

BIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS LETTER REPORT

**Sprint/Nextel Telecommunications Facility
P06-049, CA 8457E Boulder Creek Facility
County of San Diego, California
APN # 407-051-01**

Prepared For

**Strategic Planning Estate Services (SRES)
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Prepared By

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January 30, 2008

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UPDATED SUMMARY BIOLOGY REPORT

Biological Resources, Project Impacts, and Mitigation The P06-098 (Verizon Wireless) & P06-049 (Sprint/Nextel) Projects APN 407-051-01 Descanso, California

January 2008

Summary

The P06-098 (Verizon Wireless) & P06-049 (Sprint/Nextel) Projects consist of Major Use Permits to allow the construction of a shared Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel telecommunications facility on a portion of the APN 407-051-01 property. Habitat-types found on the site include Urban/Developed Habitat and Granitic Chamise Chaparral. No mitigation for impacts to Urban/Developed Habitat will be necessary. However, it is recommended that impacts to Granitic Chamise Chaparral be mitigated for offsite in a County-approved location at a ½-to-1 ratio. In addition, an avian nesting survey and/or seasonal restrictions on site development are recommended to ensure project consistency with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code.

A previous biological assessment was conducted for the Sprint/Nextel portion of the lease area by Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc (Attachment A). The results of that assessment have been incorporated into this report.

Introduction, Project Description, Location, and Setting

The Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel projects propose the construction of a shared Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel telecommunications facility on a portion of the APN 407-051-01 property. The project includes the construction of a Verizon Wireless monopine and equipment room, a Sprint/Nextel monopine and equipment room, a co-located Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel unmanned equipment building, a shared power generator, a joint electrical and telecommunications trench, and associated access road improvements.

The site is located at 11190 State Route 79 in the Descanso area of unincorporated San Diego County, immediately south of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park (Figure 1). The site is within the draft East County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea planning area. The site is designated in the San Diego County General Plan as “National Forest and State Park”, although it is privately owned and not within the Cleveland National Forest or Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. The property supports Urban/Developed Habitat (dirt road, water tanks, and associated graded pad) and Granitic Chamise Chaparral.

Vince Scheidt, Certified Biological Consultant, and Julia Groebner, Associate Biologist, conducted an updated field survey of the subject property on January 17, 2008 between the house of approximately 14:00 and 15:00. Weather conditions were acceptable for field surveying, with clear skies, temperatures in the low 50's, and a wind from the north blowing at 20-30 mph. The purpose of this survey was to re-evaluate the site's flora and fauna (Table 1), the onsite habitat-types (Figures 2-4), potential project impacts, and mitigation, if required.

Habitats/Vegetation Communities

The updated field surveys included the proposed Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel lease areas, the access road, and the area that would be affected by the proposed joint electrical and telecommunications trench. These areas support existing development or chaparral (Figures 2-4):

Urban/Developed (Holland Code 12000) – 0.66 acre

A dirt access road and two existing water tanks on a small, graded pad are located a short distance to the north of the proposed lease area. These areas are mapped as Urban/Developed Habitat, although portions could be alternatively classified as Disturbed Habitat (Holland Code 11300). Vegetative cover at the turnaround of the dirt access road is composed of grasses and weedy species which comprise approximately 10 percent of the surface area. Urban/Developed Habitat is a non-sensitive habitat-type in San Diego County, as defined by the County's Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO). The Urban/Developed Habitat onsite has little to no biological resource value.

Granitic Chamise Chaparral (Holland Code 37210) – 0.47 acre

The majority of the project site supports Granitic Chamise Chaparral (GCC). The entire site burned in the Cedar Fire of 2003. However, by the time of the 2008 field survey the chaparral was vigorously regenerating, although the plants remained of low stature. Chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) dominates the GCC, with lesser numbers of Interior Scrub Oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*), Eastwood Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa*), Bigberry Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glauca*), Mission Manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*), and White Sage (*Salvia apiana*). Understory species occurring in more open areas include California Cudweed (*Gnaphalium californica*), Flat-top Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*), and Foxtail Brome (*Bromus rubens*). GCC qualifies as a sensitive habitat-type in San Diego County, as defined by the RPO. The GCC onsite has moderate biological resource value.

Special Status Species

PSBS reports three sensitive animal species (Red-shouldered Hawk, Bell's Sage Sparrow, and San Diego Coast Horned Lizard) and no sensitive plant species as being present on the property:

Bell's Sage Sparrow

Amphispiza belli belli

Listing: County status: San Diego County Sensitive Animal List, Group 1 (DPLU, 2006)

State status: "California Species of Special Concern" (CDFG, 2003)

Federal status: "Species of Concern" (USFWS, 2005); Former Federal Category C2 (USFWS, 1993)

Distribution: Sage sparrows occur in patchy distributions in San Diego County

Habitat(s): Coastal sage scrubs and areas of chaparral in the foothill zone
Status on Site: Bell's Sage Sparrow was detected in the chaparral surrounding the project site. Nesting may occur on the ample areas of appropriate habitat that are present in the vicinity.

Red-shouldered Hawk

Buteo lineatus

Listing: "Blue List" (Tate, 1986)

County status: San Diego County Sensitive Animal List, Group 1 (DPLU, 2006)

State status: California "Fully Protected" Species (CDFG Code Sections 3511, 4700, 5050 & 5515)

Federal status: Protected Raptor (16 U.S.C. 668-668d, 54 Stat. 250), as amended

Distribution: Central and southern California west of the Sierras. Also Mexico, southeastern Canada, and the eastern United States

Habitat(s): Roost and nest in a variety of woodland habitats: eucalyptus woodlands, oak groves, open riparian forests, and related broken wooded areas.

