Exhibit D

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THOMPSON
WILDLAND MANAGEMENT
Environmental Management & Conservation Services
International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist # WE-7468A
Department of Pesticide Regulation Qualified Applicator Lic. #QL50949 B
Environmental & Arborist Assessments, Protection, Restoration, Monitoring & Reporting
Wildland Fire Property Protection, Fuel Reduction & Vegetation Management
Invasive Weed Control, and Habitat Restoration & Management
Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control
Resource Ecologist

September 21, 2024

Rickard Residence
5 Yankee Beach Way
Carmel, CA. 93923
APN: 243-141-008-000

Subject: 5 Yankee Beach Way Biological Assessment

A biological assessment was recently conducted on September 6, 2024 for the property located at 5 Yankee Beach Way in Carmel (APN: 243-141-008) in preparation for a proposed home remodel and addition project. This already developed and impacted lot is located in a mixed woodland and coastal scrub residential community in the Carmel Highlands. This property assessment involved performing a ground level inspection to record and document biological resources, vegetation types and habitat characteristics that are occurring on the subject parcel; determine the presence or absence of biological resources that have protection status under federal and state laws (e.g., *Federal Endangered Species Act* [FESA], *California Environmental Quality Act* [CEQA] and *California Endangered Species Act* [CESA]); and provide resource protection and mitigation recommendations that may be necessary in preparation for the proposed property development project.

This biological assessment was conducted by performing a thorough walk through and visual inspection of the subject parcel and reviewing property development plans and maps (refer to the corresponding project plans for construction design details and property features). Where possible the characteristics and conditions described in this report are depicted in the photographs located at the end of the report (refer to attached photos, *Figures 1-12*). Findings and recommendations are provided herein.

I. SITE CHARACTERISTICS & BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This coastal zone area of the Carmel Highlands to the west of Highway 1 supports a diversity of biological and cultural resources, including protected special status species

and sensitive habitat types. However, sensitive and/or protected species or resources were not observed or detected on this previously disturbed and impacted parcel located at 5 Yankee Beach Way. This property is 0.73 acres in size and is in a region that is significantly influenced by seasonally temperate coastal environmental conditions. This lot has an existing occupied main house and guest unit, a garage, a driveway that bridges over a drainage, and a maintained landscape area surrounding the home (refer to *Figures 1-12*). Proposed property improvements will include a home remodel and addition project.

Notable resources occurring on this moderately sloped property include the following: A seasonal drainage located a short distance to the north of the main house, garage, guest unit and driveway parking area with a long culvert passing through this presently dry channel (refer to *Figures 1, 9-11*); a very steep and densely vegetated coastal bluff scrub slope located immediately to the west of the home that continues down to the rocky seashore (refer to *Figures 12*); and several mature Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*), Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and a few coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) trees, many of which appear to have been previously planted and are not naturally occurring (refer to *Figures 1-11*). Monterey cypress is the dominant tree specie on the lot. It should be noted that the paved driveway to the property bridges over this dry seasonal drainage that is largely composed of non-native invasive vegetation. This drainage currently does not support any sensitive or protected flora or fauna; however, a few well-established native arroyo willows (*Salix lasiolepis*) are inhabiting this drainage.

Soil types and conditions on this moderately sloped lot appear to be stable and sufficient for supporting property development and improvements, as well as sustaining native flora that is occurring on the property. Wind direction is predominantly out of the southwest, west and northwest. Per the project plans, proposed property improvement and construction activities will utilize the existing building footprint and adjacent areas that have been previously disturbed and impacted. A majority of this lot is moderately sloped and no development or soil disturbance will be occurring in sensitive or high value habitat or on steep slopes with high erosion potential.

