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STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE RESOURCES AGENCY

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION SOUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA 89 SOUTH CALIFORNIA ST., SUITE 200 VENTURA, CA 93001 (805) 585-1800

RECORD PACKET COPY

GRAY DAVIS, Governor

 Filed:
 1/27/03

 49th Day:
 3/17/03

 180th Day:
 7/26/03

 Staff:
 L. Ford

 Staff Report:
 5/23/03

 Hearing Date:
 6/13/03

 Commission Action:

STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR

APPLICATION NO.: 4-02-134

**APPLICANTS:** James Hawkins and Christopher Shea

PROJECT LOCATION: 20529 Medley Lane, Topanga, Los Angeles County

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Construction of a three-story, 2,044 sq. ft. single family residence and detached three-story, 1,312 sq. ft., 2-car garage, with driveway, stairs, three retaining walls, two fire protection walls, septic system, and 138 cu. yds. of grading (83 cu. yds. cut, 55 cu. yds. fill).

Lot area: Building coverage: Pavement coverage: Landscape coverage: Unimproved:

18,281 square feet 2,700 square feet 751 square feet 6,545 square feet 8,284 square feet

**LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED:** County of Los Angeles Planning Department, Approval in Concept, April 18, 2002; County of Los Angeles Fire Department Final Fuel Modification Plan Approval, November 25, 2002; County of Los Angeles Geologic Review, Approval in Concept, December 5, 2002; County of Los Angeles Soils Engineering Review, Approval in Concept, December 10, 2002; County of Los Angeles, Fire Department (Access), Approval in Concept, August 27, 2002 and November 18, 2002; County of Los Angeles, Environmental Health, Approval in Concept, March 22, 2002.

**SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:** Certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan (1986); "Preliminary Geologic and Soils Engineering Investigation, Proposed Single Family Residence, 20529 Medley Lane, Topanga, California," SubSurface Designs, Inc., October 9, 2001; "Re: Oak Tree Survey, 20529 Medley Ln., Lots 12 & 13, Topanga, CA," Kerry Norman, Certified Arborist, Arbor Essence, May 1, 2003; "Habitat Assessment for Kerry Lane," Steve Williams, Staff Conservation Biologist, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, April 12, 2002; "Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal," Kerry Lane Preservation Project, April 2002; Coastal Development Permit (CDP) No. 4-98-242 (Lau); CDP No. 4-00-263 (Bolander).

## SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approval** of the proposed project with eleven (11) special conditions regarding conformance with geologic recommendations, landscape and erosion control plans, drainage and polluted runoff control plan, wildfire waiver of liability, removal of natural vegetation, removal of excess excavated material, future development restriction, lighting restrictions, deed restriction, revised plans, and lot combination.

## I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

<u>MOTION</u>: I move that the Commission approve Coastal Development Permit No. 4-02-134 pursuant to the staff recommendation.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL:

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 TO APPROVE THE PERMIT:**

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 Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3. 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

1. <u>Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment</u>. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittees or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.

2. <u>Expiration</u>. 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. <u>Interpretation</u>. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.

**4.** <u>Assignment</u>. 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. <u>Terms and Conditions Run with the Land</u>. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittees to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

## III. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

## 1. Plans Conforming to Geologic Recommendations

All recommendations contained in the report prepared by SubSurface Designs, Inc. ("Preliminary Geologic and Soils Engineering Investigation, Proposed Single Family Residence, 20529 Medley Lane, Topanga, California," dated October 9, 2001) shall be incorporated into all final design and construction including <u>foundations</u>, <u>settlement</u>, <u>erosion control</u>, <u>excavations</u>, <u>retaining walls</u>, and <u>drainage</u>. Final plans must be reviewed and approved by the project's consulting geotechnical engineer. Prior to the issuance of the Coastal Development Permit, the applicants shall submit, for review and approval by the Executive Director, evidence of the consultant's review and approval of all project plans.

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 an amendment to the permit or a new Coastal Development Permit.

## 2. Landscaping and Erosion Control Plans

Prior to issuance of the Coastal Development Permit, the applicants shall submit landscaping, erosion control, and fuel modification plans prepared by a licensed landscape architect or qualified resource specialist for review and approval by the Executive Director. The landscaping and erosion control plans shall be reviewed and approved by the consulting geologist to ensure that the plans are in conformance with the consultant's recommendations. The plans shall incorporate the following criteria:

## A) Landscaping Plan

 All graded and disturbed areas on the subject site shall be planted and maintained for erosion control purposes within sixty (60) 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, compatible with the surrounding chaparral habitat, 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. Invasive, non-indigenous plant species that tend to supplant native species shall not be used.

- 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. Such planting shall be adequate to provide ninety (90) percent coverage within two (2) years, and this requirement shall apply to all disturbed soils.
- 4) 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.
- 5) The Permittees shall undertake development in accordance with the final approved plan. Any proposed changes to the approved final plan shall be reported to the Executive Director. No changes to the approved final plan shall occur without a Coastal Commission approved amendment to the Coastal Development Permit, unless the Executive Director determines that no amendment is required.
- 6) Vegetation removal 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. The final fuel modification plan shall minimize the removal of native vegetation while providing for fire safety. Irrigated lawn, turf, and ground cover planted within Zone A shall be selected from the most drought tolerant species or subspecies, or varieties suited to the Mediterranean climate of the Santa Monica Mountains. Prior to issuance of the Coastal Development Permit, the applicants shall submit evidence that the final fuel modification plan has been reviewed and approved by the Forestry Department of Los Angeles County.

#### B) Interim Erosion Control Plan

- 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 project site with fencing or survey flags.
- 2) The plan shall specify that should excavation or grading take place during the rainy season (November 1 March 31), the applicants 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. These 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.
- 3) The plan shall also include temporary erosion control measures should grading or site preparation cease for a period of more than thirty (30) days, including but not limited to: stabilization of all stockpiled fill, access roads, disturbed soils, and cut and fill slopes with geotextiles, mats, sand bag barriers, and/or silt fencing; and temporary drains, swales, and

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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.

## C) Monitoring

Five years from the date of the receipt of the certificate of occupancy for the residence, the applicants shall submit, for the review and approval of 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 performance standards specified in the landscaping plan approved pursuant to this permit, the applicants (or successors in interest) shall submit a revised or supplemental landscape plan for the review and approval of the Executive Director. The revised landscaping plan must be prepared by a licensed landscape architect or qualified resource specialist and shall specify measures to remediate those portions of the original plan that have failed or are not in conformance with the original approved plan.

### 3. Drainage and Polluted Runoff Control Plan

Prior to issuance of the Coastal Development Permit, the applicants shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, final drainage and runoff control plans, including supporting calculations. The plan shall be prepared by a licensed engineer and shall incorporate structural and non-structural Best Management Practices (BMPs) designed to control the volume, velocity, and pollutant load of stormwater leaving the developed site. The plan shall be reviewed and approved by the consulting engineering geologist to ensure the plan is in conformance with engineering geologist's recommendations. In addition to the above specifications, the plan shall be in substantial conformance with the following requirements:

- (a) Selected BMPs (or suites of BMPs) shall be designed to treat, infiltrate, or filter stormwater from each runoff event, up to and including the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, 24-hour runoff event for volume-based BMPs, and/or the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile, one (1) hour runoff event, with an appropriate safety factor, for flow-based BMPs.
- (b) Runoff shall be conveyed off site in a non-erosive manner.
- (c) Energy dissipating measures shall be installed at the terminus of outflow drains.
- (d) The plan shall include provisions for maintaining the drainage system, including structural BMPs, in a functional condition throughout the life of the approved development. Such maintenance shall include the following: (1) BMPs shall be inspected, cleaned, and repaired when necessary prior to the onset of the storm season, no later than September 30<sup>th</sup> each year and (2) should any of the project's surface or subsurface drainage, filtration structures, or other BMPs fail or result in increased erosion, the applicants, landowner, or successor-in-interest shall be

responsible for any necessary repairs to the drainage, filtration system, and BMPs and restoration of any eroded area. Should repairs or restoration become necessary, prior to the commencement of such repair or restoration work, the applicants 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.

## 4. Wildfire Waiver of Liability

Prior to the issuance of a coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit a signed document which shall indemnify and hold harmless the California Coastal Commission, its officers, agents, and employees against any and all claims, demands, damages, costs, and expenses of liability arising out of the acquisition, design, construction, operation, maintenance, existence, or failure of the permitted project in an area where an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wildfire exists as an inherent risk to life and property.

## 5. <u>Removal of Natural Vegetation</u>

Removal of natural vegetation for the purpose of fuel modification shall not commence until the local government has issued a building or grading permit for the development approved pursuant to this permit. Vegetation thinning shall not occur until commencement of construction of the structure(s) approved pursuant to this permit.

## 6. Removal of Excess Excavated Material

The applicant shall remove all excess excavated material to an appropriate disposal site located outside of the Coastal Zone. Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicants shall provide evidence to the Executive Director of the location of the disposal site for all excess excavated material from the site. Should the dumpsite be located in the Coastal Zone, a coastal development permit shall be required.

## 7. Future Development Restriction

This permit is only for the development described in coastal development permit 4-02-134. 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 coastal development permit 4-02-134. Accordingly, any future improvements to the single family residence authorized by this permit, shall require an amendment to Permit 4-02-134 from the Commission or shall require an additional coastal development permit from the Commission or from the applicable certified local government.

## 8. Lighting Restrictions

A. The only outdoor night lighting allowed on the subject parcel is limited to the following:

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- 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.

## 9. Deed Restriction

Prior to the 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 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 (hereinafter referred to as the "Standard and Special Conditions"); and (2) imposing all Standard and 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 applicant's entire parcel or parcels. 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. <u>Revised Plans</u>

Prior to the issuance of the coastal development permit, the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, revised project plans that eliminate the second floor storage area of the proposed garage through structural design measures.

## 11. Lot Combination

A. (1) All portions of the two lots, Lots 12 and 13 of Block 8, Tract 9531, Los Angeles County, shall be recombined and unified, and shall henceforth be considered and treated as a single parcel of land for all purposes with respect to the lands included therein, including but not limited to sale, conveyance, development, taxation or encumbrance and (2) the single parcel created herein shall not be divided or otherwise alienated from the combined and unified parcel.

B. Prior to issuance of CDP No. 4-02-134, the applicant shall execute and record a deed restriction, in a form acceptable to the Executive Director, reflecting the restrictions set forth above. The deed restriction shall include a legal description and graphic depiction of the two lots being recombined and unified. 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.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

## A. Project Description and Background

The applicant proposes to construct a three-story, 2,044 sq. ft. single family residence and detached three-story, 1,312 sq. ft., 2-car garage, with driveway, stairs, three retaining walls, two fire protection walls, septic system, and 138 cu. yds. of grading (83 cu. yds. cut, 55 cu. yds. fill) **(Exhibits 6 - 10)**.

The approximately 0.42 acre project site is a vacant lot located in the Fernwood area of unincorporated Los Angeles County (Exhibit 1). The lot is located on the south side of Medley Lane, in an area partially developed with single family residences and adjacent to Topanga State Park (Exhibits 2 - 3). Adjacent lots to the north of Medley Lane are generally developed with single family residences; the adjacent lots to the east and west (south of Medley Lane) are largely undeveloped, although two recently permitted homes have been constructed (CDP No. 4-98-242 [Lau] and CDP No. 4-00-263 [Bolander]). An approximately 1/2 acre parcel immediately west of the subject site is held under public trust by the Mountains Restoration Trust, and an approximately five acre parcel south of the site is also undeveloped. This parcel forms the nucleus of an approximately 25 acre area south of Medley Lane (including the project site) that is the subject of an acquisition proposal, as discussed below.

Site topography is characterized by a southerly descending slope with gradients ranging from 2:1 to near vertical adjacent to Kerry Lane. The proposed residence and garage will be built on friction pile foundations and the proposed project will require only 138 cu. yds. of grading for construction of a terraced front yard area.

The upper portion of the site has been cleared and contains non-native ruderal grasses. The lower portion of the site contains mature mixed-series chaparral vegetation, including ceanothus, elderberry, hollyleaf cherry, lemonade berry, and toyon, and several small oak trees **(Exhibits 12 and 15)**. None of the oak trees are large enough to warrant protection under the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance.

The lower part of the subject site is adjacent to a riparian area and small wetland fed by the Sperling Well, a perennial spring that feeds an unnamed stream. The stream corridor has gentle topography and runs through Topanga State Park to a large culvert beneath Topanga Canyon Boulevard. This area is an important resource for wildlife, providing year-round water and an attractive movement corridor, and meets the definition of ESHA provided in Section 30107.5 of the Coastal Act (Exhibits 2, 3, 13 and 14).

Kerry Lane, a public dirt road that runs parallel to the stream corridor and separates the project site from the riparian area, provides access to the remote northwestern portion of Topanga State Park. Due to its ecological importance, as well its potential use as a public trail into the park, the approximately 25 acre area surrounding the stream corridor and immediately west of the park boundaries is the subject of an acquisition proposal currently under consideration by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Exhibit 14).

The proposed project will not be visible from nearby Tuna Canyon Road, a designated Scenic Highway in the 1986 Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan, or other scenic resources areas.

## B. Hazards and Geologic Stability

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act states, in pertinent part, that new development shall:

- (1) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard.
- (2) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, 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.

The applicant has submitted a geologic report prepared by Subsurface Designs, Inc. ("Preliminary Geologic and Soils Engineering Investigation, Proposed Single Family Residence, 20529 Medley Lane, Topanga, California," dated October 9, 2001). The report makes numerous recommendations regarding foundations, retaining walls, settlement, erosion control, excavations, and drainage.

The Subsurface Designs, Inc. report concludes:

# It is the finding of this firm, based upon the subsurface data, that the subject building site will not be affected by settlement, landsliding, or slippage. Further, based upon the proposed location, development will not have an adverse affect on off-site property.

Therefore, based on the recommendations of the applicant's geologic consultants, the proposed development is consistent with the requirements of Section 30253 of the Coastal Act, so long as the geologic consultant's recommendations are incorporated into the final project plans and designs. Therefore, it is necessary to require the applicant to submit final project plans that have been certified in writing by the geologic consultant as conforming to all recommendations of the consultant, in accordance with **Special Condition One (1)**.

The Commission finds that, as conditioned by **Special Condition One (1)**, the proposed project is consistent with the geologic stability requirements of Coastal Act Section 30253.

#### Erosion

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act requires that new development neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion. The site of the proposed project contains slopes that descend, at gradients up to 1:1, to within approximately 50 feet of a stream. Incorporating adequate erosion control, drainage provisions and appropriate landscaping into the proposed development will serve to minimize erosion at the site.

As noted above, the applicant's proposal includes construction of a new single-family residence, detached garage, retaining walls, and septic system. The site is considered a "hillside" development, as it involves steeply to moderately sloping terrain with soils that are susceptible to erosion. The site is located approximately 50 feet north of an unnamed perennial stream.

In total, the project will result in additional impervious surface area on the site, increasing both the volume and velocity of storm water runoff. Unless surface water is controlled and conveyed off of the site in a non-erosive manner, this runoff will result in increased erosion on and off the site.

Uncontrolled erosion leads to sediment pollution of downgradient water bodies. Surface soil erosion has been established by the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, as a principal cause of downstream sedimentation known to adversely affect riparian and marine habitats. Suspended sediments have been shown to absorb nutrients and metals, in addition to other contaminants, and transport them from their source throughout a watershed and ultimately into the Pacific Ocean. The construction of single family residences in sensitive watershed areas has been established as a primary cause of erosion and resultant sediment pollution in coastal streams.

In order to ensure that erosion and sedimentation from site runoff are minimized, the Commission requires the applicant to submit a drainage plan, as defined by **Special Condition Three (3)**. **Special Condition Three (3)** requires the implementation and maintenance of a drainage plan designed to ensure that runoff rates and volumes after development do not exceed pre-development levels and that drainage is conveyed in a non-erosive manner. Fully implemented, the drainage plan will reduce or eliminate the resultant adverse impacts to the water quality and biota of coastal streams. This drainage plan is fundamental to reducing onsite erosion and the potential impacts to coastal streams. Additionally, the applicant must monitor and maintain the drainage and polluted runoff control system to ensure that it continues to function as intended throughout the life of the development.

In addition, the Commission finds that temporary erosion control measures implemented during construction and excavation on the slope will also minimize erosion and enhance site stability. **Special Condition Two (2)** therefore requires the applicant to implement interim erosion control measures should grading take place during the rainy season. Such measures include stabilizing any stockpiled fill with geofabric covers or other erosion-controlling materials, installing geotextiles or mats on all cut and fill slopes, and closing and stabilizing open trenches to minimize potential erosion from wind and runoff water.

