

**Appendix L** United States Fish and  
Wildlife Service (USFWS)  
Letter

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# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services  
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office  
6010 Hidden Valley Road  
Carlsbad, California 92011

In Reply Refer To:  
FWS-WRIV-4214.5

JAN 23 2006

Wendy Walters  
LSA Associates, Inc.  
1650 Spruce Street, Fifth Floor  
Riverside, California 92507

Subj: Species List for Mid-County Parkway Project in Riverside County, California

Dear Ms. Walters:

This letter is in response to your written request, received on November 15, 2005, for information on federally endangered, threatened, and proposed species that may occur in the vicinity of the proposed Mid-County Parkway project in Riverside County, California. The proposed project extends from Interstate 15 on the west and State Route 79 on the east. The study area is about 32 miles long and ranges from 1 to 4 miles in width. The project is being developed by the Riverside County Transportation Commission in cooperation with Caltrans District 8 and the Federal Highway Administration. To assist you in evaluating the potential occurrence of federally listed endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species that may occur in the vicinity of the area identified, we are providing the enclosed list.

The proposed project is located in the plan area of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The MSHCP establishes a multiple species conservation program to minimize and mitigate habitat loss and the incidental take of covered species associated with covered activities. Caltrans and Riverside County are signatory to the MSHCP, and, therefore, should conduct this project consistent with the provisions of the MSHCP and its associated implementation agreement and permit.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended, requires Federal agencies to consult with us, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, should it be determined that their actions may affect federally listed threatened or endangered species. Section 9 of the Act prohibits the "take" (e.g., harm, harassment, pursuit, injury, kill) of federally listed wildlife. "Harm" is further defined to include habitat modification or degradation where it kills or injures wildlife by impairing essential behavioral patterns including breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Take incidental to otherwise lawful activities can be authorized under sections 7 (Federal consultations) and 10 (habitat conservation plans) of the Act.

If a proposed project is authorized, funded, or carried out by a Federal agency and may affect a listed species, then the Federal agency must consult with us on behalf of the applicant, pursuant to section

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7 of the Act. In other words, any activity on private land that requires Federal involvement (such as the issuance of a section 404 permit under the Clean Water Act by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) and may affect listed species must be reviewed by us to ensure that the continued existence of the species would not be jeopardized. During the section 7 process, measures to avoid and minimize project effects to listed species and their habitat will be identified and incorporated into a biological opinion that includes an incidental take statement that authorizes incidental take by the Federal agency and applicant.

If a proposed project does not involve a Federal agency, but is likely to result in the take of a listed animal species, then the landowner or project proponent should apply for an incidental take permit, pursuant to section 10 of the Act. When an application is made for an incidental take permit, measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate for effects to listed species and their habitat will be identified and incorporated into a habitat conservation plan. If the habitat conservation plan and the application for the permit meet the issuance criteria, a permit authorizing incidental take is issued.

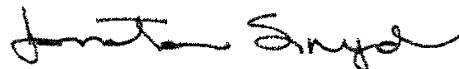
We do not have site-specific information for this area. Therefore, we recommend that project proponents seek assistance from a biologist familiar with the habitat conditions and associated species in and around their project site to assess the actual potential for direct, indirect and cumulative impacts likely to result from the proposed activity.

We are also concerned for the following habitat community types that could potentially occur in the area and are becoming more rare. These include woodlands, coastal sage scrub, alluvial fan scrub, native grasslands, wetlands, riparian habitat, and vernal pools. In addition, we are concerned about the effects of the proposed project on habitat connectivity and wildlife movement in the region.

Please contact the California Department of Fish and Game for State-listed and other sensitive species that may occur in the area of the project. State-listed species are protected under the provisions of the California Endangered Species Act. Rare plant species that may occur in the project area are included in the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) inventory of rare and endangered vascular plants in California. State-listed and CNPS species require full consideration under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Should you have any questions regarding the species list provided, or your responsibilities under the Act, please contact Doreen Stadlander, Division Chief for Western Riverside County, at (760) 431-9440.

Sincerely,



*KAG* Karen A. Goebel  
Assistant Field Supervisor

Enclosure

**Federally Endangered, Threatened, Proposed, and Candidate Species that May Occur in the  
Vicinity of the Proposed Mid-County Parkway Project in Riverside County, California**

**January 23, 2006**

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>
<b><u>Mammals</u></b>		
San Bernardino kangaroo rat	<i>Dipodomys merriami parvus</i>	endangered
Stephens' kangaroo rat	<i>Dipodomys stephensi</i>	endangered
<b><u>Birds</u></b>		
yellow-billed cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	candidate
southwestern willow flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	endangered
bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	threatened
coastal California gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>	threatened
least Bell's vireo	<i>vireo bellii pusillus</i>	endangered
<b><u>Amphibians</u></b>		
arroyo toad	<i>Bufo californicus</i>	endangered
California red-legged frog	<i>Rana aurora draytoni</i>	threatened
<b><u>Invertebrates</u></b>		
vernal pool fairy shrimp	<i>Branchinecta lynchii</i>	threatened
Quino checkerspot butterfly	<i>Euphydryas editha quino</i>	endangered
Riverside fairy shrimp	<i>Streptocephalus woottoni</i>	endangered
<b><u>Plants</u></b>		
Munz's onion	<i>Allium munzii</i>	endangered
San Diego ambrosia	<i>Ambrosia pumila</i>	endangered
Braunton's milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus brauntonii</i>	endangered
San Jacinto Valley crowscale	<i>Atriplex coronata var. notatior</i>	endangered
Nevin's barberry	<i>Berberis nevinii</i>	endangered
thread-leaved brodiaea	<i>Brodiaea filifolia</i>	threatened

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**January 23, 2006**

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>
<b><i>Plants (cont.)</i></b>		
San Diego button celery	<i>Eryngium aristulatum</i> var. <i>parishii</i>	endangered
slender-horned spineflower	<i>Dodecahema leptoceras</i>	endangered
spreading navarretia	<i>Navarretia fossalis</i>	threatened
California Orcutt grass	<i>Orcuttia californica</i>	endangered
Brand's phacelia	<i>Phacelia stellaris</i>	candidate