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STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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October 13, 2026

Kathleen King
City of Los Angeles
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Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the 425 North Mount Holyoke Avenue Residential Project, SCH No. 2026090501, Los Angeles County, CA

Dear Kathleen King:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) from City of Los Angeles (City) for the 425 North Mount Holyoke Avenue Residential Project (Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines[1].

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish and wildlife.

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.

[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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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 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 law[2] 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: 425 Mount Holyoke Ave LLC

Objective: The Project objective is to construct a three-story, 12,872 square-foot single-family residential unit, including an attached 1,336 square-foot accessory dwelling unit (ADU), pool and spa, retaining walls, outdoor terraces and decks, and an attached garage. Primary Project activities include site clearing, grading, and construction, and would require the export of approximately 1,950 cubic yards of soil.

Location: The Project consists of an undeveloped 0.96-acre parcel (APN 4412015011) located at 425 North Mount Holyoke Avenue in the Pacific Palisades neighborhood of the City of Los Angeles in Los Angeles County, between the cross-streets Earlham Street and West Friends Street and abutting North Mount Holyoke Avenue along its eastern boundary. To the south is a currently vacated parcel where a residence was destroyed in the 2025 Palisades Fire, and to the east across the street is a residential community, within which many of the homes were also destroyed in the fire. Directly to the north is a single-family residence that survived the fire, and to the west is undeveloped open space (Temescal Canyon Park). The property is designated as part of the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan Area under the Los Angeles City Planning Department.

Timeframe: The Project will take up to approximately 30 months to construct.

Biological Setting: The site is currently undeveloped and supports a mix of native and nonnative vegetation. Much of the on-site vegetation has been regularly disturbed (cleared) to comply with fuel modification requirements for the adjacent properties. Prior to the fire, the site composition was as follows, per the 2024 Biological Resources Report: 0.1 acres (10.4%) California Brittle Bush–Ashy Buckwheat Scrub (*Encelia californica–Eriogonum cinereum* Shrub Alliance), 0.19 acres (19.7%) Indian Fig Scrub (*Opuntia ficus-indica* Shrubland Alliance), 0.06 acres (6.1%) Landscape-Forb, 0.12 acres (12.7%) Landscape - Tree & Shrub, 0.07 acres (7.5%) Laurel Sumac Scrub (*Malosma laurina* Shrub Alliance), 0.13 acres (13.9%)

[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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Upland Mustards or Star-thistle Fields (*Brassica nigra–Centaurea* (*solstitialis, melitensis*) Herb SemiNatural Alliance), and 0.2 acres (20.9%) Wild Oats and Annual Brome Grasslands (*Avena* spp.*–Bromus* spp. Herb Semi-Natural Alliance). A single large eucalyptus tree was also present. According to the 2026 letter on post-fire conditions (Appendix 2 of NOP), the Project biologist made observations from the sidewalk and concluded that Upland Mustards are now the dominant vegetation on the site, that Laurel Sumac Scrub is gone, and that California Brittle Bush–Ashy Buckwheat Scrub is no longer present, although a handful of ashy buckwheat plants are present. This remnant scrub may still constitute California Brittle Bush–Ashy Buckwheat Scrub, which is a Sensitive Natural Community with rank G3 and S3.

In terms of the surrounding (500-foot) biological study area that was assessed in the Biological Resources Report (2024), 23.7% consisted of natural communities, most of which is in Temescal Canyon Park and within which the dominant vegetation alliance was Laurel Sumac Scrub. These conditions may have changed since the Palisades Fire.

Project History: A Biological Resources Report for the Project (Appendix 1 of the NOP) was prepared in 2024 based on surveys conducted in 2023 and 2024. A letter dated June 2026 summarizing post-fire biological conditions on the site was included as Appendix 2 of the NOP.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Specific Comments

1) **Project Description and Alternatives**. To enable adequate review and comment on the proposed Project from the standpoint of the protection of fish, wildlife, and plants, CDFW recommends the following information be included in the DEIR.

   a. A complete discussion of the purpose and need for, and description of the proposed Project.

