

Appendix B

Environmentally Sensitive Lands Assessment

MEMORANDUM

TO: Colin Applewhite, Longfellow
Peter Fritz, Longfellow

FROM: Melissa Busby, Busby Biological Services, Inc.

DATE: August 6, 2021

RE: Environmentally Sensitive Lands Assessment for 10225 Barnes Canyon Road & Various Properties on Lusk Boulevard, City of San Diego, California

Busby Biological Services, Inc. (BBS) was contracted by Longfellow to conduct an assessment of the property located at 10225 Barnes Canyon Road and various properties located along Lusk Boulevard (i.e., 6370, 6440, 6450, 6540, 6640, 6650, 6150, and 6160 Lusk Boulevard; see Attachment 1: Photograph 1) in the City of San Diego, California, to determine if these properties support or are adjacent to City of San Diego (City) Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESLs). This memorandum provides a brief summary of the site visit and results of the assessment.

SITE VISIT METHODS

In preparation for the site visit, BBS conducted a brief aerial analysis of 10225 Barnes Canyon Road and the various properties located along Lusk Boulevard. BBS biologist, Darin Busby, visited the property on Tuesday, August 3, 2021 to conduct the site visit, specifically to assess the property for ESL. Mr. Busby was on-site between 1315 and 1415. Weather conditions were mild, with a temperature of 79 degrees Fahrenheit, winds ranging from 2 to 4 miles per hour, and clear skies.

SITE VISIT RESULTS

The 10225 Barnes Canyon Road property supports areas classified as Urban/Developed and Ornamental Plantings. The Urban/Developed classification makes up the majority of the property and includes all buildings and associated infrastructure (e.g., parking lots, side walks). Ornamental Plantings occur primarily along the boundary of the parking lot and on a manufactured slope along the southern boundary of the property, with a few additional Ornamental Plantings scattered within the parking lot. Ornamental Plantings on the property are dominated by non-native horticultural species, such as acacia (*Acacia* sp.), gum tree (*Eucalyptus* spp.), Peruvian pepper tree (*Schinus molle*), Indian hawthorn

(*Rhaphiolepis indica*), Japanese pittosporum (*Pittosporum tobira*), bottlebrush (*Melaleuca* sp.), and pine tree (*Pinus* sp.).

The Lusk Boulevard properties also support areas classified as Urban/Developed and Ornamental Plantings. The Urban/Developed classification includes all buildings and associated infrastructure (e.g., parking lots, side walks). Ornamental Plantings occur throughout the property, and include Ornamental Plantings along the boundary of the parking areas, scattered within the parking areas, and along the southern property boundaries, adjacent to the Urban/Developed, on a manufactured slope supported by a retaining wall but are also found scattered throughout the parking lot. Ornamental Plantings on the property are dominated by non-native horticultural species, such as acacia, gum tree, Peruvian pepper, bottlebrush, pine, Brazilian pepper tree (*Schinus terbinthifolius*), crapemyrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*), pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*), and lantana (*Lantana* sp.).

The City Biology Guidelines (City of San Diego 2018) classify vegetation communities by tier to determine the mitigation requirements for unavoidable impacts. Urban/Developed is a land cover type and does not have a tier designation under the City Biology Guidelines and does not require mitigation for impacts. Ornamental Plantings are considered Tier IV (other uplands) and do not require mitigation for impacts, because they are not considered sensitive vegetation community.

Commercial Urban/Developed is the dominant land use surrounding these properties; however, a small area of open space occurs north of both 6640 and 6540 Lusk Boulevard, on the opposite side of Lusk Boulevard. This open space includes a small, unnamed, canyon, which runs north and intersects with Los Peñasquitos Canyon, which runs east/west to the north of Lusk Boulevard. Los Peñasquitos Canyon is part of the City Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), which is the City's preserve system and is classified as ESL. An analysis of the current MHPA boundaries that are available on the San Diego Management & Monitoring Program website (www.sdmmp.com) shows that the MHPA extends from Los Peñasquitos Canyon south into the unnamed canyon but ends approximately 600 feet north of Lusk Boulevard.

