

# Coastal Biological Resource Evaluation

Prepared for:  
Matt Culpepper  
454 Lower Pacific Drive,  
Shelter Cove, CA 95589  
APN 111-121-007-000

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## **1.0 Introduction**

The report presents the results of a Biological Resource Evaluation [BRE] performed on APN 111-121-007 in Shelter Cove, California. The purpose of the BRE is to evaluate the presence of biological resources that may merit protections from potential impacts associated with proposed project actions. These resources may include special status plants or wildlife and their associated potential habitats. The Project Parcel does not include any natural plant communities and does not contain any special status plants. The proposed project will not impact special status wildlife.

### **Project Location**

The proposed project occurs within APN 111-121-007 [Project Parcel] and is located at 454 Lower Pacific Drive, Shelter Cove, CA 95589. The Project Parcel is located on the Shelter Cove 7.5' USGS quadrangle within Section 16, T5S, R1E, HB&M. A General Location Map has been included with this report as Attachment 1.

### **Project Description**

The Project Parcel is located within the Shelter Cove Subdivision. This subdivision began proceedings to split and develop ranch lands into residential parcels in 1966. The subdivision was designed to host approximately 4,200 parcels to be developed. The Project Parcel is currently vacant with no existing improvements.

The project proposes constructing a new residence on the Project Parcel. The footprint of the residence will occupy 800 square feet (40-feet by 20-feet). A 300-square foot driveway will also be constructed. In total 800 square feet of the parcel will be developed. Proposed construction will grade and develop approximately 14.6% of the Project Parcel.

### **Statement of Qualifications**

This report has been prepared by Environmental Scientist and Biologist Evan Henricksen. Mr. Henricksen possesses a Bachelor of Science from California Polytechnic University Humboldt in Biology with a Marine emphasis. Mr. Henricksen has seven years of experience performing surveys and assessments for threatened and endangered marine, aquatic, and terrestrial species as well as their associated habitat. He has been implementing tree and plant assessments for 4 years as well as nesting bird surveys. He has been conducting watershed assessments as well as drafting and implementing associated permits for mitigation/remediation for 2.5 years.

## **2.0 Regulatory Background**

### **California Coastal Commission – California Coastal Act**

Section 30600(a) of the California Coastal Act [CCA] requires any person proposing development in the coastal zone shall obtain a Coastal Development Permit [CDP] from the California Coastal Commission [CCC]. Development is defined under CCA Section 30106 to include “construction, reconstruction, demolition, or alteration of the size of any structure...” Humboldt County does have a certified Local Coastal Plan [LCP] which allows the county to act as lead agency in issuing CDPs. The CCC has retained sole jurisdiction over a portion the coastal zone in Humboldt County. The Project Parcel overlaps with the boundary between CCC and Humboldt County jurisdiction. The CDP framework is, by statute, equivalent to environmental review associated with California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA].

This report focuses solely on ecological resources as protected in Chapter 3 and 4 of the CCA. Chapter 3 specifies protections of marine resources, biological productivity, water quality, and wetlands. Chapter 4 is directed at terrestrial ecological resources such as agricultural land and timberland management.

### **Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas**

The CCA provides protections for Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas [ESHA] as defined in Section 30107.5. This term refers to any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily

disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments. Identified ESHAs in the Humboldt Bay LCP include but are not limited to:

- Wetlands and estuaries including Humboldt Bay
- Vegetated dunes along the North Spit to the Mad River and along South Spit
- Rivers, creeks, gulches, sloughs, and associated riparian habitats
- Critical habitats for rare and endangered species

Sensitive Natural Communities have been defined by CDFW and the California Native Plant Society [CNPS] as vegetation types with a state rank of S1-S3 per standards set forth in the NatureServe Heritage Methodology. This list of sensitive natural communities is equivalent to those identified as ESHA and will be treated as such. This system uses the best and most recent scientific information to assess rarity per a community's range, distribution, and the proportion of occurrences that are of good ecological integrity. Threats and trends are also considered in the overall ranking of a community's rarity. The use of marsh and/or wetlands in the names of vegetation alliances does not imply or assert regulatory jurisdiction. Although there are no specific protocols for avoiding and/or mitigating impacts to these communities they are afforded consideration during environmental review per CEQA Guidelines checklist IVb.