Status on Site: Specimens were seen soaring over the site and offsite on adjoining lands.

Comments: Population numbers of this species in Southern California seem to have changed little over the last century, although other areas within the species' range have experienced significant population declines.

San Diego Coast Horned Lizard

Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei

Status: "Endangered" (San Diego Herpetological Society, 1980)

County status: San Diego County Sensitive Animal List, Group 2 (DPLU, 2006)

State status: "California Species of Special Concern" (CDFG, 2003)

Federal status: "Species of Concern" (USFWS, 2005)

Distribution: Ventura County south into northern Baja California Norte. Specimens found from sea level to mountain elevations and down desert slopes to the edge of the low desert.

Habitat(s): Open sage scrub, grassland, forested areas and chaparral.

Status on Site: A single San Diego Coast Horned Lizard was detected within the project footprint. This species likely occurs elsewhere in the chaparral habitat within and surrounding the project site.

In addition to these species, various wide-ranging sensitive species, such as any of several species of bats, etc. might be expected to utilize resources onsite. Less likely would be the occurrence of highly sensitive species, such as Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, Mountain Lion, or others. Although these species could theoretically move across the site, no resident specimens would be anticipated due to the very small size of the project site. No state or federally listed Rare, Threatened or Endangered species would be anticipated onsite, and no critical or highly sensitive populations of any species are anticipated. Sensitive species known from the vicinity, along with an assessment of the probability of occurrence onsite, are presented in Table 2.

Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways

Wetlands and jurisdictional "waters" are not present on the project site. The site does not support hydrophytes, hydric soils, or wetlands hydrology.

Other Unique Features/Resources

Because of the projectsite's small size and location adjoining a pad and two water tanks, it lacks unique features or resources that would enhance its biological significance. Although the surrounding area is mostly undeveloped, there are residences to the east and the site is not located in any identified wildlife corridor or wildlife movement area.

Significance of Project Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

Impacts associated with the Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel projects are subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the County's RPO. This means that the County requires that all project-related impacts to the site's flora, fauna, and habitats be assessed, and that mitigation be provided in the instance that impacts are considered "significant", as defined by CEQA. Mitigation is designed to reduce the effects of development, keeping all impacts at a level that is "less than significant".

Direct and Indirect Impacts

Implementation of the Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel projects could result in the following direct and indirect impacts:

1. A loss of up to 0.47 acre of GCC. Although the current impact acreage is small, given the project's location adjacent to Cuyamaca State Park and surrounded by native habitat that is essentially undeveloped, the impacts to habitat are considered significant and require mitigation.
2. A loss of up to 0.66 acre of Urban/Developed Habitat. Impacts to Urban/Developed Habitat are considered less than significant and do not require mitigation.
3. Impacts Red-shouldered Hawk, Bell's Sage Sparrow, San Diego Coast Horned Lizard, and any other resident sensitive species are considered less than significant and do not require mitigation. The number of specimens of these species directly or indirectly affected by site development is anticipated to be very small.
4. Potential displacement impacts to nesting raptors or migratory songbirds are considered significant. The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and Sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code protect the nests of essentially all native birds. Nesting in some of the trees or larger shrubs on or adjacent to the site is possible. Any disturbance, either direct or indirect, that would cause abandonment of active nests containing eggs or young would be a violation of the MBTA and/or the California Fish and Game Code.

Cumulative Impacts

Due to the very small size of the project site, and the fact that all significant impacts to biological resources will mitigated to a level that is less than significant, approval of the Verizon Wireless and

Sprint/Nextel projects will not have cumulatively considerable impacts when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects affecting the same resource.

Proposed Mitigation

As discussed above, impacts to 0.47 acre of GCC must be mitigated for offsite in a County-approved location. The appropriate mitigation ratio is ½-to-1. That is, no less than 0.24 acre-credits of GCC must be secured offsite at a County-approved location. No specific mitigation for impacts to Urban/Developed Habitat is required.

In order to ensure that the project is consistent with the requirements of the MBTA and Sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code, site brushing, grading, and/or the removal of vegetation within 300 feet of any potential avian nesting location will not be permitted during the spring/summer bird breeding season, defined as from 1 January (for certain raptors) to 31 August of each year. Limiting activities to the non-breeding season will minimize chances for the incidental take of migratory songbirds or raptors.

Should it be necessary to conduct brushing, grading, or other habitat-removal activities during the bird breeding season, a preconstruction nesting survey of all areas within 300 feet of the proposed activity will be required. The results of the survey will be provided in a report to the Director, Department of Planning and Land Use and the Wildlife Agencies for concurrence with the conclusions and recommendations.

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Preparer and Persons/Organizations Contacted



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Attachments

- Table 1. Flora and Fauna Detected
- Table 2. Sensitive Species Known from the Vicinity
- Figure 1. Regional Location
- Figure 2. The Sprint/Nextel Project - Biological Resources
- Figure 3. The Verizon Wireless Project - Biological Resources
- Figure 4. Utility Trench showing Biological Resources
- Attachment A. P 06-049 Sprint/Nextel Boulder Creek Telecommunications Facility Biological Letter Report

Table 1. Flora and Fauna Detected - The Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel Projects

