho Miramonte Residential and Commercial Development located in the city of Chino, San Bernardino County, California.

An electronic version of the Draft EA is available at the Corps' website at:

[https://urldefense.com/v3/___https://www.spl.usace.army_mil/Media/Public-Notices/Article/2203503/spl-2020-0601-nlh-rancho-miramonte-draft-ea/___:!!LWi6xHDyrA!sgQcaAZDNaVyX_xD2PS_jcXrBbrroh4KTyfosir8TXvY5gcNTTJgU5YB4mUMTYzhuYmykQ\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/___https://www.spl.usace.army_mil/Media/Public-Notices/Article/2203503/spl-2020-0601-nlh-rancho-miramonte-draft-ea/___:!!LWi6xHDyrA!sgQcaAZDNaVyX_xD2PS_jcXrBbrroh4KTyfosir8TXvY5gcNTTJgU5YB4mUMTYzhuYmykQ$)
<Blockedhttps://urldefense.com/v3/___https://www.spl.usace.army_mil/Media/Public-Notices/Article/2203503/spl-2020-0601-nlh-rancho-miramonte-draft-ea/___:!!LWi6xHDyrA!sgQcaAZDNaVyX_xD2PS_jcXrBbrroh4KTyfosir8TXvY5gcNTTJgU5YB4mUMTYzhuYmykQ\$>

The Corps encourages all interested parties to submit comments concerning the analysis present in the Draft EA. Comments may be submitted starting December 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. Please see the attached letter for additional details.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Megan Wong

Project Environmental Coordinator

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, Planning Division



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services
Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office
777 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite 208
Palm Springs, California 92262



In Reply Refer to:
FWS-SB-19B0157-20I1643

December 8, 2020
Sent by Email

Eduard T. De Mesa
Planning Division Chief
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers LA District
915 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 930
Los Angeles, California 90017-3489

Attn: Megan T. Wong

Subject: Informal Section 7 Consultation for the Rancho Miramonte Housing Development
Project Flowage Easement Exchange, Chino, San Bernardino County, California

Dear Mr. De Mesa:

This letter is in response to your correspondence received on September 9, 2020, requesting our concurrence with your determination that the flowage easement exchange (Easement Exchange) in the City of Chino, San Bernardino County, California may effect, is not likely to adversely affect the federally endangered least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*, LBV), the federally endangered southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax trailii extimus*, SWFL), or their designated critical habitats in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

This informal consultation is based on information from the September 9 initiation letter, the June 2018 Rancho Miramonte Riparian Habitat Restoration Project Biological Assessment (ESA 2018a), LBV and SWFL focused surveys from 2018 (ESA 2018b, ESA 2018c), and phone calls between this office and Megan Wong of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps).

The Easement Exchange is associated with the 61.72 acre (ac) Rancho Miramonte riparian habitat restoration footprint as well as the adjacent, roughly 200 ac Rancho Miramonte residential housing development. The Rancho Miramonte project originally included both the development and the restoration activities. TH Miramonte Investors, LLC (Applicant) split the project up for the purposes of consultations with the Service as all impacts to endangered species and their designated critical habitat were contained within the restoration project footprint. The majority of the habitat restoration project footprint will be excavated to provide fill for the housing development. The graded area along the creek will then be improved for riparian species. We issued a concurrence letter in 2019 to the Corps regarding the riparian habitat restoration project and its impacts on LBV, SWFL, and their designated critical habitats (Service 2019). The Corps is seeking a second concurrence determination for the issuance of a flowage easement exchange that applies to areas both within the 2019 concurrence footprint and the larger housing development.

Project Description

The Easement Exchange area is located along Mill Creek approximately 4 miles upstream from Prado Dam in the City of Chino, San Bernardino County, California. Directly to the northeast of the Rancho Miramonte development and restoration sites is the Mill Creek Wetlands Project (Service 2012a, Service 2012b). To the west lies Prado Regional Park. To the east is a landscaping business, agricultural land, and a small regional airport. The Prado dam lies to the south. The eastern side of the Easement Exchange area contains riparian woodland vegetation, while the western side of the site contains highly disturbed agricultural and ruderal vegetation.

The Corps holds a flowage easements up to the 556 foot (ft) elevation line average mean sea level for water retention associated with Prado Dam. This elevation represents the maximum elevation that water was designed to be held behind the dam. The Easement Exchange would remove 30.23 ac of existing flowage easement from the Corps' holdings and add 4.91 ac elsewhere on the site. A total of 115.22 ac in the flowage easement area will then be excavated and the resulting fill will be used to raise the housing development area to above the 566 ft elevation line. Approximately 4,245,426 cubic yards of material will be excavated using heavy equipment such as excavators, bulldozers, and dump trucks to achieve these changes in topography. The net flowage easement area will be decreased by 25.32 ac in total, however there will be no change in overall flood volume capacity below the 556 elevation line.