The Commission also finds that landscaping of disturbed areas on the subject site will reduce erosion and serve to enhance and maintain the geologic stability of the site, provided that minimal surface irrigation is required. Therefore, **Special Condition Two (2)** requires the applicant to submit landscaping plans, including irrigation plans, certified by the consulting geologists as in conformance with their recommendations for landscaping of the project site. **Special Condition Two (2)** also requires the applicant to utilize and maintain native and noninvasive plant species compatible with the surrounding area for landscaping the project site.

Invasive and non-native plant species are generally characterized as having a shallow root structure in comparison with their high surface/foliage weight. The Commission finds that non-native and invasive plant species with high surface/foliage weight and shallow root structures do not serve to stabilize slopes and that the use of such vegetation results in potential adverse effects to the stability of the project site. Native species, alternatively, tend to have a deeper root structure than non-native, invasive species and therefore aid in preventing erosion.

In addition, the use of invasive, non-indigenous plant species tends to supplant species that are native to the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area. Increasing urbanization in this area has caused the loss or degradation of major portions of the native habitat and loss of native plant seed banks through grading and removal of topsoil. Moreover, invasive groundcovers and fast growing trees that originate from other continents that have been used as landscaping in this area have invaded and seriously degraded native plant communities adjacent to development. Such changes have resulted in the loss of native plant species and the soil retention benefits they offer. Therefore, in order to ensure site stability and erosion control, **Special Condition Two (2)** requires the disturbed and graded areas of the site to be landscaped with appropriate native plant species, and the removal of native vegetation to be minimized consistent with fire safety standards.

In addition, to ensure that vegetation clearance for fire protection purposes does not occur prior to commencement of grading or construction activities, the Commission finds that it is necessary to impose a restriction on the removal of natural vegetation as specified in **Special Condition Five (5)**. In the absence of adequately constructed drainage and run-off control devices and implementation of the landscape and interim erosion control plans, loss of natural vegetative cover may result in unnecessary erosion. **Special Condition Five (5)** specifies that natural vegetation shall not be removed until grading or building permits have been secured and construction of the permitted structures has commenced.

The proposed project involves 83 cu. yds. of cut and 55 cu. yds. of fill, as well as excavation for foundations, producing excess graded material. The Commission finds that stockpiling excavated material may contribute to increased erosion at the site. The Commission also notes that landform alteration would result if the excavated material were to be collected and retained on site. In order to ensure that excavated material will not be stockpiled on site and that landform alteration is minimized, **Special Condition Six (6)** requires the applicant to remove all excess graded material from the site to an appropriate location and provide evidence to the Executive Director of the location of the disposal site prior to the issuance of the permit.

Finally, in order to ensure that any future site development is reviewed for its potential to create or contribute to erosion, the Commission finds it necessary to impose **Special Condition Seven (7)**, which requires the applicants to obtain a coastal development permit for any future development on the site, including improvements that might otherwise be exempt from permit requirements. In addition, **Special Condition Nine (9)** 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.

#### Wild Fire

The proposed project is located in the Santa Monica Mountains, an area subject to an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wild fire. Typical vegetation in the Santa Monica Mountains consists mostly of coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Many plant species common to these communities produce and store terpenes, which are highly flammable substances (Mooney in Barbour, *Terrestrial Vegetation of California*, 1988). Chaparral and sage scrub communities have evolved in concert with, and continue to produce the potential for, frequent wild fires. The typical warm, dry summer conditions of the Mediterranean climate combine with the natural characteristics of the native vegetation to pose a risk of wild fire damage to development that cannot be completely avoided or mitigated.

Due to the fact that the proposed project is located in an area subject to an extraordinary potential for damage or destruction from wild fire, the Commission can only approve the project if the applicants assume the liability from these associated risks. Through **Special Condition Four (4)**, the wildfire waiver of liability, the applicants acknowledge the nature of the fire hazard which exists on the site and which may affect the safety of the proposed development. Moreover, through acceptance of **Special Condition Four (4)**, the applicants also agree to indemnify the Commission, its officers, agents and employees against any and all expenses or liability arising out of the acquisition, design, construction, operation, maintenance, existence, or failure of the permitted project.

In summary, the Commission finds that, as conditioned, the proposed project is consistent with Section 30253 of the Coastal Act.

#### C. <u>Sensitive Habitat</u>

Section **30231** of the Coastal Act states:

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.

Section 30240 of the Coastal Act states:

(a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on such resources shall be allowed within such areas.

(b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade such areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of such habitat areas.

Section 30107.5 of the Coastal Act defines an environmentally sensitive area as follows:

"Environmentally sensitive area" means any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments.

Section 30231 requires that the biological productivity and quality of coastal waters be maintained and, where feasible, restored through among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharge and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flows, and maintaining natural buffer areas.

In addition, Sections 30107.5 and 30240 of the Coastal Act state that environmentally sensitive habitat areas must be protected against disruption of habitat values. Therefore, when considering any area, such as the Santa Monica Mountains, with regard to an ESHA determination, one must focus on three main questions:

- 1) Is a habitat or species rare or especially valuable?
- 2) Does the habitat or species have a special nature or role in the ecosystem?
- 3) Is the habitat or species easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments?

In making ESHA determinations, scale is important. Both temporal and spatial scales must be considered in determining ecologically sensitive habitat, and at different scales the conclusions may vary. Whereas on a local scale a small patch of degraded habitat might not be called ESHA, on a landscape scale its status might be different. For example, on a landscape scale it may form a vital stepping stone for dispersal of a listed species between larger habitat patches. At this scale it is valuable, performing an important role in the ecosystem, and is easily degraded by human activities and developments. Thus the degraded habitat would fit the Coastal Act definition of ESHA. Similarly, habitats in a largely undeveloped region far from urban influences may not be perceived as rare or functionally important, whereas a large area of such habitats surrounded by a dense urban area may be exceedingly rare and each constituent habitat within it an important functional component of the whole. Therefore, in order to appropriately assess habitat sensitivity, it is important to consider all applicable ecological scales and contexts. In addition to spatial and temporal scales, there are species scales. For example, one can focus on single species (e. g., mountain lions, flycatchers or tarplants), or one can focus on whole communities of organisms (e.g., coastal sage scrub or chaparral) or interconnected habitats in a geographic region (e.g., the Santa Monica Mountains and its habitats). On a global scale, in terms of numbers of rare endemic species, endangered species and habitat loss, the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area is part of a local hot-spot of endangerment and extinction and is in need of special protection (Myers 1990, Dobson et al. 1997, Myers et al. 2000).

In the case of the Santa Monica Mountains, its geographic location and role in the ecosystem at the landscape scale is critically important in determining the significance of its native habitats. Riparian corridors such as the one adjacent to the project site contribute to habitat connectivity

between the coast and large, undisturbed habitat areas in the Santa Monica Mountains and the Sierra Madre, San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains to the north. These corridors are home to many listed species and are easily disturbed by development. Some of these corridors have already been subject to considerable development near the coast, e.g. Las Flores Canyon, Malibu Creek & Lagoon, Ramirez Canyon and Trancas Canyon. Proceeding inland from the coast, however, the quality of the habitat improves rapidly and soon approaches a relatively undisturbed environment consisting of steep canyons containing riparian oak-sycamore bottoms, with coastal sage scrub and chaparral ascending the canyon walls.

The project site is a steeply sloping, undeveloped parcel located on the south side of Medley Lane, in an area partially developed with single family residences and adjacent to Topanga State Park. The upper portion of the site has been cleared and contains non-native ruderal grasses. The lower portion of the site contains mature mixed-series chaparral vegetation, including ceanothus, elderberry, hollyleaf cherry, lemonade berry, and toyon, and several small oak trees. None of the oak trees are large enough to warrant protection under the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance. The Commission has also, in previous permit actions, required protection only of oak trees whose trunks are larger than 6 inches in diameter (or a combined 8 inches in diameter if there are two trunks) as measured 4½ feet above grade. Adjacent undeveloped parcels to the east and west of the site, including an approximately ½ acre parcel held under public trust by the Mountains Restoration Trust, also contain similar chaparral vegetation.

An approximately five acre parcel immediately south of the project site is also undeveloped, and contains a riparian area and small wetland fed by the Sperling Well, a perennial spring that feeds an unnamed stream. Riparian vegetation consists of the California sycamore-coast live oak association. The stream corridor has gentle topography and runs through Topanga State Park to a large culvert beneath Topanga Canyon Boulevard. This area is an important resource for wildlife, providing year-round water, cover, and a relatively level corridor between the western and eastern portions of Topanga State Park. A habitat assessment of the riparian area, performed by Steve Williams, Staff Conservation Biologist, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains, is included as **Exhibit 13**.

The riparian habitat adjacent to the subject site is especially valuable in that it is one of the few perennial water sources in the Santa Monica Mountains. It plays a special role in the ecosystem by providing year-round water to wildlife, sustaining a small wetland, and providing a gently sloping movement corridor that allows easy access under Topanga Canyon Boulevard, thus allowing connectivity between the western and eastern portions of Topanga State Park. Lastly, the habitat could be easily degraded by increased erosion and runoff from adjacent development, which could transport sediments and other pollutants into the riparian corridor and wetland. Furthermore, its value to wildlife could be substantially reduced by increased human disturbances such as night lighting and noise pollution. Therefore, the riparian and wetland habitat constitutes an environmentally sensitive habitat area (ESHA) pursuant to Section 30107.5 of the Coastal Act.

Section 30240(a) requires that ESHA be protected against any "significant disruption of habitat values." Section 30240(b) requires that development in areas adjacent to ESHA be sited and designed to prevent impacts that would degrade ESHA, and be compatible with the continuance of the ESHA. In addition, the certified Malibu Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan, which has been used as guidance in previous Commission actions, requires residential development to be set back 100 feet from ESHA.

The proposed single family residence is located approximately 125 feet from the riparian corridor at its nearest point. Thus all structural development will be located more than 100 feet from the ESHA. However, other potential impacts of the proposed project must also be considered.

To reduce the risks of wildfire, the County of Los Angeles Fire Department requires fuel modification to be performed on all properties to be developed with combustible structures in the Santa Monica Mountains. In addition, the Fire Department requires brush clearance in a 200-foot radius from all combustible structures.

Construction of the proposed project would therefore result in a brush clearance radius that extends up to 75 feet into the riparian area. However, due to the relatively low fire risk posed by riparian areas, and the firebreak provided by the dirt road that separates the riparian area from the project site, little or no brush clearance would be performed in the riparian area, according to the County of Los Angeles Fire Department Brush Clearance Unit. However, brush clearance would occur on the adjacent properties, including the Mountains Restoration Trust Property immediately west of the project site. Brush clearance on this property would result in the removal of mature mixed-series chaparral habitat. While the chaparral habitat has been fragmented such that it no longer meets the Coastal Act definition of ESHA, it does provide habitat for a number of plant and animal species, helps prevent erosion of the steep slopes overlooking the riparian area, and contributes to the shady microclimate of the riparian area.

The applicants have submitted a fuel modification plan that has received final approval from the Fire Department. The fuel modification plan establishes Zone A, which includes highly fire resistant and high moisture content vegetation, in a 20-25 foot radius surrounding the house and garage. The remainder of the property is designated as Zone B, also an irrigated zone. The fuel modification plan requires chaparral on the property to be removed, and the vegetation in Zone B to be type converted to high moisture content ground cover. As noted above, removal of native habitat and irrigation of steep slopes in and adjacent to stream corridors contributes to indirect impacts such as erosion and sedimentation, as well as microclimatic changes which can degrade water quality and aquatic habitat, and adversely impact sensitive plant and animal species.

Commission staff has explored alternatives to the proposed development that would reduce removal of the native chaparral habitat on the subject parcel and adjacent trust land. Feasible reductions in the approximately 50 foot wide footprint of the proposed residence would be minimal and would not significantly reduce the approximately 120-140 foot radius of clearance that would be established on the adjacent trust land. The additional brush clearance necessitated by the garage would largely exist within brush clearance radii already established by neighboring residences. Reducing the garage footprint, therefore, would not significantly reduce brush clearance (Exhibit 4).

However, revisions to the submitted fuel modification plan that would reduce removal of chaparral habitat on the project site may be possible. Such revisions could include, for instance, thinning instead of removing vegetation on the steep grade adjacent to Kerry Lane near the southern property line. Therefore, in order to minimize potential impacts to the adjacent riparian ESHA, **Special Condition Two (2)** requires the applicants to submit a final fuel modification plan that minimizes the removal of native vegetation while providing for fire safety. **Special Condition Two (2)** also requires that all landscaping consist primarily of native plant species

compatible with the surrounding chaparral habitat and that invasive plant species shall not be used.

In addition to increasing the potential for erosion and associated 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 Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area. Adverse effects from such landscaping result from the direct occupation or displacement of native plant communities by new development and associated non-native landscaping. 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 Commission notes that the use of exotic plant species for residential landscaping has already resulted in significant adverse effects to native plant communities in the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area. Therefore, **Special Condition Two (2)** is also necessary in order to minimize adverse impacts on the indigenous plant communities of the project site and the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area.

Streams and drainages, such as the stream located immediately south of the subject site, in conjunction with primary waterways, provide important habitat for sensitive plant and animal species. Section 30231 of the Coastal Act provides that the quality of coastal waters and streams shall be maintained and restored whenever feasible through means such as: controlling runoff, preventing interference with surface water flows and alteration of natural streams, and by maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas. In past permit actions the Commission has found that new development adjacent to coastal streams and natural drainages results in potential adverse impacts to riparian habitat and marine resources from increased erosion, contaminated storm runoff, introduction of non-native and invasive plant species, disturbance of wildlife, and loss of riparian plant and animal habitat.

In addition to the protections afforded by **Special Condition Two** (2), potential adverse effects of the proposed development on riparian habitat may be further minimized through the implementation of a drainage and polluted runoff control plan, which will ensure that erosion is minimized and polluted run-off from the site is controlled and filtered before it reaches natural drainage courses within the watershed. Therefore, the Commission requires **Special Condition Three (3)**, the Drainage and Polluted Run-off Control Plan, which requires the applicant to incorporate appropriate drainage devices and Best Management Practices (BMPs) to ensure that run-off from the proposed structures, impervious surfaces, building pad area, and horse corral is conveyed off-site in a non-erosive manner and is treated/filtered to reduce pollutant load before it reaches coastal waterways. (See Section D. <u>Water Quality</u> for a more detailed discussion of coastal water quality).

The Commission has found, in past permit actions, that night lighting of a high intensity has the potential to reduce the habitat value of ESHA, and disrupt the behavior of wildlife that occupy or migrate through rural and relatively undisturbed areas. As noted above, the stream corridor adjacent to the project site is an important resource for wildlife, providing year-round water, cover, and a gently sloping corridor between the western and eastern portions of Topanga State Park. Therefore, **Special Condition Eight (8)** is necessary to reduce the disruptive effects of night lighting on wildlife by restricting outdoor night lighting to the minimum amount required for safety.

The Commission further finds that the amount and location of any new development that may be proposed in the future on the subject site is significantly limited by the unique nature of the site and the environmental constraints discussed above. Therefore, 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 by the Commission for consistency with the resource protection policies of the Coastal Act, **Special Condition Seven** (7), the future development restriction, has been required. In addition, **Special Condition Nine** (9) 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.

As conditioned, the Commission finds that, for the reasons set forth above, the proposed project is consistent with the requirements of Sections 30231 and 30240 of the Coastal Act.

## D. <u>Water Quality</u>

The Commission recognizes that new development in the Santa Monica Mountains has the potential to adversely impact coastal water quality through the removal of native vegetation, increase of impervious surfaces, increase of runoff, erosion, and sedimentation, and introduction of pollutants such as petroleum, cleaning products, pesticides, and other pollutant sources, as well as effluent from septic systems.

Section 30231 of the Coastal Act states:

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, minimizing alteration of natural streams.

As described in detail in the previous sections, the applicant is proposing to develop the subject site with a new single-family residence, detached garage, retaining walls, and septic system. The site is considered a "hillside" development, as it involves steeply to moderately sloping terrain with soils that are susceptible to erosion. The site is located approximately 50 feet north of an unnamed perennial stream.