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>
<u>Plants</u>	
<i>Adenostoma fasciculatum</i>	Chamise
<i>Arctostaphylos glandulosa</i>	Eastwood Manzanita
<i>Arctostaphylos glauca</i>	Bigberry Manzanita
<i>Bromus tectorum</i> *	Cheat Brome
<i>Bromus rubens</i> *	Foxtail Brome
<i>Ceanothus cuneatus</i>	Buck Brush
<i>Cneoridium dumosum</i>	Spice Bush
<i>Cryptantha</i> sp.	Cryptantha
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	Flat-top Buckwheat
<i>Eriophyllum confertiflorum</i>	Golden Yarrow
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i> *	Red-stem Stork's-bill
<i>Galium andrewsii</i>	Prostrate Bedstraw
<i>Galium angustifolium</i>	Narrow-leaf Bedstraw
<i>Gnaphalium californica</i>	California Cudweed
<i>Gutierrezia californica</i>	California Matchweed
<i>Hazardia squarrosa</i>	Hazardia
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i> *	Short-pod Mustard
<i>Lathyrus laetiflorus</i>	Chaparral Pea
<i>Lotus scoparius</i>	Deerweed
<i>Penstemon spectabilis</i>	Showy Penstemon
<i>Quercus berberidifolia</i>	Interior Scrub Oak
<i>Salvia apiana</i>	White Sage
<i>Sisymbrium altissimum</i> *	Tumble Mustard
<i>Stephanomeria exigua</i>	San Diego Wreath
<i>Xylococcus bicolor</i>	Mission Manzanita
<i>Yucca whipplei</i>	Our Lord's Candle
<u>Birds</u>	
<i>Amphispiza belli belli</i>	Bell's Sage Sparrow
<i>Aphelocoma coerulescens</i>	Scrub Jay
<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	Red-shouldered Hawk
<i>Carduelis psaltria</i>	Lesser Goldfinch
<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	Housefinch
<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	Common Crow
<i>Dendroica coronata</i>	Audubon's Warbler
<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	Dark-eyed Junco
<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	Bewick's Wren
<i>Toxostoma redivivum</i>	California Thrasher
<u>Reptiles</u>	
<i>Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei</i>	San Diego Coast Horned Lizard
<i>Uta stansburiana</i>	Side-blotched Lizard

* - denotes non-native taxon

Bold - denotes sensitive taxon

Table 2. Sensitive Species Known from the Vicinity - The Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel Projects

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federally Endangered	State Endangered	State Rare	MSCP Narrow Endemic	County Sensitive Plant List	Coastal Sage Scrub	Mixed Chaparral	Grassland	Riparian	Oak Woodland	Chamise Chaparral	Mixed Conifer	Close Cone Forest	Pinon-Juniper	Freshwater Marsh	Desert Scrub	Desert Wash	Salt or Alkali Marsh	Vernal Pools	Montane Meadow	Coastal or Desert Dune	Lakes and Bays	Extensive Agriculture	Probability of Occurrence	Factual Basis for Determination
<i>Arabis hirshbergiae</i>	Hirshberg's rockcress					A															X				L	1a
<i>Astragalus oocarpus</i>	San Diego Milkvetch					A					X		X												L	1a
<i>Brodiaea orcuttii</i>	Orcutt's brodiaea					A		X	X	X	X									X					L	1a
<i>Calochortus dunnii</i>	Dunn's mariposa lily			X	X	A	X					X		X											M	3b
<i>Ceanothus cyaneus</i>	Lakeside ceanothus				X	A	X																		L	1b
<i>Chaenactis parishii</i>	Parish's pincushion flower					A	X					X													M	3b
<i>Chorizanthe polygonoides longispina</i>	Long spined-spine flower					A	X					X													L	1a
<i>Cupressus stephensonii</i>	Cuyamaca cypress					A							X	X											L	1b
<i>Delphinium hesperium cuyamaca</i>	Cuyamaca larkspur			X		A															X				L	1a
<i>Downingia concolor brevior</i>	Cuyamaca downingia		X			A														X	X				L	1a
<i>Grindelia hirsutula hallii</i>	Hall's gumplant					A		X	X	X	X										X				L	1a
<i>Heuchera rubescens versicolor</i>	San Diego County alum root					B	X				X	X													L	1a
<i>Heuchera brevistaminea</i>	Mt. Laguna alumroot					A	X					X													L	1a
<i>Hulsea californica</i>	California hulsea					A	X				X														M	3b
<i>Lewisia brachycalyx</i>	Southwestern bitterroot					B															X				L	1a
<i>Lilium parryi</i>	Lemon lily					A							X								X				L	1a
<i>Limnanthes gracilis parishii</i>	Cuyamaca meadowfoam		X			A															X				L	1a
<i>Linanthus orcuttii</i>	Orcutt's linanthus					A							X												L	1a
<i>Monardella hypoleuca lanata</i>	Felt leaved rock mint					A	X				X														L	1a
<i>Monardella nana leptosiphon</i>	San Felipe monardella					A	X					X	X												L	1a
<i>Navarretia peninsularis</i>	Peninsular navarretia					A	X					X								X					M	3b
<i>Rubus glaucifolius ganderi</i>	Cuyamaca raspberry					A						X													L	1a
<i>Scutellaria bolanderi austromontana</i>	Southern skullcap					A			X			X													L	1a
<i>Selaginella eremophila</i>	Desert spike moss					B											X								L	1a
<i>Sidalcea neomexicana</i>	Salt Spring Checkerbloom					A	X	X				X													L	1a
<i>Streptanthus campestris</i>	Southern jewelflower					A	X							X											L	1a
<i>Thermopsis californica semota</i>	Velvety false lupine					A		X	X												X				L	1a
<i>Aimophila ruficeps canescens</i>	Rufous-crowned sparrow						X					X													L	1a
<i>Amphispiza belli belli</i>	Bell's sage sparrow						X	X				X													O	--
<i>Bassariscus astutus</i>	Ringtail						X	X	X	X	X														L	1a
<i>Bufo microscaphus californicus</i>	Arroyo toad	X			X					X															L	1a
<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	Red-shouldered hawk									X	X														O	--
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				M	1a
<i>Felis concolor</i>	Mountain lion						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				M	2a
<i>Lampropeltis zonata pulchra</i>	SD mountain kingsnake												X												L	1a
<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i>	San Diego desert woodrat						X	X	X	X	X	X													L	1a
<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>	Southern mule deer						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				M	2a
<i>Oreortyx pictus eremophila</i>	Mountain quail						X			X	X	X	X	X											M	2a
<i>Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei</i>	San Diego horned lizard						X	X	X		X														O	--
<i>Taricha torosa torosa</i>	California newt									X															L	1a

Probability of Occurrence Codes:

L - Low Probability; rare species in area M - Moderate Probability H - High Probability O - Observed; see text for detailed discussion.

