

Steve Byrne  
A&T Development LLC  
64233 Wilshire Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90069  
310-867-3302  
[1blueheightsdrive@gmail.com](mailto:1blueheightsdrive@gmail.com)

March 20, 2018

**Re: Biological Resources Review, 1830 Blue Heights, Los Angeles, California (APN 5558-015-019)  
SWCA Project No. 49294**

Dear Steve:

This letter provides the results of a biological assessment conducted of the property located at 1830 Blue Heights, Los Angeles, California (APN 5558-015-019). The approximately 0.85-acre vacant parcel is in the Bel Air – Beverly Crest neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles (City). The City requested a biological assessment due to the parcel's location in a Habitat Block per the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) and Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA) *Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Map*.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this survey is to satisfy the City's requirement for a biological assessment.

### **Literature Search**

Prior to the site visit, a literature search was completed to discover previously identified special status flora, fauna, or habitats on the USGS 7.5 minute Beverly Hills quadrangle, where the property is situated. MRCA personnel were consulted regarding the Habitat Block map noted above.

### **Field Survey**

SWCA Senior Biologist Jackie Worden conducted a field survey of the property on March 1, 2018. All portions of the site were visually surveyed and the flora and fauna found on-site were recorded. Photographs were collected from various viewpoints throughout the parcel.

### **Findings/Existing Conditions**

The subject property is vacant and very steep, sloping downward to the southwest and southeast. Soils are granitic and highly friable, with a few small boulders. A paved road forms the upper (north-northeast) boundary of the parcel, while existing residential development is present to the east and below the site to the southwest and southeast. A high retaining wall is present along and outside of the lower property boundary, rising from behind the houses along Viewmont Drive, below the subject parcel.

---

<sup>1</sup> Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority. January 23, 2017. *Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Map*.

## **Flora**

The ground layer of vegetation on-site is strongly dominated by invasive, non-native fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*), with a relative cover of 50-70 percent. Castor bean (*Ricinus sativa*), tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*) and filaree (*Erodium* spp.) are the other common non-native species on the property.

A few native shrubs are present, limited to scattered California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), and multi-trunk laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*). Some of the sumac have been cut and are stump sprouting. There are scattered non-native trees, including Aleppo pine (*Pinus halapensis*), lemon-scented gum trees (*Eucalyptus citriodora*), and Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolia*). Planted ornamentals are present outside the east and southern property boundaries.

## **Fauna**

Wildlife identified on the property during the field survey included California [Beechey] ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), and American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) overhead. No evidence of larger mammals (tracks; scat), such as deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) or coyote (*Canis latrans*) was detected.

## **Special Status Species**

Braunton's milk-vetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*): The literature search found one previously identified special status plant, last reported on the Beverly Hills quadrangle in 1930. This perennial herb is a federally-listed endangered species, and is listed by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) with a Rare Plant Rank (RPR) of 1B.1 (plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere).<sup>2</sup> No milk-vetch was found on the property during the March field survey.

## **Special Status Habitat**

No special status habitats, such as oak woodland, wetlands, or riparian corridors, were reported previously or found on or near the property during the site survey.

## **Habitat Blocks**

The parcel is located within Habitat Block 53/58 on the *Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Map*.<sup>3</sup> This origin and intent of this map was explained by Marc Shores of the Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority (MRCA) as follows:

“The numbers are purely for natural resource planning purposes only, the blocks were numbered east to west, with the Griffith Park area receiving A-X. Our goal is to discern the gaps and obstacles between the blocks that hinder wildlife movement. Once those areas are quantified, we then have a better tool for strategic acquisition/management planning. No biological datasets were created in

---

<sup>2</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife. January 2018. Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB).

<sup>3</sup> Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority. January 23, 2017. *Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Habitat Linkage Planning Map*.

---

conjunction with the habitat block dataset. It is merely a tool to map areas of undeveloped open space. The method used to identify each block was researching multiple year Google Earth imagery and Assessor parcel data.”<sup>4</sup>

As such, this mapping does not infer any biological significance or confer any special protections.

### ***Conclusions***

The subject parcel does not provide unique or high-quality biological habitat values. There is no evidence of wildlife movement through the property. The site is in a developed residential neighborhood and is likely to be visited infrequently by wildlife typical of such neighborhoods and tolerant of human activity. Nesting bird activity is possible, particularly in the more dense vegetation in the lower southwest areas of the parcel. Compliance with applicable State and Federal laws pertaining to the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, listed in Sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code to reduce these potential impacts to less than significant levels.

MM-Bio-3, Brush Removal, contained in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration<sup>5</sup> does not seem warranted given the lack of apparent wildlife use of the property.

Sincerely,



Jacqueline Bowland Worden  
Senior Biologist/Natural Resources Project Manager

---

<sup>4</sup> Marc Shores. February 22, 2018. Email to Jackie Worden. Marc.shores@mrca.ca.gov.

<sup>5</sup> Meridian Consultants, LLC in September 2017. *Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration*. 1830 Blue Heights Residence Project Case # ENV-2016-4327-MND.

---