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DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
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May 28, 2025

Jodie Sackett
Los Angeles County
320 W Temple Street, Fl. 13
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SUBJECT: PARTIAL RECIRCULATED DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE NORTHLAKE SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT, SCH NO. 2015031080, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CA

Dear Jodie Sackett:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) reviewed the Partial Recirculated Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (RPDSEIR) from Los Angeles County (County) for the Northlake Specific Plan Project (Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines¹.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish and wildlife. Likewise, CDFW appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is California's Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a)). CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (Fish & G. Code, § 1802). Similarly, for purposes of CEQA, CDFW is charged by law to provide, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

CDFW may also act as a Responsible Agency under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381). CDFW expects that it may need to exercise

¹ CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

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regulatory authority as provided by the Fish and Game Code. As proposed, for example, the Project may be subject to CDFW's lake and streambed alteration regulatory authority (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 et seq.). Likewise, to the extent implementation of the Project as proposed may result in "take" as defined by State law² of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA; Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.) or the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA; Fish & G. Code, §1900 et seq.), the Project proponent may seek related take authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Proponent: Northlake Associates, LLC

Objective: The previously approved Project consists of development of Phase 1, Phase 2, and off-site external map improvements (65.14 acres), which include remedial grading, drainage features, and road and utility alignments. Project activities in Phase 1 would include the development of 2,295 dwelling units, commercial development, open space and parks, roadways, a school pad, and a fire station across 720 acres within the Project area. Phase 2 would consist of the development of single-family homes, parks, trails, open space, school uses, and associated roadway and infrastructure improvements across 545 acres.

Additional Project construction improvements include a 4.64-acre connection of Grasshopper Creek Park, a debris basin, 2.39 acres in trail connections, a 5.1-acre pad for a water tank, 29.79 acres of manufactured slopes, and 11.98 acres of natural open space. Lastly, an existing crude oil pipeline easement that traverses the entire north-south length of the Project area would be relocated to an alignment along the eastern boundary of the proposed development area.

Creek Avoidance Alternative (CAA): The design basis for the CAA is to avoid disturbing the Grasshopper Creek bottom that runs through the Project site and completing the proposed land plan. The CAA would remove and recompact the underlying landslides to provide suitable soil conditions for development; this is per standard engineering and design practices and Los Angeles County requirements, according to the RPDSEIR. A 300-foot setback from the creek bottom was determined to be the appropriate buffer due to several existing landslides directly underneath the creek bottom. The CAA would require construction of a new road, export of 8.2 million cubic yards of soil, and construction of three clear span bridges. The Project would decrease the developable acreage by approximately 78 acres and decrease the developable footprint by approximately 29 percent compared to the previously approved Project.

² "Take" is defined in Section 86 of the Fish and Game Code as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill."

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The CAA would reduce impacts to sensitive vegetation communities and special-status species discussed in the RPDSEIR. Impacts to western spadefoot toad (*Spea hammondi*; Endangered Species Act (ESA) proposed threatened; California Species of Special Concern (SSC)) are proposed to be similar to the previously approved Project based on the location of the pond habitat. While the CAA would avoid direct impacts to Grasshopper Creek, the RPDSEIR claims that grading to remediate landslides would result in the loss of up to two-thirds of the creek's current tributary water and eliminate subsurface water. Additionally, the CAA is proposed to create significant indirect impacts to southwestern spiny rush (*Juncus acutus ssp. leopoldii*; California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 4.2) and other riparian phreatophytes in and near the creek. In conclusion, according to the RPDSEIR, the CAA would be considered infeasible.

Partial Creek Avoidance Alternative (PCAA): The PCAA would reduce the development scope of Phase 2 of the Project. The PCAA would avoid landslides in the northern portion and, therefore, avoid associated risk of additional loss of creek area. The disturbance area would be reduced in Phase 2 by 61 percent, reduce earthwork, and maintain similar land plan goals proposed by the Project. Lastly, the PCAA would provide approximately 37 fewer acres of active recreational and open space areas.

