CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR

Application No.: 4-14-0544

Applicant: Gayle Pepper

Agent: Steven J. Reves and Charles Santos c/o Santos Planning &

Permitting

Location: 25080 Mulholland Hwy, Santa Monica Mountains, Los

Angeles County (APN 4455-018-027)

Project Description: Construction of a 5,005 sq. ft., 24.5 ft. high from existing

grade single family residence with 640 sq. ft. attached garage, septic system, and 1,850 cu. yds. of grading (1,180 cu. yds. cut

and 670 cu. yds. fill.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the proposed development with

twelve (12) special conditions. The standard of review for the proposed project is the Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal

Program.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **approval** of the proposed coastal development permit with twelve (12) special conditions regarding: 1) plans conforming to geotechnical engineer's recommendations, 2) assumption of risk, 3) permanent drainage and polluted runoff control plan, 4) interim erosion control plans and construction responsibilities, 5) Landscaping and fuel modification plans, 6) structural appearances, 7) lighting restriction, 8) future development restriction, 9) deed restriction, 10) habitat impact mitigation, 11) open space conservation easement, and 12) removal of natural vegetation.

The standard of review for the proposed development is the policies and provisions of the certified Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program (LCP). As conditioned, the proposed project is

consistent with all applicable policies of the Santa Monica Mountains LCP. Following is a summary of the main issues raised by the project and how they are resolved by staff's recommendation:

The proposed structure will be visible from public viewing areas and will adversely impact visual resources. There are no siting alternatives that would avoid or reduce visual impacts. The proposed size and maximum height of the residence will be consistent with the character of other development in the immediate area as well as the maximum height and size of structures allowed by the policies and provisions of the LCP. The project is conditioned to incorporate mitigation measures including landscaping, future improvements restriction, and a color restriction to minimize the visual resource impacts of the residence.

The proposed development of the site, including the addition of impervious surfaces and the use of the site for residential uses has the potential to adversely impact water quality within the Cold Creek watershed, a significant watershed within the Santa Monica Mountains. The project is conditioned to require interim erosion control measures during construction, to implement a permanent drainage and polluted runoff plan, and to landscape all graded or disturbed areas.

The project site contains habitat that meets the LCP definition of "H2" habitat which is a subcategory of SERA and the project will have adverse impacts on SERA. The proposed residence is not a resource dependent use, but will be approved to permit the applicant a reasonable economic use of the property. The structure(s) is sited to minimize significant disruption of habitat values and the building site conforms to the maximum allowable building site area of 10,000 square feet. The project is conditioned to require the grant of an open space easement in order to ensure that the remaining SERA on the site will be preserved. Mitigation is required for the loss of SERA due to the development and the required fuel modification around structures.

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EXHIBITS

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Exhibit 2 – Site Plan

Exhibit 3 – SMM Biological Resources

Exhibit 4 – Site Plan

Exhibit 5 – Building Plans Exhibit 6 – Cross Sections

Exhibit 7 – Elevations

Exhibit 8 – Open Space Area

I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

Motion:

I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit Application No. 4-14-0544 pursuant to the staff recommendation.

Staff recommends a YES vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of the permit as conditioned and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

Resolution:

The Commission hereby approves a coastal development permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of the Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

II. STANDARD CONDITIONS:

This permit is granted subject to the following standard conditions:

- 1. **Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment**. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
- 2. **Expiration.** If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date on which the Commission voted on the application. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
- 3. **Interpretation.** Any questions of intent of interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
- 4. **Assignment.** The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.

5. **Terms and Conditions Run with the Land.** These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS:

This permit is granted subject to the following special conditions:

1. Plans Conforming to Geotechnical Engineer's Recommendations

By acceptance of this permit, the applicant agrees to comply with the recommendations contained in all of the geology, geotechnical, and/or soils reports referenced as Substantive File Documents. These recommendations, including recommendations concerning foundations, sewage disposal, and drainage, shall be incorporated into all final design and construction plans, which must be reviewed and approved by the consultant prior to commencement of development.

The final plans approved by the consultant shall be in substantial conformance with the plans approved by the Commission relative to construction, grading, and drainage. Any substantial changes in the proposed development approved by the Commission that may be required by the consultant shall require amendment(s) to the permit(s) or new Coastal Development Permit(s).

2. Assumption of Risk, Waiver of Liability and Indemnity

By acceptance of this permit, the applicants acknowledges and agrees (i) that the site may be subject to hazards from erosion, liquefaction, waves, flooding, tsunami, and sea level rise; (ii) to assume the risks to the applicant and the property that is the subject of this permit of injury and damage from such hazards in connection with this permitted development; (iii) to unconditionally waive any claim of damage or liability against the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees for injury or damage from such hazards; and (iv) to indemnify and hold harmless the Commission, its officers, agents, and employees with respect to the Commission's approval of the project against any and all liability, claims, demands, damages, costs (including costs and fees incurred in defense of such claims), expenses, and amounts paid in settlement arising from any injury or damage due to such hazards.

3. Permanent Drainage and Polluted Runoff Control Plan

- A. PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director, two (2) copies of a final Drainage and Runoff Control Plan for the post-construction project site, prepared by a qualified licensed professional. The Plan shall include detailed drainage and runoff control plans with supporting calculations. The plans shall incorporate long-term post-construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) that protect water quality and minimize increases in runoff volume and rate in the project design of developments in the following order of priority:
- a. Site Design BMPs: Project design features that reduce the creation or severity of potential pollutant sources, or reduce the alteration of the project site's natural stormwater flow regime.

Examples are minimizing impervious surfaces, preserving native vegetation, and minimizing grading.

- b. Source Control BMPs: Methods that reduce potential pollutants at their sources and/or avoid entrainment of pollutants in runoff, including schedules of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, managerial practices, or operational practices. Examples are covering outdoor storage areas, use of efficient irrigation, and minimizing the use of landscaping chemicals.
- c. Treatment Control BMPs: Systems designed to remove pollutants from stormwater, by gravity settling of particulate pollutants, filtration, biological uptake, media adsorption, or any other physical, biological, or chemical process. Examples are vegetated swales, detention basins, and storm drain inlet filters. Where post-construction treatment of stormwater runoff is required, treatment control BMPs (or suites of BMPs) shall, at a minimum, be sized and designed to treat, infiltrate, or filter stormwater runoff from each storm event, up to and including the 85th percentile, 24-hour storm event for volume-based BMPs, or the 85th percentile, 1-hour storm event (with an appropriate safety factor of 2 or greater) for flow-based BMPs.

The qualified licensed professional shall certify in writing that the final Drainage and Runoff Control Plan is in substantial conformance with the following minimum requirements:

- (1) Projects shall incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in order to minimize stormwater quality and quantity impacts from development, unless a credible and compelling explanation is provided as to why such features are not feasible and/or appropriate. LID strategies use small-scale integrated and distributed management practices, including minimizing impervious surfaces, infiltrating stormwater close to its source, and preservation of permeable soils and native vegetation.
- (2) Post-development runoff rates from the site shall be maintained at levels similar to predevelopment conditions.
- (3) Selected BMPs shall consist, or primarily consist, of site design elements and/or landscape based systems or features that serve to maintain site permeability, avoid directly connected impervious area and/or retain, infiltrate, or filter runoff from rooftops, driveways and other hardscape areas, where feasible. Examples of such features include but are not limited to porous pavement, pavers, rain gardens, vegetated swales, infiltration trenches, cisterns.
- (4) Landscape plants shall have low water and chemical treatment demands and be consistent with **Special Condition 5**, **Landscaping and Fuel Modification Plans**. An efficient irrigation system designed based on hydrozones and utilizing drip emitters or micro-sprays or other efficient design shall be utilized for any landscaping requiring water application.
- (5) All slopes shall be stabilized in accordance with provisions contained in the Landscaping and/or Interim Erosion and Sediment Control Condition for this Coastal Development Permit and, if applicable, in accordance with engineered plans prepared by a qualified licensed professional.
- (6) Runoff shall be discharged from the developed site in a non-erosive manner. Energy dissipating measures shall be installed where needed to prevent erosion. Plan details and cross sections for any rock rip-rap and/or other energy dissipating devices or structures associated with the drainage system shall be prepared by a qualified licensed professional. The drainage plans shall specify, the location, dimensions, cubic yards of rock, etc. for the any velocity reducing structure with the supporting calculations showing the sizing

- requirements and how the device meets those sizing requirements. The qualified, licensed professional shall ensure that all energy dissipaters use the minimum amount of rock and/or other hardscape necessary to protect the site from erosion.
- (7) All BMPs shall be operated, monitored, and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications where applicable, or in accordance with well recognized technical specifications appropriate to the BMP for the life of the project and at a minimum, all structural BMPs shall be inspected, cleaned-out, and where necessary, repaired prior to the onset of the storm season (October 15th each year) and at regular intervals as necessary between October 15th and April 15th of each year. Debris and other water pollutants removed from structural BMP(s) during clean-out shall be contained and disposed of in a proper manner.
- (8) For projects located on a hillside, slope, or which may otherwise be prone to geologic instability, site drainage and BMP selection shall be developed concurrent with the preliminary development design and grading plan, and final drainage plans shall be approved by a licensed geotechnical engineer or engineering geologist.
- (9) Should any of the project's surface or subsurface drainage/filtration structures or other BMPs fail or result in increased erosion, the applicant/landowner or successor-in-interest shall be responsible for any necessary repairs to the drainage/filtration system or BMPs and restoration of the affected area. Should repairs or restoration become necessary, prior to the commencement of such repair or restoration work, the applicant shall submit a repair and restoration plan to the Executive Director to determine if an amendment or new coastal development permit is required to authorize such work.
- B. The final Drainage and Runoff Control Plan shall be in conformance with the site/ development plans approved by the Coastal Commission. Any necessary changes to the Coastal Commission approved site/development plans required by a qualified, licensed professional shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the Coastal Commission approved final site/development plans shall occur without an amendment to the coastal development permit, unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

4. Interim Erosion Control Plans and Construction Responsibilities

A. PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director an Interim Erosion Control and Construction Best Management Practices Plan, prepared by a qualified, licensed professional. The qualified, licensed professional shall certify in writing that the Interim Erosion Control and Construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) plan are in conformance with the following requirements:

1. Erosion Control Plan

(a) The plan shall delineate the areas to be disturbed by grading or construction activities and shall include any temporary access roads, staging areas and stockpile areas. The natural areas on the site shall be clearly delineated on the plan and on-site with fencing or survey flags.

- (b) Include a narrative report describing all temporary run-off and erosion control measures to be used during construction.
- (c) The plan shall identify and delineate on a site or grading plan the locations of all temporary erosion control measures.
- (d) The plan shall specify that grading shall take place only during the dry season (April 1 October 31). This period may be extended for a limited period of time if the situation warrants such a limited extension, if approved by the Executive Director. The applicant shall install or construct temporary sediment basins (including debris basins, desilting basins, or silt traps), temporary drains and swales, sand bag barriers, silt fencing, and shall stabilize any stockpiled fill with geofabric covers or other appropriate cover, install geotextiles or mats on all cut or fill slopes, and close and stabilize open trenches as soon as possible. Basins shall be sized to handle not less than a 10 year, 6 hour duration rainfall intensity event.
- (e) The erosion control measures shall be required on the project site prior to or concurrent with the initial grading operations and maintained throughout the development process to minimize erosion and sediment from runoff waters during construction. All sediment should be retained on-site, unless removed to an appropriate, approved dumping location either outside of the coastal zone or within the coastal zone to a site permitted to receive fill.
- (f) The plan shall also include temporary erosion control measures should grading or site preparation cease for a period of more than 30 days, including but not limited to: stabilization of all stockpiled fill, access roads, disturbed soils and cut and fill slopes with geotextiles and/or mats, sand bag barriers, silt fencing; temporary drains and swales and sediment basins. The plans shall also specify that all disturbed areas shall be seeded with native grass species and include the technical specifications for seeding the disturbed areas. These temporary erosion control measures shall be monitored and maintained until grading or construction operations resume.
- (g) All temporary, construction related erosion control materials shall be comprised of biodegradable materials (natural fiber, not photo-degradable plastics) and must be removed when permanent erosion control measures are in place. Bio-degradable erosion control materials may be left in place if they have been incorporated into the permanent landscaping design.