   b. A range of feasible alternatives to the Project location to avoid or otherwise minimize direct and indirect impacts on sensitive biological resources and wildlife movement areas. CDFW recommends the City select Project designs and alternatives that would avoid or otherwise minimize direct and indirect impacts on biological resources. CDFW also recommends the City consider establishing appropriate setbacks from sensitive and special status biological resources. CDFW notes that California Brittle Bush–Ashy Buckwheat Scrub (*Encelia californica–Eriogonum cinereum* Shrub Alliance; state rank S3 and global rank G3) is a CDFW Sensitive Natural Community and was present on the site pre-fire. Some remnants of this scrub type still remain, per the 2026

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update letter (Appendix 2 of NOP), or have the potential to recover with time. The pre-fire biological resources report (Appendix 1 of NOP) indicated that this scrub type was directly adjacent to the proposed footprint. If feasible, areas with remnant California Brittle Bush–Ashy Buckwheat Scrub (i.e., that currently support either of the indicator species) should be avoided during both permanent and temporary (including fuel modification) impacts. Setbacks should not be impacted by ground disturbance or hydrological changes from any future Project-related construction, activities, maintenance, and development. As a general rule, CDFW recommends reducing or clustering a development footprint to retain unobstructed spaces for vegetation and wildlife and provide connections for wildlife between properties and minimize obstacles to open space. If it is not possible to fully avoid temporary or permanent impacts to the recovering California Brittle Bush–Ashy Buckwheat Scrub, then (i) the DEIR should include a discussion of why it was unavoidable, (ii) on-site restoration should be conducted to remove the nonnative invasives and help the scrub habitat reestablish, and (iii) compensatory mitigation should be provided (see General Comments #5, 6, 7).

c. Project alternatives should be thoroughly evaluated, even if an alternative would impede, to some degree, the attainment of the Project objectives or would be more costly (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6). The DEIR shall include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, public participation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed Project (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6). Furthermore, Project footprint analyses should include any adjacent areas associated with the residence that will be converted to non-permeable land (e.g., pools, driveways), ornamental landscaping, etc., and impacts to native species and habitat should include those temporarily expected during construction as well as adjacent natural areas that will be degraded over time through fuel modification.

d. Where the Project may impact aquatic and riparian resources, CDFW recommends the City select Project designs and alternatives that would fully avoid impacts to such resources. CDFW also recommends an alternative that would not impede, alter, or otherwise modify existing surface flow, watercourse and meander, and water-dependent ecosystems and natural communities. Project designs should consider elevated crossings to avoid channelizing or narrowing of watercourses. Any modifications to a river, creek, or stream may cause or magnify upstream bank erosion, channel incision, and drop in water level, which may cause the watercourse to alter its course of flow.

2) **Nesting Birds and Special Status Species**. To avoid impacts to nesting birds, CDFW recommends that clearing of vegetation occur outside of the peak avian breeding season, which generally runs from February 1 through September 15 (as early as January 1 for some raptors). If Project construction is necessary during the bird breeding season, a qualified biologist with experience in conducting breeding bird surveys should conduct a

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nesting bird survey within three days prior to work in the area. If an active nest is identified, a buffer shall be established between the construction activities and the nest so that nesting activities are not interrupted. For the given Project site, CDFW generally recommends a 300-foot buffer for all native avian species and a 500-foot buffer for raptors and species that are listed or sensitive. The nest buffer may be reduced to 100 feet for urban-habituated species that are currently abundant and not experiencing declines (e.g., house finch and Anna's hummingbird). Several special-status wildlife species (Allen's hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*), Nuttall's woodpecker (*Dryobates nuttallii*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), wrentit (*Chamaea fasciata*), and California thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*)) were identified in the Biological Resources Report as having a low to moderate potential for being affected by the project because they were directly observed during field surveys. Along with loss of habitat, the main concern for these species would be impacts during nesting season. As such, CDFW recommends an increased buffer of 500 feet for nests of these or other special-status species if discovered in pre-construction surveys or otherwise noted during construction activities.

The buffer for nesting birds should be delineated by temporary fencing and remain in effect as long as construction is occurring. No Project construction shall occur within the fenced nest zone until the young have fledged, are no longer being fed by the parents, have left the nest, and will no longer be impacted by the Project.

