

KJELDSSEN BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING
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June 30, 2011

To: Conservation Division Napa Co. CDPD
1195 Third St., Suite 210
Napa, CA 94559

Attention: Suzie Gambill
Email suzie.gambill@countyofnapa.org

Re: Native Grassland Survey- Proposed Access Road
Menaged Residence APN 031-050-073
7830 Silverado Trail
Napa, CA

Introduction

At the request of Garry Raugh we conducted a survey of the west end of the proposed road alignment to determine if there would be any impacts to sensitive native grassland habitat. See Plate I for location.

The project site is located in the hills above the Napa Valley on the east side of Silverado Trail. Site access is via a paved private road. The proposed access road extends upslope through chaparral see Plate II Survey Area. Our study focused on the initial section the proposed the road alignment down slope from an existing deer fence.

Methods

The site was walked and photographs taken with a Nikon Digital camera. Field notes were taken on the vegetation present. Our study was conducted in the morning of June 27, 2011.

Napa County Baseline maps the lower portion of the proposed access road as California Annual Grasslands Alliance [4] (creeping ryegrass, purple needlegrass*, and one-sided bluegrass; grasslands and wildflower field).



Figure 1. Study area illustrating the existing conditions and the absence of native grasses.



Figure 2. View of existing vegetation. Non-native grasses present within a disturbed site.

Native Grassland - Napa County Policy CON-17: Preserve and protect native grasslands, serpentine grasslands, mixed serpentine chaparral and other sensitive biotic communities and habitats of limited distribution.

Three grassland assemblages exist within the County: annual grassland, native grassland and serpentine (bunchgrass) grassland. Of these assemblages, both native grassland and serpentine grassland are considered sensitive communities.

Native grasslands are dominated by a mixture of annual and perennial grasses, such as small fescue (*Vulpia microstachys*), purple needlegrass (*Nasella pulchra*), and nodding needlegrass (*Nasella cernua*). These species likely occurred in the County in most areas currently occupied by annual grassland dominated by non-native species (Heady 1988, Wester 1981).

Native grassland is a herbaceous grassland community in which perennial grasses such as purple needlegrass or nodding needlegrass dominant or are co-dominant species (Holland 1986, Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf 1995). In the County, native grassland generally occurs as patches within the larger annual grassland complex. Accordingly, native grassland consists of an abundance of non-native annual grasses mixed with perennial grasses and forbs that are a result of historic land use and fire regime.

Species commonly found associated with native grassland in the County include slender wild oats (*Avena barbata*), one-sided bluegrass (*Poa secunda*), prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*), California golden violet (*Viola pedunculata*), common lomatium (*Lomatium utriculatum*), California poppy, Douglas's lupine (*Lupinus nanus*), notched clover (*Trifolium bifidum*), blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*), ookow (*Dichelostemma congestum*), harvest Brodiaea (*Brodiaea elegans*), smooth tidy tips (*Layia chrysanthemoides*) and arroyo lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*). * The above is quoted from the Napa County Baseline Data Report November 30, 2005.

Findings

- Our surveys found no indications of sensitive native grassland or populations of native grasses on the study area which meet the definition of Native Grass Grassland. There where no species or site conditions which would be considered essential for the support of a species with limited distribution or be considered to be a sensitive natural plant community
- The site has been disturbed (routinely weed wacked) and planted with fruit trees;
- The site is dominated by non-native ruderal "weed" species such as *Avena barbata* (wild oats), *Centaurea melitensis* (Tocalote Napa Star Thistle), *Centaurea solstitialis* (Yellow Star Thistle), *Torilis arvensis* (Hedge-parsley), *Sisymbrium officinalis* (Hedge Mustard) and *Kickxia spuria* (Fluellin); and
- Occasional native grasses are present within openings in the chaparral adjacent to the study site, but these scattered native grasses do not meet the definition of Native Grass Grassland.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at: telephone (707) 544-3091,
Email kjeldsen@sonic.net, or by fax (707) 575-8030.

