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MEMORANDUM

Date: June 15, 2020
To: Mr. Steve Rodriguez
Organization: County of Santa Barbara
From: Kevin Merk
Email: kmerk@kevinmerkassociates.com
cc: Ray Shady (Grapevine Land Management), Brian Tetley (UPC), Jennifer Scholl (Cardno)
Re: North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds Project – Supplemental Biological Resources Information

At your request, the following memorandum was prepared to address questions that arose during Cardno's peer review of the Biological Resources Assessment report (KMA February 2020; BRA) for the above referenced project. Specifically, further information was requested regarding the extent of the survey area, timing of surveys, and general wildlife observations. In addition, it was requested that we revise the line work for Figure 3A showing the study area and limits of Reservoir or Frost Pond 1 in the vicinity of Schoolhouse Canyon Road. Following provides the additional information to supplement our BRA for the project.

The surveys occurred on 28 March and 29 April of 2019. Surveys on these days commenced at approximately 0900 hours and were completed by approximately 1600 hours. The surveys started in the Cottonwood Canyon area west of the proposed frost ponds to search reference sites of several rare plants known to occur in the area. The proposed frost pond study areas were then visited and the survey effort typically moved from west to east across the property. With this approach, Reservoir 3 was surveyed first, then Reservoir 2 was surveyed next, and Reservoir 1 was surveyed last. The study areas shown on each respective figure in the BRA (i.e., Figures 3A, 3B, and 3C) were walked and surrounding ranch roads driven. Drainage features and other interesting areas such as hillsides with native vegetation that were outside the vineyard footprint were also inspected.

As stated in the BRA, the vineyard is fenced and has regular human presence. As such, very little sign or direct observation of wildlife occurred in each frost pond study area because most medium and large animals known to occur in the greater area have been excluded by the fence. Time of day may have also reduced the direct observation of certain species since the reservoirs were visited from roughly 1000 hours to 1600 hours. Still, the nearly impenetrable fence that surrounds the vineyard is expected to exclude most medium and large animals such as coyote and deer that are expected to be present in the region. Bird activity was generally low during the surveys with only red-tailed hawk and turkey vulture observed flying over the site. Also, please refer to the information provided in Appendix A of the BRA documenting the additional studies conducted on the property prior to and during vineyard development, and wildlife observed in those areas of the site. The statement on page 21 second paragraph that "no recent observations of badgers were identified on or adjacent to the proposed project sites" was based on

occurrence records in the California Natural Diversity Database (California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2019) that were reviewed during report preparation, as well as our own personal observations made during surveys conducted onsite from 2015 to 2019.

Regarding the accuracy of the line work on the Habitat Map for Reservoir 1 (Figure 3A) provided in the BRA, we believe the line work is accurate and correctly depicts the frost pond location. The line work for the frost pond (shown in yellow) was reviewed with the project engineer, Mr. Thomas Howell, and cross referenced with the project plans from 2017 (Sheet 4 of 12). Mr. Howell confirmed that the line work for the frost pond is accurate and that the south corner is in close proximity to Schoolhouse Canyon Road. Reservoir 1 will not encroach onto or block Schoolhouse Canyon Road, but will be located immediately adjacent to it as shown on Figure 3A. Vehicular traffic will still be able to use Schoolhouse Canyon Road during the construction of Reservoir/Frost Pond 1.

I trust the above information clarifies the questions raised by Cardno during their peer review of the BRA prepared for the project, and can facilitate their completion of the Draft Environmental Impact Report. Please don't hesitate to call or email me if you would like to discuss this supplemental biological resources information further. Thank you.