3) **Use of Native Plants and Trees**. CDFW recommends the City to require the Project Applicant to provide a native plant palette for the Project. The Project's landscaping plan should be disclosed and evaluated in the DEIR for potential impacts on biological resources such as natural communities adjacent to the Project site (e.g., introducing non-native, invasive species). Per page 4 of the Housing Element EIR Mitigation Measure Applicability (Attachment 4 of the NOP), Project Design Feature 1 will ensure that only native plant species be used for landscaping. CDFW supports the use of native plants for the Project, especially considering the Project's location adjacent to protected open space and natural areas (Temescal Canyon Park and the on-site habitat downslope of the proposed residences). CDFW strongly recommends avoiding non-native, invasive species for landscaping and restoration, particularly any species listed as 'Moderate', 'High', 'Limited', or 'Watch' by the California Invasive Plant Council[3] Although the currently proposed mitigation measures suggest no use of invasive plant species, CDFW supports the use of native species found in naturally occurring plant communities within or adjacent to the Project site, given that the project will likely entail the removal of native plant species and communities that are recovering post-fire. In addition, CDFW strongly supports planting native species of trees, such as oaks (*Quercus* genus), and native understory vegetation (e.g., ground cover, vines, subshrubs, and shrubs) that create habitat and provide a food source for birds. CDFW recommends retaining any

[3] https://www.cal-ipc.org/plants/inventory/

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standing, dead, or dying trees (snags) where possible because snags provide perching and nesting habitat for birds and raptors. Finally, CDFW supports planting species of vegetation with high insect and pollinator value.

General Comments

1) Disclosure. The DEIR should provide an adequate, complete, and detailed disclosure about the effects which a proposed project is likely to have on the environment (Pub. Resources Code, § 20161; CEQA Guidelines, § 15151). Such disclosure is necessary so CDFW may provide comments on the adequacy of proposed avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures, as well as assess the significance of the specific impact relative to plant and wildlife species impacted (e.g., current range, distribution, population trends, and connectivity).

2) Biological Baseline Assessment. An adequate biological resources assessment should provide a complete assessment and impact analysis of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the Project site and where the Project may result in disturbance of native floral and faunal species. The assessment and analysis should place emphasis on identifying endangered, threatened, rare, and sensitive species; regionally and locally unique species; and sensitive habitats. An impact analysis will aid in determining the Project's potential direct, indirect, and cumulative biological impacts, as well as specific mitigation or avoidance measures necessary to offset those impacts. CDFW also considers impacts to Species of Special Concern (SSC) a significant direct and cumulative adverse effect without implementing appropriate avoidance and/or mitigation measures. The DEIR should include the following information.

   a. Information on the regional setting that is critical to an assessment of environmental impacts, with special emphasis on resources that are rare or unique to the region (CEQA Guidelines, § 15125(c)). The DEIR should include measures to fully avoid and otherwise protect Sensitive Natural Communities. CDFW considers Sensitive Natural Communities as threatened habitats having both regional and local significance. Natural communities, alliances, and associations with a State-wide rarity ranking of S1, S2, and S3 should be considered sensitive and declining at the local and regional level. These ranks can be obtained by visiting the Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program - Natural Communities webpage[4].

   b. A thorough, recent, floristic-based assessment of special status plants and natural communities following CDFW's *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities*[5]. Botanical field surveys should be comprehensive over the entire Project site, including areas that will be directly or indirectly impacted by the Project. Adjoining properties should also

[4] https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities
[5] https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=18959&inline

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be surveyed where direct or indirect Project effects could occur, such as those from fuel modification, herbicide application, invasive species, and altered hydrology. Botanical field surveys should be conducted in the field at the times of year when plants will be both evident and identifiable. Usually, this is during flowering or fruiting. Botanical field survey visits should be spaced throughout the growing season to accurately determine what plants exist in the Project site. This usually involves multiple visits to the Project site (e.g., in early, mid, and late season) to capture the floristic diversity at a level necessary to determine if special status plants are present.

c. Floristic alliance- and/or association-based mapping and vegetation impact assessments conducted in the Project site and within adjacent areas. The Manual of California Vegetation[6], second edition, (Sawyer, Keeler-Wolf, & Evens, 2009) should also be used to inform this mapping and assessment. Adjoining habitat areas should be included in this assessment where the Project's construction and activities could lead to direct or indirect impacts offsite.

d. A complete and recent assessment of the biological resources associated with each habitat type in the Project site and within adjacent areas. A full literature review includes but is not limited to CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database[7] (CNDDB). The CNDDB should be accessed to obtain current information on any previously reported sensitive species and habitat. An assessment should include a minimum nine-quadrangle search of the CNDDB to determine a list of species potentially present in the Project site. A nine-quadrangle search should be provided in the Project's CEQA document for adequate disclosure of the Project's potential impact on biological resources.

