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Spotted Owl Habitat Study

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May 2, 2016

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Environmental Resource Management
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RE: Sleeping Lady Winery Project
Section 7 T6N, R4W, MDB&M - Napa County

Scott,

This is an assessment for northern spotted owls (*strix occidentalis caurinia*), or NSOs, for the Sleeping Lady Winery Project located on Solano Avenue just south of Yountville, California. The Project proposes to build a winery and crush pad, improve existing access road, and add a pad for water storage tanks. No trees will be removed.

Known Northern Spotted Owl Territories:

On 02MAY16, I ran a California Department of Fish & Wildlife's spotted owl viewer for the above listed project (Attachment #1). An assessment area of 1.3 miles from the project area was used. The 1.3 mile assessment area was created by USFWS for a Take Avoidance of northern spotted owls within the California Interior (outside the redwood zone). Although Napa County does have redwoods, the environmental conditions in the area are hotter/drier than the coastal redwood zone; therefore, the 1.3 mile assessment area was used for this Project (Attachment #2). A summary of the report includes:

There are no known NSO territories within 1.3 miles of the Project Area. The closest known northern spotted owl territory is NAP0016, which is located over 2 miles away.

Northern Spotted Owl Habitat:

The attributes for northern spotted owl habitat includes a forest with:

- Dense, multi-layered canopy of several trees species.

- Trees of varying sizes and ages.
- Abundant logs, snags/cavity trees, and trees with broken tops or platform-like substrates (i.e. broken tops, mistletoe, debris piles, or old raptor/squirrel nests).
- Open spaces among lower branches to allow flight under the canopy.

USFWS more specifically defines northern spotted owl habitat within the California Interior as follows:

- High Quality Nesting/Roosting Habitat: Mixed tree species with basal area of 210+ ft² and ≥ 15 " quadratic mean diameter, and ≥ 8 trees per acre of trees ≥ 26 " in diameter at breast height, and $\geq 60\%$ canopy closure.
- Suitable Nesting/Roosting Habitat: Mixed tree species with basal area ranging from 150 - 180+ ft² and ≥ 15 " quadratic mean diameter, and ≥ 8 trees per acre of trees ≥ 26 " in diameter at breast height, and $\geq 60\%$ canopy closure.
- Suitable Foraging Habitat: Mixed tree species with basal area ranging from 120 - 180+ ft² and ≥ 13 " quadratic mean diameter, and ≥ 5 trees per acre of trees ≥ 26 " in diameter at breast height, and a mix of $\geq 40\%$ to 100% canopy closure.
- Low Quality Foraging Habitat: Mixed tree species with basal area ranging from 80 - 120+ ft² and ≥ 11 " quadratic mean diameter, and $\geq 40\%$ canopy closure.

Project Area:

The Project Area is on the edge of a large agricultural and residential area and mixed second-growth forest (Attachment #3). The area where the construction will take place is open and there will not be any trees harvested.

The location of the Project Area is within unsuitable northern spotted owl habitat due to lack of trees and large expanse of agricultural/residential housing. The forest adjacent to the Project Area does meet USFWS definitions of suitable northern spotted owl habitat; however, examining the landscape of the area, the forested area is surrounded by unsuitable, open habitat. The forested patch near the Project Area, along with other patches in the landscape, may provide temporary habitat for a transient northern spotted owl; however, is probably too small and patchy to support a resident owl.

Conclusions for Sleeping Lady Winery Project:

The closest known northern spotted owl territory is located over 2 miles from the Project Area. The Project is located in unsuitable NSO habitat due to lack of mixed forest, agricultural use, and residential houses in the area.

Although the Project Area is adjacent to marginal but suitable NSO habitat, this Project will not remove any trees, therefore, not alter any NSO habitat.

There will be no change in northern spotted owl habitat due to this project; therefore, no mitigation measures for northern spotted owls are proposed.

This is a general assessment of northern spotted owls for the above listed project area. This is not a complete Biological Assessment for all listed species for an EIR/EIA, nor can it be used in place of USFWS Protocol Surveys.

If you have questions regarding this information, please feel free to contact me.



Pamela Town
Consulting Wildlife Biologist

Attachments:

- 1: CA Fish & Wildlife Report #1 – NSO Database (1 pages)
- 2: Topographical Map of NSOs within 1.3 Miles of Sleeping Lady Winery Project (1 page)
- 3: Aerial Photo of Landscape around Sleeping Lady Winery Project (1 page)

References:

Protocol for Surveying Proposed Management Activities That May Impact Northern Spotted Owls. Endorsed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. February 2, 2011 and Revised January 9, 2012.

Important Information for Timber Operations Proposed within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl. California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection. February 2008.

Northern Spotted Owl Viewer (BIOS CA Natural Diversity Database). Managed by California Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Data Version Date:
03/30/2016
Report Generation Date:
5/2/2016

Report #1 - Spotted Owl Sites Found
Known Spotted Owl sites having observations
within the search area.