Factual Basis for Determination:

- 1a - no significant habitat (animal or plant)
- 1b - distinctive perennial that would not have been missed if present onsite (plant)
- 2a - could be expected to occur onsite on at least an occasional basis, based on habitat quality (animal);
- 2b - could occur onsite, but very rare, and/or poorly known (plant)
- 3a - nearly certain to occur onsite on a regular basis (animals), but cryptic
- 3b - ephemeral species known from the immediate vicinity, but seasonal in occurrence (plant)

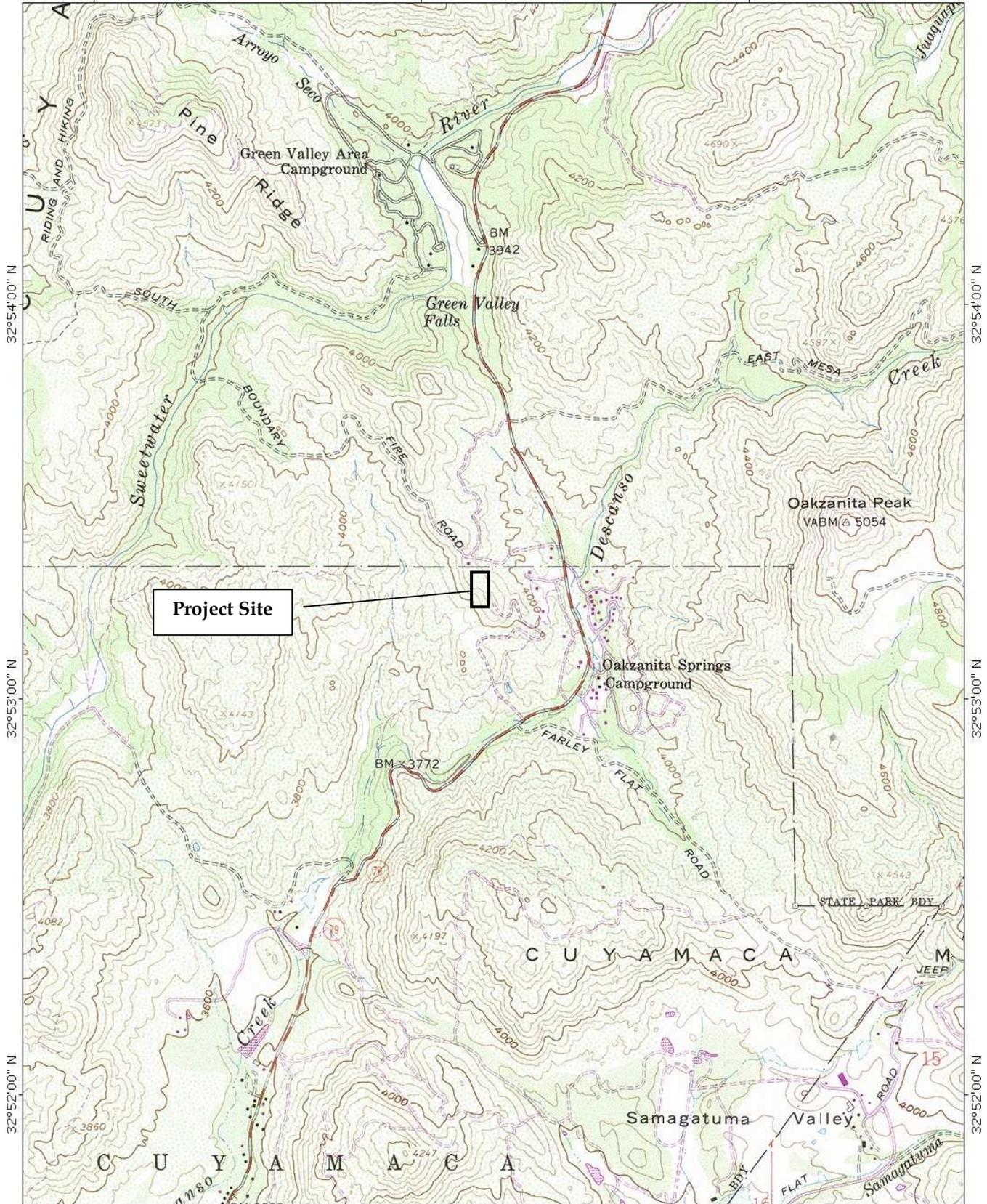
Figure 1. Regional Location - The Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel Projects
Portion of U.S.G.S. "Cuyamaca Peak, California" 7.5' Quadrangle

TOPO! map printed on 01/21/08 from "SanDiego.tpo" and "Untitled.tpg"

116°36'00" W

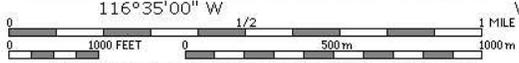
116°35'00" W

WGS84 116°34'00" W



Project Site

Oakzanita Springs Campground



Printed from TOPO! ©1999 Wildflower Productions (www.topo.com)