e. A complete, recent, assessment of endangered, rare, or threatened species and other sensitive species within the Project site and adjacent areas, including SSC and California Fully Protected Species (Fish & G. Code, §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515). Species to be addressed should include all those which meet the CEQA definition of endangered, rare, or threatened species (CEQA Guidelines, § 15380). Seasonal variations in use of the Project site should also be addressed such as wintering, roosting, nesting, and foraging habitat. Focused species-specific surveys, conducted at the appropriate time of year and time of day when the sensitive species are active or otherwise identifiable, may be required if suitable habitat is present. See CDFW's Survey and Monitoring Protocols and Guidelines[8] for established survey protocol. Acceptable species-specific survey procedures may be developed in consultation with CDFW and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[6] https://vegetation.cnps.org/
[7] https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB
[8] https://wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/survey-protocols

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f. A recent wildlife and rare plant survey. A lack of records in the CNDDB does not mean that rare, threatened, or endangered plants and wildlife do not occur. Field verification for the presence or absence of sensitive species is necessary to provide a complete biological assessment for adequate CEQA review (CEQA Guidelines, § 15003(i)). CDFW generally considers biological field assessments for wildlife to be valid for a one-year period, and assessments for rare plants may be considered valid for a period of up to three years. Some aspects of the proposed Project may warrant periodic updated surveys for certain sensitive taxa, particularly if Project implementation build out could occur over a protracted time frame or in phases.

3) Direct and Indirect Impacts on Biological Resources. The DEIR should provide a thorough discussion of direct and indirect impacts expected to affect biological resources with specific measures to offset such impacts. The DEIR should address the following.

a. A discussion of potential impacts from lighting, noise, temporary and permanent human activity, and exotic species, and identification of any mitigation measures. A discussion regarding Project-related indirect impacts on biological resources. These include resources in nearby public lands, open space, adjacent natural habitats, riparian ecosystems, and any designated and/or proposed or existing reserve lands (e.g., preserve lands associated with a Natural Community Conservation Plan (Fish & G. Code, § 2800 et. seq.)).

b. A discussion of both the short-term and long-term effects of the Project on species population distribution and concentration, as well as alterations of the ecosystem supporting those species impacted (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.2(a)).

c. Impacts on, and maintenance of, wildlife corridor/movement areas, including access to undisturbed habitats in areas adjacent to the Project, should be fully analyzed and discussed in the DEIR.

d. A discussion of post-Project fate of drainage patterns, surface flows, and soil erosion and/or sedimentation in streams and water bodies. The discussion should also address the potential water extraction activities and the potential resulting impacts on habitat supported by the groundwater. Measures to mitigate such impacts should be included.

e. An analysis of impacts from proposed changes to land use designations and zoning, and existing land use designation and zoning located nearby or adjacent to natural areas that may inadvertently contribute to wildlife-human interactions. A discussion of possible conflicts and mitigation measures to reduce these conflicts should be included in the DEIR.

4) Cumulative Impact. Cumulative impacts on biological resources can result from collectively significant projects which are individually insignificant. The Project, when

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considered collectively with prior, concurrent, and probable future projects, may have a significant cumulative effect on biological resources. The Project may have the potential to substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of endangered, rare, or threatened species. Species that may be impacted by the Project include, but are not limited to, the biological resources described in this letter.

Accordingly, CDFW recommends the DEIR evaluate the Project's potential cumulative impacts on biological resources. The Project may have a "significant effect on the environment" if the possible effects of the Project are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects (Pub. Resources Code, § 21083(b)). The City's conclusions regarding the significance of the Project's cumulative impact should be justified and supported by evidence to make those conclusions. Specifically, if the City concludes that the Project would not result in cumulative impacts on biological resources, the City, "shall identify facts and analysis supporting the Lead Agency's conclusion that the cumulative impact is less than significant" (CEQA Guidelines section § 15130(a)(2)).