The proposed development will result in an increase in impervious surface at the subject site, which in turn decreases the infiltrative function and capacity of existing permeable land on site. Reduction in permeable space therefore leads to an increase in the volume and velocity of stormwater runoff that can be expected to leave the site. Further, pollutants commonly found in runoff associated with residential use include petroleum hydrocarbons including oil and grease from vehicles; heavy metals; synthetic organic chemicals including paint and household cleaners; soap and dirt from washing vehicles; dirt and vegetation from yard maintenance; litter; fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides; and bacteria and pathogens from animal waste. The discharge of these pollutants to coastal waters can cause cumulative impacts such as: eutrophication and anoxic conditions resulting in fish kills and diseases and the alteration of aquatic habitat, including adverse changes to species composition and size; excess nutrients

causing algae blooms and sedimentation increasing turbidity which both reduce the penetration of sunlight needed by aquatic vegetation which provide food and cover for aquatic species; disruptions to the reproductive cycle of aquatic species; and acute and sublethal toxicity in marine organisms leading to adverse changes in reproduction and feeding behavior. These impacts reduce the biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes and reduce optimum populations of marine organisms and have adverse impacts on human health.

Therefore, in order to find the proposed development consistent with the water and marine resource policies of the Coastal Act, the Commission finds it necessary to require the incorporation of Best Management Practices designed to control the volume, velocity and pollutant load of stormwater leaving the developed site. Critical to the successful function of post-construction structural BMPs in removing pollutants in stormwater to the Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP), is the application of appropriate design standards for sizing BMPs. The majority of runoff is generated from small storms because most storms are small. Additionally, storm water runoff typically conveys a disproportionate amount of pollutants in the initial period that runoff is generated during a storm event. Designing BMPs for the small, more frequent storms, rather than for the large infrequent storms, results in improved BMP performance at lower cost.

For design purposes, with case-by-case considerations, post-construction structural BMPs (or suites of BMPs) should be designed to treat, infiltrate or filter the amount of stormwater 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 (i.e., 2 or greater), for flow-based BMPs. The Commission finds that sizing post-construction structural BMPs to accommodate (infiltrate, filter or treat) the runoff from the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile storm runoff event, in this case, is equivalent to sizing BMPs based on the point of diminishing returns (i.e. the BMP capacity beyond which, insignificant increases in pollutants removal (and hence water quality protection) will occur, relative to the additional costs. Therefore, the Commission requires the selected post-construction structural BMPs be sized based on design criteria specified in **Special Condition Three (3)**, and finds this will ensure the proposed development will be designed to minimize adverse impacts to coastal resources, in a manner consistent with the water and marine policies of the Coastal Act.

Furthermore, interim erosion control measures implemented during construction and post construction landscaping will serve to minimize the potential for adverse impacts to water quality resulting from drainage runoff during construction and in the post-development stage. Therefore, the Commission finds that **Special Condition Two (2)** is necessary to ensure the proposed development will not adversely impact water quality or coastal resources.

Removal of native habitat in and adjacent to stream corridors contributes to indirect impacts such as erosion and sedimentation, as well as microclimatic changes which can degrade water quality and aquatic habitat, and adversely impact sensitive plant and animal species. **Special Condition Two (2)** also requires the applicants to submit a fuel modification plan that minimizes the removal of native habitat on the project site, in order to help prevent erosion of the steep slopes overlooking the stream, and maintain the shady microclimate of the riparian corridor. Measures to minimize removal of native habitat include, for instance, thinning instead of removing vegetation on the steep grade adjacent to Kerry Lane near the southern property line.

Finally, the proposed development includes the installation of an on-site private sewage disposal system to serve the residence. The County of Los Angeles, Department of Health Services, has given in-concept approval of the proposed septic system, determining that the system meets the requirements of the plumbing code. The Commission has found that conformance with the provisions of the plumbing code is protective of resources.

For the reasons set forth above, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with Section 30231 of the Coastal Act.

## E. Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project involves the construction of a new single family residence, which is defined under the Coastal Act as new development. New development raises issues with respect to cumulative impacts on coastal resources. Sections 30250 and 30252 of the Coastal Act address the cumulative impacts of new development.

Section 30250(a) of the Coastal Act states:

New residential, commercial, or industrial development, except as otherwise provided in this division, 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. In addition, land divisions, other than leases for agricultural uses, outside existing developed areas shall be permitted where 50 percent of the usable parcels in the area have been developed and the created parcels would be no smaller than the average size of the surrounding parcels.

Section 30252 of the Coastal Act states:

The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by (I) facilitating the provision or extension of transit service, (2) providing commercial facilities within or adjoining residential development or in other areas that will minimize the use of coastal access roads, (3) providing nonautomobile circulation within the development, (4) providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation, (5) assuring the potential for public transit for high intensity uses such as high-rise office buildings, and by (6) assuring that the recreational needs of new residents will not overload nearby coastal recreation areas by correlating the amount of development with local park acquisition and development plans with the provision of onsite recreational facilities to serve the new development.

Section 30105.5 of the Coastal Act defines the term "cumulatively," as it is used in Section 30250(a), to mean that:

the incremental effects of an individual project shall be reviewed in conjunction with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.

Throughout the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains coastal zone there are a number of areas that were subdivided in the 1920's and 30's into very small "urban" scale lots. These subdivisions,

known as "small lot subdivisions" are comprised of parcels of less than one acre but more typically range in size from 4,000 to 5,000 square feet. The total buildout of these dense subdivisions would result in a number of adverse cumulative impacts to coastal resources. Cumulative development constraints common to small lot subdivisions were documented by the Coastal Commission and the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Planning Commission in the January 1979 study entitled: "Cumulative Impacts of Small Lot Subdivision Development In the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone".

The study acknowledged that the existing small lot subdivisions can only accommodate a limited amount of additional new development due to major buildout constraints including: geologic, road access, water quality, disruption of rural community character, creation of unreasonable fire hazards and others. Following an intensive one-year planning effort by Commission staff, including five months of public review and input, new development standards for residential development on small hillside lots, including the Slope-Intensity/Gross Structural Area Formula (GSA), were incorporated into the Malibu District Interpretive Guidelines in June 1979. A nearly identical Slope Intensity Formula was incorporated into the 1986 certified Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains Land Use Plan under policy 271(b)(2) to reduce the potential effects of buildout as discussed below.

The Commission has found that minimizing the cumulative impacts of new development is especially critical in the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area because of the large number of lots that already exist, many in remote, rugged mountain and canyon areas. From a comprehensive planning perspective, the potential development of thousands of existing undeveloped and poorly sited parcels in these areas creates cumulative impacts on coastal resources and public access over time. Because of this, the demands on road capacity, public services, recreational facilities, and beaches could be expected to grow tremendously.

Policy 271(b)(2) of the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP, which has been used as guidance by the Commission, requires that new development in small lot subdivisions comply with the Slope Intensity Formula for calculating the allowable Gross Structural Area (GSA) of a residential unit. Past Commission action certifying the LUP indicates that the Commission considers the use of the Slope Intensity Formula appropriate for determining the maximum level of development that may be permitted in small lot subdivision areas consistent with the policies of the Coastal Act. The basic concept of the formula assumes the suitability of development of small hillside lots should be determined by the physical characteristics of the building site, recognizing that development on steep slopes has a high potential for adverse impacts on resources.

## Slope Intensity Formula:

 $GSA = (A/5) \times ((50-S)/35) + 500$ 

GSA = the allowable gross structural area of the permitted development in square feet. The GSA includes all substantially enclosed residential and storage areas, but does not include garages or carports designed for storage of autos.

A = the area of the building site in square feet. The building site is defined by the applicant and may consist of all or a designated portion of the one or more

lots comprising the project location. All permitted structures must be located within the designated building site.

S = the average slope of the building site in percent as calculated by the formula:

 $S = I \times L/A \times 100$ 

- I = contour interval in feet, at not greater than 25-foot intervals, resulting in at least 5 contour lines
- L = total accumulated length of all contours of interval "I" in feet
- A = the area being considered in square feet

The proposed project is located in the small lot subdivision of Fernwood and involves the construction of a new three story, 2,044 sq. ft. single family residence and detached three-story 1,312 sq. ft. garage/storage space on two contiguous lots. The applicant has submitted a GSA calculation in conformance to Policy 271(b)(2) of the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains LUP. This calculation arrived at a maximum GSA of 2,050 sq. ft. of habitable space, considering the total area of both lots as one. Therefore, the proposed 2,044 sq. ft. single family residence is consistent with the maximum allowable GSA.

However, the proposed project also includes a three story garage structure adjacent to the residence. Under the Slope/Intensity formula, the GSA does not include garages, but does include all substantially enclosed storage areas. The proposed garage structure includes an approximately 656 sq. ft. garage on the third level, and two levels of enclosed space below. The proposed bottom level, while enclosed, will have no floor but instead will be located directly on the steep dirt slope, and will therefore be unusable as storage space. The proposed second level, however, is an enclosed storage space and therefore must included within the GSA allowance. With the inclusion of the second level storage space, the proposed GSA is 2,700 sq. ft., thus exceeding the allowable GSA by 650 sq. ft.

Therefore, in order to reduce the proposed development to a level that is consistent with the policies of the Coastal Act, **Special Condition Ten (10)** requires the applicants to submit revised plans that eliminate the second floor storage area of the proposed garage through structural design measures. These measures can include removing the floor of the second level.

In addition, improvements to the subject property could cause adverse cumulative impacts on the limited resources of the subdivision. Therefore, 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 by the Commission for consistency with the resource protection policies of the Coastal Act, **Special Condition Seven (7)** requires the applicant to record a future improvements deed restriction on this lot. In addition, **Special Condition Nine (9)** 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.

Lastly, the Commission notes that the proposed residence is proposed to be built on two lots, Lots 12 & 13 in Block 8 of Tract 9531 (APN 4448-012-41), and that the maximum allowable gross structural area was calculated considering the total area of both lots as one (Exhibit 11). The Commission has long required that lots in small lot subdivisions using the GSA formula, as noted above, be combined. Such a combination was required in previous permit decisions for development of residences on two lots in the Fernwood small lot subdivision [CDP No. 4-00-263 (Bolander) CDP No. 4-98-242 (Lau)]. For these reasons, **Special Condition Eleven (11)** is necessary to ensure that the lots are combined and held as such in the future.

The Commission therefore finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, is consistent with Section 30250(a) of the Coastal Act.

### F. Local Coastal Program

Section 30604 of the Coastal Act states:

A) Prior to certification of the local coastal program, a coastal development permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the Commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of this division and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a local program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200).

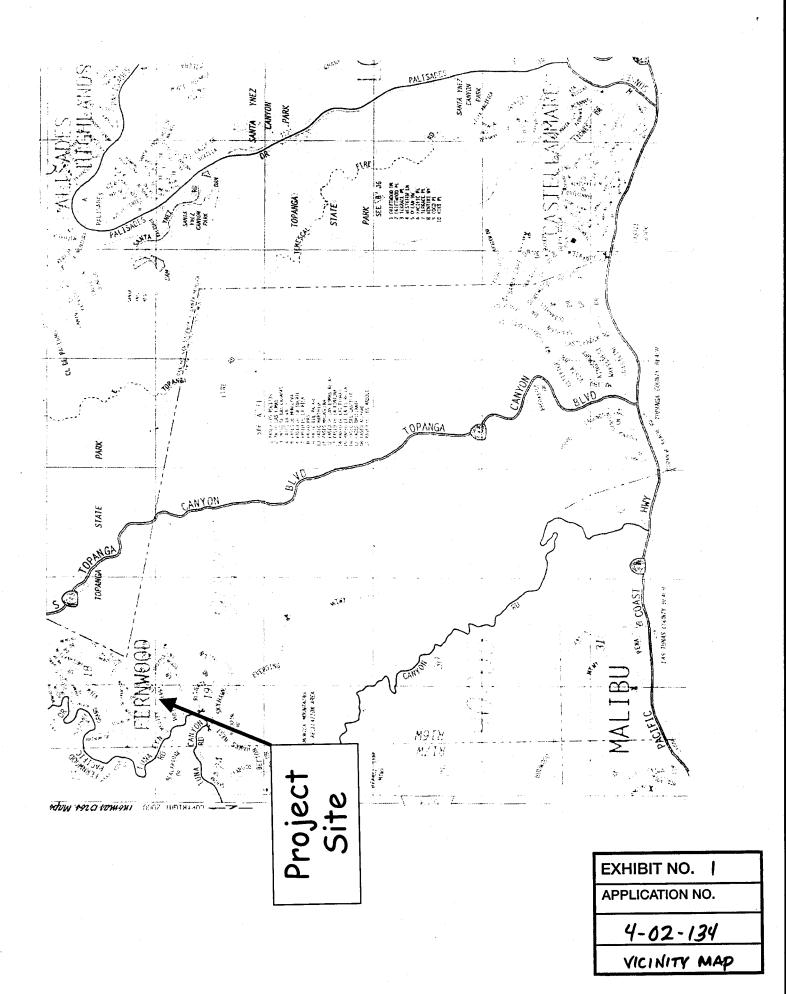
Section 30604(a) of the Coastal Act provides that the Commission shall issue a Coastal Permit only if the project will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction to prepare a Local Coastal Program that conforms to Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act. The preceding sections provide findings that the proposed project will be in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 if certain conditions are incorporated into the project and accepted by the applicants. As conditioned, the proposed project will not create adverse impacts and is found to be consistent with the applicable policies contained in Chapter 3. Therefore, the Commission finds that approval of the proposed development, as conditioned, will not prejudice the County of Los Angeles' ability to prepare a Local Coastal Program for the Malibu/Santa Monica Mountains area that is also consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act as required by Section 30604(a).

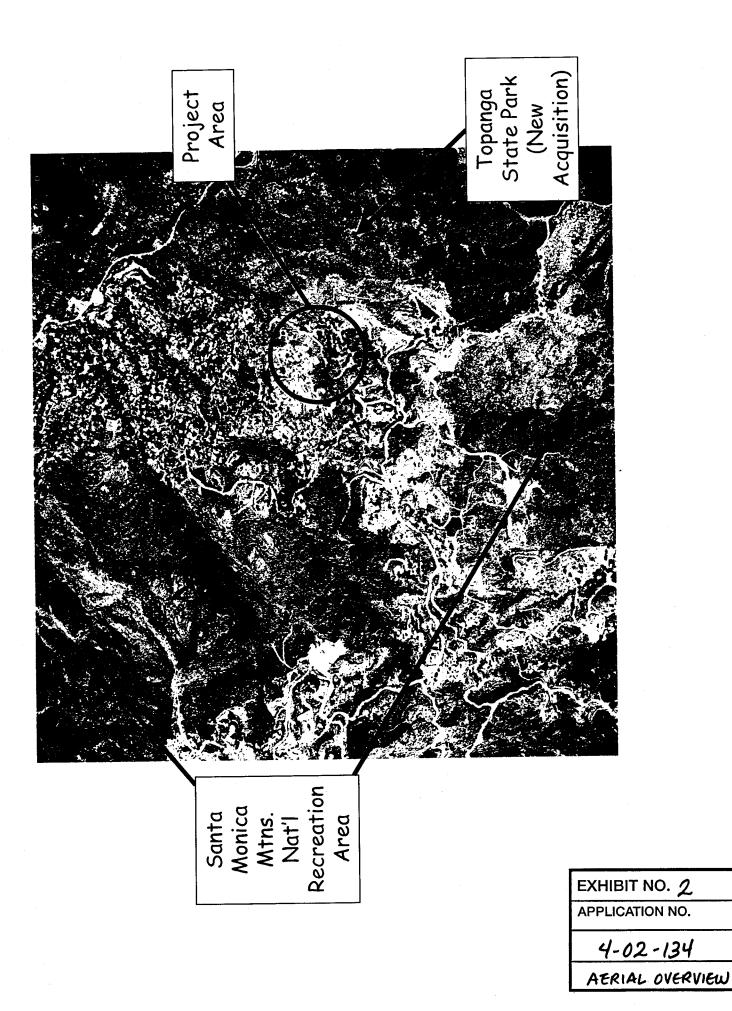
## G. California Environmental Quality Act

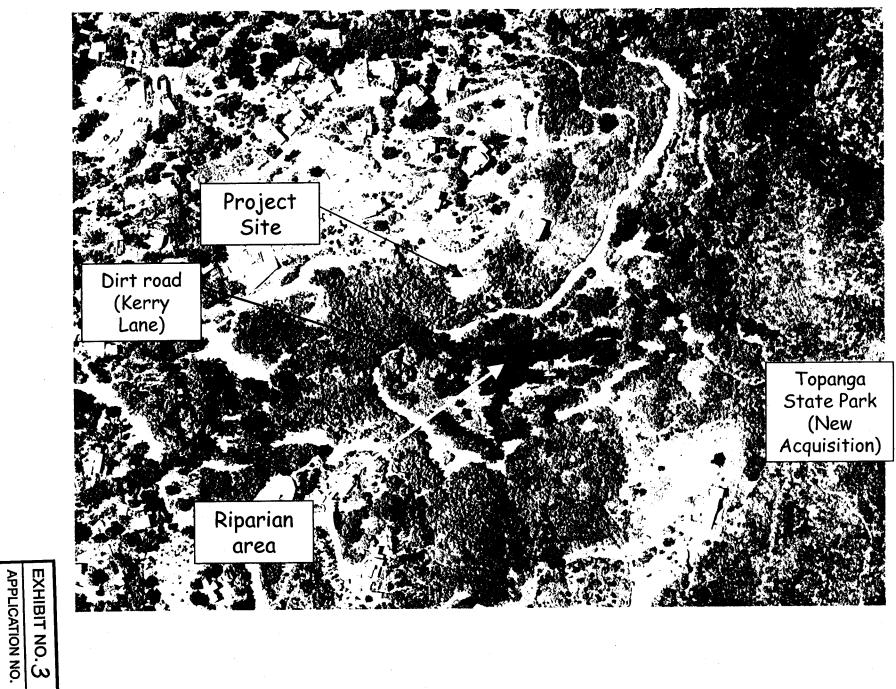
Section 13096(a) of the Commission's administrative regulations requires Commission approval of a Coastal Development Permit application to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmentally 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 which the activity may have on the environment.

The Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned, will not have significant adverse effects on the environment, within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality

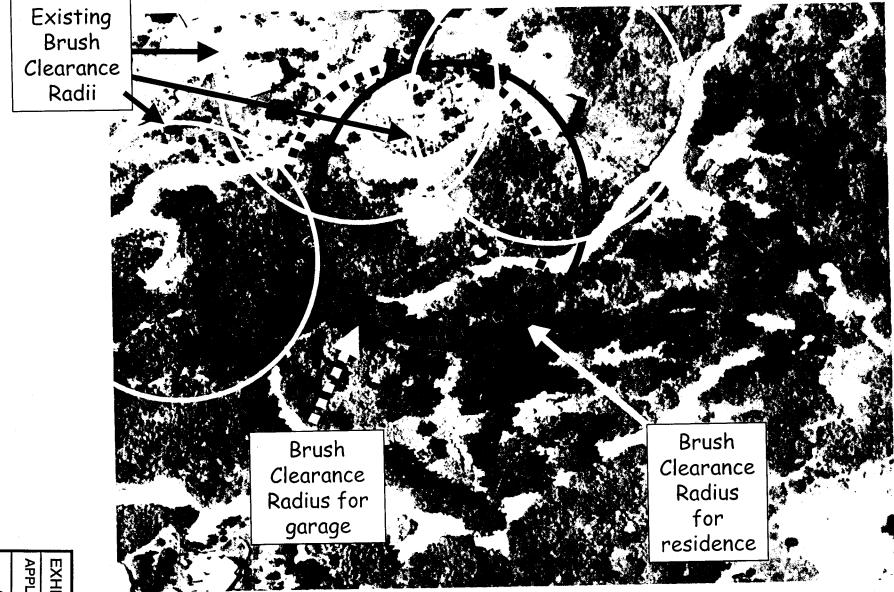
Act of 1970. Therefore, the proposed project, as conditioned, has been adequately mitigated and is determined to be consistent with CEQA and the policies of the Coastal Act.





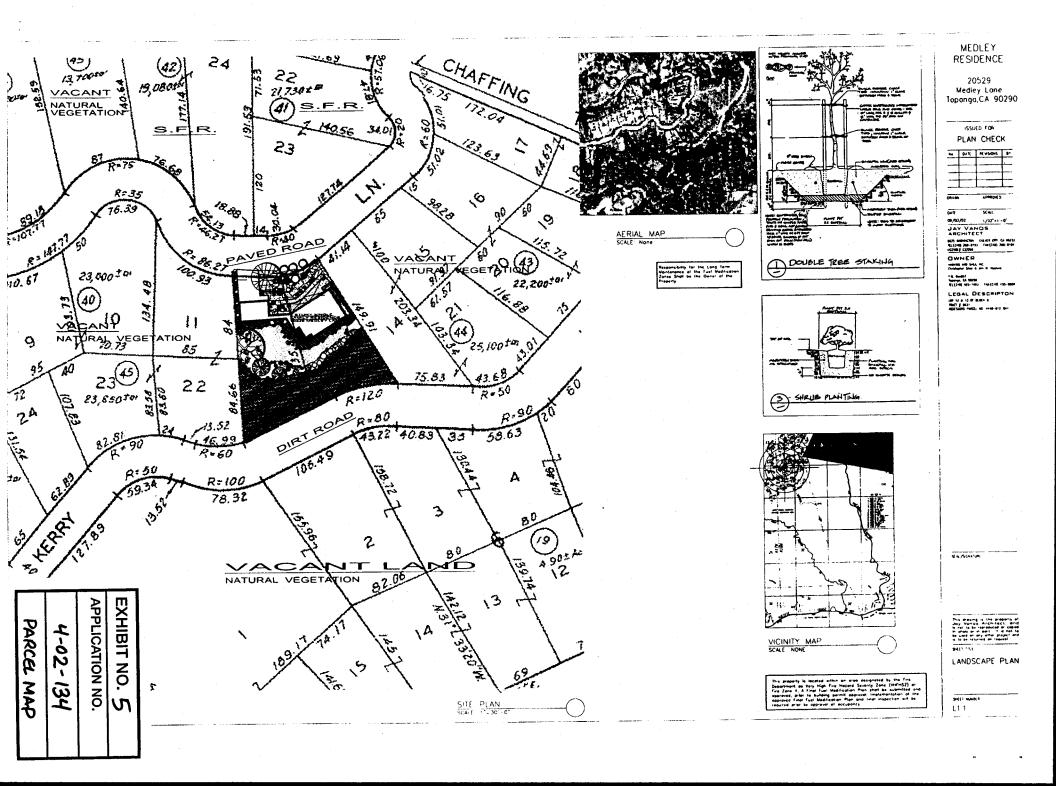


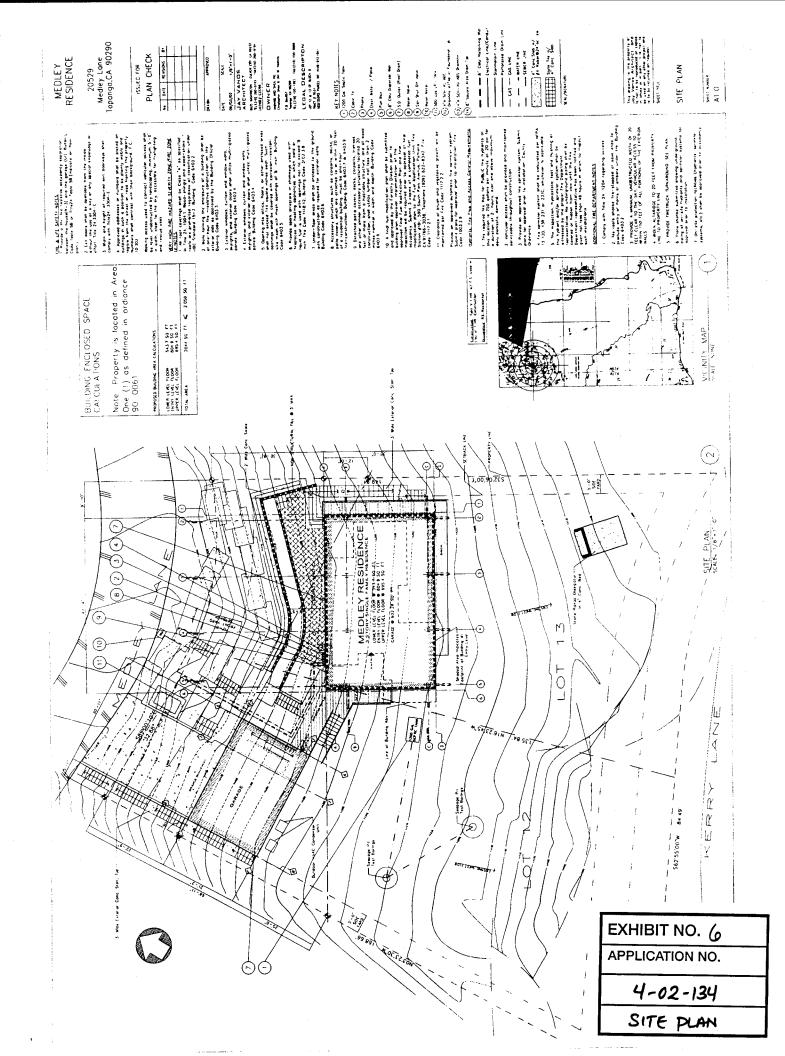
4-02-134 AERIAL DETRIL

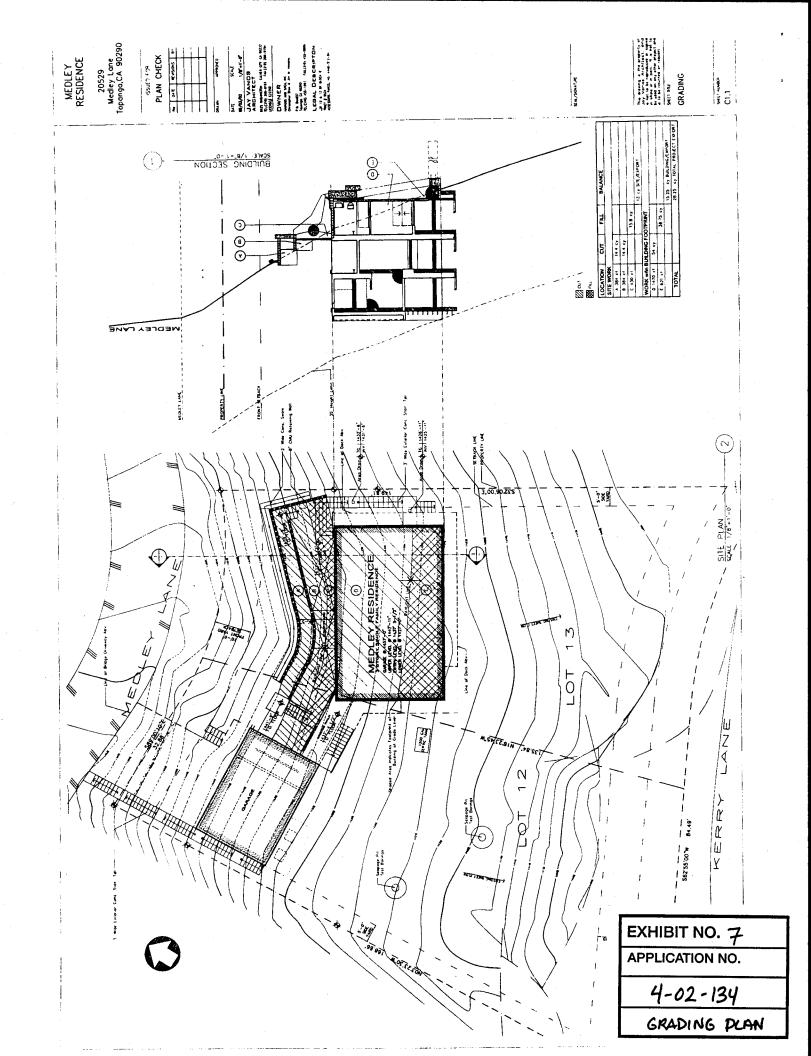


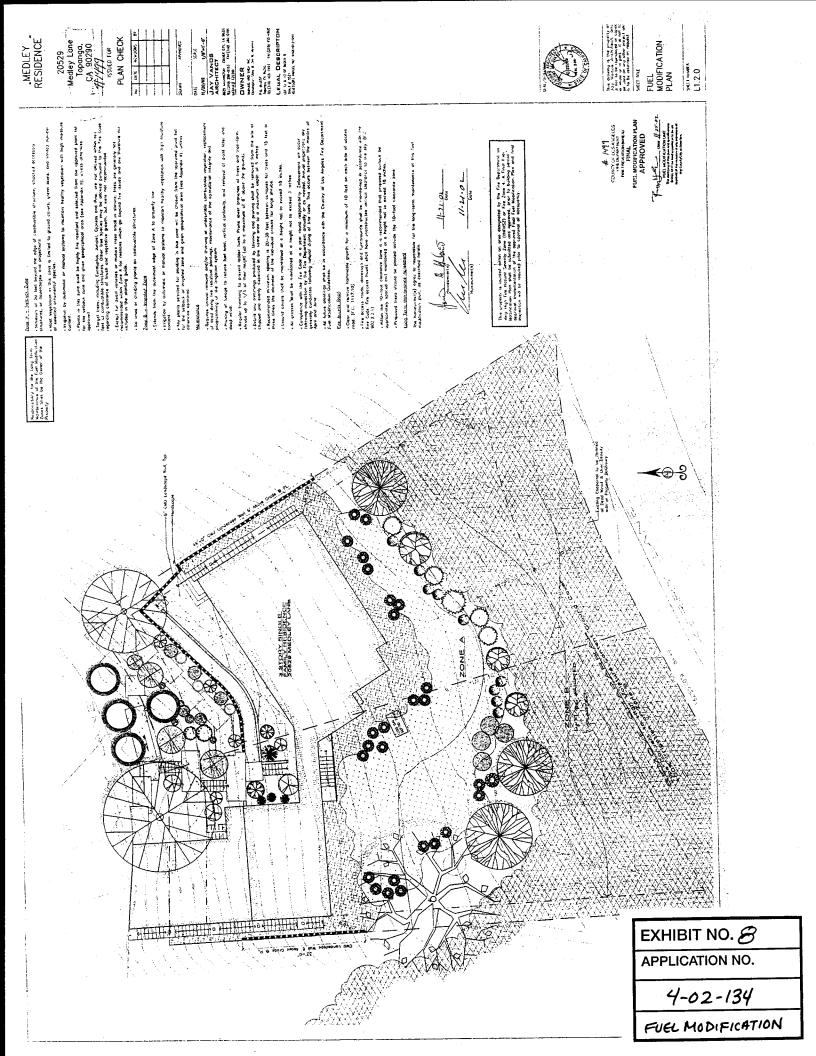
Approximate Brush Clearance Radii for proposed residence and garage, and existing/permitted residences.