2. Construction Best Management Practices

- (a) No demolition or construction materials, debris, or waste shall be placed or stored where it may enter sensitive habitat, receiving waters or a storm drain, or be subject to wave, wind, rain, or tidal erosion and dispersion.
- (b) No demolition or construction equipment, materials, or activity shall be placed in or occur in any location that would result in impacts to environmentally sensitive habitat areas, streams, wetlands or their buffers.
- (c) Any and all debris resulting from demolition or construction activities shall be removed from the project site within 24 hours of completion of the project.

- (d) Demolition or construction debris and sediment shall be removed from work areas each day that demolition or construction occurs to prevent the accumulation of sediment and other debris that may be discharged into coastal waters.
- (e) All trash and debris shall be disposed in the proper trash and recycling receptacles at the end of every construction day.
- (f) The applicant shall provide adequate disposal facilities for solid waste, including excess concrete, produced during demolition or construction.
- (g) Debris shall be disposed of at a permitted disposal site or recycled at a permitted recycling facility. If the disposal site is located in the coastal zone, a coastal development permit or an amendment to this permit shall be required before disposal can take place unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment or new permit is legally required.
- (h) All stock piles and construction materials shall be covered, enclosed on all sides, shall be located as far away as possible from drain inlets and any waterway, and shall not be stored in contact with the soil.
- (i) Machinery and equipment shall be maintained and washed in confined areas specifically designed to control runoff. Thinners or solvents shall not be discharged into sanitary or storm sewer systems.
- (i) The discharge of any hazardous materials into any receiving waters shall be prohibited.
- (k) Spill prevention and control measures shall be implemented to ensure the proper handling and storage of petroleum products and other construction materials. Measures shall include a designated fueling and vehicle maintenance area with appropriate berms and protection to prevent any spillage of gasoline or related petroleum products or contact with runoff. The area shall be located as far away from the receiving waters and storm drain inlets as possible.
- (l) Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Good Housekeeping Practices (GHPs) designed to prevent spillage and/or runoff of demolition or construction-related materials, and to contain sediment or contaminants associated with demolition or construction activity, shall be implemented prior to the on-set of such activity
- (m) All BMPs shall be maintained in a functional condition throughout the duration of construction activity.
- B. The final Interim Erosion Control and Construction Best Management Practices Plan shall be in conformance with the site/ development plans approved by the Coastal Commission. Any necessary changes to the Coastal Commission approved site/development plans required by a qualified, licensed professional shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the Coastal Commission approved final site/development plans shall occur without an amendment to the coastal development permit, unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.

5. Landscaping and Fuel Modification Plans

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit two sets of landscaping and fuel modification plans, prepared by a licensed landscape

architect or a qualified resource specialist. The consulting landscape architect or qualified landscape professional shall certify in writing that the final Landscape and Fuel Modification plans are in conformance with the following requirements:

A) Landscaping Plan

- (1) All graded & disturbed areas on the subject site shall be planted and maintained for erosion control purposes within thirty (30) days of receipt of the certificate of occupancy for the residence. To minimize the need for irrigation all landscaping shall consist primarily of native/drought resistant plants, as listed by the California Native Plant Society, Santa Monica Mountains Chapter, in their document entitled Recommended List of Plants for Landscaping in the Santa Monica Mountains, dated February 5, 1996. All native plant species shall be of local genetic stock. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society (http://www.CNPS.org/), the California Invasive Plant Council (formerly the California Exotic Pest Plant Council) (http://www.calipc.org/), or as may be identified from time to time by the State of California shall be employed or allowed to naturalize or persist on the site. No plant species listed as a "noxious weed" by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized within the property.
- (2) All cut and fill slopes shall be stabilized with planting at the completion of final grading. Planting should be of native plant species indigenous to the Santa Monica Mountains using accepted planting procedures, consistent with fire safety requirements. All native plant species shall be of local genetic stock. Such planting shall be adequate to provide 90 percent coverage within two (2) years, and this requirement shall apply to all disturbed soils;
- (3) Plantings will be maintained in good growing condition throughout the life of the project and, whenever necessary, shall be replaced with new plant materials to ensure continued compliance with applicable landscape requirements;
- (4) Rodenticides containing any anticoagulant compounds (including, but not limited to, Warfarin, Brodifacoum, Bromadiolone or Diphacinone) shall not be used.

B) Fuel Modification Plans

Vegetation within 20 feet of the proposed house may be removed to mineral earth, vegetation within a 200-foot radius of the main structure may be selectively thinned in order to reduce fire hazard. However, such thinning shall only occur in accordance with an approved long-term fuel modification plan submitted pursuant to this special condition. The fuel modification plan shall include details regarding the types, sizes and location of plant materials to be removed, and how often thinning is to occur. In addition, the applicant shall submit evidence that the fuel modification plan has been reviewed and approved by the Forestry Department of Los Angeles County. Irrigated lawn, turf and ground cover planted within the twenty foot radius of the proposed house shall be selected from the most drought tolerant species or subspecies, or varieties suited to the Mediterranean climate of the Santa Monica Mountains.

C) Conformance with Coastal Commission Approved Site/Development Plans

The Permittee shall undertake development in accordance with the final Landscape and Fuel Modification Plans. The final Landscape and Fuel Modification Plans shall be in conformance with the site/development plans approved by the Coastal Commission. Any changes to the Coastal Commission approved site/development plans shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the Coastal Commission approved final site/development plans shall occur without an amendment to the coastal development permit, unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is legally required.

D) Monitoring

Three years from the date of the receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy for the residence the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director, a landscape monitoring report, prepared by a licensed Landscape Architect or qualified Resource Specialist, that certifies the on-site landscaping is in conformance with the landscape plan approved pursuant to this Special Condition. The monitoring report shall include photographic documentation of plant species and plant coverage.

If the landscape monitoring report indicates the landscaping is not in conformance with or has failed to meet the requirements specified in this condition, the applicant, or successors in interest, shall submit, within 30 days of the date of the monitoring report, a revised or supplemental landscape plan, certified by a licensed Landscape Architect or a qualified Resource Specialist, that specifies additional or supplemental landscaping measures to remediate those portions of the original plan that have failed or are not in conformance with the original approved plan. This remedial landscaping plan shall be implemented within 30 days of the date of the final supplemental landscaping plan and remedial measures shall be repeated as necessary to meet the requirements of this condition.

6. Structural Appearance

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a color palette and material specifications for the outer surface of all structures authorized by the approval of this Coastal Development Permit. The palette samples shall be presented in a format not to exceed 8½" x 11" x ½" in size. The palette shall include the colors proposed for the roofs, trims, exterior surfaces, driveways, retaining walls, and other structures authorized by this permit. Acceptable colors shall be limited to colors compatible with the surrounding environment (earth tones) including shades of green, brown and gray with no white or light shades and no bright tones. All windows shall be comprised of non-glare glass.

The approved structures shall be colored with only the colors and window materials authorized pursuant to this special condition. Alternative colors or materials for future repainting or resurfacing or new windows may only be applied to the structures authorized by this Coastal Development Permit if such changes are specifically authorized by the Executive Director as complying with this special condition.

7. Lighting Restriction

- A. The only outdoor night lighting allowed on the subject parcel is limited to the following:
- (1) The minimum necessary to light walkways used for entry and exit to the structures, including parking areas on the site. This lighting shall be limited to fixtures that do not exceed two feet in height above finished grade, are directed downward and generate the same or less lumens equivalent to those generated by a 60 watt incandescent bulb, unless a greater number of lumens is authorized by the Executive Director.
- (2) Security lighting attached to the residence and garage shall be controlled by motion detectors and is limited to same or less lumens equivalent to those generated by a 60-watt incandescent bulb.
- (3) The minimum necessary to light the entry area to the driveway with the same or less lumens equivalent to those generated by a 60-watt incandescent bulb.
- B. No lighting around the perimeter of the site and no lighting for aesthetic purposes is allowed.

8. Future Development Restriction

This permit is only for the development described in this Coastal Development Permit. Pursuant to Title 14 California Code of Regulations section 13250(b)(6), the exemptions otherwise provided in Public Resources Code section 30610(a) shall not apply to the development governed by this Coastal Development Permit. Accordingly, any future structures, future improvements, or change of use to the permitted structures authorized by this permit, including but not limited to, any grading, clearing or other disturbance of vegetation other than as provided for in the approved landscape plan prepared pursuant to **Special Condition 5**, **Landscaping and Fuel Modification Plans**, shall require an amendment to this Coastal Development Permit from the Commission or shall require an additional coastal development permit from the Commission or from the applicable certified local government.

9. Deed Restriction

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director for review and approval documentation demonstrating that the applicant has executed and recorded against the parcel(s) governed by this permit a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director: (1) indicating that, pursuant to this permit, the California Coastal Commission has authorized development on the subject property, subject to terms and conditions that restrict the use and enjoyment of that property; and (2) imposing the Special Conditions of this permit as covenants, conditions and restrictions on the use and enjoyment of the Property. The deed restriction shall include a legal description of the entire parcel or parcels governed by this permit. The deed restriction shall also indicate that, in the event of an extinguishment or termination of the deed restriction for any reason, the terms and conditions of this permit shall continue to restrict the use and enjoyment of the subject property so long as either this permit or the development it authorizes, or any part, modification, or amendment thereof, remains in existence on or with respect to the subject property.

10. Habitat Impact Mitigation

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a map delineating all areas of chaparral and mixed chaparral habitat (Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas - SERAs) that will be disturbed by the proposed development, including fuel modification and brush clearance requirements on the project site and adjacent property. The chaparral and coastal sage scrub SERA areas on the site and adjacent property shall be delineated on a detailed map, to scale, illustrating the subject parcel boundaries and, if the fuel modification/brush clearance zones extend onto adjacent property, adjacent parcel boundaries. The delineation map shall indicate the total acreage for all chaparral and coastal sage scrub SERA, both on and offsite that will be impacted by the proposed development, including the fuel modification/brush clearance areas. A 200-foot clearance zone from the proposed structures shall be used to determine the extent of off-site brush clearance for fire protection purposes. The delineation shall be prepared by a qualified resource specialist or biologist familiar with the ecology of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Mitigation shall be provided for impacts to the chaparral SERA from the proposed development and fuel modification/brush clearance requirements by <u>one</u> of the three following habitat mitigation methods:

A. Habitat Restoration

1) Habitat Restoration Plan

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit a habitat restoration plan, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, for an area of degraded chaparral habitat equivalent to the area of chaparral ESHA impacted by the proposed development and fuel modification/brush clearance area. The habitat restoration area may either be onsite or offsite within the coastal zone either in the City of Malibu or elsewhere in the Santa Monica Mountains. The habitat restoration area shall be delineated on a detailed site plan, to scale, that illustrates the parcel boundaries and topographic contours of the site. The habitat restoration plan shall be prepared by a qualified resource specialist or biologist familiar with the ecology of the Santa Monica Mountains and shall be designed to restore the area in question for habitat function, species diversity and vegetation cover. The restoration plan shall include a statement of goals and performance standards, revegetation and restoration methodology, and maintenance and monitoring provisions. If the restoration site is offsite, the applicant shall submit written evidence to the Executive Director that the property owner has irrevocably agreed to allow the restoration work, maintenance and monitoring required by this condition and not to disturb any native vegetation in the restoration area.