The PCAA would impact sensitive vegetation communities and special-status species in a similar manner to the previously proposed project. It would reduce impacts to Grasshopper Creek and associated phreatophyte vegetation by 20 percent compared to the previously approved Project. According to the RPDSEIR, the PCAA would be the environmentally superior alternative.

Location: The Project area encompasses approximately 1,330 acres of undeveloped land in unincorporated Los Angeles County. The Project area is located between Interstate 5 to the west, Castaic Lake to the east, and the Angeles National Forest to the west, north, and east. The town of Castaic is located to the south of the proposed Project.

Biological Setting: The Project area is bound by open space to the north and west, and residential development and Castaic Lagoon in the south. The Project area consists of a variety of vegetation communities which include, but is not limited to, California sagebrush, California annual grassland, Foothill needlegrass grassland, wildflower fields, riparian vegetation such as cottonwoods (*Populus spp.*) and willows (*Salix spp.*), and ephemeral ponds. Additionally, Grasshopper Creek flows north to south through the center of the Project area.

Updated surveys for western spadefoot toad were conducted by Glenn Lukos Associates (GLA) during the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 rainfall seasons. Multiple western spadefoot toads were observed in three existing features within the Project area where the species had been detected previously. In April 2022, a GLA biologist conducted a site visit and observed paniculate tarplant (*Deinandra paniculata*; CRPR 4.2). Focused surveys for southwestern spiny rush (*Juncus acutus ssp. leopoldii*; CRPR

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4.2) were conducted in 2021 and was detected at Grasshopper Creek. Moreover, several individual Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*; CESA candidate endangered) were detected within the Project area during focused surveys, following protocol produced by GLA, in May and June 2024.

Sensitive species that are of concern for the Project include Crotch's bumble bee. The RPDSEIR provides mitigation measures relating to western spadefoot toad, round-leaved filaree, paniculate tarplant, southwestern spiny rush, slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*; CRPR 1B.2) and club-haired mariposa lily (*C. clavatus* var. *clavatus*; CRPR 4.3), and compensatory mitigation for impacts to Crotch's bumble bee suitable habitat (i.e., coastal sage scrub, grassland, wildflower field, and needlegrass grassland).

Project History: CDFW previously reviewed the Notice of Preparation in 2015 and provided comments on the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR) in 2017. Previous comments from the DSEIR include, but are not limited to, the range of alternatives considered, DSEIR analysis of wildlife crossing, western spadefoot toad presence and mitigation, impacts to Grasshopper Creek and its tributaries, and impacts to rare plants and vegetation communities.

The RPDSEIR was prepared by the County in accordance with the Los Angeles Superior Court ruling on the Center For Biological Diversity and Endangered Habitats League v. County Of Los Angeles, et al, and Real Parties in Interest, Northlake Associates, et al, Case No. 19STCPO1610 ruling (Court Ruling), dated January 11, 2021. The Court held the ruling that the DSEIR failed to comply with CEQA and required revision of the CEQA document. The Lead Agency drafted the RPDSEIR with revised and updated portions of the Project proposal. Lastly, as referenced in the RPDSEIR, CDFW has reviewed and approved the Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for special-status plants (July 2022 [Revised October and December 2022 and February 2023]) and western spadefoot toad (July 2022 [Revised March and June 2023]).

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the County in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources.

COMMENT # 1: Crotch's Bumble Bee

Issue: Mitigation Measures 5.2-6 through 5.2-8 for Crotch's bumble bee may be improved to ensure impacts to the species are appropriately mitigated.

Specific impact: CDFW is not included in the review and approval process for habitat restoration/enhancement that is proposed to be suitable for Crotch's bumble bee. CDFW is concerned that the selected habitat restoration/enhancement sites may not

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contain Crotch's bumble bee; therefore, the Project would not be mitigating impacts to a level less than significant.