Effects of the Action

USFW-1

Earthwork in the Easement Exchange area will redistribute soil primarily from the eastern side of the property near Mill Creek into residential development area. Surveys conducted in 2018 showed no LBV or SWFL outside of the wooded portion of the Project footprint (ESA 2018b, ESA 2018c). Actions occurring in this area as part of the habitat restoration project were fully assessed during the previous informal consultation. The current Project does not include any effects to LBV, SWFL, or their designated critical habitat that were not previously addressed in the 2019 consultation.

If the Project is completed as described, the Service concurs with your determination that the proposed Rancho Miramonte Housing Development Project Flowage Easement Exchange is not likely to adversely affect LBV or SWFL or their designated critical habitats. Therefore, the interagency consultation requirements of section 7 of the Act have been satisfied. Although our concurrence ends informal consultation, obligations under section 7 of the Act will be reconsidered if new information reveals effects of the agency action that may affect listed species or designated critical habitat in a manner or to an extent not previously considered, or this action is subsequently modified in a manner that was not considered in this assessment.

Thank you for your coordination on this project. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact [Emily Hockman](#) of this office at [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

KARIN
CLEARY-ROSE
for
Roland White
Assistant Field Supervisor



LITERATURE CITED

- [ESA] Environmental Science Associates. 2018a. Rancho Miramonte Riparian Habitat Restoration Project Biological Assessment, Prepared by ESA for Trumark Homes and submitted to the Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office, Palm Springs, California. June 2018.
- [ESA] Environmental Science Associates. 2018b. Results of Focused Least Bell's Vireo Surveys on the Rancho Miramonte Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, City of Chino, San Bernardino County, California. Prepared by ESA for Trumark Homes and submitted to the Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office, Palm Springs, California. August 13, 2018.
- [ESA] Environmental Science Associates. 2018c. Results of Focused Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Surveys for the Rancho Miramonte Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, City of Chino, San Bernardino County, California. Prepared by ESA for Trumark Homes and submitted to the Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office, Palm Springs, California. August 13, 2018.
- [Service] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2012a. Cucamonga Creek Watershed Regional Water Quality Proposal Alternative 2A, San Bernardino County, California (FWS-SB-12B0014-12I0139). Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office, Palm Springs, California.
- [Service] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2012b. Cucamonga Creek Watershed Regional Water Quality Proposal Alternative 2A Amendment, San Bernardino County, California (FWS-SB-12B0014-12I0482). Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office, Palm Springs, California.
- [Service] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2019. Rancho Miramonte Riparian Habitat Restoration Project, Chino, San Bernardino County, California (FWS-SB-19B0157-19I1044). Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office, Palm Springs, California.

From: Dan Silver <[REDACTED]>
Date: Tuesday, Dec 15, 2020, 10:05 AM
To: Wong, Megan T CIV (USA) <[REDACTED]>
Subject: [Non-DoD Source] Rancho Miramonte Easement Exchange Agreement Draft EA Review Comments

December 15, 2020

Megan Wong
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District, Planning Division
[REDACTED]

RE: Rancho Miramonte Easement Exchange Agreement Draft EA Review Comments

Dear Ms Wong:

EHL-1 Endangered Habitats League (EHL) has *no objection* to the proposed easement exchange and subsequent implementation for purposes of flood protection. For your reference, EHL is a Southern California regional conservation group with a long history of concern for, and work in, the Prado Basin. We have particularly engaged with the City of Chino on its planning endeavors. In past years, EHL reached an agreement with the applicant on a modified and environmentally superior project that increases conservation of the riparian and wetland resources of Mill Creek, and also provides restoration.

Please let me know of questions.

Yours truly,
Dan Silver

Dan Silver, Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League
[REDACTED]



Department of Public Works

- Flood Control
- Operations
- Solid Waste Management
- Special Districts
- Surveyor
- Transportation

Brendon Biggs, M.S., P.E.
Director

David Doublet, M.S., P.E.
Assistant Director

December 28, 2020

File: 10(ENV)-4.01

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Los Angeles District
Attn: Megan T. Wong
915 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 930
Los Angeles, CA 90017-3489
Email: [REDACTED]

Transmitted Via Email

RE: CEQA – NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED EASEMENT EXCHANGE ASSOCIATED WITH THE RANCHO MIRAMONTE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Dear Eduardo De Mesa:

SBC-1

Thank you for allowing the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced project. **We received this request on November 30, 2020** and pursuant to our review, we have no comments at this time.

We respectfully request to be included on the circulation list for all project notices, public reviews, or public hearings. In closing, I would like to thank you again for allowing the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced project.

Sincerely,

Michael Perry

MICHAEL R. PERRY
Supervising Planner
Environmental Management

MP:AJ:ms

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