The applicant shall submit, on an annual basis for five years, a written report, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, prepared by a qualified resource specialist, evaluating compliance with the performance standards outlined in the restoration plan and describing the revegetation, maintenance and monitoring that was conducted during the prior year. The annual report shall include recommendations for mid-course corrective

measures. At the end of the five-year period, a final detailed report shall be submitted for the review and approval of the Executive Director. If this report indicates that the restoration project has been, in part or in whole, unsuccessful, based on the approved goals and performance standards, the applicant shall submit a revised or supplemental restoration plan with maintenance and monitoring provisions, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, to compensate for those portions of the original restoration plan that were not successful. Should supplemental restoration be required, the applicant shall submit, on an annual basis for five years, a written report, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, prepared by a qualified resource specialist, evaluating the supplemental restoration areas. At the end of the five-year period, a final report shall be submitted evaluating whether the supplemental restoration plan has achieved compliance with the goals and performance standards for the restoration area. If the goals and performance standards are not met within 10 years, the applicant shall submit an application for an amendment to the coastal development permit for an alternative mitigation program and shall implement whatever alternative mitigation program the Commission approves, as approved.

The habitat restoration work approved in the restoration plan shall be carried out prior to occupancy of the residence.

2) Open Space Deed Restriction

No development, as defined in section 30106 of the Coastal Act, shall occur in the habitat restoration area, as shown on the habitat restoration site plan required pursuant to (A)(1) above.

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit evidence that the applicant has executed and recorded a deed restriction (if the applicant is not the owner, then the applicant shall submit evidence that the owner has executed and recorded the deed restriction), in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, reflecting the above restriction on development and designating the habitat restoration area as open space. The deed restriction shall include a graphic depiction and narrative legal descriptions of both the parcel on which the restoration area lies and the open space area/habitat restoration area. The deed restriction shall run with the land, binding all successors and assigns, and shall be recorded free of prior liens that the Executive Director determines may affect the enforceability of the restriction. This deed restriction shall not be removed or changed without a Commission amendment to this coastal development permit.

3) Performance Bond

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall post performance bonds to guarantee implementation of the restoration plan as follows: a) one equal to the value of the labor and materials; and b) one equal to the value of the maintenance and monitoring for a period of 5 years. Each performance bond shall be released upon satisfactory completion of items (a) and (b) above. If the applicant fails to

either restore or maintain and monitor according to the approved plans, the Coastal Commission may collect the security and complete the work on the property.

B. Habitat Conservation

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall (or, if the applicant is not the owner of the habitat conservation site, then the owner of the habitat conservation site shall) execute and record an open space deed restriction in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, over the entirety of a legal parcel or parcels containing chaparral ESHA. The chaparral ESHA located on the mitigation parcel or parcels must be of equal or greater area than the ESHA area impacted by the proposed development, including the fuel modification/brush clearance areas. No development, as defined in section 30106 of the Coastal Act, shall occur on the mitigation parcel(s) and the parcel(s) shall be preserved as permanent open space. The deed restriction shall include a graphic depiction and narrative legal descriptions of the parcel or parcels. The deed restriction shall run with the land, binding all successors and assigns, and shall be recorded free of prior liens that the Executive Director determines may affect the enforceability of the restriction.

Prior to occupancy of the residence, the applicant shall submit evidence, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, that the recorded documents have been reflected in the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Records.

If the mitigation parcel(s) is/are larger in size than the impacted habitat area, the excess acreage may be used to provide habitat impact mitigation for other development projects that impact like ESHA.

C. Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall submit evidence, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, that compensatory mitigation, in the form of an in-lieu fee, has been paid to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to mitigate adverse impacts to chaparral habitat ESHA. The fee shall be calculated as follows:

1. Development Area, Irrigated Fuel Modification Zones, Off-site Brush Clearance

The payment for these areas shall be \$15,500 per acre within the development area, any required irrigated fuel modification zones, and required off-site brush clearance areas (assuming a 200-foot radius from all structures). The total acreage shall be based on the map delineating these areas required by this condition.

2. Non-irrigated Fuel Modification Zones

The in-lieu fee for non-irrigated fuel modification areas (on-site) shall be \$3,900 per acre. The total acreage shall be based on the map delineating these areas required by this condition.

Prior to the payment of any in-lieu fee to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, the calculation of the in-lieu fee required to mitigate adverse impacts to chaparral habitat in accordance with this condition. After review and approval of the fee calculation, the fee shall be paid to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority's Coastal Habitat Impact Mitigation Fund for the acquisition, permanent preservation or restoration of habitat in the Santa Monica Mountains coastal zone, with priority given to the acquisition of or extinguishment of all development potential on properties containing environmentally sensitive habitat areas and properties adjacent to public parklands. The fee may not be used to restore areas where development occurred in violation of the Coastal Act's permit requirements.

11. Open Space Conservation Easement.

- A. No development, as defined in Section 30106 of the Coastal Act, grazing, or agricultural activities shall occur outside of the approved building site, within the portion of the property identified as the "open space conservation easement area", as shown in Exhibit 8 except for:
- (1) Fuel modification required by the Los Angeles County Fire Department undertaken in accordance with the final approved fuel modification plan approved pursuant to **CDP 4-14-0544 Special Condition 5, Landscaping and Fuel Modification Plans**, or other fuel modification plans required and approved by the Commission pursuant to a different CDP(s) issued by the Commission;
- (2) Drainage and polluted runoff control activities required and approved pursuant to:
 - a. The drainage and runoff control plans approved pursuant to **Special Condition 3**, **Permanent Drainage and Runoff Control Plan**; and
 - b. The landscaping and erosion control plans approved pursuant to Special Condition 4, Interim Erosion Control & Construction Best Management Practices Plan, and Special Condition 5, Landscaping and Fuel Modification Plans;
- (3) Planting of native vegetation and other restoration activities, if approved by the Commission as an amendment to this coastal development permit or a new coastal development permit;
- (4) If approved by the Commission as an amendment to this coastal development permit or a new coastal development permit,
 - a. construction and maintenance of public hiking trails; and
 - b. construction and maintenance of roads, trails, and utilities consistent with existing easements.

PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT, the applicant shall execute and record a document in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director, granting to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority ("MRCA") on behalf of the people of the State of California an open space conservation easement over the "open space conservation easement area" described above, for the purpose of habitat protection. The recorded easement document shall include a formal legal description of the

entire property; and a metes and bounds legal description and graphic depiction, prepared by a licensed surveyor, of the open space conservation easement area, as generally shown on **Exhibit 8**. The recorded document shall reflect that no development shall occur within the open space conservation easement area except as otherwise set forth in this permit condition. The grant of easement shall be recorded free of prior liens and encumbrances (other than existing easements for roads, trails, and utilities) which the Executive Director determines may affect the interest being conveyed, and shall run with the land in favor of the MRCA on behalf of the people of the State of California, binding all successors and assigns.

12. Removal of Natural Vegetation

Removal of natural vegetation for the purpose of fuel modification within the 20-foot zone surrounding the proposed structure shall not commence until the local government has issued a building or grading permit for the development approved pursuant to this permit. Vegetation thinning within the 20-200 foot fuel modification zone shall not occur until commencement of construction of the structure approved pursuant to this permit.

IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS:

A. Project Location & Description

The site is located south of Mulholland Highway, just east of Cold Canyon Road. The majority of the parcel is located within the Cold Creek watershed. Topographically, the entire parcel drains into Cold Creek watershed through several small drainages. The applicant proposes to construct a 5,005 sq. ft., 24.5 ft. high from existing grade single family residence with 640 sq. ft. attached garage, septic system, and 1,850 cu. yds. of grading (1,180 cu. yds. cut and 670 cu. yds. fill).

The project site is surrounded by open space and very low-density residential development. Owing to this land use pattern, the rural atmosphere, open spaces, vistas, and large contiguous areas of natural landforms and native vegetation, the area is highly scenic. There are designated public viewing areas in the vicinity of the project that could possibly be affected by the proposed development. The first resource is Mulholland Highway to the north of the development area, which is classified as a State-Designated County Scenic Highway and a Scenic Route by the certified Santa Monica Mountains LUP and provides pristine scenic vistas in the area. Mulholland Highway is also a major coastal access route, not only utilized by local residents, but also heavily used by tourists and visitors to access several public parks and recreation areas located in the surrounding area. Another public viewing area is Cold Creek Canyon, which is recognized as a highly scenic area and given special treatment when evaluating potential impacts caused by new development. Further, there is State Parkland south of the proposed project site and the Backbone Trail crosses this land from east to west. The trail is approximately 1,000 feet higher in elevation than the project site and approximately 5,000 ft. south of the site. As such, the pad and any future residential development will be visible from the park and the Backbone Trail. In addition, the Stunt Ranch Park is located to the southeast of the project site and there will be views of the project site from this park as well.

Parcel Legality

As evidence of lot legality, the applicant submitted a Certificate of Compliance dated February 13, 2003 that states that the subject property is Parcel 4 of Certificate of Exception No. 13842, approved by Los Angeles County on January 25, 1972. The certificate of exception indicates that the parcel was created legally in 1972 through the approval of a "minor land division", which was defined by the County of Los Angeles as: "...any parcel or contiguous parcels of land which are divided for the purpose of transfer of title, sale, lease, or financing, whether present or future, into two, three, or four parcels..." (The minor land division process was in effect in Los Angeles County between September 1967 and March 1972).

B. PAST COMMISSION ACTION

On August 8, 2009, the Commission unanimously approved application 4-08-072 with 13 special conditions for the construction of a 5,005 sq. ft., 26 ft. high from existing grade single family residence with 640 sq. ft. attached garage, septic system, and 3,530 cu. yds. of grading (1,370 yds. cut and 2,160 yds. fill) at 25080 Mulholland Highway, Santa Monica Mountains. The applicant did not apply for a permit extension and the approved permit expired on July 9, 2011. The proposed project in this report is substantially the same project as CDP 4-08-072, which was approved by the Commission on July 8, 2009.

C. WATER QUALITY

The Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program (LCP) contains the following policies related to the protection of water quality:

- CO-2 Site, design, and manage new development and improvements, including but not limited to, landscaping to protect coastal waters from non-point source pollution by minimizing the introduction of pollutants in runoff and minimizing increases in runoff rate and volume. Review new development and improvements for potential degradation of water quality, and ensure that they meet the requirements of the NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit's Low Impact Development (LID) Requirement, included as part of the Local Implementation Program.
- CO-3 To reduce runoff and erosion and provide long-term, post-construction water quality protection in all physical development, prioritize the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in the following order: 1) site design BMPs, 2) source control BMPs, 3) treatment control BMPs. When the combination of site design and source control BMPs is not sufficient to protect water quality, require treatment control BMPs, in addition to site design and source control measures. Design, construct, and maintain any required treatment control BMPs (or suites of BMPs) so that they treat, infiltrate, or filter the amount of storm water runoff produced by all storms up to and including the 85th percentile, 24-hour storm event for volume-based BMPs and/or the 85th percentile, 1-hour storm event (with an appropriate safety factor of 2 or greater) for flow-based BMPs. Prioritize the use of Low Impact Development in project design to preserve the natural hydrologic cycle and minimize increase in storm water or dry weather flows.