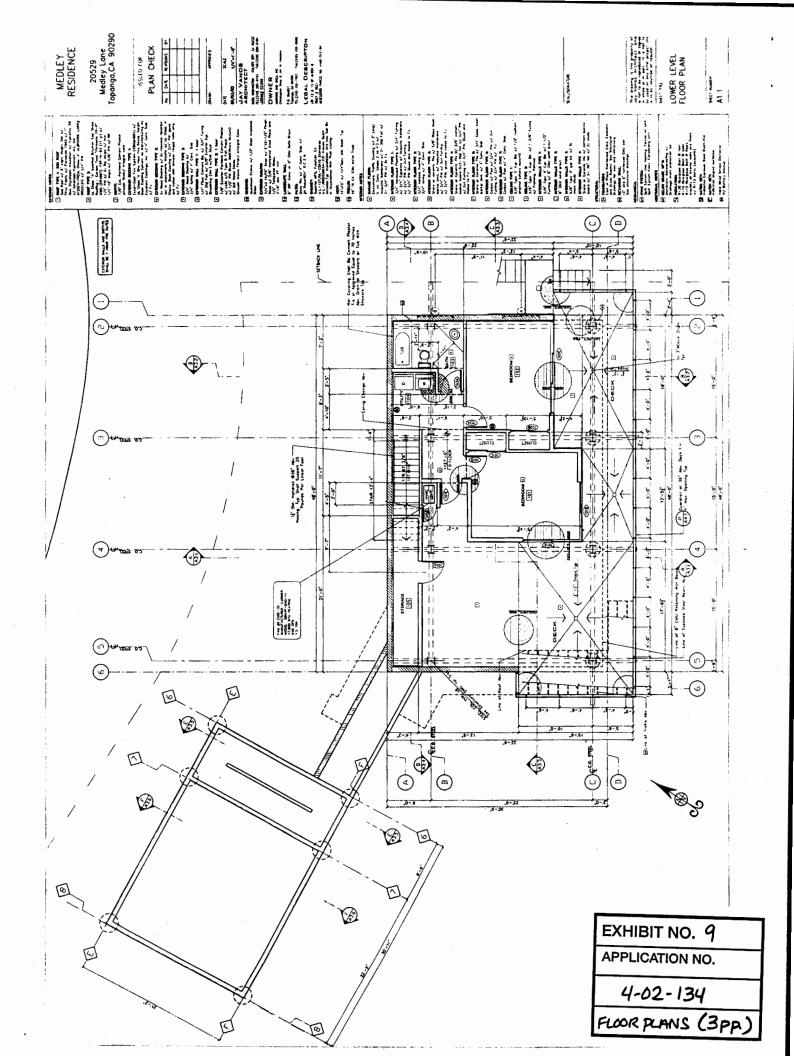
EXHIBIT NO. 4 APPLICATION NO. 4-02-134 BRUSH CLEPRANCE