Why impact would occur: According to the RPDSEIR and focused survey results, Crotch's bumble bee is present throughout the Project area. CDFW appreciates that the County has incorporated Mitigation Measures 5.2-6 through 5.2-8, which outlines habitat restoration/enhancement at a 2:1 ratio. CDFW is concerned that the RPDSEIR requires the County's review and approval of the mitigation measures but not CDFW's review and approval. Given that the Project proponent intends to obtain an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for take authority of Crotch's bumble bee, CDFW should be involved alongside the County regarding the mitigation measures outlined in the RPDSEIR. Additionally, the habitat restoration or enhancement sites that would be proposed as compensatory mitigation should be surveyed to confirm presence of Crotch's bumble bee. Having mitigation sites with vegetation communities that support suitable habitat for the species, but no confirmed presence does not constitute as effective mitigation. Impacts due to Project activities have not been fully mitigated if the targeted species is not present and thriving successfully in the proposed mitigation sites.

Evidence impact may be significant: The California Fish and Game Commission accepted a petition to list the Crotch's bumble bee as endangered under CESA, determining the listing "may be warranted" and advancing the species to the candidacy stage of the CESA listing process. Take of any endangered, threatened, candidate species that results from the Project is prohibited, except as authorized by State law (Fish & G. Code, §§ 86, 2062, 2067, 2068, 2080, 2085; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 786.9). CDFW considers impacts to species that are candidates for CESA listing to be significant, under CEQA. Accordingly, the Project may 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 CDFW or the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s)

Mitigation Measure #1: CDFW Survey Protocol

CDFW recommends the Project proponent retain a qualified biologist with the appropriate handling permits to conduct focused surveys within the proposed habitat restoration/enhancement sites prior to implementation of the HMMP. Focused surveys shall follow CDFW's [Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act Candidate Bumble Bee Species](#) (CDFW 2023). Focused surveys shall also be conducted throughout the entire proposed mitigation areas and during the appropriate flying season to ensure no missed detection of Crotch's bumble bee occurs. Survey results, including negative findings, shall be submitted to CDFW and the County prior to the start of a monitoring program.

Mitigation Measure #2: MM 5.2-6 To MM 5.2-8 Revision

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Given that the Project proponent intends to obtain an ITP, CDFW would be involved in the review and approval process of compensatory mitigation. CDFW recommends the County revise Mitigation Measures 5.2-6 through 5.2-8 in the RPDSEIR to include review and approval from CDFW.

Recommendation #1: CDFW ITP

The focused surveys conducted by GLA were performed without coordination and review of the survey methodology by CDFW. Additionally, it is unclear from the survey report and RPDSEIR if the GLA biologists had the appropriate handling permits prior to conducting focused surveys for Crotch's bumble bee. CDFW strongly recommends that the Project proponent coordinates with CDFW to determine whether the focused surveys are valid to move forward in the ITP process.

Recommendation #2: CEQA

CDFW's issuance of an ITP for a Project is subject to CEQA. As a Responsible Agency, CDFW may consider the CEQA document from the lead agency/Project proponent for the Project. However, additional documentation may be required as part of an ITP application for the Project in order for CDFW to adequately develop an accurate take analysis and identify measures that would fully mitigate for take of CESA-listed species. To minimize additional requirements by CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 and/or under CEQA, the Project's CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to Crotch's bumble bee and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of the ITP.

COMMENT # 2: Creek Avoidance Alternatives

Issue: The CAA and PCAA would impact Grasshopper Creek and its associated species.

Specific impact: CDFW is concerned that the CAA evaluated in the RPDSEIR did not include meaningful creek avoidance that leaves a hydrologically functioning Grasshopper Creek. Therefore, the RPDSEIR might have selected an alternative that may be more impactful to the environment.

Why impact would occur: The RPDSEIR defines Grasshopper Creek as an ephemeral drainage. By definition, ephemeral drainages only have flows during and immediately following precipitation and are primarily fed from surface runoff (CDFG 2010). The RPDSEIR erroneously states that some of the ephemeral channel is fed by surface and subsurface runoff from landslide formations, which contradicts the definition of ephemeral. Therefore, the RPDSEIR's claims of eliminating subsurface waters may not be a substantial impact to Grasshopper Creek; thus the CAA may be an environmentally superior alternative.