This property is in a wildland-urban interface (WUI) mixed woodland and coastal scrub residential community with homes located in fairly close proximity to one another. This corner lot is surrounded by public roadways to the north (i.e., Yankee Beach Way) and east (i.e., Yankee Point Drive), a neighboring home to the south, and the seashore to the west. Some fairly significant open-space areas with lower development and primarily consisting of mixed woodlands (i.e., Monterey pine, coast live oak and Monterey cypress) and coastal scrub vegetation communities is occurring within a half mile of the subject parcel. Some of these open-space areas support sensitive habitat types (e.g., riparian corridors) and protected special status species (e.g., California red-legged frog [*Rana draytonii*]), but none of these sensitive resources or protected species were

observed on or adjacent to the subject property and will not be impacted or affected by proposed development activities.

As previously stated, this parcel and the surrounding residential community is situated in a mixed woodland and coastal scrub environment primarily consisting of mature upper-canopy Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*), Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and lower- to mid-canopy coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*; refer *Figures 1-11*) trees occurring in the overstory. Understory vegetation is primarily composed of a variety of the following native and exotic flora: Annual and perennial grasses; woody perennial shrub and scrub type vegetation; and broadleaf annual forbs and herbaceous perennials. On this particular lot, Monterey cypress is the most common and dominant native tree specie (refer to *Figures 1-8*), with a few smaller and less significant Monterey pine, coast live oak and arroyo willow trees (the few willows are located in the adjacent seasonal drainage) also occurring on the subject property. It should be noted that many of the mature cypress trees that dominate the lot, as well as the few pines and oaks on the property, appear to have been planted and are not naturally occurring. Other lower growing non-native and introduced trees, such as acacia and pittosporum, are also inhabiting the property (refer to *Figures 1-8 & 11*).

In regards to woodland health, harmful biotic disorders (e.g., pathogens, disease and/or insect pests) and/or abiotic disorders (e.g., drought conditions) presently appear to be absent in levels that are detrimental to the health and viability of trees and habitat.

Per the assessment of this already developed and previously disturbed and impacted lot, it is clearly evident that the subject parcel does not support federally and/or state protected special status species, sensitive habitat and/or environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA), and none of these resources will be affected by proposed property development activities. There are no known occurrences of special status species, sensitive habitat or other protected resources occurring on the property and none were observed during the assessment. Additionally, actively nesting birds were not observed on or adjacent to the subject property during the site inspection, which was expected due to this assessment occurring outside of the nesting season.

Protected special status plant and animal species that according to the CNDDB (*California Natural Diversity Database*) have the potential of occurring on the subject property include Yadon's piperia (*Piperia yadonii*; a native orchid and perennial herb), California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*), monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) and Smith's blue butterfly (*Euphilotes enoptes smithi*), but none of these or other protected species or habitat (exception being native Monterey cypress, Monterey pines and coast live oaks that have County protection status) are occurring on the subject parcel.

As previously noted, the mature cypress trees on the property, the adjacent seasonal drainage to the north, and the coastal bluff scrub habitat located immediately to the west of the existing main house are the most noteworthy and ecologically valuable resources occurring on the subject parcel. Per the project design plans, none of these resources or any other ecologically valuable or unique resources will be impacted by the proposed home remodel and addition project. Native plant composition and diversity is currently fairly low on the property, while the presence of exotic introduced plants and non-native invasive weeds is fairly high on this previously disturbed and impacted lot.

During the site assessment the following native flora was observed on the subject parcel: Poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), Pacific blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), bluff lettuce (*Dudleya farinosa*), lizard tail (*Eriophyllum staechadifolium*), seaside daisy (*Erigeron glaucus*), dune sagewort (*Artemisia pycnocephala*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*; a few located in the seasonal drainage next to the property) and coral bells (*Heuchera pulchella*; planted in the landscape), among a few other native species. Non-native invasive plants are also occurring on the property, such as exotic annual grasses and some broadleaf weed species (e.g., cape ivy [*Delairea odorata*], Italian thistle [*Carduus pycnocephalus*], acacia [*Acacia longifolia*], pittosporum [*Pittosporum undulatum*], Pride-of-Madeira [*Echium candicans*], ice plant [*Carpobrotus edulis*] and dwarf periwinkle [*Vinca minor*], among a few other species). Non-native invasive weeds are harmful and degrading to habitat, displace and compete with more desirable native plants, and increase combustible fuel loads. Where possible, exotic invasive plants should be controlled, managed and eradicated.