Sincerely,

Kjeldsen Biological Consulting

Plate I. Site and Location Map

Plate II. Aerial Photo Survey Area

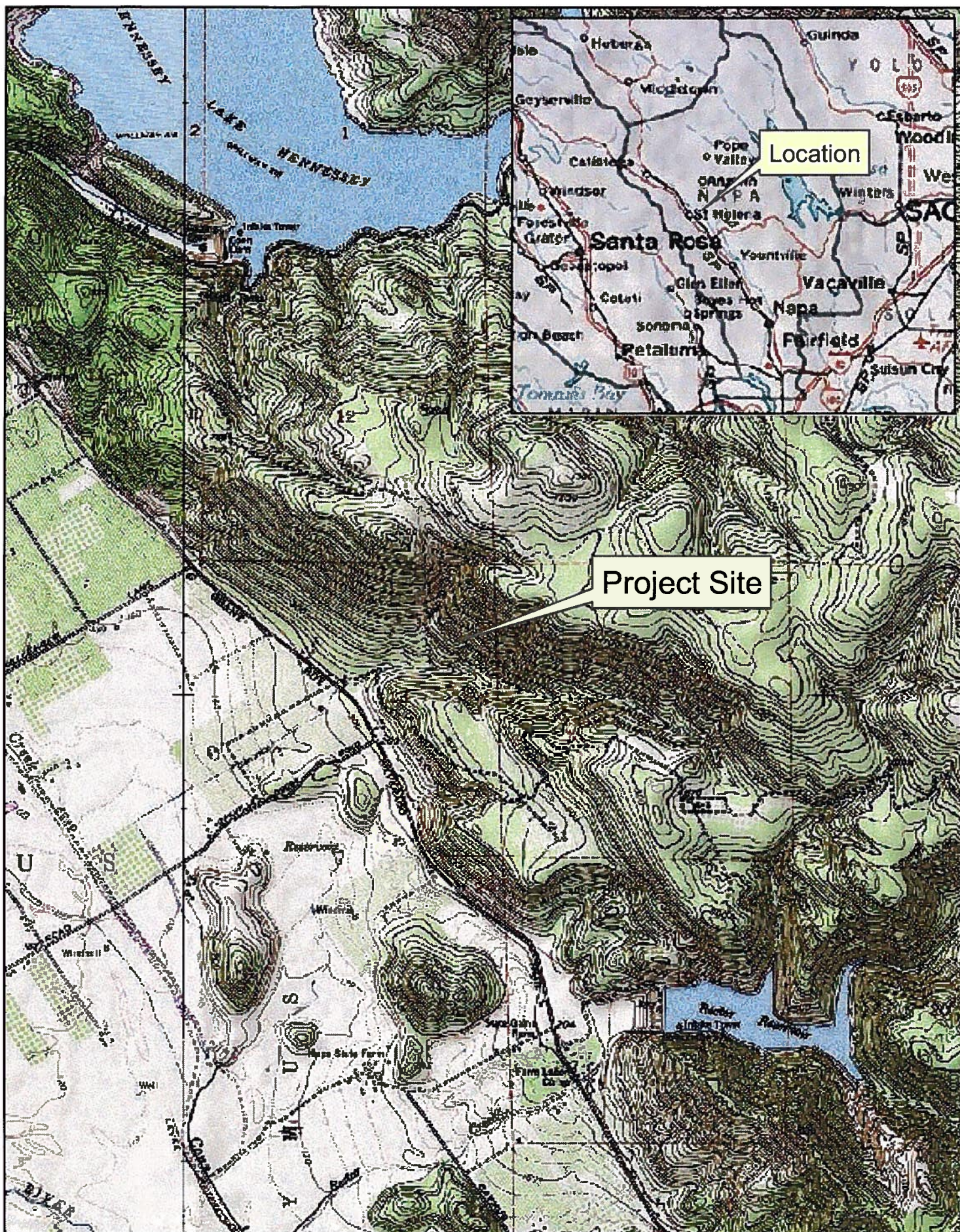


Plate I. Site and Location Map (Yountville Quadrangle)