- CO-4 Minimize impervious surfaces in new development, especially directly-connected impervious areas. Require redevelopment projects to increase the area of pervious surfaces, where feasible.
- CO-5 Infiltrate development runoff on-site, where feasible, to preserve or restore the natural hydrologic cycle and minimize increases in stormwater or dry weather flows.
- CO-30 Site new OWTS and require them to be designed so that impacts to sensitive environmental resources are minimized, including grading, site disturbance, and the introduction of increased amounts of water. Adequate setbacks and/or buffers shall be required to protect H1 habitat and surface waters from lateral seepage from the sewage effluent dispersal system and, on or adjacent to beaches, to preclude the need for bulkheads, seawalls or revetments to protect the OWTS from coastal erosion, flooding and inundation, initially or as a result of sea level rise.
- CO-76 All new development shall be sited and designed so as to minimize grading, alteration of physical features, and vegetation clearance in order to prevent soil erosion, stream siltation, reduced water percolation, increased runoff, and adverse impacts on plant and animal life and prevent net increases in baseline flows for any receiving water body.
- CO-92 Leachfields shall be located at least 100 feet and seepage pits shall be located at least 150 feet from any stream, as measured from the outer edge of riparian canopy, or from the stream bank where no riparian vegetation is present, and at least 50 feet outside the dripline of existing oak, sycamore, walnut, bay and other native trees. The County shall ensure that new leachfields and seepage pits permitted by the County comply with applicable Water Resources Control Board requirements. The LCP may be updated, pursuant to an LCP amendment that is certified by the Coastal Commission, to reflect new Water Resources Control Board.

In addition, the following certified Santa Monica Mountains Local Implementation Plan (LIP) sections are specifically applicable in this case.

LIP Section 22.44.1340 "Water Resources", in relevant part, states:

A. Water wells, geologic testing, and on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS).

. . .

- 3. New OWTS shall comply with all current County Environmental Health OWTS standards and Water Resources Control Board requirements. Coastal development permit applications for OWTS installation and expansion, where groundwater, nearby surface drainages or slope stability are likely to be adversely impacted as a result of the projected effluent input to the subsurface, shall include a study prepared by a California Certified Engineering Geologist or Registered Geotechnical Engineer that analyzes the cumulative impact of the proposed OWTS on groundwater level, quality of nearby surface drainages, and slope stability...
 - a. New OWTS shall be sited so that impacts to sensitive environmental resources are minimized including grading, site disturbance, and the introduction of increased

amounts of water. To the extent feasible, OWTS shall be sited within the approved building site area and/or the associated irrigated fuel modification zones, and in an area that can be accessed from existing or approved roads for maintenance purposes;

...

E. Where BMPs are required, BMPs shall be selected that have been shown to be effective in reducing the pollutants typically generated by the proposed land use. The selection of the BMPs shall be prioritized in the following order: 1) site design BMPs (e.g., minimizing the project's impervious footprint or using pervious pavements), 2) source control BMPs (e.g., revegetate using a plant palette that has low fertilizer/pesticide requirements), and 3) treatment control BMPs (e.g., use vegetated swales). When the combination of site design and source control BMPs is not sufficient to protect water quality, treatment control BMPs shall be required, in addition to site design and source control measures. The design of BMPs shall be guided by the current edition of the California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA) Stormwater BMP Handbooks, or an equivalent BMP manual that describes the type, location, size, implementation, and maintenance of BMPs suitable to address the pollutants generated by the development, and specific to a climate similar to the Santa Monica Mountains.

...

H. Construction Runoff and Pollution Control Plan (CRPCP) is required for all development projects that involve on-site construction to address the control of construction-phase erosion, sedimentation, and polluted runoff. This plan shall specify the temporary BMPs that will be implemented to minimize erosion and sedimentation during construction, and minimize pollution of runoff by construction chemicals and materials.

I. A Post-Construction Runoff Plan (PCRP) is required for all development that involves on-site construction or changes in land use (e.g., subdivisions of land) if the development has the potential to degrade water quality or increase runoff rates and volume, flow rate, timing, or duration.

The Commission recognizes that new development in the Santa Monica Mountains has the potential to adversely impact coastal water quality and aquatic resources because changes such as the removal of native vegetation, the increase in impervious surfaces, and the introduction of new residential uses cause increases in runoff, erosion, and sedimentation, reductions in groundwater recharge and the introduction of pollutants such as petroleum, cleaning products, pesticides, and other pollutants, as well as effluent from septic systems. LUP Policy CO-2 and CO-76 requires that development is sited and designed to minimize the introduction of pollutants in runoff and minimize increases in runoff rate and volume. To reduce runoff and erosion and provide long-term, post construction water quality protection in all physical development, CO-3 states that the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be employed to the maximum extent practicable to minimize polluted runoff. New development is required to minimize impervious surfaces, convey drainage in a non-erosive manner, and infiltrate runoff on-site, to preserve or restore the natural hydrologic cycle and minimize increases in stormwater or dry weather flows (CO-4 and CO-5).

The proposed development will result in an increase in impervious surfaces, which leads to an increase in the volume and velocity of stormwater runoff that can be expected to leave the site and eventually be discharged to coastal waters, including streams, wetlands, and estuaries. The

pollutants commonly found in runoff associated with residential use can reduce the biological productivity and the quality of such waters and thereby reduce optimum populations of marine organisms and have adverse impacts on human health.

Therefore, in order to minimize the potential for such adverse impacts to water quality and aquatic resources resulting from runoff both during construction and in the post-development stage, LUP Policy CO-3 and LIP Section 22.44.1340 require the incorporation of Best Management Practices designed to control the volume, velocity and pollutant load of stormwater and dry weather flows leaving the developed site, including: 1) site design, source control and/or treatment control measures; 2) implementing erosion sediment control measures during construction and post construction; and 3) revegetating all graded and disturbed areas with primarily native landscaping. In order to ensure that the project drainage, both during and after construction, minimizes impacts to water quality as required by these policies and provisions, the Commission requires **Special**Condition Three (3) and Special Condition Four (4), for the submittal of an interim erosion control plan and a permanent drainage and polluted runoff control plan, both of which incorporate BMPs during the construction and post-development stages of the project. Further, in order to minimize erosion from the site, the Commission finds it necessary to require the applicant to prepare and implement a landscaping plan for all disturbed or graded areas of the site, as detailed in Special Condition Five (5).

Much of the Santa Monica Mountains area is served by onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS). Many of the private systems employ state-of-the-art technology, but some failures have been reported in older systems. Failures of OWTS can adversely impair water quality, human health, biological communities in the surrounding watershed, and other coastal resources. The applicant's geologic consultants have concluded that the site is suitable for the proposed septic system and that there would be no adverse impact to the site or surrounding areas from the use of a septic system. To ensure that the OWTS prevents the introduction of pollutants into coastal waters and protects the overall quality of coastal waters and resources. Policy CO-30 requires that new OWTSs minimize impacts to sensitive resources, including grading, site disturbance and the introduction of increased amounts of water. The proposed septic system will be located within the building site which will avoid additional grading or vegetation removal. Further, consistent with LUP Policy CO-92 and LIP Section 22.44.1340, the proposed seepage pits are located at least 50 feet outside the dripline of existing oak, sycamore, walnut, bay and other native trees. The County of Los Angeles Environmental Health Department has given in-concept approval of the proposed septic system, indicating that it meets the plumbing code requirements. The Commission has found that conformance with the provisions of the plumbing code is protective of water resources.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable water quality policies of the Santa Monica Mountains LCP.

D. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat

The Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program (LCP) contains the following policies related to the protection of Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERAs):

- CO-33 Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERAs) are areas containing habitats of the highest biological significance, rarity, and sensitivity. SERAs are divided into two habitat categories H1 habitat and H2 habitat that are subject to strict land use protections and regulations.
 - 1) H1 habitat consists of areas of highest biological significance, rarity, and sensitivity-alluvial scrub, coastal bluff scrub, dune, native grassland and scrub with a strong component of native grasses or forbs, riparian, native oak, sycamore, walnut and bay woodlands, and rock outcrop habitat types. Wetlands, including creeks, streams, marshes, seeps and springs, are also H1 habitat. Coast live and valley oak, sycamore, walnut, and bay woodlands are all included in H1 habitat. H1 habitat also includes populations of plant and animals species (1) listed by the State or Federal government as rare, threatened or endangered, listed by NatureServe as State or Global-ranked 1, 2, or 3, and identified as California Species of Special Concern, and/or (2) CNPS-listed 1B and 2 plant species, normally associated with H1 habitats, where they are found within H2 or H3 habitat areas.
 - 2) H2 habitat consists of areas of high biological significance, rarity, and sensitivity that are important for the ecological vitality and diversity of the Santa Monica Mountains Mediterranean Ecosystem. H2 habitat includes large, contiguous areas of coastal sage scrub and chaparral-dominated habitats. A subcategory of H2 habitat is H2 "High Scrutiny" habitat, which comprises sensitive H2 habitat species/habitats that should be given avoidance priority over other H2 habitat. This habitat contains (1) CNDDB-identified rare natural communities; (2) plant and animal species listed by the State or Federal government as rare, threatened, or endangered; listed by NatureServe as State or Global-ranked 1, 2, or 3, and identified as California Species of Special Concern; and/or (3) CNPS-listed 1B and 2 plant species, normally associated with H2 habitats. H2 "High Scrutiny" habitat also includes (1) plant and animals species listed by the State or Federal government as rare, threatened or endangered, listed by NatureServe as State or Global ranked 1, 2, or 3, and identified as California Species of Special Concern, and/or (2) CNPS-listed 1B and 2 plant species, normally associated with H1 habitats, where they are found as individuals (not a population) in H2 habitat.
- CO-34 H3 habitat consists of areas that would otherwise be designated as H2 habitat, but the native vegetation communities have been significantly disturbed or removed as part of lawfully-established development. This category also includes areas of native vegetation that are not significantly disturbed and would otherwise be categorized as H2 habitat, but have been substantially fragmented or isolated by existing, legal development and are no longer connected to large, contiguous areas of coastal sage scrub and/or chaparral-dominated habitats. This category includes lawfully-developed areas and lawfully-disturbed areas dominated by non-native plants such as disturbed roadside slopes, stands of non-native trees and grasses, and fuel modification areas around existing development (unless established illegally in an H2 or H1 area). This category further includes isolated and/or disturbed stands of native tree species (oak, sycamore, walnut, and bay) that do not form a larger woodland or savannah habitat. While H3 habitat does not constitute a SERA, these habitats provide

- important biological functions that warrant specific development standards for the siting and design of new development.
- CO-44 New development shall be sited in a manner that avoids the most biologically-sensitive habitat onsite where feasible, while not conflicting with other LCP policies, in the following order of priority: H1, H2 High Scrutiny, H2, H3. Priority shall be given to siting development in H3 habitat, but outside of areas that contain undisturbed native vegetation that is not part of a larger contiguous habitat area. If infeasible, priority shall be given to siting new development in such H3 habitat. If it is infeasible to site development in H3 habitat areas, development may be sited in H2 habitat if it is consistent with the specific limitations and standards for development in H2 habitat and all other provisions of the LCP. New development is prohibited in H1 habitat unless otherwise provided in Policy CO-41.
- CO-51 Where new residential development is permitted in H3 habitat, the maximum allowable residential building site area shall be 10,000 square feet, or 25 percent of the parcel size, whichever is less.
- CO-54 Use primarily locally-indigenous plant species in landscape areas within Fuel Modification Zones A and B of structure(s) requiring fuel modification. Non-locally-indigenous plants and gardens that are not invasive may be allowed within the building site area and in Fuel Modification Zones A and B, with associated irrigation, provided that the species are consistent with Fire Department requirements and all efforts are made to conserve water. Invasive plants are strictly prohibited. The removal or trimming, thinning or other reduction of natural vegetation, including locally-indigenous vegetation, is prohibited except when required for construction of an approved development and/or for compliance with fuel modification requirements for approved or lawfully-existing development. Los Angeles County will work with organizations, homeowners, and park agencies on educational programs to reduce the spread of invasive plant species within the Coastal Zone.
- CO-74 New development shall be clustered to the maximum extent feasible and located as close as possible to existing roadways, services and other developments to minimize impacts to biological resources.
- CO-67 Coastal development permits for the development of uses allowed within or adjoining H1 and H2 habitat shall include an open space conservation easement over the remaining H1 habitat, H1 habitat buffer, or H2 habitat, in order to avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources.
- CO-77 New development in H2 and H3 habitat areas shall be sited and designed to minimize removal of native vegetation and required fuel modification and brushing to the maximum extent feasible in order to minimize habitat disturbance or destruction, removal or modification of natural vegetation, and irrigation of natural areas, while providing for fire safety. Where clearance to mineral soil is not required by the Fire Department, fuel load shall be reduced through thinning or mowing, rather than complete removal of vegetation.