Figure 2. The Sprint/Nextel Project - Biological Resources

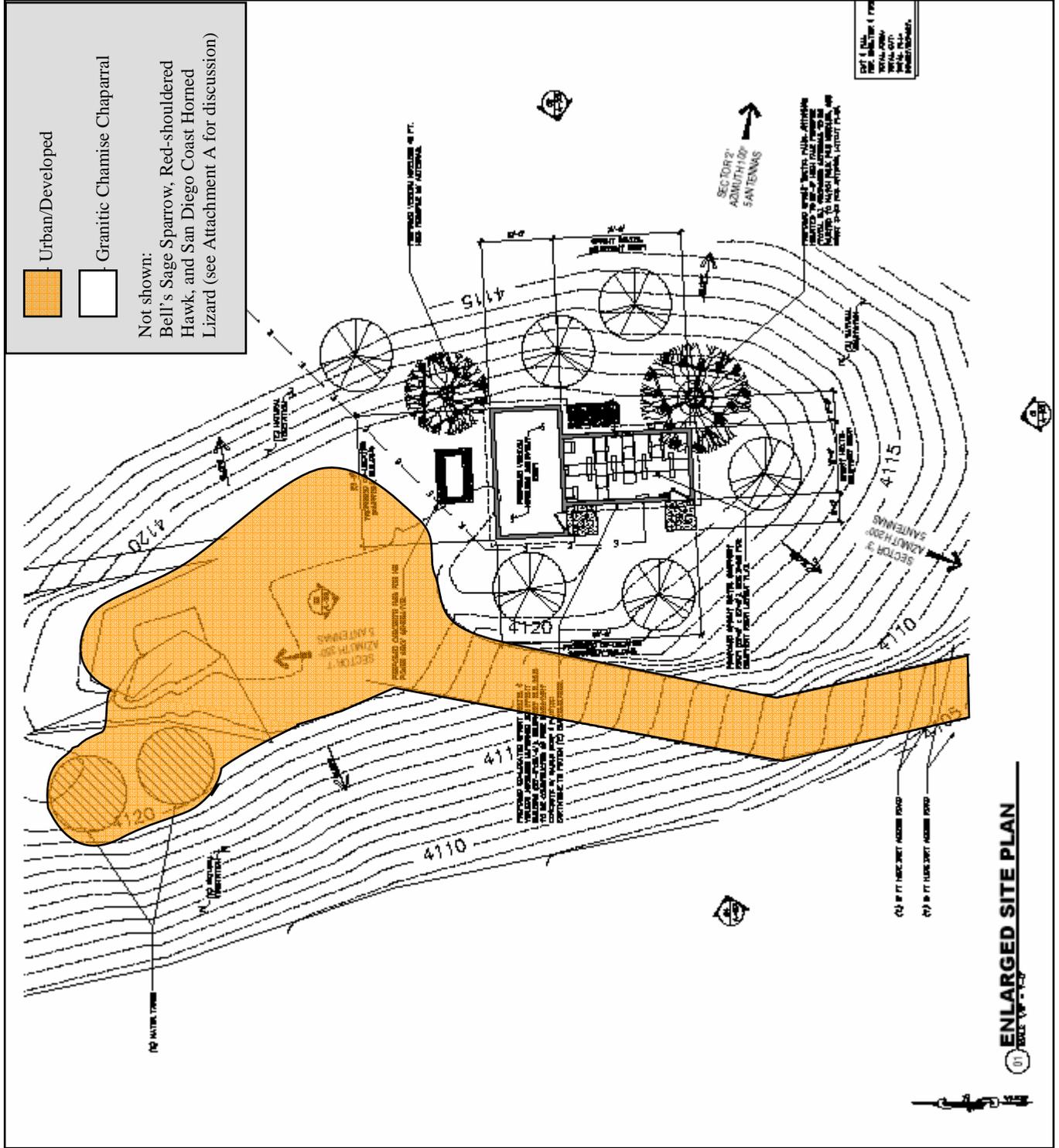
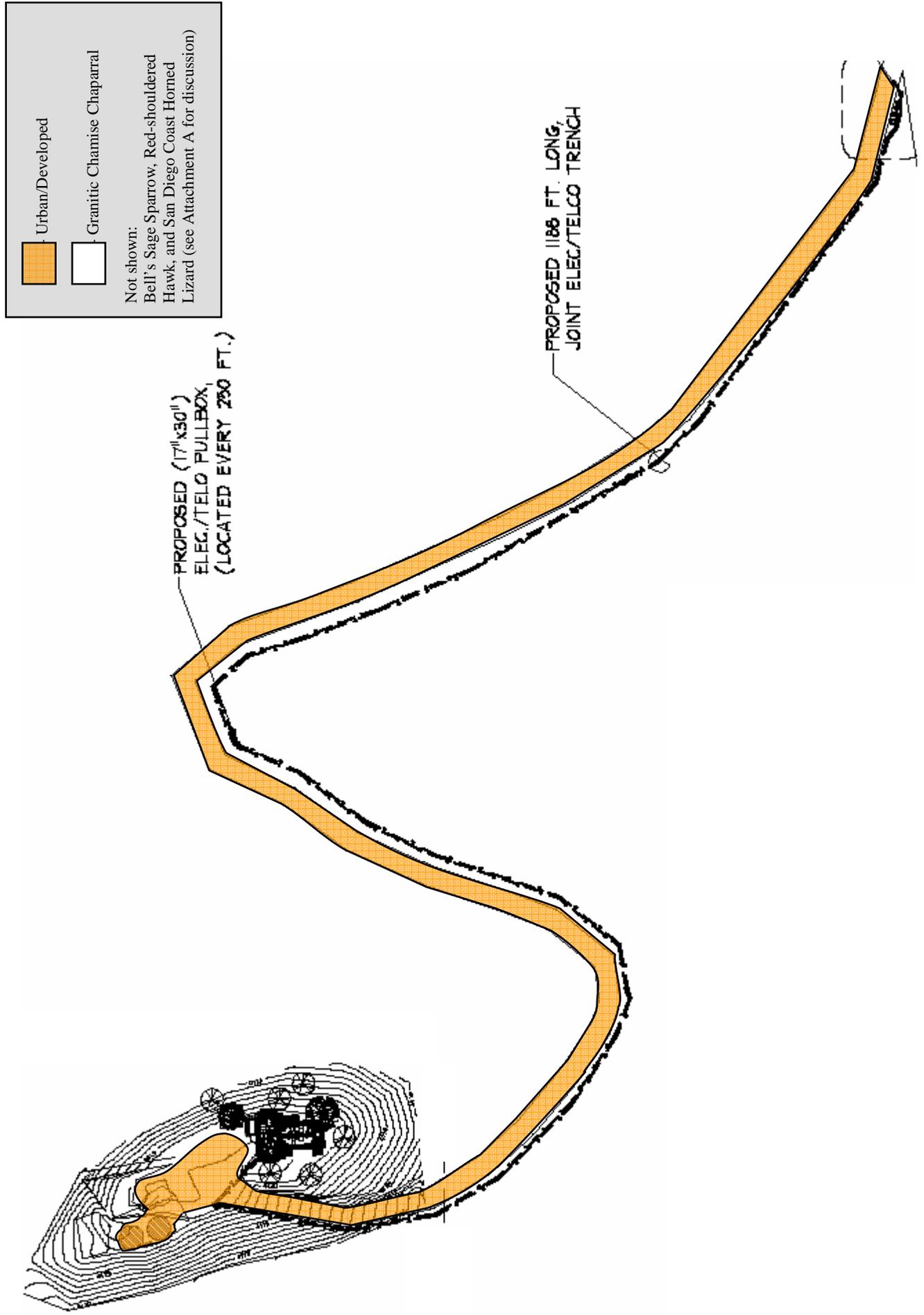


