



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
South Coast Region
3883 Ruffin Road
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 467-4201
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



June 12, 2019

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Mr. David De Vries, City Planner
City of Poway Development Services
13325 Civic Center Drive
Poway, CA 92064
ddevries@poway.org

JUNE 12 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Subject: Comments on the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Farm in Poway (SCH# 2019059048)

Dear Mr. De Vries:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has reviewed the above-referenced Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Farm in Poway (Project). The following statements and comments have been prepared pursuant to the Department's authority as Trustee Agency with jurisdiction over natural resources affected by the project (California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA] Guidelines § 15386) and pursuant to our authority as a Responsible Agency under CEQA Guidelines section 15381 over those aspects of the proposed project that come under the purview of the California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code § 2050 *et seq.*) and Fish and Game Code section 1600 *et seq.* The Department also administers the Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program. The City of Poway (City) participates in the NCCP program by implementing its approved Poway Subarea HCP/NCCP (HCP/NCCP).

The proposed Project is located at 17166 Stoneridge Country Club Lane and the 117.2-acre Project site includes the decommissioned Stoneridge Country Club and associated 18-hole golf course. The Project consists of a General Plan Amendment and Zoning Amendment, as well as a Specific Plan, Development Plan, and a Tentative Map to allow for the development of 160 single-family dwelling units. Other proposed land uses include areas designated as Open Space Conservation and Open Space Recreation, which would allow for professionally managed farmland, naturalized open space, multi-use trails, gardens, a fitness club, social club, an event barn with outdoor event space for parties, weddings, and similar events, and a butterfly education center. The Project site largely consists of ornamental vegetation and is located outside of the designated Mitigation Area under the HCP/NCCP.

The Department offers the following comments and recommendations to assist the City in avoiding or minimizing potential project impacts on biological resources.

General Comments

1. The Department has regulatory authority over activities in streams and/or lakes 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 the Department pursuant to section 1600 et seq. of the Fish and Game Code. Based on this notification and other information, the Department determines whether a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) with the applicant is required prior to conducting the proposed activities. The Department's issuance of a LSAA for a project that is subject to CEQA will require CEQA compliance actions by the Department as a Responsible Agency. The Department as a Responsible Agency under CEQA may consider the local jurisdiction's (lead agency) Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report for the Project. To minimize additional requirements by the Department pursuant to section 1600 et seq. and/or under CEQA, the document should fully identify the potential impacts to the stream or riparian resources and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring and reporting commitments for issuance of the LSAA.¹
2. The document should provide a complete assessment of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the Project area, with particular emphasis upon identifying endangered, threatened, sensitive, and locally unique species and sensitive habitats. This should include a complete floral and faunal species compendium of the entire project site, undertaken at the appropriate time of year. Focus should be given to the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) as the species is known to nest in nearby open space and the Department has received communications from the public that the species may be present within the northeast portion of the Project area.
3. A discussion of potential adverse impacts from lighting, noise, and human activity on nearby sensitive species should also be included. This should include an evaluation of impacts associated with Project construction, as well as the proposed changes in land use.
4. The proposed Project footprint includes creating naturalized open space and gardens. Therefore, the Department recommends incorporating native plant species into these areas and any proposed landscape spaces throughout the

¹ A notification package may be obtained by accessing the Department's web site at <http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/LSA>

Mr. David De Vries, City Planner
City of Poway Development Services
June 12, 2019
Page 3 of 3

Project site to benefit native bird and other pollinator species such as native bees. In addition, although these on-site areas are small, landscaping with native plant species may create pockets of habitat that provide connectivity (i.e., stepping stone habitat) for bird and pollinator species in the open space areas north and east of the Project site.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the NOP to assist the City in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources.

Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Melissa Stepek, Senior Environmental Scientist at Melissa.Stepek@wildlife.ca.gov or (858) 637-5510.

Sincerely,



FOIA
Gail K. Sevrens
Environmental Program Manager
South Coast Region

ec: Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, Sacramento
David Zoutendyk, USFWS, Carlsbad