All vegetation removal, thinning and mowing required for new development must avoid disturbance of wildlife and special-status species, including nesting birds.

- CO-94 Exterior lighting (except traffic lights, navigational lights, and other similar safety lighting) shall be minimized, restricted to low-intensity features, shielded, and cause no light to trespass into native habitat to minimize impacts on wildlife. Night lighting for development allowed in H2 or H3 habitat may be permitted when subject to the following standards.
 - a. The minimum lighting necessary shall be used to light walkways used for entry and exit to the structures, including parking areas, on the site. This lighting shall be limited to fixtures that do not exceed two feet in height, that are directed downward, and use bulbs that do not exceed 60 watts, or the equivalent. All other lighting of driveways or access roads is prohibited.
 - b. Security lighting shall be attached to the residence or permitted accessory structures that is controlled by motion detectors, and is limited to 60 watts, or the equivalent.
 - c. Night lighting for sports courts or other private recreational facilities shall be prohibited except for minimal lighting for equestrian facilities as provided for in CO-103.
 - d. Lighting is prohibited around the perimeter of the parcel or for aesthetic purposes.
 - e. Prior to issuance of a CDP, the applicant shall be required to execute and record a deed restriction reflecting the above restrictions. Public agencies shall not be required to record a deed restriction, but may be required to submit a written statement agreeing to any applicable restrictions contained in this subsection.
- CO-117 Require open space easements or deed restrictions as part of development projects on sites containing SERAs in order to ensure that approved building site areas are limited and impacts to coastal habitat are minimized.

In addition, the following certified Santa Monica Mountains Local Implementation Plan (LIP) sections are specifically applicable in this case.

Section 22.44.1320 of the Santa Monica Mountains Implementation Plan states in relevant part:

Building construction and site design shall be subject to the following standards:

- A. Clustering of structures and lots shall be required to site new construction in areas of least visibility, unless to do so would cause substantial habitat damage and destruction.
- B. Minimize the apparent size of exterior wall surfaces visible from offsite by using landscaping and/or other means of horizontal and vertical articulation to create changing shadow lines and break up the appearance of massive forms. Avoidance of impacts to visual resources through site selection and design alternatives is the preferred method over landscape screening. Landscape screening, as mitigation of visual impacts, shall not substitute for project alternatives including re-siting or reducing the height or bulk of structures.
- C. Reflective, glossy, polished, and/or roll-formed type metal siding shall be prohibited.
- D. Polished and/or roll-formed type metal roofing shall be prohibited.
- E. Colors and exterior materials used for new development shall be compatible with the surrounding landscape. Acceptable colors shall be limited to earth tones that blend with the surrounding environment, including shades of green, brown, and gray, and no white or light shades, and no bright tones.

Section 22.44.1910 of the Santa Monica Mountains Implementation Plan states in relevant part:

- A. New non-resource dependent development shall be prohibited in areas designated H1 Habitat to protect these most sensitive environmental resource areas from disruption of habitat values, unless otherwise provided in Section 22.44.1890 and subject to the standards of this section, Section 22.44.1920, and Section 22.44.1950.
- B. New development shall avoid H2 Habitat (including H2 High Scrutiny Habitat), where feasible, to protect these sensitive environmental resource areas from disruption of habitat values, subject to the standards of this section, Section 22.44.1920, and Section 22.44.1950. H2 High Scrutiny Habitat is considered a rare and extra sensitive H2 Habitat subcategory that shall be given protection priority over other H2 habitat and shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible.
- C. New development shall be sited in a manner that avoids the most biologically-sensitive habitat on site where feasible, in the following order of priority--(H1, H2 High Scrutiny, H2, H3-- while not conflicting with other LCP policies.
- Section 22.44.1920(J) of the Santa Monica Mountains Implementation Plan states in relevant part: Open Space Requirement. All CDPs that include the approval of structures within H2 "High Scrutiny" Habitat or H2 Habitat, adjacent to H1 habitat, or adjacent to parklands, shall be conditioned to require the preservation in perpetuity of the remaining H1 habitat, H2 habitat, H1 habitat buffer, or parkland buffer onsite. -On a parcel that includes steep lands (lands over 50 percent slope), all CDPs that include the approval of structures shall be conditioned to require the permanent preservation of the steep lands onsite.
 - 1. All portions of the project site outside of the Fire Department required irrigated fuel modification area (Zones A and B) shall be designated as an

Open Space Conservation Easement Area to be held by the County on behalf of the People of the State of California or another public entity acceptable to the Director. The permit condition and the easement shall indicate that no development, as defined in Section 22.44.630, grazing, or agricultural activities shall occur within the Open Space Conservation Easement Area, with the exception of the following:

- a. Fuel modification required by the County Fire Department undertaken in accordance with the final approved fuel modification plan for the permitted development and/or required brush clearance required by the County Fire Department for existing development on adjoining properties.
- b. Drainage and polluted runoff control activities required and approved by the County for the permitted development.
- c. If approved by the County as an amendment to the CDP or a new CDP:
 - i. Planting of native vegetation and other restoration activities;
 - ii. Construction and maintenance of public hiking trails;
 - iii. Construction and maintenance of roads, trails, and utilities consistent with easements in existence prior to approval of the permit;
 - iv. Confined animal facilities only where consistent with Section 22.44.1940.
- 2. The applicant shall provide evidence of the recordation of a valid dedication to the County (and acceptance by the County) or to another public entity acceptable to the Director, and acceptance by said public entity, of a permanent, irrevocable open space conservation easement in favor of the People of the State of California over the Open Space Conservation Easement Area for the purpose of habitat protection, the text of which has been approved by the Director. The recorded easement document shall include a formal legal description of the entire property and a metes and bounds legal description and graphic depiction, prepared by a licensed surveyor, of the open space conservation easement area; and it shall be recorded free of prior liens, including tax liens, and encumbrances. The recorded document shall reflect that no development shall occur within the open space conservation easement area except as otherwise set forth in the CDP condition, consistent with the exceptions detailed in this section. Recordation of said easement on the project site shall be permanent.
- 3. Open Space Deed Restriction and Transfer in Fee Title to a Public Entity. Where appropriate, the CDP open space condition may provide that, as an alternative to the recordation of an open space conservation easement, the applicant may record an open space deed restriction over the required open space conservation area and dedicate the lot or the open space portion of the lot in fee title to a public entity acceptable to the Director.
 - a. The applicant shall provide evidence of the recordation of an open space deed restriction, free of prior liens, including tax liens and encumbrances which the Director determines may affect the interest being conveyed, that applies to the entirety of the open space

conservation area, that insures that no development, as defined in Section 22.44.630, grazing, or agricultural activities shall occur within the Open Space Conservation Area and that restrictions are enforceable; and

- b. Evidence that fee title to the open space conservation site(s) has been successfully transferred to a public entity acceptable to the Director after the recordation of the deed restriction listed in subsection a above and that the document effectuating the conveyance has been recorded with the Los Angeles County Recorder. The permittee shall provide evidence that the ownership transfer and the open space deed restriction appear on a preliminary report issued by a licensed title insurance company for the site.
- 4. All of the procedures detailed in subsection J must be approved by County Counsel for form and legal sufficiency to assure that the purposes intended are accomplished.
- 5. Prior to recordation of the easement required in subsection 1 and 2 or the fee title dedication required in subsection 3, the applicant shall pay for and provide to the County a title report, no more than three months old, for any parcel containing an open space conservation area that will be protected through an open space conservation easement, or fee title dedication.

Section 22.44.1950 of the Santa Monica Mountains Implementation Plan states in relevant part:

- a. The amount of the Habitat Impact fee determined appropriate for each CDP in accordance with the following:
 - i. Current In-Lieu Fee: During the first five years following certification of the LCP, or until an updated fee is certified through an LCP amendment, the County shall utilize the Coastal Commission's Habitat Impact Fee that was implemented through individual coastal development permit actions prior to certification of the LCP, adjusted for inflation. The current fee amounts are:
 - (A)\$15,500 per acre for the approved building site area, driveway/access roads and turnarounds areas, any required irrigated fuel modification zones, and required off-site brush clearance areas (assuming a 200-foot radius from all structures).
 - (B) \$3,900 per acre for non-irrigated fuel modification areas (on-site).
 - ii. Updated In-Lieu Fee: The amount of the Habitat Impact Fee, approved through an amendment to the LCP pursuant to subsection B above, shall be used and adjusted for inflation annually.

1. Project Description and Site Specific Biological Resource Information

The project site is located in the Santa Monica Mountains, down slope from a ridgeline separating the Stokes Canyon and Cold Creek Watersheds. Much of the site is characterized by steep,

generally south facing slopes. The location of the proposed residence is on an existing partial pad connected to Mulholland Drive by an existing access drive on the northern portion of the site. The lower portion of the property consists of natural slopes and supports mixed chaparral vegetation which varies from relatively open to closed canopies. The Biological Resources Assessment, referenced in the Substantive File Documents, identifies laurel sumac (*Malpsma laurina*), mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), and California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) as the dominant species on site. The habitat on site is undisturbed, with the exception of the existing pad and driveway adjacent to Mulholland Highway. The habitat is contiguous with a large area of undisturbed chaparral habitat within Cold Creek Canyon to the south, southeast, and southwest of the project site.

The proposed project was previously approved as CDP 4-08-072. The project site was determined to have habitat meeting the criteria of Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA), The certified Santa Monica Mountains LCP designates Sensitive Environmental Resource Areas (SERA) in three categories which (H1, H2, or H2 High Scrutiny) all constitute ESHA. A fourth category is called H3 and is not considered to be SERA, due to the presence of development or other disturbance that has removed or reduced the habitat quality. According to the Santa Monica Mountains LUP Biological Resources Map (Exhibit 4) the subject parcel is designated as H3. However, the project site does contain undisturbed chaparral habitat that is contiguous with a large area of undisturbed chaparral and riparian habitat offsite. Therefore, the habitat on the project site does meet the definition of H2 as defined by the Santa Monica Mountains LUP. Additionally, the parcel borders parcels with H2 habitat designation. As such, the Commission finds that the habitat on the project site, with the exception of the pad and road areas, constitutes H2 habitat and that the proposed development must conform to the SERA policies and provisions of the certified LCP.

2. Siting and Design Alternatives to Minimize Significant Disruption of Habitat Values

The construction of the proposed development, including vegetation removal for both the development area as well as required fuel modification, grading, construction of a residence and the use of the development by residents will result in unavoidable loss of chaparral vegetation. The development been sited and designed to minimize these impacts by measures that include but are not limited to: limiting the size of structures, limiting the number of accessory structures and uses, clustering structures, siting development in any existing disturbed habitat areas rather than undisturbed habitat areas, locating development as close to existing roads and public services as feasible, and locating structures near other residences in order to minimize additional fuel modification.

In this case, siting and design alternatives have been considered in order to identify the alternative that can avoid and minimize impacts to habitat to the greatest extent feasible. The building site is located in a clustered configuration in the most northwestern location of the project site. Additionally, the proposed residence will be located immediately adjacent to an existing residential development on the neighboring parcel.