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In addition, the RPDSEIR claims that the CAA cannot sustain the hydrology necessary to support the riparian vegetation post-development. However, the RPDSEIR did not provide necessary details such as surface flow contributions from the tributaries that support the hydrology of Grasshopper Creek. Information specific to the contributions from the tributary channels are necessary to assess if removing those inputs would substantially alter the hydrology of Grasshopper Creek. Given the lack of necessary flow information and the ephemeral nature of Grasshopper Creek (whereby definition is not reliant on subsurface flow), reduction of subsurface flows through landslide remediation may not result in substantial impacts as claimed in the RPDSEIR. In addition, additional alternatives, as discussed below (Recommendation #3-7), may be considered to further reduce concerns of substantial impacts.

Finally, the technical memos (F2 and F3 of the RPDSEIR) state that the habitat in Grasshopper Creek is of “poor” habitat quality, thereby claiming that the ephemeral habitat is less valuable. Ephemeral streams naturally contain less vegetative cover and are typically dominated by shrubs, exposed substrate, and bedrock. Ephemeral habitat type is no more or less biologically valuable in an ecosystem than riparian vegetation or phreatophytic vegetation; instead, it serves a different ecological niche. Thus, CDFW advocates for the avoidance and preservation of ephemeral streams as provided by the CAA.

Evidence impact would be significant: Section 15126.6(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. Additionally, Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR identify an environmentally superior alternative among the alternatives evaluated. The proposed environmentally superior alternative, PCAA, would have similar impacts to the previously approved Project. Therefore, the RPDSEIR does not entirely satisfy the avoidance of Grasshopper Creek and its potential associated species impacts.

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s)

Recommendation #3: Reevaluation of the CAA

CDFW recommends that the CAA be reevaluated in a manner that avoids Grasshopper Creek and avoids significant impacts to its associated species, while leaving the Creek hydrologically functioning. This may include the removal of extensive landslide remediation. Additionally, CDFW recommends the CAA be achieved through engineering solutions such as using swales throughout the development to deliver surface runoff to Grasshopper Creek or subsurface drains that retain flow to Grasshopper Creek consistent with current subsurface discharge. CDFW welcomes coordination with the County and Project proponent to lessen significant impacts to the maximum extent feasible.

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Recommendation #4: Riparian Habitat Compensatory Mitigation

If preservation of the existing creek hydrology is not possible, the final CEQA document should contain an alternative that protects Grasshopper Creek in place. This alternative should identify the vegetation alliances and stream habitat acreages that would be avoided as well as the vegetation alliances and acreages that will be lost as a result of the change in hydrology. The vegetation alliances should be mitigated at a minimum 3:1 ratio in the same sub-watershed to mitigate the biological value it provides to resources in the area.

Recommendation #5: Figures and Maps

The final CEQA document should include figures or maps that provide vegetation alliance information, locations of habitat created by the change in landslide hydrology, and meaningful comparisons between the PCAA, CAA, and the original Project in terms of these vegetation alliances.

Recommendation #6: CAA Project Redesign

CDFW recommends eliminating the single-family housing, proposed to the northwest of Grasshopper Creek in the CAA, and the sports park proposed to the west of Grasshopper Creek in the PCAA. This is to reduce the edge effect and preserve more biologically valuable open space in this area. Additionally, this is to reduce the biological impacts to Grasshopper Creek and preserve more biologically valuable open space in this area.

Recommendation #7: Remediation of Landslides

The final CEQA document should address why the CAA appears to include remediation of landslides that occur on the opposite side of Grasshopper Creek. In addition, the final CEQA document should address why landslide remediation would need to occur across the creek from where development is proposed and provide an avoidance alternative to reduce edge effect and impact to the proposed open space.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Fuel Modification. The final CEQA document should discuss how fuel modification requirements would impact any avoided stream and open space habitat and clarify if fuel modification requirements are included in the impact calculations and mitigation analysis.