### **Special Status Species**

Sensitive and protected species include those taxa that have been formally listed or are candidates for either listings under the Federal Endangered Species Act [ESA] or California Endangered Species Act [CESA]. These acts afford legal protection to both listed species and species that are candidates for listing. Additionally, CEQA affords special consideration to species ranked as sensitive (S1-3 are considered sensitive), as a CDFW Species of Special Concern, or CDFW Fully Protected. In addition to regulations for special-status species, most birds in the United States, including non-status species, are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act [MBTA] of 1918. Under this legislation, destroying active nests, eggs, and young is illegal.

Wildlife and plant taxa are ranked per standards set forth in the NatureServe Heritage Methodology. All species are given two ranks that consist of a letter and a number. The letter represents whether the rank is a global rank [G] or a state rank [S]. The number corresponds to the subject's rarity. This report only assesses the state rank of taxa.

**1 Critically Imperiled.** At very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer populations), very steep declines, or other factors

**2 Imperiled.** At risk because of rarity due to the very restricted range, very few populations, (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the nation or state/province

**3 Vulnerable.** At moderate risk of extinction due to a restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent widespread declines, or other factors

**4 Apparently Secure.** Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors

**5 Secure** – Common; widespread and abundant

Subspecies receive a T-rank attached to the G-rank and an additional S-rank for state ranking. With subspecies, the initial rank reflects the entire species' risk while the second rank represents just the subspecies' status.

Plant species have an additional ranking system designed by the CNPS. The following alphanumeric codes are the CNPS List, California Rare Plant Ranks [CRPR]:

**1A** – Presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere

- 1B** – Rare or Endangered in California and elsewhere
- 2A** – Presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere
- 2B** – Rare or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
- 3** – Plants for which more information is needed – Review List
- 4** – Plants of limited distribution – Watch List

The CRPR use a decimal-style threat rank. The threat rank is an extension added onto the CRPR and designates the level of threats by a 1 to 3 ranking with 1 being the most threatened and 3 being the least threatened. Most CRPRs read as 1B.1, 1B.2, 1B.3, etc. Note that some Rank 3 plants do not have a threat code extension due to difficulty in ascertaining threats. Rank 1A and 2A plants also do not have threat code extensions since there are no known extant populations in California. Threat Code extensions and their meanings are as follows:

- 1) Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)
- 2) Moderately threatened in California (20-80% of occurrences threatened / moderate degree and of threat)
- 3) Not very threatened in California (<20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

### **3.0 Methods**

#### **Field Observations**

All field data was collected by Environmental Scientist and Biologist Evan Henricksen using direct observations, measurements, and ocular estimations during a site review conducted on November 20, 2023. A 200' Lufkin FE200 HI-VIZ measuring tape and Forestry Pro (Nikon Laser Range Finder) was used for recording distances to the nearest tenth of a foot. Slope percent was measured using a Suunto PM-5/360 PC Clinometer to the nearest degree. The reach of the field observations covered the Project Parcel and parcels directly adjacent.

#### **Review of Scientific Literature**

Scientific literature and data have been sourced from multiple locations. The majority of reference material has been sourced from online journal archives and databases. If hardcopies or pdfs could not be acquired the web URL and date of reference is present within the bibliography. Some species data is sourced from agency factsheets such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA], U.S. Geological Survey [USGS], and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS].

### **4.0 Results**

#### **Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas**

The Project Parcel consists of grassland habitat within the parcel boundaries. The Project Parcel is dominated by nonnative annual grasses and is best characterized as Annual Grassland habitat per the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship System [CWHRS]. This habitat type is dominated by sweet vernal grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), quaking grass (*Briza spp.*), and wild oats (*Avena spp.*). The nearest watercourse is approximately 900-feet north of the nearest parcel boundary. The Project Parcel contains no streams, wetlands, or other wet areas which require protection per Humboldt County's Streamside Management Areas and Wetland Ordinance (Humboldt County Code §314-61). The project as proposed will not impact any ESHA as none occur in the Project Parcel or within 100 feet.