The Santa Monica Mountains LCP limits residential development in SERA to a maximum building site area of 10,000 square feet in order to minimize cumulative impacts and adverse impacts to SERA from fuel modification requirements. As mentioned above, though designated as H3 habitat, the subject parcel also contains H2 habitat as defined by the Santa Monica Mountains LCP and

based on the habitat types identified in the Biological Resources Assessment. The Commission has found that H2 habitat constitute ESHA, and areas designated as H3 constitute existing developed areas. The location of the proposed residence is within the disturbed area of the parcel. The Santa Monica Mountains LCP also requires a maximum building site of 10,000 square feet in H3 habitat. The applicants have provided plans which depict a residence at the location of the proposed building site which conforms to the required 10,000 square foot maximum building site area.

3. Open Space Conservation

The policies and provisions of the Santa Monica Mountains LUP specifically require the recordation of open space easements or deed restrictions in order to ensure that approved building site is limited and impacts to coastal habitat are minimized. Policy CO-67 requires that an open space conservation easement be included in permits that authorize development within H2 habitat, in order to avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources on the remainder of the property. Therefore, in order to ensure that the remaining habitat on this site is protected, **Special Condition Eleven (11)** requires that the applicants grant to the Mountains Conservation and Recreation Authority an open space and conservation easement on the portions of the properties outside of the designated building site, as depicted on Exhibit 8. As detailed in Special Condition Eleven (11), the open space and conservation easement will run with the land and will prohibit all development, with exceptions including fuel modification required by the Los Angeles County Fire Department undertaken in accordance with development approved in a CDP(s) issued by the County; drainage and polluted runoff control activities approved in a CDP(s) issued by the County.

Under the terms of Special Condition Eleven (11), an open space and conservation easement over the open space will be granted by the applicant to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority ("MRCA"), a joint powers authority. The MRCA is a partnership between the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the Conejo Recreation and Park District, and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. The MRCA is dedicated to the preservation and management of open space, parkland, watershed lands, trails, and wildlife habitat. The MRCA manages and provides ranger services for almost 50,000 acres of public lands and parks that it owns or are owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The governing board of the MRCA has agreed to accept all open space easements required by the Commission for properties within the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

4. Habitat Impact Mitigation

While impacts resulting from development can be reduced through siting and design alternatives for new development and by ensuring that the remaining SERA on the site is permanently protected, they cannot be completely avoided, given the location of SERA on and around the project site, the high fire risk in the Santa Monica Mountains, and the need to modify fuel sources to protect life and property from wildfire.

Fuel modification is the removal or modification of combustible native or ornamental vegetation. It may include replacement with drought tolerant, fire resistant plants. The amount and location of required fuel modification will vary according to the fire history of the area, the amount and type of plant species on the site, topography, weather patterns, construction design, and siting of structures. There are typically three fuel modification zones applied by the Los Angeles County Fire

Department, which include a setback zone immediately adjacent to the structure (Zone A) where all native vegetation must be removed, an irrigated zone adjacent to Zone A (Zone B) where most native vegetation must be removed or widely spaced, and a thinning zone (Zone C) where native vegetation may be retained if thinned or widely spaced although particular high-fuel plant species must be removed. The combined required fuel modification area around structures can extend up to a maximum of 200 feet. If there is not adequate area on the project site to provide the required fuel modification for structures, then brush clearance may also be required on adjacent parcels. In this way, for a large area around any permitted structures, native vegetation will be cleared, selectively removed to provide wider spacing, and thinned. The Commission has found in past permit actions, that a new residential development (with a 10,000 sq. ft. building site area) within SERA with a full 200 foot fuel modification radius will result in impact (either complete removal, irrigation, or thinning) to SERA habitat of four to five acres.

Obviously, native vegetation that is cleared and replaced with ornamental species or substantially removed and widely spaced will be lost as habitat and watershed cover. As discussed in the LCP, the cumulative loss of habitat cover also reduces the value of the sensitive resource areas as a refuge for birds and animals, for example by making them—or their nests and burrows—more readily apparent to predators. Further, fuel modification can result in changes to the composition of native plant and wildlife communities, thereby reducing their habitat value. Although, in these cases, the impacts from habitat removal cannot be avoided, the Commission finds that the loss of sensitive habitat resulting from the removal, conversion, or modification of natural habitat for new development including the building site area can be minimized by siting and design measures. As described above, the proposed developments have been sited and designed to minimize removal of H2 habitat for fuel modification. Further, fuel modification can be mitigated in order to ensure that impacts are minimized to the extent feasible.

Policy CO-86a provides that unavoidable impacts to H2 habitat from direct removal or modification, shall be compensated by the provisions of the County's Resource Conservation Program (RCP), whereby the County commits to expend funds to be used for the acquisition and permanent preservation of land in the Santa Monica Mountains coastal zone containing substantial areas of H1 and/or H2 habitats. The proposed fuel modification for the proposed residence will have unavoidable impacts to H2 habitats. Therefore, consistent with Policy CO-86a, the applicant is required to mitigate such H2 habitat impacts. However, the Commission does not have the ability to require the applicants to participate in the RCP. As such, the Commission finds it necessary to require the applicants to provide mitigation for impacts to H2 habitat directly. The Commission requires Special Condition Eight (8) to habitat impact mitigation commensurate with the area of H2 habitat that will be impacted as a result of the proposed project. The Commission finds that one of three measures is appropriate in this case to mitigate the loss of sensitive habitat on the project sites. The first method is to provide mitigation through the restoration of an area of degraded habitat (either on the project site, or at an off-site location) that is equivalent in size to the area of habitat impacted by the development. A restoration plan must be prepared by a biologist or qualified resource specialist and must provide performance standards, and provisions for maintenance and monitoring. The restored habitat must be permanently preserved through the recordation of an open space easement.

The second habitat impact mitigation method is habitat conservation. This includes the conservation of an area of intact habitat of a similar type as that impacted equivalent to the area of the impacted

habitat. The parcel containing the habitat conservation area must be restricted from future development and permanently preserved. If the mitigation parcel is larger in size than the impacted habitat area, the excess acreage could be used to provide habitat impact mitigation for other development projects that impact ESHA.

The third habitat impact mitigation option is the in-lieu fee payment for mitigation of impacts to habitat. The fee required is based on the habitat types in question, the cost per acre to restore or create comparable habitat types, and the acreage of habitat affected by the project. The Commission has, in past permit decisions, determined the appropriate fee for the restoration or creation of chaparral and coastal sage scrub habitat, based on research carried out by the Commission's biologist. A range of cost estimates was obtained that reflected differences in restoration site characteristics including topography (steeper is harder), proximity to the coast (minimal or no irrigation required at coastal sites), types of plants (some plants are rare or difficult to cultivate), density of planting, severity of weed problem, condition of soil, etc.

The appropriate mitigation for loss of coastal sage scrub or chaparral ESHA should be based on the actual installation of replacement plantings on a disturbed site, including the cost of acquiring the plants (seed mix and container stock) and installing them on the site (hydroseeding and planting). The payment amount found by the Commission to be appropriate to provide mitigation for the habitat impacts to ESHA areas where all native vegetation will be removed (building site, the "A" zone required for fuel modification, and off-site brush clearance areas), and where vegetation will be significantly removed and any remaining vegetation will be subjected to supplemental irrigation (the "B" zone or any other irrigated zone required for fuel modification) is \$15,500 per acre. Further, the LCP has required a payment of \$3,900 per acre for areas where the vegetation will be thinned, but not irrigated ("C" zone or other non-irrigated fuel modification zone).

The acreage of ESHA that is impacted must be determined based on the size of the building site area, required fuel modification (as identified on the fuel modification plan approved by the Los Angeles County Fire Department) on the site, and required brush clearance off-site, if any. As such, **Special Condition Ten (10)** is necessary to condition the applicants to delineate the total acreage of ESHA on the site (and offsite brush clearance areas, if applicable) that will be impacted by the proposed development, and provide mitigation to compensate for this loss of habitat, through one of the three methods described above.

5. Additional Mitigation Measures to Address Additional ESHA Impacts

The use of non-native and/or invasive plant species for residential landscaping results in both direct and indirect adverse effects to native plants species indigenous to the Santa Monica Mountains area. Direct adverse effects from such landscaping result from the direct occupation or displacement of native plant communities by new development and associated non-native landscaping, and mitigation for that effect was discussed in the previous section. Indirect adverse effects include offsite migration and colonization of native plant habitat by non-native/invasive plant species (which tend to outcompete native species) adjacent to new development. The use of exotic plant species for residential landscaping has already resulted in significant adverse effects to native plant communities in the Santa Monica Mountains area. Therefore, in order to minimize adverse effects to the indigenous plant communities of the Santa Monica Mountains area that are not directly and immediately affected by the proposed development, **Special Condition Five (5)** requires that all

landscaping consist primarily of native plant species and that invasive plant species shall not be used. Furthermore, fencing of the property would adversely impact the movement of wildlife through the SERA on this parcel. Therefore, the Commission finds it is necessary to limit fencing to the perimeter of the approved development area, turnaround, and driveway. This is required to be shown on the landscaping plan.

In addition, the night lighting of sensitive habitat areas in the Santa Monica Mountains may alter or disrupt feeding, nesting, and roosting activities of native wildlife species. Therefore, **Special Condition Seven (7)** limits night lighting of the site in general; limits lighting to the developed area of the site; and requires that lighting be shielded downward. Limiting security lighting to low intensity security lighting will assist in minimizing the disruption of wildlife that is commonly found in this rural and relatively undisturbed area and that traverses the area at night. To further minimize impacts associated with development of the project site, **Special Condition Six (6)** requires that the structures be finished in a color consistent with the surrounding natural landscape; that windows on the development be made of non-reflective glass; use of appropriate, adequate, and timely planting of native landscaping to soften the visual impact of the development from public view areas; and a limit on night lighting of the site to protect the nighttime rural character of this portion of the Santa Monica Mountains.

Pursuant to LIP Section 22.44.1920(I), any CDP that includes the approval of structures within 200 feet of H1, H2 "High Scrutiny," or H2 Habitat shall be conditioned to require that any future improvements to the approved development will require an amendment or new CDP. The amount and location of any new development that could be built in the future on the subject site consistent with the resource protection policies of the LCP is significantly limited by the unique nature of the site and the environmental constraints discussed above. Therefore, the CDP exemptions (as provided in LIP Section 22.44.820) that apply for, among other things, improvements to existing single family homes and repair and maintenance activities may be inappropriate here. In recognition of that fact, and to ensure that any future structures, additions, change in landscaping or intensity of use at the project site that may otherwise be exempt from coastal permit requirements are reviewed for consistency with the resource protection policies of the LCP, Special Condition Eight (8) is required. Further, the Commission requires the applicants to record a deed restriction that imposes the terms and conditions of this permit as restrictions on use and enjoyment of the property and thereby provides any prospective purchaser of the site with recorded notice that the restrictions are imposed on the subject property. This deed restriction requirement is detailed in **Special Condition** Nine (9).

Additionally, in order to ensure that vegetation clearance for fire protection purposes does not occur prior to commencement of grading or construction of the proposed structures, the Commission finds that it is necessary to require that natural vegetation shall not be removed until grading or building permits have been secured and construction of the permitted structures has commenced. This limitation, detailed in **Special Condition Twelve (12)** avoids loss of natural vegetation coverage resulting in unnecessary erosion in the absence of adequately constructed drainage and run-off control devices and implementation of the landscape and interim erosion control plans.

Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, consistent with the applicable environmentally sensitive habitat policies of the Santa Monica Mountains LCP.

