



NORTHWEST BIOSURVEY

Environmental & Planning Services
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August 26, 2024

Coda Rainsford
HDVine LLC
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RE: Response to Napa County Comments AND Addendum to “BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT WITH BOTANICAL and BAT HABITAT SURVEYS, WOODLAND ASSESSMENT, and DELINEATION OF WATERS OF THE U.S. for the MAXVILLE WINERY & VINEYARD PROJECT, APNS 025-020-002, 008 & 023”, Napa County, CA

Dear Ms. Rainsford:

This letter is provided in response to the Application Completeness Determination for Maxville Vineyard (File #P23-00130) dated July 21, 2023 by Dana Morrison of Napa County Planning Building and Environmental Services. Ms. Morrison has provided five informational requests in Item 1 of Exhibit A of the letter regarding the above report. They will be addressed in the order listed in the letter. Modifications for the Addendum are shown in yellow highlight.

Comment: a. Plant section notes that 3 species of concern were found but only 2 were listed. Later on page 55 it notes the three species (morning glory was missing from the 1st mention): Mt. St. Helena morning glory, Jepson's leptosiphon, and hollyleaf ceanothus.

Response a: All three species are listed and highlighted in Table 4, “The flora of the Maxville Property”. The first discussion is provided on page 33 Section 5.2. All three species are bulleted and highlighted at the beginning of that section. They are again discussed on page 55 in the second paragraph under “Sensitive Plants”. There are no instances in the report where only two of these species are discussed.

Comment b: Table 6 key should also note GP – Ghost pine.

Response b: So noted. This response is provided as an Addendum to the report:

Key:

CLO=Coast Live Oak MAD=Madrone PP=Ponderosa Pine
BLU=Blue Oak BAY=Bay GP= Ghost Pine

BLK=Black Oak BLM=Big-leaf Maple

Comment c: The Bio report does not show any maps of instances of species of concern within the vicinity of the project or within the proposed parcel. Please provide this information.

Response c: The account of the three sensitive plant species bulleted on page 33 of the report states that all three of these species occur within the leather oak chaparral community. This community is then mapped in the "Maxville Lake Vineyard Vegetation Types" Map provided in **Figure 2** (left diagonal green/yellow banded vegetation type along the southern edge of the property).

Comment d: The Bio report does not appear to discuss any of the existing cattle use on the parcel. This should be discussed in the Bio report.

Response d: Livestock grazing is an existing legal land use on the property that is not a component of the proposed vineyard development. A discussion of this land use was beyond the scope of the biological resource assessment. However, the following text is added as an addendum to the following sections of the report:

"1.1 Proposed Project: This survey covers approximately 59 acres of proposed vineyards within three parcels totaling 1,032 acres, located in Chiles Valley, Napa County. The parcels currently contain commercial and agricultural uses including livestock grazing and ponds. The local permitting agency is requesting completion of a botanical survey and assessment of biological resources on the property as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review required for development of a vineyard on the property."

7.5 "Wildlife Value of Woodlands in the Survey Area – paragraph 4: The Maxville Lake property contains extensive tracts of pristine forest and woodland, most of which is in existing conservation easements. The primary anthropogenic influence on these lands has been livestock grazing which has had an erosion impact on steeper slopes and moderate degradation of riparian and wetland resources through trampling and browsing.

Comment e: Please include a discussion of mosses and lichens in the Bio Report.

Response e: There are no mosses or lichens listed in the California Natural Diversity Database for the St Helena 7 ½' Quadrangle. Mosses and lichens with sensitive status in the region are readily identifiable when present and occur in species specific habitats. These habitats, when present, are reviewed during botanical surveys, however, listing of all mosses and lichens beyond those with sensitive regulatory status would require extensive additional surveys that are not standard practice in biological resource assessments and would not provide substantial additional value equal to the scale of effort. No mosses or lichens with sensitive regulatory status were observed during the botanical surveys and none are listed in Table 4.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Zalusky", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Zalusky
Principal Biologist