

## BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES DESCRIPTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Meeting Date: June 2, 2025 – Monday**

**Project Name:** Duggan Wells and Pipeline

**Project No.:** PRJ2024-001019-(3)

**Permit Nos.:** Conditional Use Permit No. RPPL2024001500

**APNs:** 4471-001-015, 4472-002 -006, 4472 -002 -011, 4472- 003 -043, 4472- 003 -044, and 4472 -003 -048

**Location:** 302 E. Carlisle Road, Thousand Oaks, California

**SEA:** Santa Monica Mountains

**USGS Quad:** Point Dume

**Project Applicant:** Martha Duggan

**Project Biologist:** David L. Magney, David Magney Environmental Consulting

**Staff Planner:** Shawn Skeries

**Staff Biologist:** Joe Decruyenaere

### **Project Description with Respect to Biological Resource Conditions:**

The proposed Project Site is a 1.034-mile-long alignment along an existing dirt road that traverses six parcels totaling approximately 240 acres. Proposed development would include the establishment of a water well, 5,000-gallon storage tank, and above-ground piping and associated support footings to provide water to an existing residence. The disturbance footprint for the storage tank would be approximately 500 sf, and the total disturbance for 303 footings spaced 18 ft apart would total approximately 1,212 sf. All new development is proposed within the disturbed area of an existing dirt road. Fuel-modification is not necessary for the tank or pipeline. The residence served by the water system is accessed from Ventura County and therefore has a Ventura County address, but the residence itself is within Los Angeles County, and the proposed water system would be constructed over parcels within Los Angeles County and under the same ownership as the residence. The entire development footprint of the proposed project lies within the Santa Monica Mountains SEA, and the project is subject to the biological resource protections of the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan.

Sensitive biological resources within and in proximity of the project include the following:

- Island mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides* var. *blancheae*, CRPR 4.3), southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica*, CRPR<sup>1</sup> 4.2), and fragrant pitcher sage (*Lepechinia fragrans*, CRPR 4.2), Santa Monica grasshopper (*Trimerotropis occidentiloides*, IUCN:EN<sup>2</sup>), and coastal western whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*, CDFW:SSC<sup>3</sup>);
- CDFW-ranked rare plant communities, including *Adenostoma sparsifolium* shrubland alliance (G3/S3), *Platanus racemosa* woodland alliance (G3/S3), and *Populus trichocarpa* woodland alliance (G5/S3);
- Los Angeles County-designated S1 and S2 sensitive habitats, including coast live oak woodland and California walnut woodland designated S1, and coastal sage scrub and chaparral associations designated S2.

None of the above-listed rare plants or sensitive habitat types would be directly affected by proposed project activities since all such resources lie outside of the area of proposed direct impacts. The proposed water line would be constructed immediately adjacent to the individual island mountain mahogany and fragrant pitcher sage shrubs. However, the water line would be constructed above ground and aligned to avoid direct impacts to all occurrences of these two shrubs and native trees. Direct impacts to biological resources would therefore be limited to ruderal areas within the existing road bed.

Mitigation measures are proposed to reduce any potential impacts to special-status plant and wildlife species, protected trees, and active bird nests to a less than significant level.

### **SEA Ordinance Consistency Analysis**

The following discussions list the required SEA Ordinance Findings, followed by Staff's determination of the proposed Project's consistency with those findings. Pursuant to Los Angeles County Code Section 22.102.080.D, the applicant shall substantiate the following facts:

- 1. The proposed development is highly compatible with SEA Resources, including the preservation of natural open space areas and providing for the long-term maintenance of ecosystem functions.**

Most of the proposed project's water line will be above ground and the approximately 322 square foot proposed water tank will be located entirely within the previously disturbed ranch road. The water line would follow along the edge of an existing fire road with only three underground

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<sup>1</sup> California Rare Plant Rank. Rank 4 species are plants of limited distribution. Decimal numbers following the rank (.1,.2, or .3) indicate level of threat, as follows:

- 0.1-Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)
- 0.2-Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
- 0.3-Not very threatened in California (less than 20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known).

<sup>2</sup> International Union for Conservation of Nature: Endangered

<sup>3</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern

crossings. Only ruderal vegetation would be disturbed by the underground road crossings. The proposed project if approved will entail a recorded covenant agreement to hold all five parcels as one, totaling 136.64 acres, thus limiting future development on these parcels and ensuring the current existing ecosystems stay intact.

Staff find the project to be consistent with this finding.

- 2. The proposed development avoids or minimizes impacts to the SEA Resources and wildlife movement through one or more of the following:**
  - a. Avoiding habitat fragmentation;**
  - b. Minimizing edge effects; or**
  - c. Sitting development in the least sensitive location.**

While the proposed waterline will pass through approximately 125 feet of Coast Live Oak Woodland the total area permanently impacted is estimated at about 400 square feet, this impact would be considered less than significant since no trees would be adversely affected due to the minor amounts of soil disturbance required to install the waterline support footings. Special-status plant and animal species are known to occur within the region of the project site, the installation of the waterline will be routed to avoid any direct impacts to these special-status species.

Staff find the project to be consistent with this finding.

- 3. Important habitat areas are adequately buffered from development by retaining sufficient natural vegetation cover and/or natural open spaces and integrating sensitive design features.**

To avoid impacts to special-status species and sensitive habitats during installation of the water line, mitigation measures are recommended to ensure impact avoidance. The proposed water line will encroach upon the Critical Root Zone (CRZ) of several mature Coast Live Oak Trees. The proposed water line will be installed above ground for most of its length including under the Coast Live Oak Trees. A certified arborist will monitor activities associated with installing the water line when it passes through the CRZ.

Staff find the project to be consistent with this finding.

- 4. The proposed development maintains ecological and hydrological functions of water bodies, watercourses, and their tributaries.**

The proposed development does not alter or have implications for local watercourses and their tributaries. Development is designed to have no impact on hydrological features of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Staff find the project to be consistent with this finding.

5. **The proposed development ensures that roads, access roads, driveways, and utilities do not conflict with Priority Biological Resources, habitat areas, migratory paths, or wildlife corridors; and**

A qualified botanist will flag all special-status plants within 50 feet of the construction zone as well as all special-status wildlife species locations shall be flagged, and avoidance measures will be developed prior to initiation of construction.

Staff find the project to be consistent with this finding.

6. **The proposed development promotes the resiliency of the SEA to the greatest extent possible. For purposes of this finding, SEA resiliency is not promoted when the proposed development may cause any of the following:**
- a. **Significant unmitigated loss of contiguity or connectivity of the SEA;**
  - b. **Significant unmitigated impact to a Priority Biological Resource;**
  - c. **Removal of habitat that is the only known location of a new or rediscovered species; and/or**
  - d. **Other factors as identified by SEATAC.**

The water well and storage tank will not affect any sensitive habitat type as none of the sensitive habitats onsite would be affected by the proposed drilling, placement of the water tank, or water line. The proposed water line is would be routed immediately adjacent to individual shrubs along the road; however, the waterline will be constructed to avoid direct impacts to all occurrences of shrubs and native trees.

Staff find the project to be consistent with this finding.

<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Consistent</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Consistent after Modifications &amp; Bio Report Completion</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Inconsistent</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>No decision</b>

**Comments:**

**Staff Biologist recommendation for project revisions:** None.