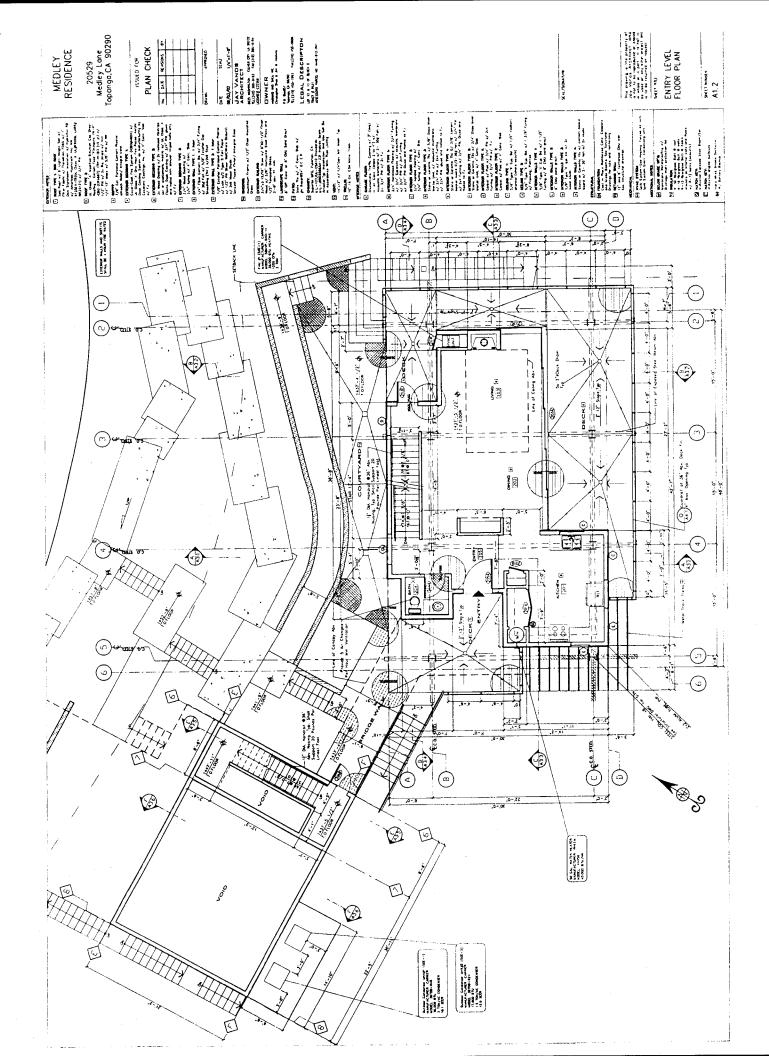


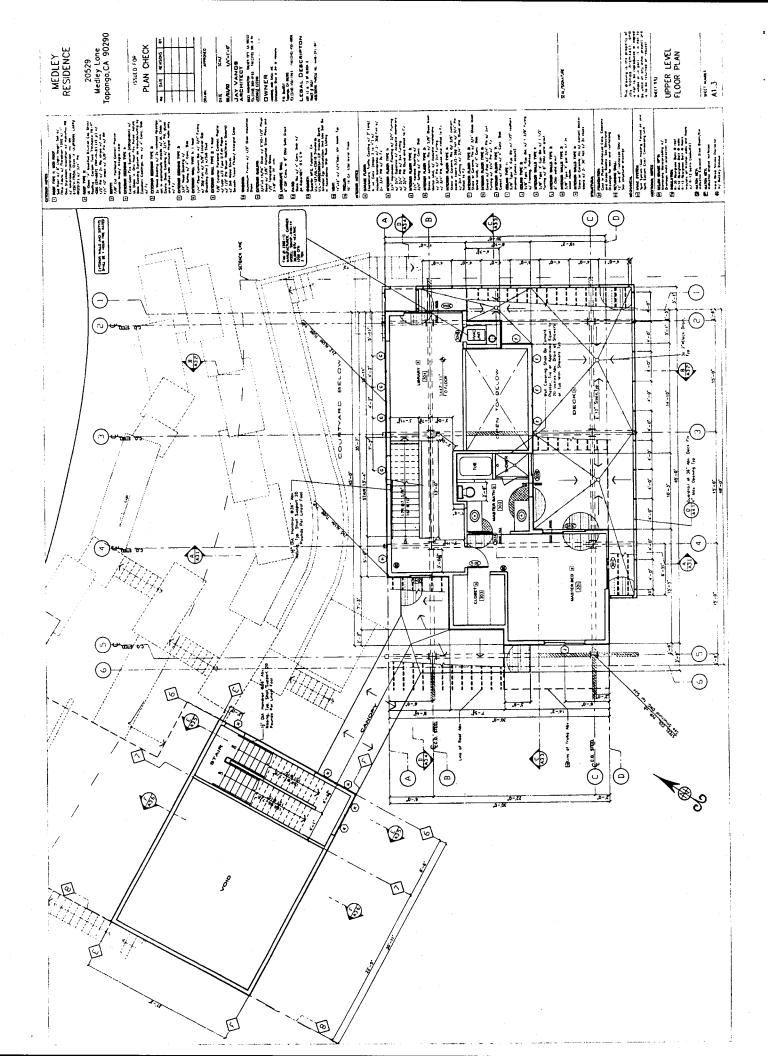


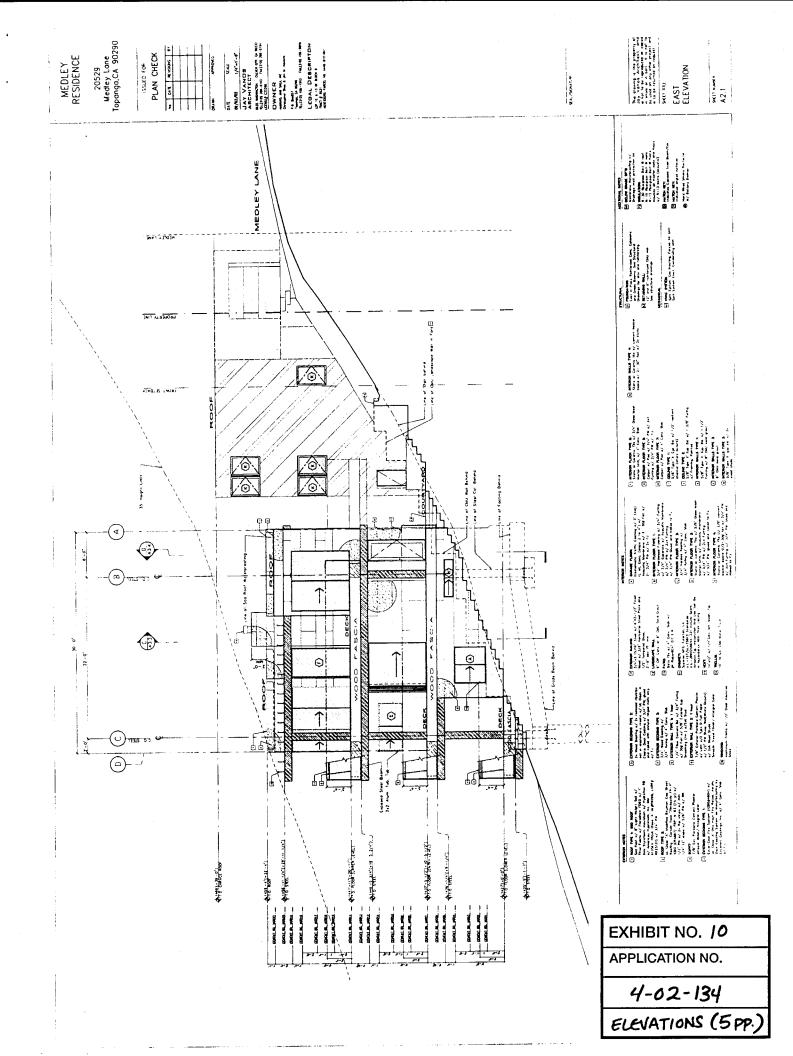


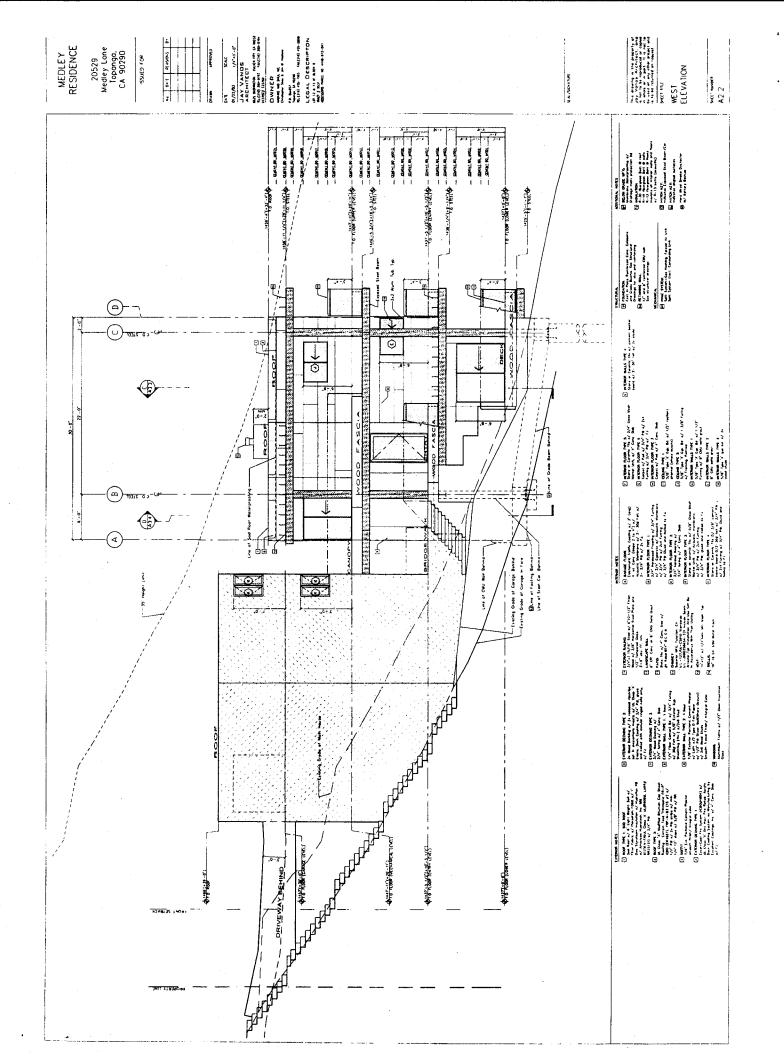


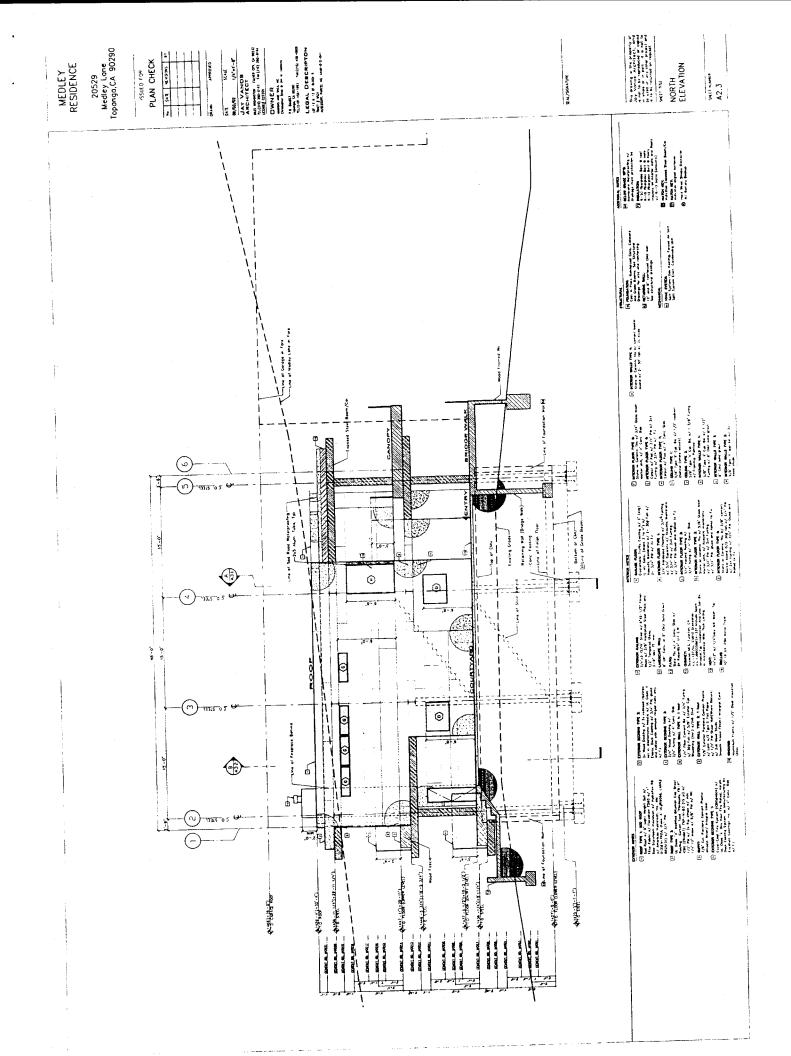


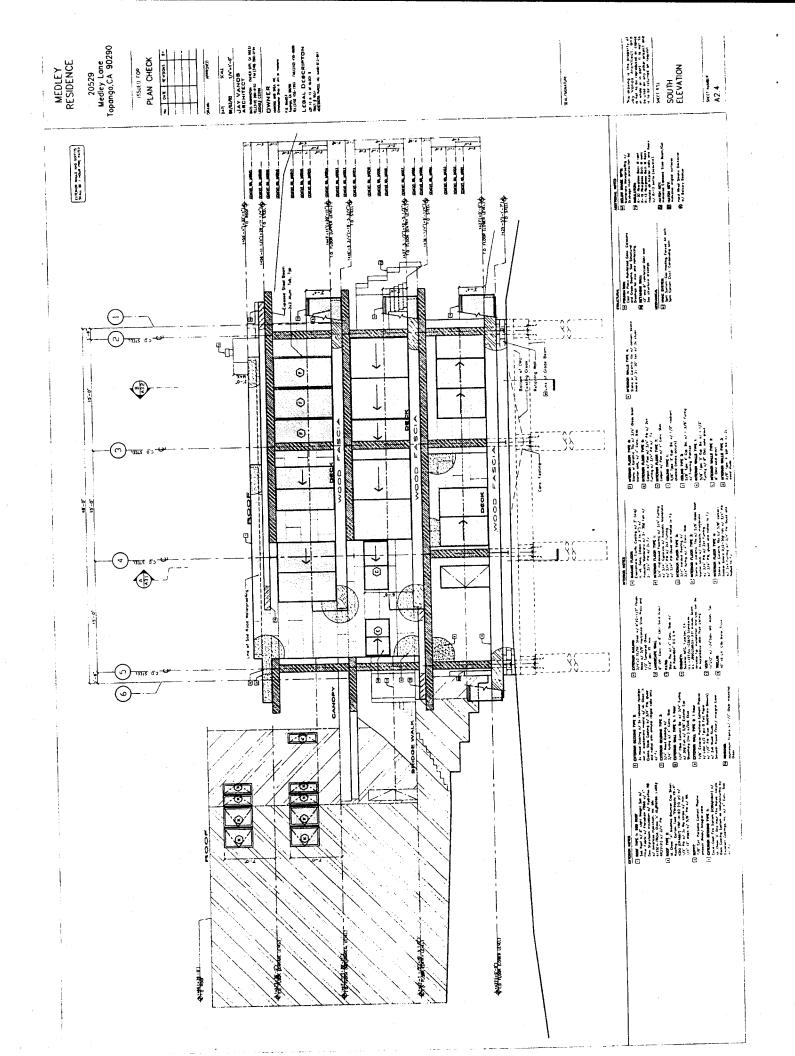


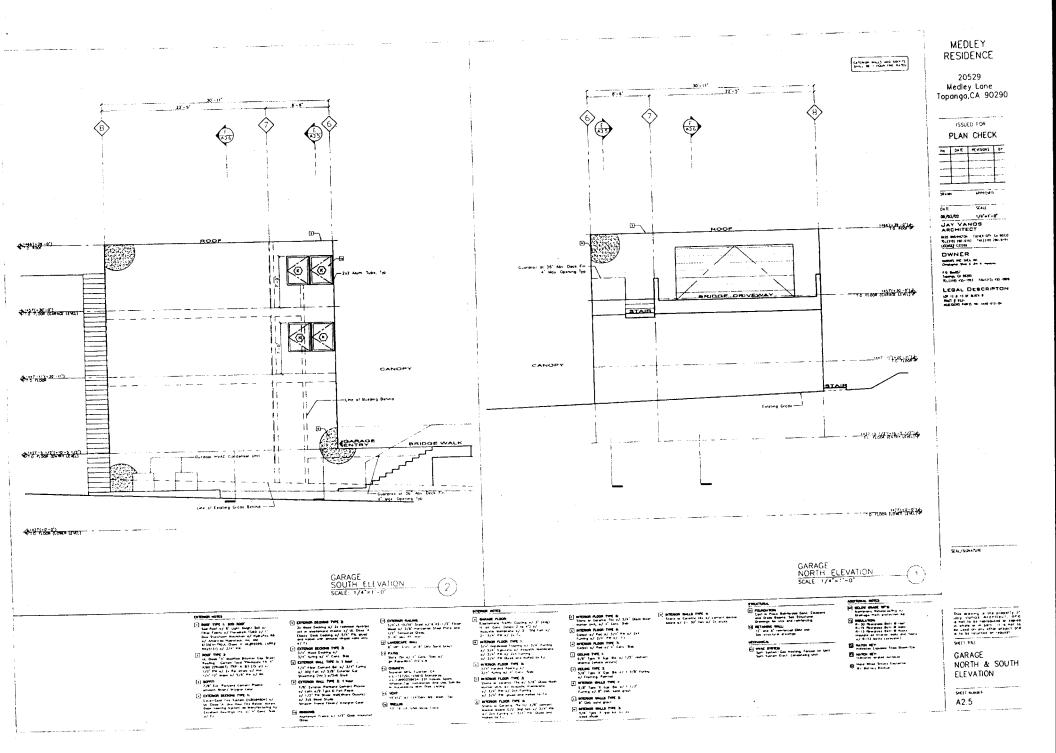




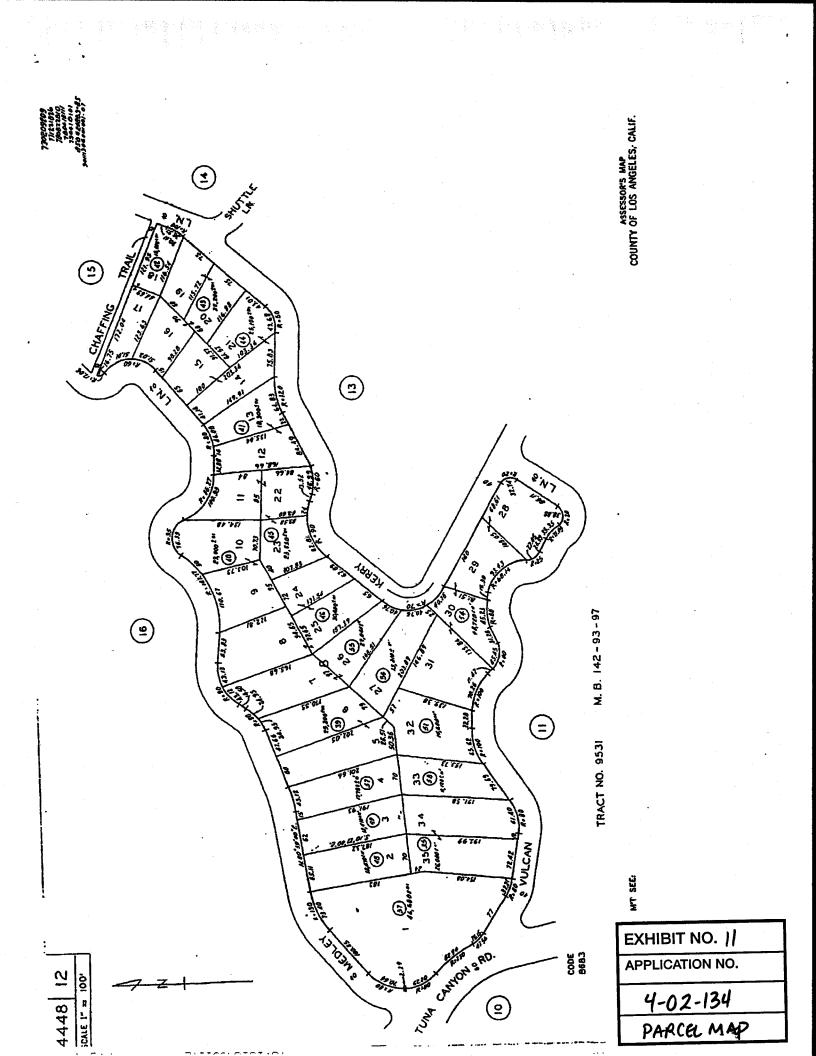








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May 1, 2003

Mr. Christopher Shea Hawkins & Shea, Inc. 1577 Old Topanga Canyon Road. Topanga, CA 90290

Regarding: Oak Tree Survey 20529 Medley Ln., Lots 12 & 13 Topanga, CA

Dear Chris,

At your request an Oak tree survey was performed at the above referenced sites on April 29, 2003. The purpose of this work was to survey the property and inventory all existing Quercus species. This survey includes quantity of trees, specifications, photos of each tree, and their mapped locations (refer to attached plans).

Essenče

The only species of oak trees identified on site were that of Quercus dumosa (California Scrub oak), most are multi-trunk with calipers ranging from 1/2" – 3" in diameter. Based on scale of plans provided all oak trees are located 30' or further from any proposed area of construction and construction will not encroach the "Protected Zone". Additionally there are no trees or woody shrubs within 30' of the entire area of proposed construction. Proposed construction will result in minimal impact to environment and surrounding habitat. Pursuant to Los Angeles county oak tree ordinance 22.56.2050 there exists no oak species within property line that exceed 8" in trunk diameter. Although not required it is recommended that construction fencing be placed around all oak species to insure their protection from any brush clearance or other activity.

Other plant species observed on site include Sambucas (Elderberry), Ceanothus, Prunus ilicifolia (Hollyleaf Cherry), Rhus integrifolia (Lemonade Berry), and Heteromeles arbutifolia (Toyon).

#### Quercus dumosa inventory

Tree #	Form Ht, spr	ead, caliper
#1	single trunk	10' x 10' x 3'
#2*	6 trunks 10 x 12	2' x 2-3" (Total caliper = 14")
#3	bush	3' x 3' x 1"
#4	bush	5' x 5' x 2"
#5	single trunk	5' x 4' x 3"
#6	3 trunks5' x 5'	x 1/2-3/4"
#7	4 trunks 10' x 1	0' x 2 @ 2", 2 @ 1"

\* Tree number two is located outside of property line.

EXHIBIT NO. 12
APPLICATION NO.
4-02-134
OAK TREE SURVEY

CUAST DISTRICT

erro Londfords - E. 19 Volley Villages CA 91807, Phone & Fax818,503 a22,

If you should have any questions or require services please contact me at the number listed below.

Sincerely, Arbor Essence

Kerry Norman ISA Certified Arborist # WC-3643 C-27 Landscape Contractor, Lic. #655745

11930 Chandler Boolgaud#10 Valley Village, CA 91607 Phone & Fax 818,506,6222

Habitat Assessment for Kerry Lane April 12, 2002 Steven Williams

APR 1 7 2003

CAUFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION SOUTH CENTRAL COAST DISTRICT

#### Field Observations:

Dates of field visits: March 22, April 10,11

#1 on Map (Interior of Kerry Loop along riparian corridor from spring to Shuttle Lane):

#### Erosional features:

No slides or gullying evident; sediment inputs to creek from seasonally imported road fill (Kerry Loop) could impact aquatic organisms.

The geology appears to be of sedimentary origin, with occasional sandstone outcrops above Kerry Lane.

#### Vegetation description:

The northern interior portion of the Kerry-Vulcan-Shuttle Lane Loop is composed of the California sycamore - coast live oak association (Sawyer, Keeler-Wolf). California sycamores require year-round root saturation, and the perennial spring above these trees has provided some of them with enough moisture to grow to maturity (approx.75 feet).

Although some of the sycamores are the tallest trees onsite, the CA live oak (Quercus agrifolia) provides the most cover along the riparian corridor. Bay laurel (Umbellularia californica), arroyo willow (Salix lasiolepis) and black walnut (Juglans californica) are also well represented in the upper strata of vegetation along the corridor.

The understory shrub layer is composed of elderberry (Sambucus mexicana), and interfacing chaparral species such as toyon (Heteromeles arbutifolia), holly-leaf cherry (Prunus ilicifolia), scrub oak (Quercus dumosa), greenbark ceanothus (Ceanothus spinosus), bigpod ceanothus (Ceanothus macrocarpus), laurel sumac (Malosma laurina), sugarbush (Rhus ovata) and chamise (Adenostoma fasciculatum).

The lower height strata is largely represented by canyon sunflower (Venegazia carpesioides), heart-leaved penstemon (Keckiella cordifolia), CA blackberry (Rubus ursinus), sticky monkeyflower (Mimulus auranticus), wild cucumber (Marah macrocarpus), poison oak (toxicodendron diversilobum), nightshade (Solanum sp.), giant wild rye (Leymus condensatus) and hedge nettle (Stachys bullata).

The area is surrounded in the upland areas by mixed series chaparral, varying according to slope and aspect.

#### Site Improvements:

The northwest (upslope) interior corner of Kerry Loop contains a 5 x 5 feet square by 6 feet deep concrete block water tank. It is fed continuously by a metal 1.5-inch pipe reportedly driven 20 feet horizontally into the hillside. The tank overflow runs downhill (slight grade) along the surface for about 15 meters before returning to the groundwater. The owner has used a hose to divert a trickle of water from the pipe to a small pit (3 ft. dia.) about 30 yards east. This pit is for

EXHIBIT NO. 13
APPLICATION NO.
4-02-134
HABITAT ASSESSMENT

frog habitat and is caged for protection from predators (personal communication,"Art" 4/11/02). It overflows into a small culvert that bisects earthen road, returning to riparian groundwater.

The area south of the spring (toward Vulcan) looks like it was cleared (bulldozed) long ago. It is open and park-like, with a giant three-trunked coast live-oak (combined dbh approx. 63") and a few mature sycamores. Native vegetation seems to be re-occupying the area; an ample seed source exists just upslope and across the road.

Below the spring about 25 yards, a dirt road composed of mounded earth, bisects the riparian area and continues northeast along the property, parallel to the riparian area, meeting with Vulcan Lane. It is lined with mature pine trees (Pinus sp.) approximately 50-60 ft. tall. More pines extend into the upland area (approx 50) and the historic understory, presumably chapparal, has largely been replaced by pine duff.

#### Non-native Invasive Plants:

There are also a number of non-native species utilizing this disturbed habitat. Some are milk thistle (Silybum marianum), geranium (Geranium molle), fennel (Foeniculum vulgare), horehound (Marrubium vulgare), mustard (Brassica sp.), bedstraw (Gallium sp.) and plantain (Plantago major). The severity of infestation is low for these species; they occur in disturbed sites and the natives are competing for habitat. Cape Ivy (Senecio mikanoides) is present along entire riparian corridor, sometimes blanketing the natives. This may be the upper extent of its distribution along this sub-watershed. This could be an important factor if CDPR attempts to control its spread along their property in a top-down control plan.

#2 on map (Below corner of Kerry and Shuttle Lane):

Partially cleared lot. Stream drops about 20 ft. at edge (dry waterfall). Views across Topanga Canyon to Eagle Rock. No houses visible.

#### Vegetation:

All same (as #1)except for these additions:

Ferns: Polypodium californicum, Aspidotis californica.

Others: mugwort (Artemisia douglasiana), vetch (Vicia sp.), popcorn flower (Emmananthe penduliflora), snowberry (Symphoricarpos mollis) Annual grasses in cleared area: Bromus madritensis, Bromus hordeaceous, Avena barbata.

A few tree tobacco (Nicotiana glauca) and hemlock.

#### Improvements:

20 x 30 m. cleared area with two conex boxes onsite. Brush, soil pushed to edge of stream.

#3 on map (Lockview Lane with riparian area near end): Narrow road with bulldozer parked at end. Vegetation similar to #1, sycamore and bay dominated riparian overstory with black walnut, elderberry and laurel sumac.

#### Vegetation:

(same as #1 and #2 except for these additions):

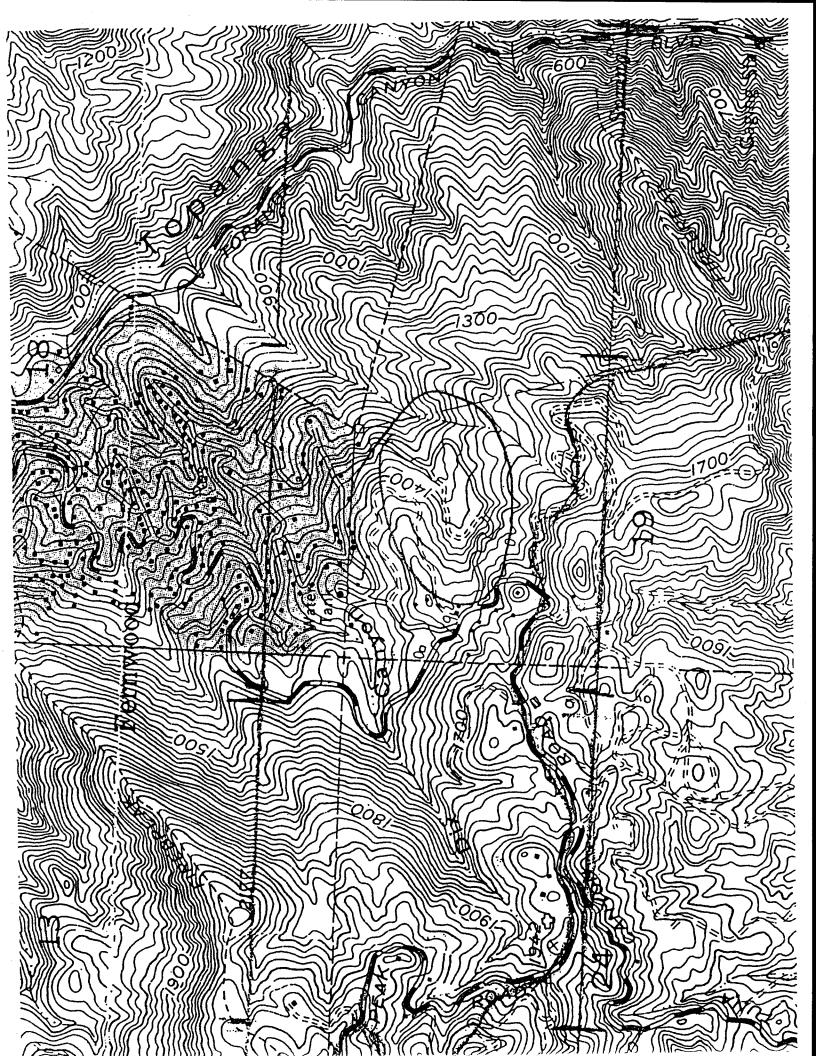
Black sage (salvia mellifera), two-tone everlasting (Gnaphalium bicolor), cobwebby thistle (Cirsium occidentale), vervain (Verbena lasiostachys), telegraph weed (Heterotheca grandiflora), caterpillar phacelia (Phacelia cicutaria), bush poppy (Dendromecon rigida), deerweed (Lotus scoparius), buckwheat (Eriogonum fasciculatum), CA brome (Bromus californica), chaparral currant (Ribes malvaceum ssp. viridifolium), Spanish broom (Spartium junceum)(few), Coyote brush (Baccharis pilularis).