E. HAZARDS AND GEOLOGIC SAFETY

The Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program (LCP) contains the following development policies related to hazards that are applicable to the proposed development:

- SN-1 All new development shall be sized, designed and sited to minimize risks to life and property from geologic hazard.
- SN-11 New development shall assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs.
- SN-16 New development shall provide adequate drainage and erosion control facilities that convey site drainage in a non-erosive manner in order to minimize hazards resulting from increased runoff, erosion and other hydrologic impacts to streams.
- SN-17 New development shall not increase peak stormwater flows.
- SN-20 Ensure that all new development is sized, designed and sited to minimize risks to life and property from fire hazard.
- SN-21 Design and site new development in a manner that minimizes the threat of loss from wildland fires while avoiding the need for excessive vegetation clearance.
- SN-24 Structures shall be constructed with appropriate features and building materials, including but not limited to: fire-resistant exterior materials, windows and roofing, and eaves and vents that resist the intrusion of flame and burning embers.
- SN-25 Structures that require fuel modification shall be set back 200 feet from adjoining vacant lands, where feasible. If it is not feasible to provide a 200 foot setback, then structures shall be set back to the maximum extent possible. However, a lesser setback may be approved where it will serve to cluster development, minimize fire hazards, or minimize impacts to coastal resources

In addition, the following certified Santa Monica Mountains Local Implementation Plan (LIP) sections are specifically applicable in this case.

LIP Section 22.44.2102 "Development Standards," in relevant part, states:

A. All new development shall be sized, sited, and designed to minimize risks to life and property from geologic, flood, and fire hazard, considering changes to inundation and flood zones caused by rising sea level.

. . .

D. All recommendations of the consulting licensed professional and/or the County geotechnical staff shall be incorporated into all final design and construction...

. . .

G. New development, including construction, grading, and landscaping shall be designed to incorporate drainage and erosion control measures prepared by a qualified licensed professional that incorporate structural and non-structural Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control the volume, velocity and pollutant load of stormwater runoff in compliance with the LID requirements of this LIP.

. . .

K. As a condition of approval of new development within or adjacent to an area subject to flooding, land or mudslide, or other high geologic hazard, prior to issuance of the Coastal Development Permit, the property owner shall be required to execute and record a deed restriction which acknowledges and assumes said risks and waives any future claims of damage or liability against the County and agrees to indemnify the County against any liability, claims, damages, or expenses arising from any injury or damage due to such hazards.

The proposed development is located in the Santa Monica Mountains area, an area historically subject to significant natural hazards including, but not limited to, landslides, erosion, and flooding. In addition, fire is an inherent threat to the indigenous chaparral community of the coastal mountains. Wild fires often denude hillsides in the Santa Monica Mountains of all existing vegetation, thereby contributing to an increased potential for erosion and landslides on property. Therefore, to address these hazards, the SMM LCP includes a number of policies and provisions related to hazards and geologic stability. Policies SN-1, SN-11, and SN-20 require that new development be sited, sized and designed to minimize risks to life and property from different kinds of hazards. Policies SN-16 and SN-17 require that new development shall provide adequate drainage and erosion control facilities that convey site drainage in a non-erosive manner in order to minimize hazards resulting from increased runoff, erosion and other hydrologic impacts to streams and new development shall not increase peak stormwater flows.

The submitted geology, geotechnical, and/or soils reports referenced as Substantive File Documents conclude that the project site is suitable for the proposed project based on the evaluation of the site's geology in relation to the proposed development. The reports contain recommendations to be incorporated into the project plans to ensure the stability and geologic safety of the proposed project, the project site, and the adjacent properties. To ensure stability and structural integrity and to protect the site and the surrounding sites, and pursuant to LIP Section 22.44.2102 (D), the Commission requires **Special Condition One (1)** which states that the applicant shall comply with the recommendations contained in the applicable reports, to incorporate those recommendations into all final design and construction plans, and to obtain the geotechnical consultant's approval of those plans prior to the commencement of construction.

Additionally, to minimize erosion and ensure stability of the project site, the project must include adequate drainage and erosion control measures. Pursuant to LIP Section 22.44.2102(G), the Commission requires the applicant to submit drainage and interim erosion control plans certified by the geotechnical engineer as detailed in **Special Condition Three (3)**.

Policies SN-21, SN-24, and SN-25 require that all new development is sited and designed in a manner that minimizes the threat of loss from wildland fires while avoiding the need for excessive

vegetation clearance encourages the clustering of residential structures both on individual lots and on multiple adjacent lots to provide for more localized and effective fire protection measures such as consolidated of required fuel modification and brush clearance.

Although the conditions described above render the project sufficiently stable to satisfy the geologic, flood, and fire hazard policies of the Santa Monica Mountains LCP, no project is wholly without risks. Due to the fact that the proposed project is located in an area subject to an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from natural hazards, including wildfire and erosion, those risks remain substantial here. Pursuant to LIP Section 22.44.2102 (D), if the applicant nevertheless chooses to proceed with the project, the Commission requires the applicant to assume the liability from these associated risks, as detailed in **Special Condition Two (2)**. Through the assumption of risk condition, the applicant acknowledges the nature of the fire and/or geologic hazard that exists on the site and that may affect the safety of the proposed development. Additionally, consistent with LIP Section 22.44.2102(K), the Commission requires the applicant to record a deed restriction detailed in **Special Condition Nine (9)** that imposes the terms and conditions of this permit as restrictions on use and enjoyment of the property and provides any prospective purchaser of the site with recorded notice that the restrictions are imposed on the subject property.

For the reasons set forth above, the Commission finds that, as conditioned, the proposed project is consistent with the applicable geologic, fire and flood hazard policies of the Santa Monica Mountains LCP.

F. VISUAL RESOURCES

The Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program (LCP) contains the following policies related to minimizing visual resources impacts to scenic areas:

- CO-128 New development shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.
- CO-131 Site and design new development to minimize adverse impacts on scenic resources to the maximum extent feasible. If there is no feasible building site location on the proposed project site where development would not be visible, then the development shall be sited and designed to minimize impacts on scenic areas through measures that may include, but not be limited to, siting development in the least visible portion of the site, breaking up the mass of new structures, designing structures to blend into the natural hillside setting, restricting the building maximum size, reducing maximum height, clustering development, minimizing grading, incorporating landscape and building material screening elements, and where appropriate, berming.
- CO-132 Avoidance of impacts to scenic resources through site selection and design alternatives is the preferred method over landscape or building material screening. Landscape or building material screening shall not substitute for project alternatives including resiting or reducing the height or bulk of structures.
- CO-133 New development shall be sited and designed to minimize alteration of natural

landforms by:

- a. Conforming to the natural topography.
- b. Preventing substantial grading or reconfiguration of the project site.
- c. Eliminating flat building pads on slopes. Building pads on sloping sites shall utilize split-level or stepped-pad designs.
- d. Requiring that manufactured contours mimic the natural contours.
- e. Ensuring that graded slopes blend with the existing terrain of the site and surrounding area.
- f. Minimizing grading permitted outside of the building footprint.
- g. Clustering structures to minimize site disturbance and to minimize development area.
- h. Minimizing height and length of cut and fill slopes.
- i. Minimizing the height and length of retaining walls.
- j. Cut and fill operations may be balanced on site, where the grading does not substantially alter the existing topography and blends with the surrounding area. Export of cut material may be required to preserve the natural topography.
- CO-141 Limit and design exterior lighting to preserve the visibility of the natural night sky and stars, to the extent feasible and consistent with public safety. Los Angeles County will periodically update the LIP's Dark Skies requirements to ensure that they are consistent with the most current Dark Skies science, technology, and best practices in the field, beginning five years after the LCP's certification date.
- CO-144 New development shall incorporate colors and exterior materials that are compatible with the surrounding landscape. The use of highly-reflective materials shall be prohibited, with the exception of solar panels.
- CO-149 Fences, gates, and walls shall be designed to incorporate veneers, texturing, and/or colors that blend in with the surrounding natural landscape, and shall not present the appearance of a bare wall.

In addition, the following certified Santa Monica Mountains Local Implementation Plan (LIP) sections are specifically applicable in this case.

LIP Section 22.44.1440 "Visual Resource Protection", in relevant part, states:

A...Development shall be sited and designed to minimize impacts on scenic resources to the maximum extent feasible through measures that may include, but not be limited to: siting development in the portion of the site least visible from public viewing areas as defined in the LCP; breaking up the mass of new structures; restricting building size and height; designing the structure to blend into its setting; clustering development; minimizing grading; incorporating landscape screening elements; and, berming where such berming would be appropriate.

. . .

E (3) Ensure that development is subordinate to the natural setting and character of the area, and all impacts on scenic resources are eliminated to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with all biological resource protection policies of the LUP.

F. Avoidance of impacts to scenic resources through site selection and design alternatives is the preferred method over landscape or building material screening. Screening shall not substitute for project alternatives, including re-siting and/or reducing the height and bulk of structures.

LIP Section 22.44.1990 "Development Standards" for scenic resource areas, in relevant part, states:

A. All Scenic Resource Areas:

- 1. View Protection. New development shall be sited and designed to protect public views within Scenic Resource Areas and to minimize adverse impacts on scenic resources to the maximum extent feasible. If there is no feasible building site location on the proposed project site where development would not be visible from a scenic resource area, then the development shall be sited and designed to minimize impacts on scenic areas through measures that may include, but not be limited to, siting development in the least visible portion of the site, breaking up the mass of new structures, designing structures to blend into the natural hillside setting, restricting the building maximum size, reducing maximum height, clustering development, minimizing grading, incorporating landscape and building material screening elements, and where appropriate, berming.
- 2. Avoidance of impacts to scenic resources through site selection and design alternatives is the preferred method over landscape or building material screening. Landscape or building material screening shall not substitute for project alternatives including resiting or reducing the height or bulk of structures.
- 3. New development shall incorporate colors and exterior materials that are compatible with the surrounding landscape. The use of highly-reflective materials shall be prohibited, with the exception of solar panels...
- 8. Outdoor lighting shall preserve the visibility of the natural night sky and stars, to the extent feasible and consistent with public safety...
- 9. Fences, gates, walls, and landscaping shall minimize impacts to public views of scenic areas, and shall be compatible with the character of the area. Fences, gates, and walls shall be designed to incorporate veneers, texturing, and/or colors that blend in with the surrounding natural landscape, and shall not present the appearance of a bare wall...
- 11. Grading. Alteration of natural landforms shall be minimized by conforming to natural topography and using contour grading, and shall comply with the following standards:
 - a. The height and length of manufactured cut and fill slopes shall be minimized. A graded slope shall not exceed a height of 15 feet;
 - b. Graded pads on hillsides having a natural slope of 15 percent or more shall be split-level or stepped pad designs. Cantilevers and understories shall be minimized and covered with materials that blend with the surrounding landscape;
 - c. The height and length of retaining walls shall be minimized. Retaining walls shall not exceed six feet in height and shall be constructed of materials, textures, veneers, and colors that are compatible with the surrounding landscape. Where feasible, long contiguous walls shall be broken into sections or shall include undulations to provide visual relief. Where more than one retaining wall is necessary, they shall be separated by a minimum three-foot horizontal distance; the area in front of and separating retaining walls shall be landscaped to screen

them, unless otherwise screened by buildings;

The proposed project area is designated as Rural Lands 40 (RL40) in the Santa Monica Mountains LCP. This designation is given to areas that consist of rolling hills, steep slopes, and remote mountain lands with difficult or no access. This land use designation allows a maximum residential density of one dwelling unit per 40 acres is permitted. Within the project site area, low density residential development occurs along Mulholland Highway in addition to large areas undisturbed by development. The project site includes slopes descending steeply from the south side of the road down into Cold Canyon. Development of the proposed residence raises two issues regarding the siting and design: (1) whether or not public views from public roadways will be adversely affected; and, (2) whether or not public views from public lands and trails will be affected.