#### **Special Status Plants**

Although the Project Parcel occurs within an existing subdivision it has yet to be developed and thus hosts low quality potential habitat for some special status plants. The Project Parcel, in terms of potential plant habitat, may best be characterized as Coastal Prairie habitat. The dominance of nonnatives and proximity to roads degrades potential habitat quality. The Project Parcel hosts potential habitat for leafy reed grass (*Calamagrostis foliosa*), Mendocino Coast paintbrush (*Castilleja mendocinensis*), Whitney's


farewell-to-spring (*Clarkia amoena ssp. whitneyi*), Oregon goldthread (*Coptis laciniata*), Pacific gilia (*Gilia capitata ssp. pacifica*), harlequin lotus (*Hosackia gracilis*), perennial goldfields (*Lasthenia californica ssp. macrantha*), marsh pea (*Lathyrus palustris*), and Siskiyou checkerbloom (*Sidalcea malviflora ssp. patula*). See Attachment 3 for a list of special status plants assessed as part of the CNPS query. No special status plants were observed within the Project Parcel, a list of observed plant species is included as Attachment 4. The project as proposed will not impact special status plants as none occur within the Project Parcel.

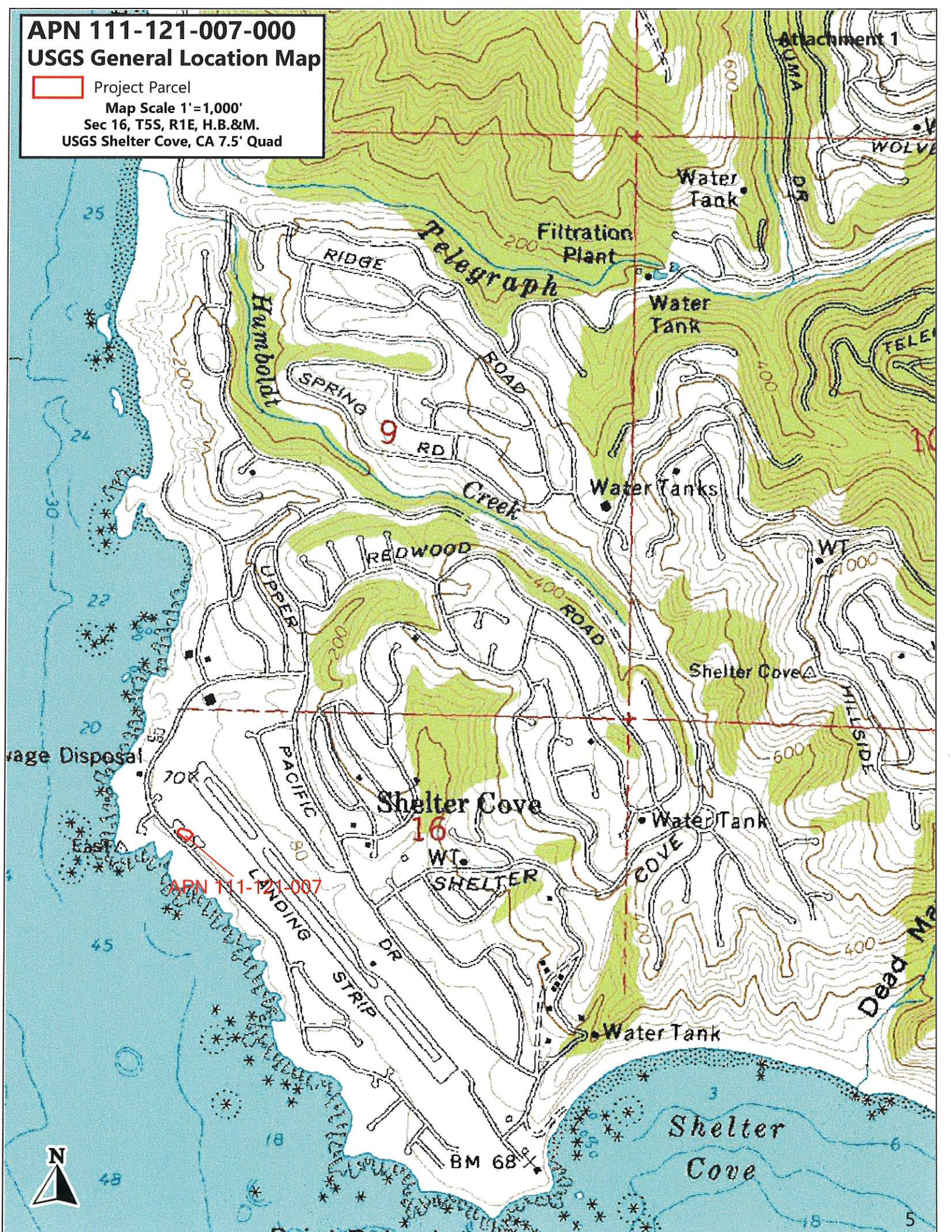
### **Special Status Wildlife**

The proposed project occurs in an existing subdivision that provides marginal potential habitat for wildlife given the amount of anthropogenic activity that occurs in the vicinity. See Attachment 5 for the list of wildlife assessed as part of the 9-quad search. The Project Parcel does not contain any key habitat for any special status vertebrate species. The Project Parcel does provide potential habitat for special status bumble bees due to the dominance of herbaceous vegetation, although the quality of this potential habitat is significantly degraded due to the dominance of nonnative grasses and the regular lawn mowing that occurs on the parcel. No bumble bee nests were observed during the site visit. The development of the Project Parcel will not remove significant amounts of potential habitat from this species range. The surrounding vegetated parcels provide potential habitat for special status bumble bees. Additionally, the planting of native flowering plants as landscaping may enhance potential habitat relative to current conditions. Given these conditions, the project will not impact potentially present special status bumble bees.

