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AUG 10 2017

MONTEREY COUNTY  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

May 23, 2017

Frank Hennessy  
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831.659.1925 – 831.917.6336, cell

SUBJECT: UPDATED BIOLOGICAL REPORT, APN 241-301-009, 195 Spindrifft Road, Carmel.  
Carmel Area Plan, Coastal Zone

Dear Mr. Hennessy:

At your request, on May 21, 2017, I visited your undeveloped property at 195 Spindrifft Road in the Carmel Highlands, to conduct a site inspection and update the September 2004 Biological Assessment prepared by Vern Yadon. Mr. Yadon concluded there were no special status species on the parcel and that vegetation was largely non-native and highly disturbed.

I concur with Mr. Yadon that vegetation is largely non-native and highly disturbed, however I would like to call your attention to three active stick nests of the Monterey Dusky-footed Woodrat I observed on your parcel. The three, large stick nests are clustered together under acacia branches along the lower-elevation, eastern boundary of the lot. Vegetation has been cleared up to the acacia trees, exposing the stick nests, access holes and runways.

The Monterey Dusky-footed Woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes luciana*, aka *Neotoma macrotis luciana*) is a nocturnal rodent considered a Species of Concern by both the federal Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The population of this native rat is distributed in woodland, forest, scrub and chaparral habitat types between Monterey and Point Conception. Woodrats are identified most easily by the presence of their large, mounded nests built out of sticks and fresh twigs. Nests are often grouped in clusters, with occupied, active nests exhibiting a "sharper" profile and fresh, woody material placed at the apex of the stick pile.

Prior to additional vegetation clearing on the parcel, the Monterey Dusky-footed Woodrats and their nests will need to be removed from the site by a Wildlife Biologist approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. I recommend contacting Mark Allaback or David Labbs at BioSearch Associates in Santa Cruz, 831.662.3938, [markallaback@sbcglobal.net](mailto:markallaback@sbcglobal.net). Staff members at BioSearch Associates have the requisite state and federal permits for removing the woodrats from your project site.

I also observed a recently cut coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) stump that exhibited vigorous resprouting from the base of the cut tree. The sprouts and large tree rounds and branches below the stump indicate that the tree was cut relatively recently. The base of the cut stump was 13-inches in diameter. In Monterey County, any coast live oak with a DBH 6 inches or greater (DBH = Diameter at Breast Height, 4.5-feet above the ground surface) requires a permit for removal.

Nicole Nedeff  
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In addition, along the eastern property line I noted another coast live oak with a 10-inch DBH. This tree will require a permit for removal, if it is to be removed during development of the parcel. A smaller, multi-stemmed oak with trunk DBH less than 6-inches occurs along the western parcel boundary – this tree will not need a permit for removal.

My recommendation to address the three, active Monterey Dusky-footed Woodrat nests is to stop vegetation clearing immediately in the vicinity of the acacia trees along the eastern parcel line and call BioSearch Associates to remove the rats and dismantle the nests according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife protocol.

To address the coast live oak that has already been removed, as well as the other oak exceeding 6" DBH, I recommend that permit conditions for your proposed project include the planting of 2 coast live oak seedlings for each oak tree removed. The planted coast live oak seedlings should be situated in locations on the parcel where they can grow to maturity without being impacted by canopies of adjacent trees, or vegetation.

No other sensitive, or special status plants or wildlife species occur on this parcel.

I've enclosed a brochure of drought-resistant plants appropriate for landscaping in the coastal zone of Monterey County. I recommend that landscaping for your project maintain plant species with low water requirements that are also appropriate for local coastal settings. My personal preference is to landscape with California native plant species, however the enclosed brochure includes many attractive options that will provide cover and habitat for birds, pollinators and wildlife.

Please contact me if I can provide you with any additional information, or with photographs taken during my site visit on May 21, 2017.

Sincerely,



Nicole Nedeff  
Consulting Ecologist

Enclosure: Monterey County brochure "Seacoast Plants for Monterey County"