There are designated public viewing areas in the vicinity of the project that could possibly be affected by the proposed development. The first resource is Mulholland Highway to the north of the development area, which is classified as a State-Designated County Scenic Highway and a Scenic Route by the Certified Santa Monica Mountains LUP and provides pristine scenic vistas in the area. Mulholland Highway is also a major coastal access route, not only utilized by local residents, but also heavily used by tourists and visitors to access several public parks and recreation areas located in the surrounding area. Another public viewing area is Cold Creek Canyon, which is recognized as a highly scenic area and given special treatment when evaluating potential impacts caused by new development. Additionally, there is State Parkland south of the proposed project site and the Backbone Trail crosses this land from east to west. The trail is approximately 1,000 feet higher in elevation than the project site and approximately 5,000 ft. south of the site. As such, the pad and any future residential development will be visible from the park and the Backbone Trail, although the views will be from a distance. In addition, the Stunt Ranch Park is located to the southeast of the project site and there will be views of the project site from this park as well.

The proposed residence is two-stories with a maximum height of 24.5 feet from existing grade at any given point. The residence is designed to be stepped into the hillside. The development has been clustered on one pad area, is less than 10,000 sq. ft. in size, and is designed to reduce landform alteration and removal of native vegetation that is considered environmentally sensitive habitat. The County of Los Angeles, in its review of the proposed structure, required that a topographic feature that slopes up from the edge of Mulholland Highway be retained on the site. The proposed development area is graded on the back side of this feature. As such, views of the structure from Mulholland Highway itself will be minimized. Additionally, the 24.5 foot height of the structure complies with the maximum height of 30 feet above natural or finished grade that is allowed by the SMM LCP. This height restriction will help to minimize adverse impacts to visual resources. Therefore, the proposed structure will be compatible with the character of other residential development in the area. The proposed structure is sited and designed to minimize impacts to visual resources to the extent feasible. In addition, the development would be partially screened by vegetation.

Even with vegetative screening, the proposed development will be visible from public viewing areas. The Commission has considered siting and design alternatives that would avoid or reduce any impacts to visual resources. There is no feasible alternative whereby the structure would not be visible from public viewing areas. However, the proposed residence is located in a Rural Lands 40 area developed with similar residential structures at a relatively low density. As such, and pursuant

to LUP Policies CO-128 and CO-131, as well as LIP Sections 22.44.1440 and 22.44.1990, the proposed structure will be compatible with the character of the surrounding area. To minimize the visual impacts associated with development of the project site, and pursuant to LUP Policies CO-132, CO-133, CO-141, CO-144 and CO-149, as well as LIP Sections 22.44.1440 and 22.44.1990, the Commission requires: that the structure be finished in a color consistent with the surrounding natural landscape; that windows on the development be made of non-reflective glass; use of appropriate, adequate, and timely planting of native landscaping to soften the visual impact of the development from public view areas; and a limit on night lighting of the site to protect the nighttime rural character of this portion of the Santa Monica Mountains. Thus, the Commission requires out **Special Conditions Six (6) and Seven (7)** to specify the appropriate structural appearance and lighting specifications of the development.

In recognition that future development normally associated with a single-family residence, that might otherwise be exempt, has the potential to impact scenic and visual resources of the area, the Commission requires **Special Condition Eight (8)**, which states that any future improvements on the subject property shall be reviewed by the Commission for consistency with the resource protection policies of the Santa Monica Mountains LCP through a coastal development permit.

Additionally, the Commission requires the applicant to record a deed restriction per **Special Condition Nine (9)** that imposes the terms and conditions of this permit as restrictions on use and enjoyment of the property and provides any prospective purchaser of the site with recorded notice that the restrictions are imposed on the subject property.

For the reasons set forth above, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable visual and scenic resources policies of the Santa Monica Mountains LCP.

G. LAND USE AND CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program (LCP) contains the following policies, in relevant part, related to minimizing cumulative impacts to coastal resources:

- LU-1 New residential, commercial, or industrial development shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it, or where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources...
- LU-2 Retain the area's natural setting, rural and semi-rural character, and scenic features.
- LU 29 Maintain low densities within Rural Lands and Rural Residential areas and protect the features that contribute to rural character and rural lifestyles....
- LU-33 Require that new development be compatible with the rural character of the area and the surrounding natural environment.

- LU 34 Require that new development preserve views from public parks, trails, and designated Scenic Routes. This includes preserving and enhancing views from public roadways which are oriented toward existing or proposed natural community amenities such as parks, open space, or natural features.
- LU 36 Development on parcels must be clustered and concentrated in one building site area, particularly within lands designated either Rural Lands or Rural Residential, to facilitate fire protection and to preserve and minimize impacts to coastal resources and the area of disturbance. Areas surrounding the approved building site area shall be required to be dedicated as open space in perpetuity.
- LU-43 Limit exterior lighting, except when needed for safety. Require that new exterior lighting installations use best available Dark Skies technology to minimize sky glow and light trespass, thereby preserving the visibility of a natural night sky and stars and minimizing disruption of wild animal behavior, to the extent consistent with public safety.

The applicant is seeking permit approval for a 5,005 sq. ft. new single family residence. Under the certified Santa Monica Mountains LCP, the subject property's land use designation is "Rural Lands 40." Rural Lands are those areas in the unincorporated Coastal Zone that have rolling hills, steep slopes, and remote mountain lands with difficult or no access and indicates that a maximum residential density of one dwelling unit per 40 acres is permitted. The principal permitted use in the Rural Lands land use designation is low-density single-family residential homes.

Policies LU-2 and LU-33 of the certified Santa Monica Mountains LUP mandate that the proposed development maintain the existing rural and scenic character of its proposed site location. Further, in order to minimize the cumulative impacts associated with developing these parcels, Policies LU-29 and LU-33, and LU-34 of the certified Santa Monica Mountains LUP require that new development in Rural Lands protect the features that contribute to rural character and rural lifestyles.

In addition, the Commission has found that night lighting of sensitive areas in the Santa Monica Mountains may alter or disrupt feeding, nesting and roosting activities of native wildlife species. Specifically, Santa Monica Mountains LUP Policy LU-43 requires that new exterior lighting installations use best available Dark Skies technology to minimize sky glow and light trespass, thereby preserving the visibility of the natural night sky and stars and minimizing disruption of wild animal behavior, to an extent consistent with public safety. Therefore, pursuant to LU-43, the Commission requires **Special Condition Five (7) Lighting Restriction**. Special Condition 7 limits night lighting of the site in general; limits lighting to the developed area of the site; and requires that lighting be shielded downward. Limiting security lighting to low intensity security lighting will assist in minimizing the disruption of wildlife that commonly traverses this rural and relatively undisturbed area at night.

Additionally, the Commission requires the applicant to record a deed restriction that imposes the terms and conditions of this permit as restrictions on use and enjoyment of the property and provides any prospective purchaser of the site with recorded notice that the restrictions are imposed on the subject property. The details of the Deed Restriction are specified in **Special Condition Nine** (9).

Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with the applicable cumulative impact policies of the Santa Monica Mountains LCP.

H. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

Section 13096(a) of the Commission's administrative regulations requires Commission approval of a Coastal Development Permit application to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect that the activity may have on the environment.

The Commission incorporates its findings on Coastal Act consistency at this point as if set forth in full. These findings address and respond to all public comments regarding potential significant adverse environmental effects of the project that were received prior to preparation of the staff report. As discussed above, the proposed development, as conditioned through the twelve special conditions discussed, is consistent with the policies of the certified Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program. Feasible mitigation measures, which will minimize all adverse environmental effects, have been required as special conditions. The twelve Special Conditions referenced throughout the findings are required to assure the project's consistency with Section 13096 of the California Code of Regulations.

As conditioned, there are no feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available, beyond those required, which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact that the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to mitigate the identified impacts, can be found to be consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.

Appendix A - Substantive File Documents

Santa Monica Mountains, Local Coastal Program; "Biological Resources Assessment for 25080 Mulholland Highway Calabasas, CA" prepared by Steven G. Nelson, dated January 2012; "Geologic and Soils Engineering Update and Plan Review" prepared by Grover Hollingsworth and Associates, Inc. dated September 18, 2013. "Visual Analysis of 25080 Mulholland Hwy., Calabasas," prepared by John Anthony Lewis.

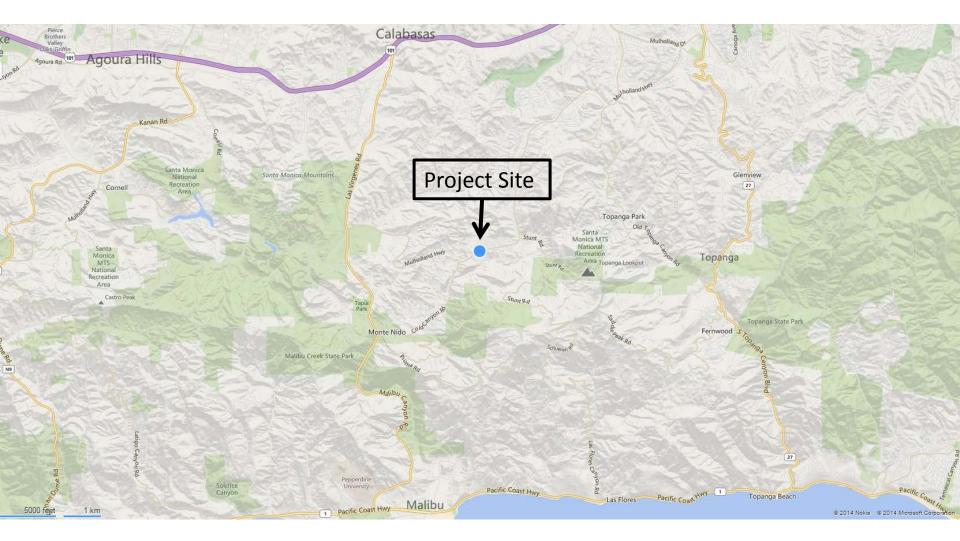
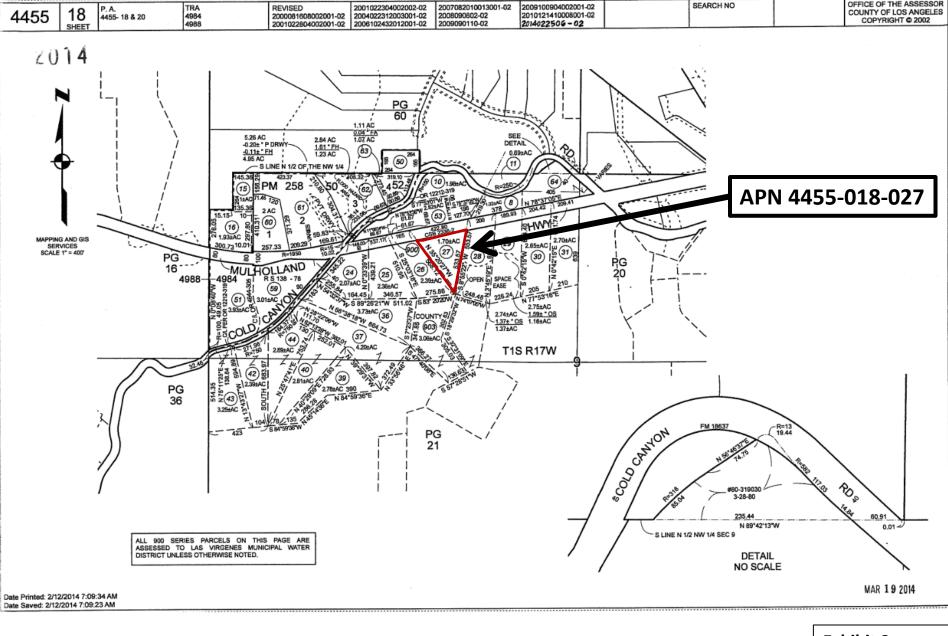


Exhibit 1 4-14-0544 Vicinity Map



Exhibit 1 4-14-0544 Vicinity Map



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Exhibit 2 4-14-0544 **Parcel Map**

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