Debris Basin Impacts to Creeks. Page 104 of the RPDSEIR includes a figure that includes turning Grasshopper Creek and unnamed tributaries into debris basins and other in-line water quality features. CDFW does not support turning streams into basins for water quality. Any feature designed to attenuate flow and/or improve water quality should be located outside of the stream with a 300-foot buffer. CDFW does not support

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the use of in-line basins or type conversion of ephemeral streams to water quality features. The addition of urban runoff into ephemeral streams type converts them from ephemeral systems to intermittent or perennial systems. This changes the vegetation communities and hydrology, which allows invasive species such as Argentine ants, bullfrogs, crawfish, and invasive aquatic weeds to proliferate and damage the overall value of the surrounding habitat. The RPDSEIR should locate all water quality features outside of streams with a minimum 300-foot buffer. If water will be continually present in the basin from urban runoff, the basin should be located a minimum 500 feet from any stream to prevent the spread of Argentine ants into adjacent stream habitat (S.B Menke, et al. 2007 & Conservation Biology 2010).

Western Burrowing Owl. On October 10, 2024, the Fish and Game Commission voted unanimously to advance the western burrowing owl to candidacy under the CESA. As such, it is afforded all the legal protections of a CESA-listed species. CDFW considers adverse impacts to a species protected by CESA, for the purposes of CEQA, to be significant without mitigation. There is potential for burrowing owl to occur within the Project area, and burrowing owl was mentioned in the RPDSEIR in multiple Mitigation Measures. Burrowing owls use burrows dug by other species, such as the California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), as well as natural rock cavities, debris piles, culverts, and pipes for nesting during the breeding season and for roosting and cover, year-round. We recommend coordinating with CDFW's CESA Program to determine if take authorization is necessary and discuss appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures.

Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Plan. CDFW recommends the Project's environmental document include mitigation measures recommended in this letter. CDFW has provided comments via a mitigation monitoring and reporting plan to assist in the development of feasible, specific, detailed (i.e., responsible party, timing, specific actions, location), and fully enforceable mitigation measures (CEQA Guidelines, § 15097; Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6). The County is welcome to coordinate with CDFW to further review and refine the Project's mitigation measures. Per Public Resources Code section 21081.6(a)(1), CDFW has provided a summary of our suggested mitigation measures and recommendations in the form of an attached Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (Attachment A).

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e).) Accordingly, please report any special status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to the California Natural Diversity

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Database (CNDDDB). The [CNDDDB website](#)³ provides direction regarding the types of information that should be reported and allows on-line submittal of field survey forms.

In addition, information on special status native plant populations and sensitive natural communities, should be submitted to CDFW's Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program using the [Combined Rapid Assessment and Relevé Form](#)⁴.

The County should ensure data collected for the preparation of the RPDSEIR is properly submitted.

FILING FEES


The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of environmental document filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the County and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the environmental document filing fee is required in order for the underlying project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.)

CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the RPDSEIR to assist the County in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources. CDFW requests an opportunity to review and comment on any response that the County has to our comments and to receive notification of any forthcoming hearing date(s) for the Project (CEQA Guidelines, § 15073(e)).

Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Joleena De La Fe⁵, Environmental Scientist.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Victoria Tang
Environmental Program Manager
South Coast Region

³ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB>

⁴ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities/Submit>

⁵ Phone: (858) 354-3527; Email: joleena.delafe@wildlife.ca.gov

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Draft Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program

ec: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Victoria Tang, Environmental Program Manager
Frederic (Fritz) Rieman, Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor
Joleena De La Fe, Environmental Scientist
Kelly Schmoker, Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist

Office of Planning and Research
State.Clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

REFERENCES

[CDFG] California Department of Fish and Game. 2010. A Review of Stream Processes and Forms in Dryland Watersheds. Available from <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=25779>

[CDFW] California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2023. Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Candidate Bumble Bee Species. Available from: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=213150&inline>

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ATTACHMENT A: DRAFT MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM (MMRP)

CDFW provides the following language to be incorporated into the MMRP for the Project.