As previously noted, special status species, sensitive habitat and nesting birds that have protection status are not known to occur on the subject property and were not observed during a recent site assessment. Protected species that have the potential of occurring in the area, but were not observed during the site survey, include Yadon's piperia (*Piperia yadonii*), Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), Smith's blue butterfly (*Euphilotes enoptes smithi*), California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) and California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*). Although nesting birds were not observed during the property assessment, an additional nesting bird survey should be conducted if construction activities begin during the nesting season, which in Monterey County may begin as early as February and continue through August.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the interest of protecting and minimizing construction related impacts to habitat and ecological resources the following resource protection measures and best management practices (BMP's) should be implemented:

1) Prior to construction activities beginning, install resource protection measures that will be necessary to clearly delineate the construction zone and to prevent unnecessary

construction site expansion, disturbance and impacts to surrounding areas. Examples of resource protection BMP's include the appropriate tree protection and erosion & sedimentation control measures, such as high visibility exclusionary fencing that clearly identifies the construction zone and protects the canopy dripline and critical root zone of nearby trees, and erosion & sedimentation control measures, such as silt fence, straw wattles and soil stabilization measures. Properly install and monitor resource protection measures and BMP's and keep them properly maintained for the duration of the project.

2) For any landscape improvements consideration should be given to utilizing plants that are native or well-adapted to this mixed woodland and coastal bluff scrub vegetation community. Plants selected for landscaping operations should be drought tolerant, less flammable and more fire resistant, non-invasive to nearby habitat and open-space areas, and well-adapted and appropriate to this coastal zone environment.
3) Control and manage non-native invasive plant species, such as cape ivy (*Delairea odorata*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), acacia (*Acacia longifolia*), pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*), Pride-of-Madeira (*Echium candicans*), ice plant (*Carpobrotus edulis*) and dwarf periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), among a few other species, to improve habitat and reduce combustible fuel loads and wildland fire hazards.
4) As previously stated, nesting birds were not observed during a recent assessment of the subject property. However, the nesting season in Monterey County may begin as early as February and continue through August. Consequently, if construction activities begin during this nesting period an additional nesting assessment should be conducted within two weeks of construction activities commencing.

III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, biological resources that are protected under federal and state laws (e.g., FESA, CESA and CEQA) were not observed or detected during a recent site assessment and are not known to occur on this already developed and previously disturbed property located at 5 Yankee Beach Way in the Carmel Highlands. Consequently, there is no indication or evidence that protected special status species and/or sensitive habitat will be impacted by construction activities that will be involved with this home remodel and addition project.

The proper implementation of resource protection BMP's will assist in preventing and minimizing construction related impacts to ecological resources, as well as to comply with *Monterey County Housing & Community Development Department-Planning Services* permit requirements and conditions of approval.

Best regards,

Rob Thompson *September 21, 2023*

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Figure 1. Driveway entrance off of Yankee Beach Way bridges over seasonal drainage that is currently dry and does not support sensitive habitat.

Figure 2. Parking area off of driveway has several mature Monterey cypress trees. Trees will be retained and protected.

Figure 3. Driveway leading to garage and guest house. Seasonal drainage to the left does not support sensitive habitat.

Figure 4. View of main house from driveway. A pine tree and more cypress trees are to the right, which will be retained & protected.

Figure 5. Disturbed and impacted backyard area with a few cypress trees.

Figure 6. Another view of main house and backyard area with a few cypress trees that will be retained and protected.

Figure 7. Backyard area looking towards shoreline and cove.

Figure 8. Play house in backyard is located amongst Monterey pines and exotic acacia.

Figure 9. Dry seasonal drainage has an old culvert located in the channel. This drainage is dominated by non-native invasive weeds, such as cape ivy and acacia, and a few native willow trees.

Figure 10. Another view of seasonal drainage that is dominated by non-native invasive vegetation.

Figure 11. Another view of seasonal drainage located next to subject property.

Figure 12. Steep coastal bluff scrub located along coastline below home will not be impacted by property improvements.

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