The Project Parcel also provides marginal to no potential nesting habitat for migratory birds that may not meet special status per species rankings. There are no shrub or tree species growing within the Project Parcel. No potential nesting habitat and no nests were found during the site visit.

**APN 111-121-007-000**  
**USGS General Location Map**

 Project Parcel  
Map Scale 1"=1,000'  
Sec 16, T5S, R1E, H.B.&M.  
USGS Shelter Cove, CA 7.5' Quad



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2022 DOQ Site Map

 Project Parcel

 Paved Road

Map Scale 1' = 100'

Sec 16, T5S, R1E, H.B.&M.

USGS Shelter Cove, CA 7.5' Quad



### Attachment 3 – Special Status Plants List

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	State Rank	CRPR	Bloom Period	Habitat	Potential Habitat Present?
<i>Antennaria suffrutescens</i>	evergreen everlasting	None	None	S3	4.3	Jan-Jul	Lower montane coniferous forest	No
<i>Calamagrostis foliosa</i>	leafy reed grass	None	Rare	S3	4.2	May-Sep	Coastal bluff scrub, North Coast coniferous forest	Yes
<i>Castilleja litoralis</i>	Oregon coast paintbrush	None	None	S3	2B.2	Jun	Coastal bluff scrub, Coastal dunes, Coastal scrub	No
<i>Castilleja mendocinensis</i>	Mendocino Coast paintbrush	None	None	S2	1B.2	Apr-Aug	Closed-cone coniferous forest, Coastal bluff scrub, Coastal dunes, Coastal prairie, Coastal scrub	Yes
<i>Clarkia amoena ssp. whitneyi</i>	Whitney's farewell-to-spring	None	None	S1	1B.1	Jun-Aug	Coastal bluff scrub, Coastal scrub	Yes
<i>Coptis laciniata</i>	Oregon goldthread	None	None	S3?	4.2	(Feb)Mar-May(Sep-Nov)	Meadows and seeps, North Coast coniferous forest	Yes
<i>Erythronium oregonum</i>	giant fawn lily	None	None	S2	2B.2	Mar-Jun(Jul)	Cismontane woodland, Meadows and seeps	No
<i>Erythronium revolutum</i>	coast fawn lily	None	None	S3	2B.2	Mar-Jul(Aug)	Bogs and fens, Broadleafed upland forest, North Coast coniferous forest	No
<i>Gilia capitata ssp. pacifica</i>	Pacific gilia	None	None	S2	1B.2	Apr-Aug	Chaparral, Coastal bluff scrub, Coastal prairie, Valley and foothill grassland	Yes
<i>Hosackia gracilis</i>	harlequin lotus	None	None	S3	4.2	Mar-Jul	Broadleafed upland forest, Cismontane woodland, Closed-cone coniferous forest, Coastal bluff scrub, Coastal prairie, Coastal scrub, Marshes and swamps, Meadows and seeps, North Coast coniferous forest, Valley and foothill grassland	Yes
<i>Lasthenia californica ssp. macrantha</i>	perennial goldfields	None	None	S2	1B.2	Jan-Nov	Coastal bluff scrub, Coastal dunes, Coastal scrub	Yes
<i>Lathyrus palustris</i>	marsh pea	None	None	S2	2B.2	Mar-Aug	Bogs and fens, Coastal prairie, Coastal scrub, Lower montane coniferous forest, Marshes and swamps, North Coast coniferous forest	Yes