No sensitive plant or wildlife species were detected on-site. As described above, plant species observed were primarily ornamental/horticultural varieties common to landscaping in San Diego. Wildlife species observed and/or detected during the site visit are all common species consistent with urban environments and included northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), rock pigeon (*Columba livia*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and common raven (*Corvus corax*).

ESL ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the City ESL Regulations (San Diego Municipal Code, Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 1) is to protect, preserve and, where damaged, restore, ESL and the species supported by areas designated as ESL. The City ESL Regulations apply to all proposed development where ESL is present. Based on the location of the property, ESL could include sensitive biological resources, steep hillsides, and/or MHPA.

Sensitive Biological Resources

No sensitive plant species are expected to occur on or adjacent to the property. Raptors and other birds covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) may nest in the area classified as Ornamental Planting. Therefore, if impacts (e.g., vegetation trimming, vegetation removal, demolition of existing structures/pavement) within or adjacent to Ornamental Planting would occur during bird breeding season (February 1 to September 15), a pre-construction nesting bird clearance survey may be required. Given that the surrounding areas are dominated by urban land uses and the ambient noise is already elevated, impacts associated with the redevelopment of the site are anticipated to be minimal and easily reduced to below a level of significance through appropriate avoidance and minimization measures.

Multi-Habitat Planning Area

According to the current MHPA boundaries that are available on the San Diego Management & Monitoring Program website, the MHPA extends from Los Peñasquitos Canyon south into the unnamed canyon across from 6640 and 6540 Lusk Boulevard but ends approximately 600 feet north of Lusk Boulevard. Because the MHPA is not immediately adjacent to the project, there is adequate distance between the project and the MHPA to assume that no impacts would occur to this ESL.

Steep Hillside Guidelines

The Steep Hillside Guidelines are applicable when development is proposed on a site with any portions with **a natural gradient** of at least 25 percent and a vertical elevation of at least 50 feet. The Steep Hillside Guidelines are also applicable if a portion of the site contains **a natural gradient** of at least 200 percent and a vertical elevation of at least 10 feet. Because all steep slopes on the property are manufactured slopes and because there are no natural gradients that can be classified as steep slopes, the Steep Hillside Guidelines do not apply to the property.

CONCLUSION

Based on the existing site conditions observed during the site visit conducted on August 3, 2021, no ESL occurs on or immediately adjacent to the property. Avoidance and

minimization measures for raptors and nesting birds may be required depending on proposed project activities and timing.

Please contact Melissa Busby at melissa@busbybiological.com or at 858.334.9507 if you have any questions or require additional information.

**ATTACHMENT 1
SITE PHOTOGRAPHS**



Photograph 1. Overview of project location provided by Longfellow.



Photograph 2. Urban/Developed parking lot with Ornamental Plantings along western perimeter of parking lot (taken 8/3/21; facing south).



Photograph 3. Urban/Developed parking lot and retaining wall with Ornamental Plantings on manufactured slope along the southern perimeter of parking lot (taken 8/3/21; facing east).



Photograph 4. Urban/Developed parking lot and retaining wall with Ornamental Plantings on manufactured slope along the northern perimeter of parking lot (taken 8/3/21; facing east).



Photograph 5. Urban/Developed parking lot with Ornamental Plantings on manufactured slope along the northern perimeter of parking lot (taken 8/3/21; facing east).



Photograph 6. Ornamental Plantings on manufactured slope along south side of Lusk Boulevard (taken 8/3/21; facing south).



Photograph 7. Ornamental Plantings and Urban/Developed land along south side of Lusk Boulevard (taken 8/3/21; facing south).



Photograph 8. Disturbed Land in open space along north side of Lusk Boulevard with MHPA land on distant slope (taken 8/3/21; facing north).