Figure 4. Utility Trench showing Biological Resources –The Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel Projects



ATTACHMENT A.

*P 06-049 Sprint/Nextel Boulder Creek Telecommunications Facility
Biological Letter Report
PSBS, November 2006*

BIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS LETTER REPORT

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November - 2006

**P 06-024
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BOULDER CREEK
TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY
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DESCANSO,
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
APN #: 407-051-01**

BIOLOGICAL LETTER REPORT

UTM (NAD 83): 11-S: 539,298mE; 3,638,914mN

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15 November 2006

R. Mitchel Beauchamp, M. Sc., President

P 06-024
SPRINT/NEXTEL
BOULDER CREEK
TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY
11190 STATE ROUTE 79,
DESCANSO,
SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

BIOLOGICAL LETTER REPORT

15 November 2006

Summary

Pacific Southwest Biological Services, Inc., (Pacific Southwest) conducted a biological assessment on the project site totaling approximately 41,220 square feet proposed for a twenty-foot monopole with 15 attached panel antennas and associated antennas. An equipment shelter is proposed, measuring 11.5 feet by 20 feet by 10.5 feet in height, to be situated adjacent to the antenna tower. The site is located in the eastern part of San Diego County, immediately south of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. The site is within the East County Subarea Plan Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP); this plan is presently being prepared under the California Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) process. The site is designated as the San Diego County General Plan as National Forest and State Park, although it is privately owned and not within the Cleveland National Forest or Cuyamaca Rancho State Park.

The site contains two vegetation community/habitat types: Urban / Developed and Granitic Chamise Chaparral. The site was completely burned in the 2003 Cedar Fire and all plants within the study area (100 feet beyond the proposed project site) are currently resprouting or in seedling stages.

The project, including the lease area and access road improvements, would impact approximately 10,645 square feet (0.244 acre) of Granitic Chamise Chaparral. This impact is considered less than significant under CEQA because of the small size of the impact and relatively large amount of this habitat extant in San Diego County. Two San Diego County sensitive species were encountered during the field survey, the San Diego Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillii*) and Bell's Sage Sparrow (*Amphispiza belli belli*), both California Species of Special Concern, but not officially listed under the federal or state endangered species acts (see below). Impacts from loss of habitat for the Horned Lizard are considered less than significant; potentially significant impacts to the Sage Sparrow during the nesting period would be avoided by avoiding construction during the species' nesting period.

Introduction, Project Description, Location and Setting

Introduction

Pacific Southwest, at the request of Mr. Craig Lorenz, conducted a biological assessment, on the approximately 750 square-foot lease area and proposed access road to the site. The purpose was to identify and quantify the biological resources, including vegetation types with special attention to any sensitive biological resources.

Survey Methodology

Prior to the field survey, a search was made of the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) for the USGS 7.5' Cuyamaca Peak, California topographic quadrangle for sensitive flora and fauna potentially occurring on the site. This search revealed several federally- or state-listed species that may occur on or in the vicinity of the property (Appendices 3 and 4).

Pacific Southwest biologist Geoffrey L. Rogers performed the biological assessment of the site. The on-foot survey covered all slope aspects, soil types, vegetation types and drainages within the site. Consistent with County requirements, the survey area includes a 100-foot buffer beyond the designated boundary of the parcels (Figure 3). Each plant and animal species observed was identified and recorded. Directed searches were made for species identified by the CNDDDB as potentially occurring on the site.