Meridian, Township, Range, Section (MTRS) searched:

M_06N_05W Sections(01,02,11,12,13,14,23,24);

M_06N_04W Sections(05,06,07,08,17,18,19,20);

NOTES:

Sleeping Lady Project Area

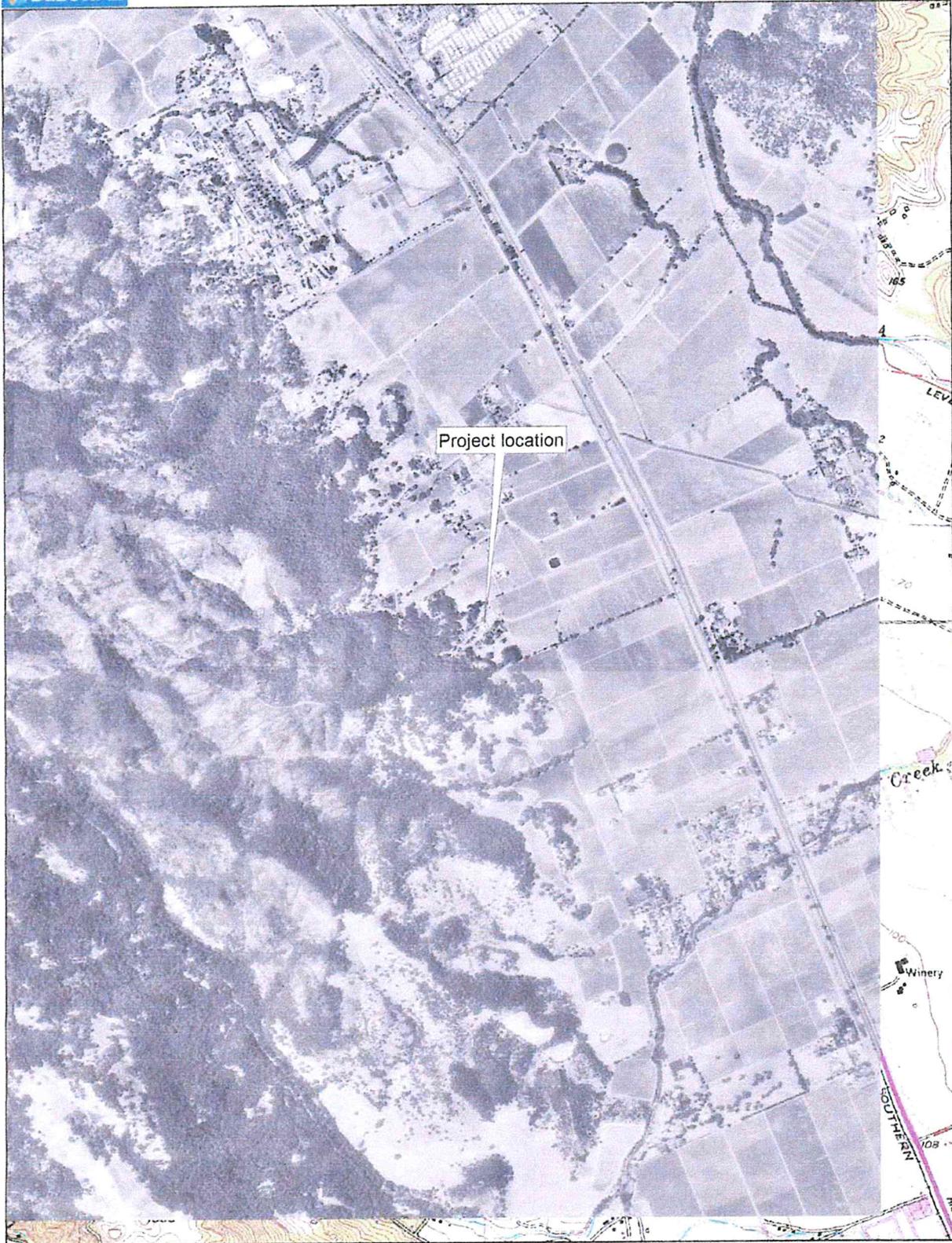
<i>Masterowl</i>	<i>Subspecies</i>	<i>LatDD NAD83</i>	<i>LonDD NAD83</i>	<i>MTRS</i>	<i>AC Coordinate Source</i>
NAP0016	NORTHERN	38.347983	-122.365383	M 06N 05W 24	Contributor
NAP0031	NORTHERN	38.377688	-122.398209	M 06N 05W 10	Contributor
NAP0038	NORTHERN	38.355946	-122.405716	M 06N 05W 22	Contributor

NAP0016 = 2.03 Miles

NAP0031 = 2.47 Miles

NAP0038 = 3.17 Miles

No known owls
in 1.3 miles
of Project



Project location

Creek

Winery

SOUTHERN

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TN
★
MN (12.8°E)
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Scale 1 : 24,000

