



Technical Memorandum

January 11, 2021

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Subject:	Bally Keal Vineyards – Biological Reconnaissance Site Visit to Support County Land Use Permit		

1. Introduction

Joe Cassidy, Bally Keal Vineyards owner and operator, proposes to complete access, parking, and structural improvements in support of expanded event capacity at the Bally Keal Vineyards (hereafter "Project"). The Project is located at 4286 Suisun Valley Road in Fairfield, California. Project activities include repaving of the south driveway, conversion of existing storage building into a special events facility, addition of a new tasting room to an existing building, removal of approximately ¼ acre of grapes for a new parking lot, removal of 5,000 SF of grapes for the new tasting room foundation, and landscaping for an outdoor event area. Special status species and resources are the primary focus of this evaluation. Common species or resources without special protections are not considered. The purpose of this biological reconnaissance technical memo is to document the results of a January 7, 2021 site visit and provide information to support the Project's County Land Use Permit.

2. Survey Methods

A reconnaissance site visit was conducted by Joslyn Curtis, GHD Botanist (hereafter surveyor), on January 7, 2021 from 0800 to 1130. Weather began as foggy, about 50 degrees Fahrenheit, with no winds (Beaufort scale 0). By 0910 the fog had cleared, and the survey concluded with clear to partly cloudy skies with little to no wind (Beaufort scale 0-1).

The survey included the lawn area behind the existing residence, new proposed patio area behind the existing event center building, new proposed parking lot area, area west of the distillery building where the



current septic system is located, and along the proposed widened access road. The surveyor was given an overview of the grounds, before beginning concerted surveying of all areas proposed for development.

The survey methods were intended to identify potential jurisdictional wetlands, sensitive natural communities (SNCs), and special status plant or wildlife habitat. Where the habitat allowed the surveyor to walk without risk of damaging nests or dens and surrounding vegetation, the survey included a physical search of the area. This included inspecting the ground, shrubs, holes, and trees for the presence of any wildlife species. Additionally, the bark of vegetation and the ground layer under vegetation were inspected for evidence of wildlife species, such as feathers, pellets, whitewash, scat, tracks, etc. Where the habitat was dense or otherwise impenetrable or inaccessible, observations were made from fixed locations. This reconnaissance-level site visit was conducted to identify general special status resources and habitat within the Project site. No protocol-level surveys for wetlands, SNCs, or special status plants and wildlife were conducted at this time.

3. Results

3.1 Summary of General Biological Resources

The Project site is composed of vineyards, existing buildings, landscaping, paved/gravel surfaces, and some graded areas where grapevines have been removed. Suisun Creek forms the eastern property boundary, and is located 500 to 1,000 feet east of the proposed activities. Putah South Canal is located about 800 feet west of the property boundary. Neither of these water bodies would be impacted by proposed Project activities.

There were two, large, mature weeping willows (*Salix babylonica*) in the lawn area behind the existing residence and a few immature yew pines (*Podocarpus macrophyllus*) and olive trees (*Olea europaea*) on the north side of the existing distillery building. Overall, across the Project site there was little natural habitat structure. The understory of the vineyard consisted of non-native, annual plants. No high-quality habitat or any habitat for special status species was observed (full species lists observed on-site is provided in **Section 6, Tables 1 and 2**). Several representative photographs are included in **Section 7** to document the site condition at the time of the visit.

3.1.1 Wetlands and Waters

No potentially jurisdictional wetlands or waters of the U.S. or State were observed in the Project area or in areas to be impacted by proposed project activities.

3.1.2 Sensitive Natural Communities (SNCs)

No SNCs were observed in the Project area or in areas to be impacted by proposed Project activities.

3.1.3 Special Status Plants

No special status plants species were observed on-site. A list of all plant species detected during the reconnaissance-level site visit are presented in **Section 6, Table 1**. However, the site visit occurred during the winter outside of the typical blooming period for plants.



3.1.4 Special Status Wildlife

No special status wildlife species were observed on-site. A list of all bird species detected during the site visit is presented in **Section 6, Table 2**. As many neotropical avian migrants do not arrive until later in the spring, **Table 2** is not a comprehensive list of all species that could occur throughout the breeding season (in addition, the survey was not protocol-level). No other wildlife species were observed.