The survey was conducted under favorable conditions on 1 November 2006. Temperature ranged from 73 to 76 degrees Fahrenheit, cloud cover was absent early to approximately 20 percent late, and winds were 1 to 5 miles per hour from the west.

The scientific nomenclature used in this report is from the following standard references: vascular plants (Beauchamp 1986, Hickman 1993); vegetation communities (Holland 1986, Oberbauer 1996); amphibians and reptiles (Crother 2000); birds (American Ornithologists' Union 1998 and 2006); and mammals (Jameson and Peeters 2004).

Project Description and Location

The proposed project is a Major Use Permit to allow installation of a twenty-foot monopole with 15 attached panel antennas and associated Nextel antennas on an approximately 750 square-foot lease area. An equipment shelter is proposed measuring 11.5 feet by 20 feet by 10.5 feet in height to be situated adjacent to the tower. Surrounding the shelter and tower will be a fence-enclosed area containing native plant seedlings and compatible cultivars. Additionally, three Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) trees will be planted outside the fenced area.

The project also proposes a 28 by 35-foot fire truck hammerhead-shaped turn-around to be constructed in a disturbed area adjacent to the proposed facility.

The existing 12-foot wide dirt access road would be widened by four feet (two feet per side) for 2400 feet from the Oakzanita Ranch compound. The property is zoned S92 (General Rural Use) which permits Wireless Telecommunication Facilities under the Tier 4 Classification with an approved Major Use Permit pursuant to Section 6985a of the Zoning Ordinance.

The site is located in eastern San Diego County (Figures 1 and 2) at 11190 State Route 79, immediately south of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. The mapped location of the site is within the property of the Oakzanita Ranch, on unsectioned lands of the Cuyamaca Rancho Land Grant, of the U. S. Geological Survey 7.5' Cuyamaca Peak, California, Quadrangle (UTM [NAD 83]: 11-S: 539,298mE; 3,638,914mN). Access to the site from U. S. Interstate Highway 8 is north on State Route 79 to the above address. The proposed site lies a short distance westward at the top of a prominent hill approximately 4,125 feet above mean sea level.

Setting

The site is located in east-central San Diego County at approximately 4,125 feet above mean sea level (Figure 3) and occupies the summit of a small hill within the Cuyamaca Mountains. The surrounding area is composed of mountainous chaparral-covered terrain. The boundary of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park lies north, west, and at a short distance, east of the site. Descanso Creek drains the area and flows southwest into the Sweetwater River.

Soils on-site were mapped as Acid igneous rock land (Bowman 1973) and geology was mapped as Mesozoic granitic rocks (Rogers 1973).

Surrounding land includes undeveloped areas to the west, north and distant east of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park; rural residences to the immediate east; Thousand Trails Campground to the southeast; and more rural residences, frequently with horse stables, to the south. The study area also has two small water tanks at the summit.

Habitats/Vegetation Communities

Only two vegetation communities were mapped for the study area: Urban / Developed and Granitic Chamise Chaparral. Although the study area and all lands west and north burned in the 2003 Cedar fire, pre-existing plants are recovering by growing from seed and rootstock on the site. A description of these communities follows, with the Oberbauer/Holland Element Numbers and approximate area in acres.

Urban / Developed (#12000) (30,575 square feet)

The dirt road approaching the site, the two existing water tanks and the proposed hammerhead turnaround were mapped under this category. Vegetative cover at the proposed turnaround is composed of grasses and weedy species and comprises approximately 10 percent of surface area.

Granitic Chamise Chaparral (#37210) (10,645 square feet)

The location of the proposed equipment shelter, tower, planted area, and additional road widening were mapped under this category. Chaparral plant species in these areas are growing from seed or resprouting vigorously. Although individual plants are less than three feet tall, Chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*) dominates all sides of the study area. California Scrub Oak (*Quercus berberidifolia*) occurs on the summit and several places on the north slope of the hill. Eastwood Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa* ssp. *zacaensis*) and Bigberry Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glauca* var. *glauca*) occur in places on all slopes. Less frequent is Mission Manzanita (*Xylococcus bicolor*). Several specimens of White Sage (*Salvia apiana*) were also found.

Understory species occurring in more open areas include California Everlasting (*Gnaphalium californica*), Interior Flat-top Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum* var. *foliosum*), Short-pod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) and Red Brome (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*). In open areas near the road edge, Showy Penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*) was found in several places.

Special Status Species

The observed flora on the project property totals 17 plant taxa (Appendix 1). Of this total, two (11%) are non-native, indicative that the site retains a high level of ecological function in terms of native species.

A total of 12 animal species were detected on and adjacent to the site. A complete list of animals observed or detected on the site is included (Appendix 2). All of the species observed were expected for the habitats on site at the present season.

The CNDDDB search revealed several special status plant species reported from the USGS 7.5' Cuyamaca Peak, California topographic quadrangle. Appendix 3 lists these plants, their conservation status, their typical habitat requirements, and probability for occurrence on the project site. None of the sensitive species recorded in the CNDDDB are likely to occur on-site. None of the MSCP Covered Species are expected to occur on-site.

The CNDDDB search revealed several sensitive animal species reported from the USGS 7.5' Cuyamaca Peak topographic quadrangle, California topographic quadrangle. Appendix 4 lists these animals, their conservation status, their typical habitat requirements, and probability for occurrence on the project site. Field surveys revealed that the San Diego Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillii*) utilizes the site: a single Horned Lizard was detected at the summit on sparsely vegetated ground within the project footprint. It is likely that this species could occur anywhere in the chaparral habitat within and surrounding the project site. The San Diego Horned Lizard is a California Species of Special Concern and a County of San Diego sensitive animal. The Bell's Sage Sparrow (*Amphispiza belli belli*) was also detected in surrounding chaparral. The Bell's Sage Sparrow is a federal Bird of Conservation Concern, a California Species of Special Concern, and a County sensitive animal. Additionally, the sparrow is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the California Fish and Game Code.

Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways

The site is located at the summit of a small hill and thus shows no definable drainage features.

Other Unique Biological Features/Resources

Lands surrounding the site are largely undeveloped with very sparse residential uses, thus relatively free wildlife movement is expected to occur in the project vicinity. The project footprint however, would not significantly affect such movement.

Overall, the site does not contain unique geographically-based wildlife resources but is located within largely undeveloped land that supports a significant wildlife population. Much of this population transits the borders of the 25,000-acre Cuyamaca Rancho State Park surrounding the site on three sides. The site itself is not located within a specific wildlife corridor or significant wildlife movement area.

Significance of Project Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

Vegetation Community/Habitat Impacts

Approximately 10,645 square feet (approximately 0.244 acre) of Chamise Chaparral would be impacted by the project (see Table 1). The clearing would occur in an area that was sparsely vegetated before the Cedar Fire and now shows a mixture of weedy species and seedling Chaparral species.

Table 1. Summary of Impacts to Vegetation Communities On-site (Areas in Square Feet).

Vegetation Community	Existing Area	Area Impacted
Urban / Developed (includes existing access road)	30,575	--
Granitic Chamise Chaparral	10,645	10,645
Total	41,220	10,645

Special Status Species

San Diego Horned Lizard. The project would impact approximately 10,645 square feet of Granitic Chamise Chaparral, all potential habitat for the San Diego Horned Lizard, which was encountered during the field surveys. This impact is considered less than significant because of the small amount of impacted habitat involved and the wide-spread distribution of the species.

Bell's Sage Sparrow. The Bell's Sage Sparrow was detected in surrounding chaparral. Bell's Sage Sparrow is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the California Fish and Game Code. If clearing or construction takes place during the spring/summer months (1 February through 31 August), nesting birds may be impacted by direct impacts to nesting sites or indirectly by noise, causing abandonment of nesting sites. This impact is considered a significant impact under CEQA unless reduced to a less-than-significant level by application of the recommended mitigation measure.

BIOMIT 1: Nesting Migratory Birds

The project should be conditioned to require a pre-construction survey of the proposed project area for nesting birds, if grubbing, clearing, or construction occurs from 1 February through 31 August. Any active nests located would be flagged and that area protected from impacts until the birds have fledged.

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APPENDIX 1. FLORAL CHECKLIST OF SPECIES OBSERVED

DICOTYLEDONS

Asteraceae - Sunflower Family

- Gnaphalium californicum* DC. California Everlasting
- Gutierrezia californica* (DC.) Torr. & Gray Broom Matchweed
- Hazardia squarrosa* ssp. *grindelioides* (DC.) Clarke Saw-toothed Goldenbush
- Stephanomeria exigua* Nutt. ssp. *deanei* (Macbr.) Gottlieb San Diego Wreath-plant

Brassicaceae - Mustard Family

- * *Hirschfeldia incana* (L.) Lagr.-Fossat Short-pod Mustard

Ericaceae - Heath Family

- Arctostaphylos glandulosa* Eastw. ssp. *adamsii* (Munz) Munz Laguna Manzanita
- Arctostaphylos glauca* Lindl. var. *glauca* [*A. g.* var. *eremicola* Jeps.] Bigberry Manzanita
- Xylococcus bicolor* Nutt. Mission Manzanita

Fabaceae - Legume Family

- Lotus scoparius* ssp. *brevialatus* (Ottley) Munz Deerweed

Fagaceae - Oak Family

- Quercus berberidifolia* Liebm. California Scrub Oak

Lamiaceae - Mint Family

- Salvia apiana* Jeps. White Sage

Polygonaceae - Buckwheat Family

- Eriogonum fasciculatum* Benth. var. *foliolosum* (Nutt.) S. Stokes Interior Flat-top Buckwheat

Rosaceae - Rose Family

- Adenostoma fasciculatum* Hook & Arn. Chamise

Rutaceae - Rue Family

- Cneoridium dumosum* (Nutt.) Hook. F. Bushrue

Scrophulariaceae - Figwort Family

- Penstemon spectabilis* Gray Showy Penstemon

MONOCOTYLEDONS

Liliaceae - Lily Family

- Hesperoyucca whipplei* (Torr.) Trel. ssp. *whipplei* K. H. Clary Our Lord's Candle

Poaceae - Grass Family

- * *Bromus madritensis* L. ssp. *rubens* (L.) Husnot Red Brome

* - Denotes non-native plant taxa

APPENDIX 2. ANIMALS OBSERVED OR DETECTED

<u>COMMON NAME</u>	<u>SCIENTIFIC NAME</u>
REPTILES	
Phrynosomatidae	
Side-blotched Lizard	<i>Uta stansburiana</i>
San Diego Horned Lizard	<i>Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei</i>
BIRDS	
Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, Harriers, Kites)	
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>
Corvidae (Jays, Crows, Ravens, Magpies)	
Western Scrub-Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>
Troglodytidae (Wrens)	
Bewick's Wren	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>
Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)	
California Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma redivivum</i>
Parulidae (Wood Warblers)	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Dendroica coronata</i>
Emberizidae (Towhees, Sparrows)	
Sage Sparrow	<i>Amphispiza belli</i>
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>
Fringillidae (Finches)	
House Finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>
Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis psaltria</i>