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	State Rank	CRPR	Bloom Period	Habitat	Potential Habitat Present?
<i>Lilium rubescens</i>	redwood lily	None	None	S3	4.2	Apr-Aug(Sep)	Broadleafed upland forest, Chaparral, Lower montane coniferous forest, North Coast coniferous forest, Upper montane coniferous forest	No
<i>Montia howellii</i>	Howell's montia	None	None	S2	2B.2	(Feb)Mar-May	Meadows and seeps, North Coast coniferous forest, Vernal pools	No
<i>Piperia candida</i>	white-flowered rein orchid	None	None	S3	1B.2	(Mar)May-Sep	Broadleafed upland forest, Lower montane coniferous forest, North Coast coniferous forest	No
<i>Sidalcea malachroides</i>	maple-leaved checkerbloom	None	None	S3	4.2	(Mar)Apr-Aug	Broadleafed upland forest, Coastal prairie, Coastal scrub, North Coast coniferous forest, Riparian woodland	No
<i>Sidalcea malviflora ssp. patula</i>	Siskiyou checkerbloom	None	None	S2	1B.2	(Mar)May-Aug	Coastal bluff scrub, Coastal prairie, North Coast coniferous forest	Yes
<i>Tiarella trifoliata</i> L. var. <i>trifoliata</i>	trifoliate laceflower	None	None	S2S3	3.2	(May)Jun-Aug	Lower montane coniferous forest, North Coast coniferous forest	No

### Attachment 4 – Plants Observed within the Project Parcel

Scientific Name	Common Name
<b>Tree Stratum</b>	
None observed on parcel	
<b>Shrub Stratum</b>	
<i>None observed on parcel</i>	
<b>Woody Vine Stratum</b>	
None observed on parcel	
<b>Herb Stratum</b>	
<i>Brizma maxima</i>	Greater Quaking Grass
<i>Carpobrotus acinaciformis</i>	Sally-my-handsome
<i>Cynosurus echinatus</i>	Bristly dogtail grass
<i>Erechtites hieraciifolius</i>	American burnweed
<i>Gamochaeta ustulata</i>	Feather weed
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Common cats-ear
<i>Jepsonia parryi</i>	Parry's jepsonia
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort plantain
<i>Phleum alpinum</i>	Alpine timothy
<i>Trifolium subterraneum</i>	Subterranean clover
<b>Non-native grasses</b>	The property is currently covered by a maintained lawn comprised of a variety of non-native grasses.

