



May 25, 2011

Ms. Erin McCarthy
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
6010 Hidden Valley Road
Carlsbad, CA 92011

Subject: 45-Day Report For California Gnatcatcher Surveys
At the Benton Burn Site
City of Escondido, San Diego County, California
URS Project No. 27700025.01000

Dear Ms. McCarthy:

This letter provides the information required for the 45-day follow up report as specified in the conditions of recovery permit TE-101151-1. The information required in conditions 7(a) through 7(h) is presented below.

SURVEY LOCATION

The survey location is shown in maps provided as attachments below. The site is located within the limits of the City of Escondido and partly within an unincorporated area of the County of San Diego, California.

PLANT COMMUNITIES

The site consists primarily of orchards and ornamental plantings. Diegan coastal sage scrub is present (0.05 acre) along the northwestern edge of the site, and is contiguous with a large patch of coastal sage scrub that extends northward. The Diegan sage scrub in and around the project site is dominated by California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), black sage (*Salvia melifera*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*), and flat-topped buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*). Although the subject coastal sage scrub habitat is in relatively pristine condition, the habitat is only considered to be of low to moderate potential for California gnatcatcher occupation. This is due to the predominance of chaparral vegetation in the adjacent naturally vegetated lands.



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SURVEY METHODS

The presence/absence surveys were conducted by Eric “Rick” Bailey. The number of acres surveyed per day was 20. The survey routes meandered through all potential California gnatcatcher habitat. Taped vocalizations were used for about 30 seconds per time at a rate of four times per hour. Dates and conditions from the surveys are listed in the table below.

Date	Time	Sky	Temp	Wind
4/15/11	0700-0900	Sunny	60-65° F	0-3 mph
4/23/11	0650-0820	Overcast	58-61° F	0-2 mph
4/30/11	0650-0820	Sunny	60-64° F	1-3 mph

CALIFORNIA GNATCATCHER AND BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD DETECTED

California gnatcatcher was absent from the site, and no brown-headed cowbird were detected during the surveys.

APN

The Assessor’s Parcel Numbers of the site parcels surveyed are 224-190-36 and 224-163-42.

GPS COORDINATES

No coordinates are provided since California gnatcatcher was absent from the site.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The site is not currently occupied by California gnatcatcher. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed Designated Critical Habitat (DCH) area of the California gnatcatcher on December 19, 2007. The survey area is not included within the DCH. The habitat onsite is of low to moderate quality for gnatcatcher, and represents a very small amount (0.05 acre). Mitigation for the loss of Diegan coastal sage scrub from the site is recommended, as the survey area has some potential to provide breeding habitat for California gnatcatcher in the future.

OTHER PERTINENT OBSERVATIONS

No sensitive or declining plant or animal species were observed onsite.



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I certify that the information in this survey report and attached exhibits fully and accurately represents my work. If you have any questions about these surveys, please contact me at 760.518.5637.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eric A. Bailey".

Eric "Rick" Bailey
Wildlife Biologist TE-101151-1

ERB:ml