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>Mitigation Measure #1: CDFW Survey Protocol</p> <p>CDFW recommends the Project proponent retain a qualified biologist with the appropriate handling permits to conduct focused surveys within the proposed habitat restoration/enhancement sites prior to implementation of the HMMP. Focused surveys shall follow CDFW’s Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act Candidate Bumble Bee Species (CDFW 2023). Focused surveys shall also be conducted throughout the entire proposed mitigation areas and during the appropriate flying season to ensure no missed detection of Crotch’s bumble bee occurs. Survey results, including negative findings, shall be submitted to CDFW and the County prior to the start of a monitoring program.</p>	<p>Prior to Project Initiation</p>	<p>Project Proponent/Qualified Biologist</p>
<p>Mitigation Measure #2: MM 5.2-6 To MM 5.2-8 Revision</p> <p>Given that the Project proponent intends to obtain an ITP, CDFW would be involved in the review and approval process of compensatory mitigation. CDFW recommends the County revise Mitigation Measures 5.2-6 through 5.2-8 in the RPDSEIR to include review and approval from CDFW.</p>	<p>Prior to Project Initiation</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>
<p>Recommendation #1: CDFW ITP</p> <p>The focused surveys conducted by GLA were performed without coordination and review of the survey methodology by CDFW. Additionally, it is unclear from the survey report and RPDSEIR if the GLA biologists had the appropriate handling permits prior to conducting focused surveys for Crotch’s bumble bee. CDFW</p>	<p>Prior to Project Initiation</p>	<p>Project Proponent/Qualified Biologist</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
strongly recommends that the Project proponent coordinates with CDFW to determine whether the focused surveys are valid to move forward in the ITP process.		
<p>Recommendation #2: CEQA</p> <p>CDFW’s issuance of an ITP for a Project is subject to CEQA. As a Responsible Agency, CDFW may consider the CEQA document from the lead agency/Project proponent for the Project. However, additional documentation may be required as part of an ITP application for the Project in order for CDFW to adequately develop an accurate take analysis and identify measures that would fully mitigate for take of CESA-listed species. To minimize additional requirements by CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 and/or under CEQA, the Project’s CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to Crotch’s bumble bee and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of the ITP.</p>	Prior to Project Initiation	Lead Agency
<p>Recommendation #3: Reevaluation of the CAA</p> <p>CDFW recommends that the CAA be reevaluated in a manner that avoids Grasshopper Creek and avoids significant impacts to its associated species, while leaving the Creek hydrologically functioning. This may include the removal of extensive landslide remediation. Additionally, CDFW recommends the CAA be achieved through engineering solutions such as using swales throughout the development to deliver surface runoff to Grasshopper Creek or subsurface drains that retain flow to Grasshopper Creek consistent with current subsurface discharge. CDFW welcomes coordination with the County and Project proponent to lessen significant impacts to the maximum extent feasible.</p>	Prior to Project Initiation	Lead Agency

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>Recommendation #4: Riparian Habitat Compensatory Mitigation</p> <p>If preservation of the existing creek hydrology is not possible, the final CEQA document should contain an alternative that protects Grasshopper Creek in place. This alternative should identify the vegetation alliances and stream habitat acreages that would be avoided as well as the vegetation alliances and acreages that will be lost as a result of the change in hydrology. The vegetation alliances should be mitigated at a minimum 3:1 ratio in the same sub-watershed to mitigate the biological value it provides to resources in the area.</p>	<p>Prior to Project Initiation</p>	<p>Lead Agency/Project Proponent</p>
<p>Recommendation #5: Figures and Maps</p> <p>The final CEQA document should include figures or maps that provide vegetation alliance information, locations of habitat created by the change in landslide hydrology, and meaningful comparisons between the PCAA, CAA, and the original Project in terms of these vegetation alliances.</p>	<p>Prior to Project Initiation</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>
<p>Recommendation #6: CAA Project Redesign</p> <p>CDFW recommends eliminating the single-family housing, proposed to the northwest of Grasshopper Creek in the CAA, and the sports park proposed to the west of Grasshopper Creek in the PCAA. This is to reduce the edge effect and preserve more biologically valuable open space in this area. Additionally, this is to reduce the biological impacts to Grasshopper Creek and preserve more biologically valuable open space in this area.</p>	<p>Prior to Project Initiation</p>	<p>Lead Agency/Project Proponent</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>Recommendation #7: Remediation of Landslides</p> <p>The final CEQA document should address why the CAA appears to include remediation of landslides that occur on the opposite side of Grasshopper Creek. In addition, the final CEQA document should address why landslide remediation would need to occur across the creek from where development is proposed and provide an avoidance alternative to reduce edge effect and impact to the proposed open space.</p>	<p>Prior to Project Initiation</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>