## Attachment 5 – Special Status Wildlife List

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	State Rank	Habitat	Potential to Occur
<i>Arborimus pomo</i>	Sonoma tree vole	None	None	S3	North coast fog belt from Oregon border to Sonoma County. In Douglas-fir, redwood and montane hardwood-conifer forests.	No
<i>Ascaphus truei</i>	Pacific tailed frog	None	None	S3S4	Occurs in montane hardwood-conifer, redwood, Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine habitats.	No
<i>Asio otus</i>	Long-eared owl	None	None	S3?	Forests and shrub lands located near grasslands.	No
<i>Bombus caliginosus</i>	obscure bumble bee	None	None	S1S2	Coastal areas from Santa Barbara County to north to Washington state.	Yes
<i>Bombus occidentalis</i>	western bumble bee	None	None	S1	Once common and widespread, species has declined precipitously from central CA to southern B.C., perhaps from disease.	Yes
<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	Olive-sided flycatcher	None	None	S3	boreal forest and in western coniferous forests, from sea level to over 10,000 feet elevation in some parts of the Rockies.	No
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat	None	None	S2	Throughout California in a wide variety of habitats. Most common in mesic sites.	No
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	western pond turtle	None	None	S3	A thoroughly aquatic turtle of ponds, marshes, rivers, streams and irrigation ditches, usually with aquatic vegetation, below 6000 ft elevation.	No
<i>Enhydra lutris nereis</i>	Southern Sea Otter	Threatened	None	S3	Found from Pidgeon Point south to Point Conception. Historical range from Punta Abreojos-Seal Rock (Oregon).	No

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	State Rank	Habitat	Potential to Occur
<i>Entosphenus tridentatus</i>	Pacific lamprey	None	None	S3	Found in medium and large low gradient rivers and streams.	No
<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>	North American porcupine	None	None	S3	Forested habitats in the Sierra Nevada, Cascade, and Coast ranges, with scattered observations from forested areas in the Transverse Ranges.	No
<i>Eumetopias jubatus</i>	Steller sea lion	Delisted	None	S2	Breeds on Ano Nuevo, San Miguel and Farallon islands, Point St. George, and Sugarloaf. Hauls-out on islands and rocks.	No
<i>Helminthoglypta arrosa monticola</i>	mountain shoulderband	None	None	S1	Known only from the King Range in Humboldt County.	No
<i>Myotis evotis</i>	Long -eared myotis	None	None	S3	Predominantly in coniferous forests, typically only at higher elevations in southern areas between 7,000 and 8,500 feet.	No
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	Fringed myotis	None	None	S3	Most known roosts are in caves, buildings, or mines	No
<i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i> pop 2.	Coho salmon	Threatened	Threatened	S2	Southern Oregon-Northern California.	No
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i> pop. 48	Steelhead-northern California DPS summer-run	Threatened	Endangered	S2	Northern California	No
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i> pop. 49	Steelhead-northern California DPS winter-run	Threatened	None	S3	Northern California	No

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	State Rank	Habitat	Potential to Occur
<i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i> pop. 17	Chinook Salmon coastal ESU	Threatened	None		Freshwater streams, estuaries, associated wetlands and ocean habitat.	No
<i>Pekania pennanti</i>	Fisher	None	None	S2S3	Intermediate to large-tree stages of coniferous forests and deciduous-riparian areas with high percent canopy closure.	No
<i>Pelecanus occidentalis californicus</i>	California Brown Pelican	Delisted	Delisted	S3	Does not breed in northern California. Between breeding seasons, the California Brown Pelican can be found wandering along the west coast of North America	No
<i>Progne subis</i>	purple martin	None	None	S3	Found in habitat where cavities are available.	No
<i>Rana boylei</i> (Population 1)	foothill yellow-legged frog	None	None	S4	Partly-shaded, shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate in a variety of habitats.	No
<i>Rhyacotriton variegatus</i>	southern torrent salamander	None	None	S2S3	Coastal redwood, Douglas-fir, mixed conifer, montane riparian, and montane hardwood-conifer habitats. Old growth forest.	No
<i>Setophaga petechia</i>	Yellow warbler	None	None	S3	Bushes, swamp edges, streams, gardens. Breeds in streamside thickets.	No
<i>Strix occidentalis caurina</i>	Northern Spotted Owl	Threatened	Threatened	S2	Requires mature forest patches with permanent water and suitable nesting trees and snags.	No
<i>Taricha rivularis</i>	red-bellied newt	None	None	S2	Coastal drainages from Humboldt County south to Sonoma County, inland to Lake County. Isolated population of uncertain origin in Santa Clara County.	No
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American badger	None	None	S3	Most abundant in drier open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats, with friable soils.	No

**Attachment 6 – Photo Facing West Across subject Parcel**

