



State of California – Natural Resources Agency  
 DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor  
 CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



July 26, 2019

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Mr. John O'Donnell  
 Acting Senior Planner  
 City of Santee  
 10601 Magnolia Avenue  
 Santee, CA 92071  
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**JULY 26 2019**

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

**Subject: Comments on the Recirculated Mitigated Negative Declaration for Prospect Estates II in Santee (SCH# 2018051040)**

Dear Mr. O'Donnell:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has reviewed the above-referenced Recirculated Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Prospect Estates II (Project), dated June 2019. 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 Santee (City) participates in the NCCP program through the preparation of its Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) draft Subarea Plan (SAP).

The 6.82-acre Project site is located north of Prospect Avenue, east of Marrokal Lane, approximately 0.3 mile west of State Route 125, and 0.15 mile south of State Route 52. The site includes two parcels. The northern parcel (3.34 acres) is developed with a single-family home and accessory buildings, while the southern parcel (3.48 acres) is vacant. The Project includes the construction of 38 multi-family units on the northern parcel and 15 single-family units on the southern parcel. Additional development includes one bio-filtration area, a park, associated infrastructure, and the dedication of various easements.

The Project site is located outside of the SAP-designated Preserve Areas of the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), and according to the Biological Resources Survey Report (Scheidt 2017) supports only disturbed and developed vegetation communities.

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 Biology Report identifies approximately 20 coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and 1 Engelmann oak (*Quercus engelmannii*) on the northern parcel of the Project site. While the Department acknowledges that these oaks were planted as part of the landscaping and would not constitute sensitive oak woodland habitat, the individual trees, given their size and age (approximately 60 years old), still have biological value. As specified in Section 5.5.2 *Uniform Mitigation Standards for Vegetation Communities* of the SAP, more specifically Table 5-14, "trees with at least one trunk of 6" or more DBH or multi-trunked native oaks with aggregate diameter of 10" or more" require a replacement-to-impact ratio of 3:1. Therefore, the Department recommends that a minimum of 60 coast live oaks and 3 Engelmann oaks be incorporated into the Project's landscaping plan and/or planted in appropriate open space areas within the City.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the recirculated MND. Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Melissa Stepek, Senior Environmental Scientist at (858) 637-5510 or [Melissa.Stepek@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Melissa.Stepek@wildlife.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Gail K. Sevrens  
Environmental Program Manager  
South Coast Region

cc: Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, Sacramento  
Carol Roberts, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Carlsbad

## References:

Scheidt, V.N. 2018. A Biological Resources Survey Report for the Prospect Estates II Project, Santee, California. Prepared for Michael Grant. May 2017. Revised September 2018.