5) Mitigation Measures. Public agencies have a duty under CEQA to prevent significant, avoidable damage to the environment by requiring changes in a project through the use of feasible alternatives or mitigation measures (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15002(a)(3), 15021). Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4, an environmental document shall describe feasible measures which could mitigate impacts below a significant level under CEQA. Mitigation measures must be feasible, effective, implementable, and fully enforceable/imposed by the lead agency through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally binding instruments (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6(b); CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.4).

   a. The DEIR should provide mitigation measures that are specific and detailed (i.e., responsible party, timing, specific actions, location) in order for a mitigation measure to be fully enforceable and implemented successfully via a mitigation monitoring and/or reporting program (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6; CEQA Guidelines, § 15097).

   b. If a proposed mitigation measure would cause one or more significant effects, in addition to impacts caused by the proposed Project, the DEIR should include a discussion of the effects of proposed mitigation measures (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.4(a)(1)). In that regard, the DEIR should provide an adequate, complete, and detailed disclosure about the Project's proposed mitigation measure(s). Adequate disclosure is necessary so CDFW may assess the potential impacts of proposed mitigation measures.

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6) Compensatory Mitigation. The DEIR should include compensatory mitigation measures for the Project's significant impacts (direct and/or through habitat modification) to sensitive and special status plants, animals, and habitats. Mitigation measures should emphasize avoidance and minimization of Project-related impacts. For unavoidable impacts, on-site habitat restoration or enhancement should be discussed in detail. If on-site mitigation is not feasible or would not be biologically viable and therefore inadequate to mitigate the loss of biological functions and values, off-site mitigation through habitat creation and/or acquisition and preservation in perpetuity should be addressed. Areas proposed as mitigation lands should be protected in perpetuity with a conservation easement and financial assurance and dedicated to a qualified entity for long-term management and monitoring.

7) Long-term Management of Mitigation Lands. For proposed mitigation lands, the DEIR should include measures to protect the targeted habitat values in perpetuity. The mitigation should offset Project-induced qualitative and quantitative losses of biological resources. Issues that should be addressed include (but are not limited to) restrictions on access, proposed land dedications, monitoring and management programs, control of illegal dumping, water pollution, and increased human intrusion. An appropriate endowment should be set aside to provide for long-term management of mitigation lands.

8) CESA. CDFW considers adverse impacts to a species protected by CESA to be significant. Take of any endangered, threatened, candidate species, or NPPA-listed plant species that results from the Project is prohibited, except as authorized by state law (Fish & G. Code §§ 2080, 2085; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §786.9). Consequently, if the Project or any Project-related activity will result in take of a species designated as endangered or threatened, or a candidate for listing under CESA, CDFW recommends that the Project proponent seek appropriate take authorization under CESA prior to implementing the Project. Appropriate authorization from CDFW may include an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) or a consistency determination in certain circumstances, among other options (Fish & G. Code, §§ 2080.1, 2081, subds. (b) and (c)). Early consultation is encouraged, as significant modification to a Project and mitigation measures may be required to obtain a CESA Permit.

   To ensure CDFW will be able to use the City's CEQA document for the issuance of an ITP, the DEIR should address all Project impacts to CESA-listed species and specify a mitigation, monitoring, and reporting program that will meet the requirements of an ITP.

9) Translocation/Salvage of Plants and Animal Species. Translocation and transplantation is the process of removing plants and wildlife from one location and permanently moving it to a new location. CDFW generally does not support the use of translocation or transplantation as the primary mitigation strategy for unavoidable impacts to endangered, rare, or threatened plants and animals. These efforts are experimental, and

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the outcome is unreliable. CDFW has found that permanent preservation and management of habitat capable of supporting these species is often a more effective long-term strategy for conserving plants and animals and their habitats.

10) Scientific Collecting Permit and Voucher Collecting Permit. A Scientific Collecting Permit would be necessary if there is a plan to capture and relocate wildlife. Pursuant to the California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 650, qualified biologist(s) must obtain appropriate handling permits to capture, temporarily possess, and relocated wildlife to avoid harm or mortality in connection with Project-related activities. CDFW has the authority to issue permits for the take or possession of wildlife, including mammals; birds, nests, and eggs; reptiles, amphibians, fish, plants; and invertebrates (Fish & G. Code, §§ 1002, 1002.5, 1003). A Scientific Collecting Permit is required to monitor project impacts on wildlife resources, as required by environmental documents, permits, or other legal authorizations; and, to capture, temporarily possess, and relocate wildlife to avoid harm or mortality in connection with otherwise lawful activities (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 650). For more information, please see CDFW's Scientific Collecting Permit webpage[9].

