

Biological Survey Memorandum

Hoffmantown 12 Acre Site Bernalillo County, New Mexico

Prepared by Marron and Associates, Inc.
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INTRODUCTION

Total Lifestyle Communities proposes to develop a 12 acre property located adjacent to Hoffmantown Church and Harper Drive in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The project area occurs on the *Alameda, New Mexico* USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle map.

The elevation of the project area ranges from approximately 5,450 to 5,500 feet above mean sea level. Soil mapping units located within the project area are Embudo-Tijeras complex, 0 to 9 percent slopes and Embudo gravelly fine sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes (NRCS 2008). The climate in Bernalillo County is semi-arid (approximately 8.7 inches of precipitation annually), with an average maximum temperature of 69.9, and an average minimum temperature of 43.1 recorded for Albuquerque, New Mexico (Western Regional Climate Center, 2005 data).

BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

Marron and Associates, Inc. (Marron) conducted a pedestrian biological survey of the project area on July 18, 2008. The purpose of the survey was to identify biological resources that occur in the project area, including general vegetation and wildlife, wetlands, and protected species. Federal and state management agency lists and databases containing information on biological resources within Bernalillo County were reviewed prior to the survey.

Vegetation

Much of the project area is currently not vegetated. Vegetation present consists of disturbed Plains/Mesa Sand Scrub, Arroyo Riparian, Desert Grassland (Dick-Peddie 1993), and weedy species. Dominant plant species located within the project area are purple rubber rabbitbush (*Ericameria nauseosa*), three-awn (*Aristida purpurea*), four-wing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), fluff grass (*Dasyochloa pulchella*), tumbleweed (*Salsola tragus*), and snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*).

Wetlands

No wetlands occur within the project area. However, a named ephemeral waterway, South Piño Arroyo, occurs along the south boundary of the project area and an associated drainage occurs along the west project area boundary. Impacts to these waterways may be regulated by the US Army Corps of Engineers, and coordination with that agency prior to construction is recommended. A permit for project associated activities may be required.

Noxious Weeds

One Class C New Mexico noxious weed species, Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*), was observed within the project area. No action is recommended for Class C species.

Wildlife

Wildlife use of the project area is low due to the presence of nearby development. However, the project area does provide a refuge for wildlife in an otherwise unsuitable urban area. The following animal species or their sign were observed within the project area: black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), white-winged dove (*Zenaida asiatica*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), greater roadrunner (*Geococcyx californicus*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).

Project activities would affect approximately 12 acres of habitat. Measures recommended to reduce effects to wildlife include replanting disturbed areas with certified weed-free native vegetation and burying any trenching concurrently to reduce trapping of reptiles and small mammals.

Protected and Monitored Species

An evaluation of plants and wildlife protected or monitored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State of New Mexico in Bernalillo County indicated that nine listed species could occur in or near the project area. No suitable habitat for other species is present. The project area occurs within a highly developed urban setting and is not likely to support most protected species, but it does provide resources and limited cover.

Federal and state listed birds that may pass through the project area include bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), arctic peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus tundrius*), Baird's sparrow (*Ammodramus bairdii*), mountain plover (*Charadrius montanus*), yellow billed cuckoo (*Coccyzuz americanus*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugea*), and Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii*).

Most of these species would likely stop within the project area only temporarily, as it supports little suitable habitat for nesting.

No target species or their sign were observed during the biological survey of the project area.

Migratory Birds

Though migratory birds could pass through the project area (see above), there is little suitable habitat present for most species. No suitable burrows for western burrowing owl, which is protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, occur within the project area, but habitat is suitable to support them and they could migrate into the area in the future.

Other migratory birds are unlikely to be affected by the project.

CONCLUSIONS

The project would affect approximately 12 acres of wildlife habitat located adjacent to residential and community services development. Marron recommends the following measures to reduce effects to biological resources: 1) replant open disturbed areas with native vegetation; 2) bury any trenching concurrently to reduce trapping of small mammals and reptiles.

(08051.01)



Photo A – Representative Vegetation at and Habitat at the Project Area, Looking East



Photo B – South Piño Arroyo within the Project Area, Looking East

References

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