



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office
2493 Portola Road, Suite B
Ventura, California 93003



IN REPLY REFER TO:
2009-SL-0505

October 5, 2009

Craig Cooper, Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
75 Hawthorne Street (SFD-8-1)
San Francisco, California 94105

Subject: Species List for Area IV and Undeveloped Areas of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory, Ventura County, California

Dear Mr. Cooper:

We are responding to a request made by Stephe Jennings on your behalf and received by electronic mail on September 16, 2009, for information on endangered and threatened species that may occur at or near Area IV and two adjacent undeveloped areas of Santa Susana Field Lab (SSFL). The SSFL was developed as a remote site to test rocket engines and conduct nuclear research, and is comprised of four administrative areas and two undeveloped land areas. Area IV of the SSFL was the site of nuclear energy research that led to the contamination of the area. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is preparing to conduct a radiological characterization study of Area IV and the two undeveloped areas. We understand that the EPA is the lead federal agency for this project, and that it would assume responsibility under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act).

The enclosed list of species fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7(c) of the Act. The EPA, as the lead federal agency for the project, has the responsibility to review its proposed activities and determine whether listed species may be affected. If the EPA determines that a listed species or critical habitat is likely to be adversely affected, it should request, in writing through our office, formal consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act. Informal consultation may be used to exchange information and resolve conflicts with respect to threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat prior to a written request for formal consultation. During this review process, the EPA may engage in planning efforts but may not make any irreversible commitment of resources. Such a commitment could constitute a violation of section 7(d) of the Act.

Only listed species receive protection under the Act; however, sensitive species should be considered in the planning process in the event they become listed or proposed for listing prior to project completion. We recommend that you review information in the California Department of Fish and Game's Natural Diversity Data Base. You can contact the California Department of Fish and Game at (916) 324-3812 for information on other sensitive species that may occur in this area.

Craig Cooper

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Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Jenny Marek or Mark Elvin of our staff at (805) 644-1766, extensions 325 and 258 respectively.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Dellith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" and last name "Dellith" clearly distinguishable.

Chris Dellith
Senior Biologist

cc: Mary Meyer, California Department of Fish and Game
Stephie Jennings, Department of Energy

**LISTED SPECIES WHICH MAY OCCUR
NEAR THE SANTA SUSANA FIELD LAB,
VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

Plants

Braunton's milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus brauntonii</i>	E, CH
Lyon's pentachaeta	<i>Pentachaeta lyonii</i>	E
Spreading navarretia	<i>Navarretia fossalis</i>	T
Conejo dudleya	<i>Dudleya abramsii</i> ssp. <i>parva</i> [<i>Dudleya parva</i>]	T
Santa Monica Mountains dudleya	<i>Dudleya cymosa</i> ssp. <i>ovatifolia</i> [inclusive of <i>Dudleya cymosa</i> ssp. <i>agourensis</i>]	T
Marcescent dudleya	<i>Dudleya cymosa</i> ssp. <i>marcescens</i>	T
San Fernando Valley spineflower	<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>fernandina</i>	C

Birds

Coastal California gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>	T
Least Bell's vireo	<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	E
California condor	<i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>	E

Amphibians

California red-legged frog	<i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>	T
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Invertebrates

Quino checkerspot butterfly	<i>Euphydryas editha quino</i>	E
Listed vernal pool branchiopod species (e.g. <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>)		T

Key:

- E – Endangered
- T – Threatened
- C – Candidate
- CH – Critical Habitat