    A voucher collection permit is required to collect state-listed plant species for identification purposes during field surveys, or to collect voucher specimens to document a newly discovered or previously unvouchered occurrence of a state-listed plant. There is no charge to apply for a voucher collection permit. Anyone who collects scientific plant specimens of state-listed species, or who may encounter a state-listed species during field surveys should have a plant voucher collection permit. To apply for a Voucher Collecting Permit please see CDFW's Voucher Collecting Permit Page.

11) Lake and Streambed Alteration. CDFW has regulatory authority over activities in streams that will divert or obstruct the natural flow, or change the bed, channel, or bank (which may include associated riparian resources) of any river, stream, or lake or use material from a river, stream, or lake. For any such activities, the Project applicant (or "entity") must provide written notification to CDFW pursuant to section 1600 et seq. of the Fish and Game Code. Based on this notification and other information, CDFW determines whether a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) with the applicant is required prior to conducting the proposed activities. CDFW's issuance of a LSAA for a project that is subject to CEQA will require CEQA compliance actions by CDFW as a Responsible Agency. CDFW recommends that the City assess whether notification is appropriate. A Notification package for a LSAA may be obtained by accessing CDFW's Lake and Streambed Alteration Program website[10].

12) Wetland Resources. CDFW, as described in Fish and Game Code section 703(a), is guided by the Fish and Game Commission's (Commission) policies[11]. Through its

[9] https://wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Scientific-Collecting
[10] http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/LSA
[11] https://fgc.ca.gov/About/Policies/Miscellaneous

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Wetlands Resources policy, the Commission "…seek[s] to provide for the protection, preservation, restoration, enhancement, and expansion of wetland habitat in California" (California Fish and Game Commission, 2005). It is the policy of the Commission to strongly discourage development in or conversion of wetlands. It opposes, consistent with its legal authority, any development or conversion that would result in a reduction of wetland acreage or wetland habitat values. To that end, the Commission opposes wetland development proposals unless, at a minimum, project mitigation assures there will be 'no net loss' of either wetland habitat values or acreage. The Commission strongly prefers mitigation which would achieve expansion of wetland acreage and enhancement of wetland habitat values."

a. The Wetlands Resources policy provides a framework for maintaining wetland resources and establishes mitigation guidance. CDFW encourages avoidance of wetland resources as a primary mitigation measure and discourages the development or type conversion of wetlands to uplands. CDFW encourages activities that would avoid the reduction of wetland acreage, function, or habitat values. Once avoidance and minimization measures have been exhausted, a project should include mitigation measures to assure a "no net loss" of either wetland habitat values, or acreage, for unavoidable impacts to wetland resources. Conversions include, but are not limited to, conversion to subsurface drains, placement of fill or building of structures within the wetland, and channelization or removal of materials from the streambed. All wetlands and watercourses, whether ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial, should be retained and provided with substantial setbacks, which preserve the riparian and aquatic values and functions benefiting local and transient wildlife populations. CDFW recommends mitigation measures to compensate for unavoidable impacts be included in the DEIR and these measures should compensate for the loss of function and value.

b. The Fish and Game Commission's Water policy guides CDFW on the quantity and quality of the waters of this State that should be apportioned and maintained respectively so as to produce and sustain maximum numbers of fish and wildlife; to provide maximum protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife and their habitat; encourage and support programs to maintain or restore a high quality of the waters of this State; prevent the degradation thereof caused by pollution and contamination; and, endeavor to keep as much water as possible open and accessible to the public for the use and enjoyment of fish and wildlife. CDFW recommends avoidance of water practices and structures that use excessive amounts of water, and minimization of impacts that negatively affect water quality, to the extent feasible (Fish & G. Code, § 5650).

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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 Database (CNDDB). The CNDDB website[12] 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[13].

The City should ensure data collected for the preparation of the DEIR is properly submitted.

FILING FEES

The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the 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 NOP to assist the City in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources.

[12] https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB
[13] https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities/Submit

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Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Laurel Peelle, Environmental Scientist[14].

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
5991E19EF8094C3...
Victoria Tang
Environmental Program Manager
South Coast Region

ec: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Victoria Tang, Environmental Program Manager
Erika Cleugh, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor)
Laurel Peelle, Environmental Scientist

Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
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