4. Discussion

Several nest structures assumed to belong to passerine songbirds were observed during the January 7, 2021 site visit (see **Photo 4 in Section 7**). Additionally, several avian species were observed on-site during the site visit that are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), California Fish and Game Code (FGC), and California Migratory Bird Protection Act (MMPA) (see **Section 6, Table 2**). Trees on-site and immediately adjacent to the Project site may provide suitable nesting habitat for migratory bird species.

5. Conclusion

Based on occurrence records, habitat availability, and the reconnaissance-level site visit, no special status plant or wildlife species, or SNCs are expected to occur at the Project site, with the exception of potential seasonal nesting by protected migratory birds. No potentially jurisdictional wetlands or waters were observed on-site.



6. Tables

Table 1 Plant Species Detected On-site

Common Name	Scientific Name	Nativity	USACE Wetland Status	Special Status
Foxtail Fern	<i>Asparagus densiflorus meyersii</i>	non-native	UPL	None
Bishop's weed	<i>Ammi majus</i>	non-native	UPL	None
Japanese laurel	<i>Aucuba japonica</i>	non-native	UPL	None
Beet	<i>Beta vulgaris</i>	non-native	UPL	None
Black mustard	<i>Brassica nigra</i>	invasive non-native	UPL	None
Pot marigold	<i>Calendula officinalis</i>	non-native	UPL	None
Field bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	invasive non-native	UPL	None
Canada horseweed	<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>	native	FACU	None
Coastal heron's bill	<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	invasive non-native	UPL	None
Whitestem filaree	<i>Erodium moschatum</i>	invasive non-native	UPL	None
Bristly ox-tongue	<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>	invasive non-native	FAC	None
Foxtail barley	<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	invasive non-native	FACU	None
Fluellin	<i>Kickxia spuria</i>	non-native	UPL	None
Prickly lettuce	<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	invasive non-native	FACU	None
Lily turf	<i>Liriope muscari</i>	non-native	UPL	None
Dwarf mallow	<i>Malva neglecta</i>	non-native	UPL	None
California burclover	<i>Medicago polymorpha</i>	invasive non-native	FACU	None
Olive	<i>Olea europaea</i>	invasive non-native	UPL	None
Bermuda buttercup	<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	invasive non-native	UPL	None
Annual blue grass	<i>Poa annua</i>	non-native	FAC	None
Yew pine	<i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i>	non-native	UPL	None
Curly dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	invasive non-native	FAC	None
Weeping willow	<i>Salix babylonica</i>	non-native	FAC	None
Common groundsel	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	non-native	FACU	None
Spiny sowthistle	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	invasive non-native	FAC	None
Chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>	non-native	FACU	None
Red seeded dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	invasive non-native	FACU	None
European wine grape	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>	non-native	UPL	None

Key:

FAC: facultative plant

FACU: facultative upland plant

UPL: upland plant



Table 2 Avian Species Detected On-site

Common Name	Scientific Name	Protected/Special Status
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
Western Bluebird	<i>Sialia mexicana</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	None; non-native
House Finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA
Audubon's Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata auduboni</i>	MBTA/FGC/MBPA

Key:

MBTA: federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act

FGC: California Fish and Game Code

MBPA: California Migratory Bird Protection Act



7. Site Visit Photographs



Photo 1 - View facing east, from southeastern corner of Project site, on west side of distillery.



Photo 2 - View facing north, from southeastern corner of Project site, on west side of distillery.

Site Visit Photographs



Photo 3 - View facing southeast, looking at several trees along north wall of distillery.



Photo 4 - View of some small passerine nests in one of the trees along distillery's north wall.



Photo 5 - View facing east, looking at road grading on widened access road.



Photo 6 - View facing west, looking at road grading on widened access road.



Photo 7 - View facing east, looking up access road from gate at main road.



Photo 8 - View facing east, looking from southwest corner at area for proposed parking lot.



Photo 9 - View facing west, looking from southeast corner at area for proposed parking lot.



Photo 10 - View facing north, looking from southeast corner at area for proposed parking lot.



Photo 11 - View facing west, looking from northeast corner at area for proposed parking lot.



Photo 12 - View facing north, looking from northwest corner at area for proposed parking lot, behind existing event center.



Photo 13 - View facing north, looking across lawn behind the existing residence.



Photo 14 - View facing west, looking at owl box behind existing residence.