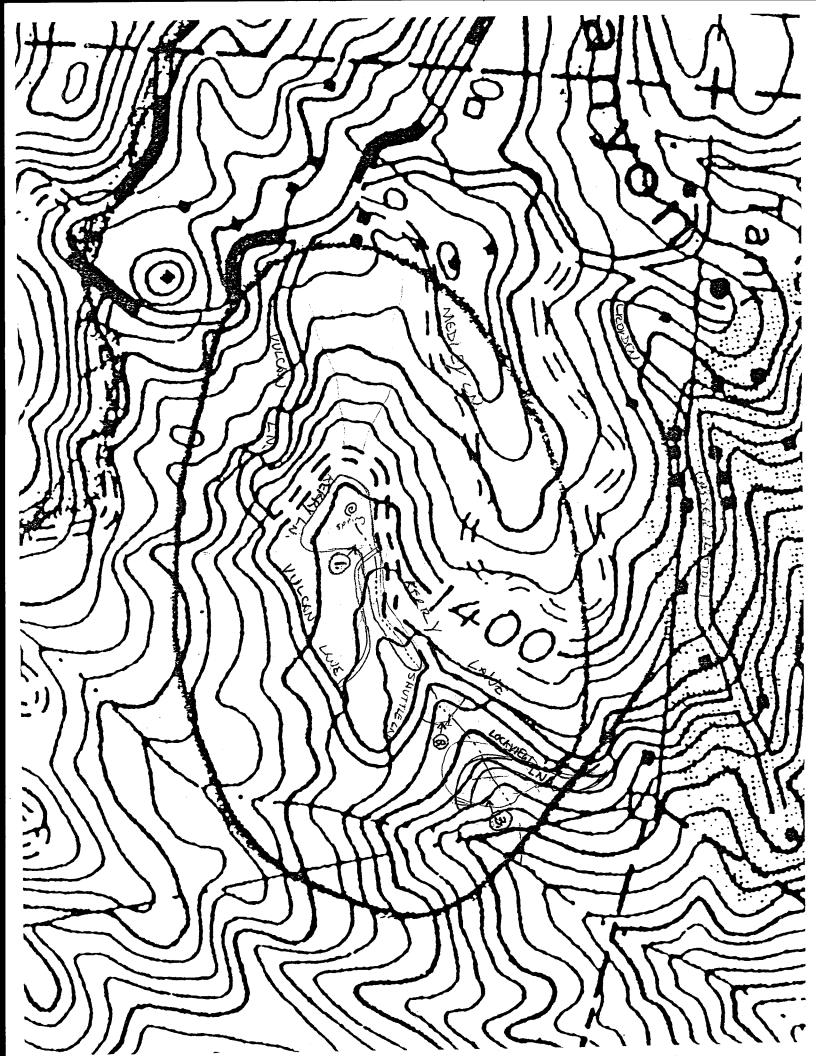
#### Wildlife: (For entire area)

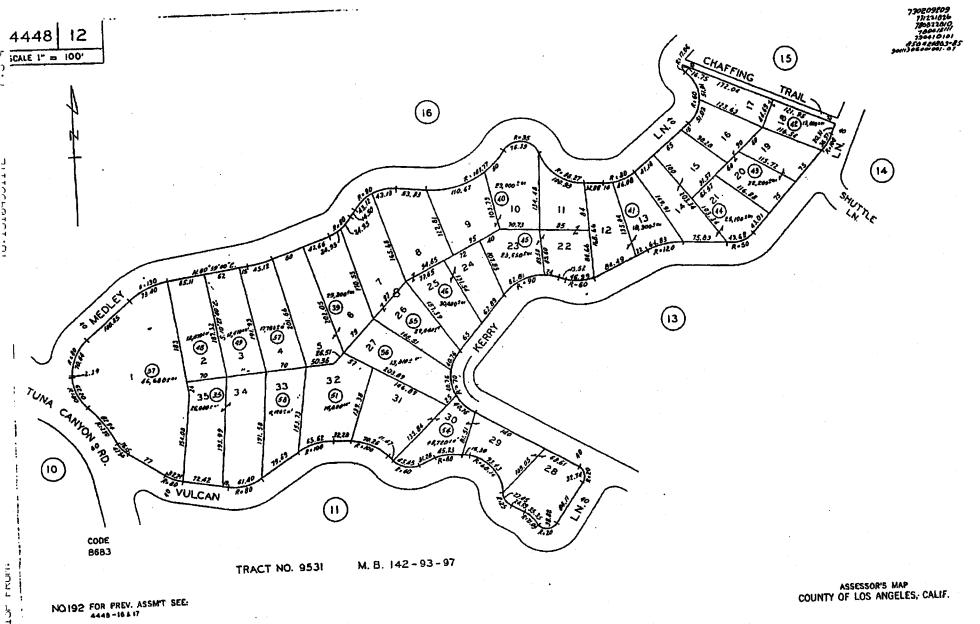
During my visits, I happened to observe a few species. On 4/11, after leaving the site, I drove around the Medley Lane loop road. On the lower section, just above Kerry Ln., a juvenile bobcat darted into the brush toward Kerry. On 4/10, a large Cooper's hawk landed in one of the pines adjacent to the riparian area. I also heard the calls of a Great-horned owl and some Pacific treefrogs (Hyla regilla).

Coyotes, brush rabbits and deer are found in most areas in Topanga, and it is likely that they use this site. There are local accounts of mountain lion sightings in the area. I spoke with a property owner ("Art", 4/11) and he gave me what sounded like a credible account of a recent sighting of a lion near his property.

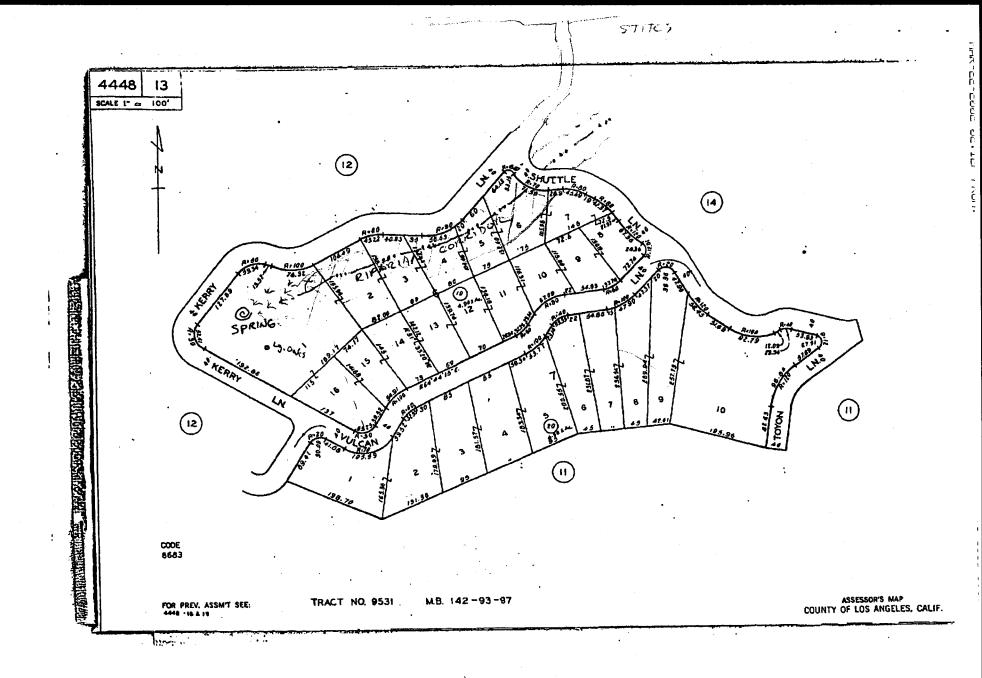
From the ocean to Fernwood, there are four blue-line stream corridors draining west to east into Topanga Creek. Of these, this unnamed stream has the gentlest topography, making it an ideal corridor for wildlife migration from the newly acquired Tuna Canyon property (MRT) to the recently expanded Topanga Canyon State Park. It crosses Highway 27 with a large culvert, providing a safe link between canyons.

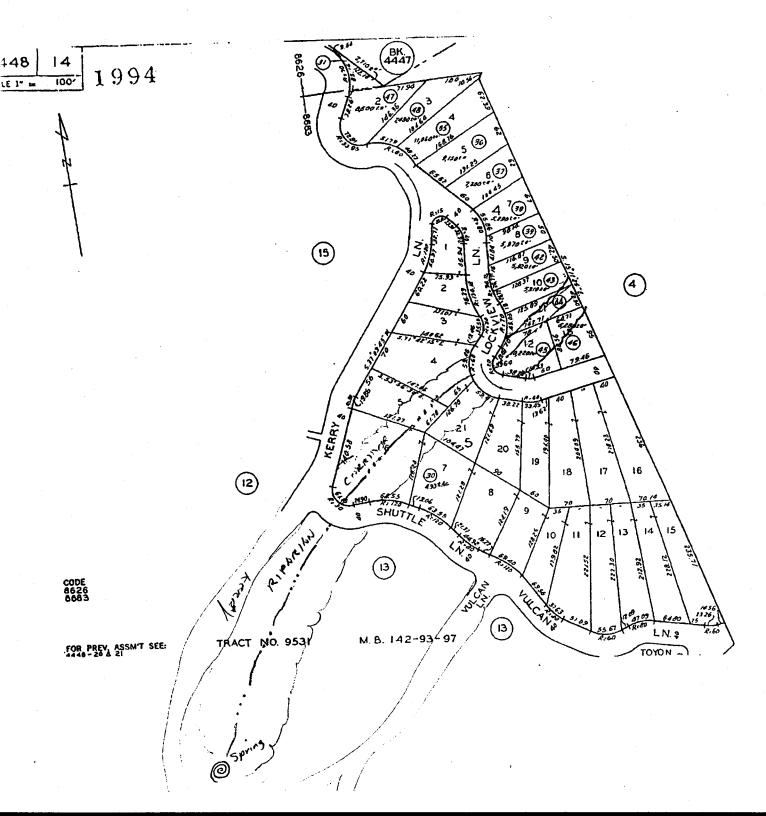






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ASSESSOR'S MAP COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF. Standard Field Observation Sheet(To be customized by each group/agency)

Kerry Line Spring	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Sampler: 5 WILLING
7	h of Sample:	Photo(s):
[Wet weather is precipitation in	n source area within pas	t 48 hours]
<ul> <li>2. Cloudy (no blue showing)</li> <li>3. Foggy</li> <li>4. Drizzle/trace</li> <li>5. Rain</li> <li>Type of sample: Type of sample: 0. non</li> <li>2. mixed fresh/ocean</li> <li>3. wave wash ponds</li> <li>4. surf or all saline</li> <li>(2) trick</li> <li>3. stea</li> </ul>	of flow: ne ided (no flow between s)/stagnant kle or intermittent ady	Wind direction: Amount: 0none/slight 1. light/moderate (< 15 miles per hour) 2. heavy (> 15 miles per hour) Velocity (measured): Has tide allowed interaction between channel water and ocean water in last 24 hours? (Y or N) Wave height: (½[crest to trough]) Beauford scale:
Water Temperature: pH:	/L): meter	le units for all measured parameters) paper field kit pen (circle one) field kit (circle one) field kit (circle one)
2. cloudy (sediment) 3. murky (algae, etc.) Measured:(units)	<ol> <li>Colorless</li> <li>Brownish</li> <li>Reddish</li> <li>Greenish</li> <li>Bluish</li> <li>Olive greenish</li> <li>Yellowish</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>None</li> <li>1. sewage</li> <li>2. fishy (except near ocean)</li> <li>3. musty</li> <li>4. chlorine</li> </ul>
0. none 1. separated bubbles 2. some (<½inch high) 3. much (>½ inch high) 3. much (>½ inch high)	e 1. float (<5%) 2. float lerate (5-25%) 3. attac (25-50%)	Igae type:Tar balls:ing at surface1. >6" aparting in water column2. 1-6" apartched3. <1" apart to continuous
Type (% items not tota % organic (food) %plastics (cups, str wrappers, bottl %recyclables-not pl (paper, %large items(applia % cigarette butts	l volume of items): raws, bags, es, junk) lastic , glass bottles, metal)	NATURAL DEBRIS Number dead or entangled animals Number fecal matter (pet droppings) Number bird droppings: Number pieces natural debris (wood,kelp, etc): [Per reporting area] Evidence of dumping (Y or N):
	[Wet weather is precipitation in         Current weather:	e:

#### Topanga Lagoon and Creek Water Quality Study Coastal Conservancy Grant November 2000 – December 2001

Observers:	SWI	LL	Im	٢

Date: 4/11/02

Moon phase: New 1st Half 3rd Date of last rain:\_\_\_\_\_Bacteria collected: Yes No

Lagoon Entrance condition: Open Closed Salinity\_\_\_\_ppt Tidal stage:\_\_\_\_\_

Tide board info: h		the second s	Low tide_		-	
Calibration Information: YSI DO Meter 55 calibrated? Nes No Time: 2.20						
Meter	Time	Standa	rd Value	Initial reading		
					to:	_
PH 7 (required)	2:20	7.0		7.1	7.0	
PH 4 or 10		4.0 of 1	0.0			_
refractometer		0		0		_
Conductivity		715		745	718	
Elevation		)'	300'			
Parameter	Topanga	Lagoon	Bridge 1	VIM2.2	Notes/ PCH Bridge	
	Kerry L	n. Spring	TC-Bive	Time Chigos	info kerry Spring we	![
Time of sampling	31	5	21	50	3:25	
Depth at station	pipe f	ll Cm	12	cm	~6'	
Grab sample	Bottle #	12	Bottle #	8	4	
Bottom sample	Bottle #					
Air Temp	6	22 C	2	3.5 C	22	
Water Temp	15.	9 C	14	.5 C	16.0	
salinity	·),_	5 ppt		ppt	1.5	
pH	7	0	7	<u>,4</u>	7.2	
Conductivity	110	28	-	740	1120	
Dissolved Oxygen		Mg/l	2.34	7 Mg/l	6.73 C	5ch.
% algae cover	falgae h	ipa		Z	Jozz	
surface	end of y	nip-				
attached	green		() dvagerfly	lance	•	
color/type						
Nitrates as Nitroge	n	ppm		ppm	0	
Ammonia -Nitroge	the second s	ppm	0	ppm	Ò	
Phosphates		ppm		ppm		
Turbidity	.49	NTU	1.06	NTU	.50	

I reviewed this data for accuracy\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: Fish seen? Condition of area under bridge? Sedimentation? Water level on E side?

Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal

Prepared by the Kerry Lane Protection Project April 2002



For more information, please contact the Kerry Lane Protection Project 20110 Observation Drive Topanga, CA 90290 310-455-9766

EXHIBIT NO. 14
APPLICATION NO.
4-02-134
ACQUISITION PROPOSAL

Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal

Contents

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IV.	Kerry / Vulcan Lane Unique Ecological Significance	5
V.	Kerry / Vulcan Lane Adjacency to Topanga State Park	6
VI.	Geographical Description	6
VII.	Conclusion	7
VIII.	Appendices	8

Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal



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The Kerry Lane/Vulcan Lane loop is a little-known natural gem on the edge of one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the Santa Monica Mountains. The last unpaved county-maintained road in Los Angeles County, Kerry Lane and the surrounding area is also one of the few remaining undeveloped, open space areas still in private ownership in Topanga Canyon.

For decades, local residents and visitors from other parts of Topanga have come to Kerry Lane to hike, stroll, bicycle and admire the flora and fauna. With its year round natural spring and one of the heaviest yearly rainfalls in the region, the .9-mile loop trail attracts a wide variety of wildlife, wildflowers and other native plants, and offers the chance to enjoy this wildlife in a setting that also has spectacular views of the canyon.

In recent years, development has moved closer to the Kerry Lane loop, but so have the boundaries of Topanga State Park. Recently, California State Parks made a major purchase of 1,659 acres to add to the State Park, which is now directly adjacent to privately held parcels adjacent to Kerry Lane. While the desirability of local real estate poses a threat to this lovely little oasis, the Kerry Lane Protection Project sees a golden opportunity for a conservancy or park agency to acquire Kerry Lane to connect to the new park, preserve its pristine beauty forever, and provide access and enjoyment to the public.

# Vision

The vision held collectively by KLPP and its supporters is for the permanent preservation of the interior of the Kerry loop, and of parcels adjacent to both Kerry and Vulcan Lanes and the new Topanga State Park. The vision includes not only ecological and watershed preservation but also creates public access to a large and presently inaccessible area of Topanga State Park.



Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal



Background

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In 2001, neighbors of Kerry Lane learned that the LA County Department of Public Works planned to pave the dirt road loop, ostensibly in order to mitigate erosion. In response, a group of residents came together to form the Kerry Lane Protection Project, and succeeded in pressuring the County to discontinue the paving plan.

While the KLPP continues to work with County officials to find environmentally acceptable approaches to the problem of erosion, we have a broader vision. KLPP believes that long-term human and ecological interests would be best served by the transfer of land around the Kerry/Vulcan Lane loops into public ownership. KLPP is confident that when the beauty and biological diversity of this property becomes known, land conservancies and other agencies will agree. Given the relatively small amount of land, we feel our goal is economically feasible as well as environmentally desirable. Topanga State Park has long held a triangle-shaped portion of the State Park that exists to the west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Some locals know this area as the "orphan triangle" due to the fact that there is no public access, and there are no park facilities in this area. The new purchase of the Lower Topanga portion of the State Park does not remedy this lack of access and facilities. The entire upper portion of the Lower Canyon purchase will remain relatively inaccessible to the public unless some sort of minimal access is created near Kerry Lane.

# Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal Unique Ecological Significance

Kerry Lane is ecologically unique in several ways. The Kerry/Vulcan Loop is relatively level, lush plateau surrounded by very rugged, steep terrain. In the interior of the Kerry Loop exists a 'blue line' spring known as Sperling Well. This is a natural spring that was tapped between 1930 and 1950 for water in the local area. The remains of an old pump-house are still in place. Water flows freely in the area even during severe drought condition, creating a small wetland that is frequented by, and sustains, a wide variety of wildlife. During the height of the last severe drought in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the spring remained active and evidence of frequent visits by a variety of wildlife was observed. A water source of this type at this elevation (approximately 1600 feet) is rare. Please see Appendix B, "Habitat Assessment" for more detailed information.

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#### Wildlife Sightings on Kerry Lane and Nearby Area

The following are sightings observed by local residents over the years in the Kerry/Vulcan area:

#### **Birds:**

See Appendix C.

#### Mammals:

Mountain Lion **Bobcat** Mule Deer **Brush** Rabbit California Ground Squirrel Raccoon Pocket Gopher Dusky-footed Woodrat

#### **Reptiles:**

Pacific Rattlesnake Coral (Mountain) King Snake Gopher Snake Common King Snake Western Fence Lizard Alligator Lizard

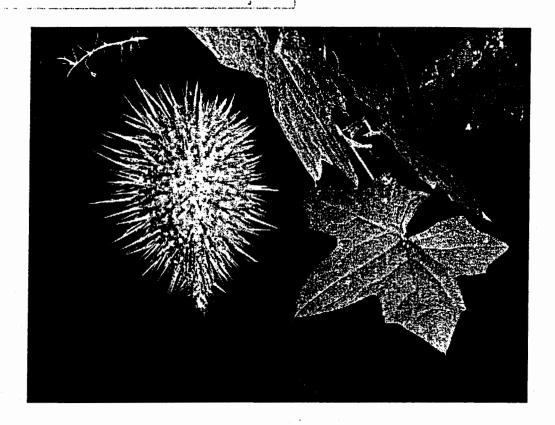
#### **Amphibians:**

Pacific Tree Frog Newts (still trying to identify)

#### **Rare Creature:**

Luminodesmous Sequoiensis (Bioluminescent Centipede) (Observation being confirmed.)

Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal



# Adjacency to Topanga State

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Unimproved private property immediately adjacent to Kerry Lane is adjacent to Topanga State Park. An existing officially registered trail (Terry's Trail) leads into the State Park and connects to trails that connect to the State Park east of Topanga Canyon Blvd., and to others that lead all the way to the lower canyon and coastal area to the west of Topanga Canyon Blvd. Kerry Lane is uniquely situated to provide access to this remote portion of Topanga State Park.

Geographical Description

The area that KLPP hopes a public land agency to acquire is approximately 22.5 acres near the western end of Topanga Canyon. This land is divided into roughly 30 small parcels. The area is immediately contiguous with the new State Park acquisition on this area's southern border.

Running through this property are Kerry Lane and Vulcan Lane. These unpaved County roads constitute .7 mile from the beginning of Kerry Lane at Observation to the end of Vulcan Lane at Tuna Canyon Road at the extreme northern point of this potential acquisition.

Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal

Because of the location of this area, public access could be achieved to the new State Park. Without this acquisition no public access to the northern end of the new State Park is possible. Also public access is achieved from Vulcan Lane to the myriad of trails that run through the new State Park.

Many spectacular views of Topanga State Park can be seen from Kerry and Vulcan Lanes and from the trails that wind through the State Park all the way to the Pacific Ocean. From the lowest point to Tuna Canyon this land elevates about 450 feet and includes a pleasant grade for walking or hiking.

Kerry Lane divides after .2 mile from Observation Drive into a fork, the left option becoming Vulcan and the right remaining Kerry Lane. These two Lanes reconnect after they each travel another .25 mile. They form a loop that surrounds 13 beautiful acres of park like land that includes over 50 pine trees, dozens of huge sycamores and oaks and dozens of other species of indigenous trees and plants. Vulcan Lane continues another .25 mile up to Tuna Canyon Road.

The attached maps indicate the details of the area around Kerry and Vulcan Lane with specific map book, page and parcel numbers. Two of the parcels are currently owned by the Mountain Restoration Trust while the others are privately owned.

Conclusion

The Kerry Lane Protection Project members believe that the Kerry Lane Loop and adjacent properties would constitute an excellent opportunity for preservation of an area that is unique in several ways. We welcome inquiries regarding the status of the properties and are prepared to assist in any way to facilitate transfer of the properties to a land conservancy.



## April 2002

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Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal

Appendix A

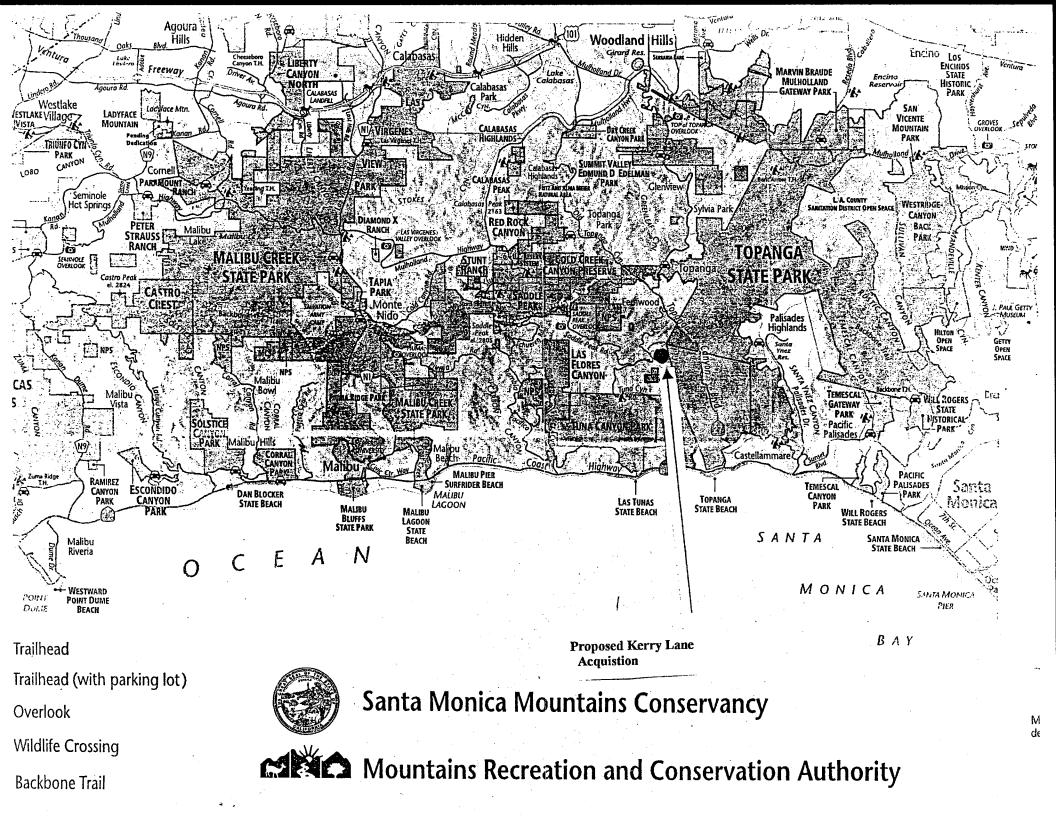
Maps

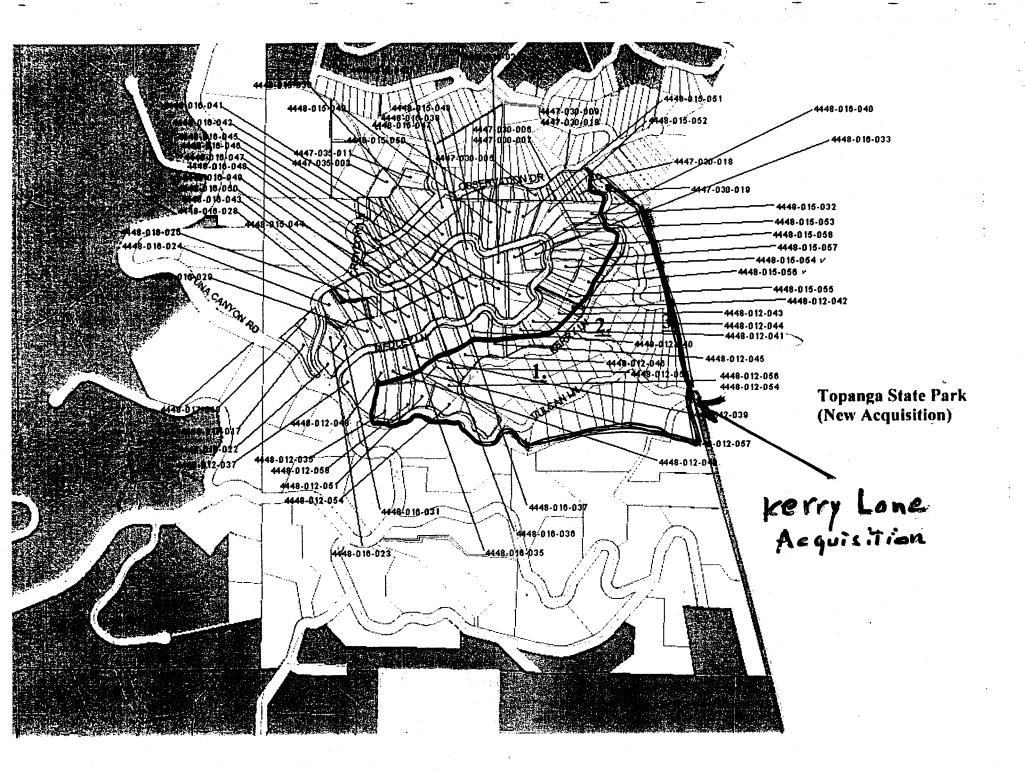
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# **Appendix B**: Excerpts from Habitat Assessment for Kerry Lane by Steve Williams, Staff Conservation Biologist, Resource Conservation District:

#### Field Observations:

#### Dates of field visits: March 22, April 10,11

#### Wildlife: (For entire area)

From the ocean to Fernwood, there are four blue-line stream corridors draining west to east into Topanga Creek. Of these, this unnamed stream has the gentlest topography, making it an ideal corridor for wildlife migration from the newly acquired Tuna Canyon property (MRT) to the recently expanded Topanga Canyon State Park. It crosses Highway 27 with a large culvert, providing a safe link between canyons.

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#1 on Map (Interior of Kerry Loop along riparian corridor from spring to Shuttle Lane):

#### Erosional features:

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The geology appears to be of sedimentary origin, with occasional sandstone outcrops above Kerry Lane.

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#2 on map (Below corner of Kerry and Shuttle Lane):

Partially cleared lot. Stream drops about 20 ft. at edge (dry waterfall). Views across Topanga Canyon to Eagle Rock. No houses visible.

#### Vegetation:

All same (as #1) except for these additions:

Ferns: Polypodium californicum, Aspidotis californica.

Others: mugwort (Artemisia douglasiana), vetch (Vicia sp.), popcorn flower (Emmananthe penduliflora), snowberry (Symphoricarpos mollis) Annual grasses in cleared area: Bromus madritensis, Bromus hordeaceous, Avena barbata.

A few tree tobacco (Nicotiana glauca) and hemlock.

**#3 on map** (Lockview Lane with riparian area near end):

Narrow road with bulldozer parked at end. Vegetation similar to #1, sycamore and bay dominated riparian overstory with black walnut, elderberry and laurel sumac.

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(same as #1 and #2 except for these additions):

Black sage (salvia mellifera), two-tone everlasting (Gnaphalium bicolor), cobwebby thistle (Cirsium occidentale), vervain (Verbena lasiostachys), telegraph weed (Heterotheca grandiflora), caterpillar phacelia cicutaria), bush poppy (Dendromecon rigida), deerweed (Lotus scoparius), buckwheat (Eriogonum fasciculatum), CA brome (Bromus californica), chaparral currant (Ribes malvaceum ssp. viridifolium), Spanish broom (Spartium junceum)(few), Coyote brush (Baccharis pilularis).

Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal

Appendix C

# The Birds of Kerry Lane

**Common Name** 

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Red-shouldered Hawk

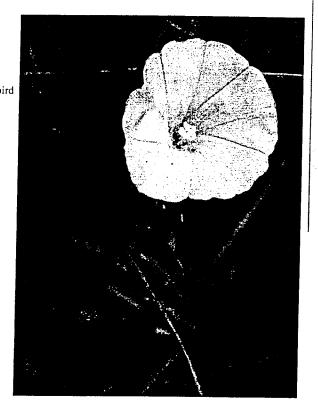
Turkey Vulture Cooper's Hawk

Red-tailed Hawk

#### Scientific Name

Cathartes aura Accipiter cooperii Accipiter striatus Buteo jamaicensis Buteo lineatus Falco sparverius Callipepla californica Columba fasciata Zenaida macroura Geococcyx californianus Tyto alba Bubo virginianus Otus kennicottii Phalaenoptilus nuttallii Aeronautes saxatalis Archilochus alexandri Calypte anna Calypte costae Selasphorus rufus Selasphorus sasin Colaptes auratus Melanerpes formicivorus Picoides nuttallii Empidonax difficilis Sayornis nigricans Myiarchus cinerascens Tyrannus verticalis Hirundo pyrrhonota Tachycineta thalassina Aphelocoma coerulescens Corvus brachyrhynchos Corvus corax Parus gambeli Parus inornatus Psaltriparus minimus Sitta carolinensis Certhia americana Catherpes mexicanus Thryomanes bewickii Troglodytes aedon Regulus calendula Catharus guttatus Turdus migratorius Chamaea fasciata Mimus polyglottos Toxostoma redivivum Bombycilla cedrorum Phainopepla nitens Sturnus vulgaris Dendroica coronata Dendroica petechia Dendroica townsendi Wilsonia pusilla Piranga ludoviciana Passerina amoena Pheucticus melanocephalus Junco hyemalis Melospiza melodia Pipilo crissalis Spizella passerina Zonotrichia leucophrys Icterus cucullatus Icterus galbula Molothrus ater Carduelis psaltria Carduelis tristis Carpodacus mexicanus Passer domesticus

American Kestrel California Quail Band-tailed Pigeon Mourning Dove Greater Roadrunner Barn Owl Great Horned Owl Western Screech-Owl Common Poorwill White-throated Swift Black-chinned Hummingbird Anna's Hummingbird Costa's Hummingbird Rufous Hummingbird Allen's Hummingbird Northern Flicker Acorn Woodpecker Nuttall's Woodpecker Pacific-slope Flycatcher Black Phoebe Ash-throated Flycatcher Western Kingbird Cliff Swallow Violet-green Swallow Scrub Jay American Crow Common Raven Mountain Chickadee Plain Titmouse Bushtit White-breasted Nuthatch Brown Creeper Canyon Wren Bewick's Wren House Wren Ruby-crowned Kinglet Hermit Thrush American Robin Wrentit Northern Mockingbird California Thrasher Cedar Waxwing Phainopepla European Starling Yellow-rumped Warbler Yellow Warbler Townsend's Warbler Wilson's Warbler Western Tanager Lazuli Bunting Black-headed Grosbeak Dark-eyed Junco Song Sparrow California Towhee Chipping Sparrow White-crowned Sparrow Hooded Oriole Northern Oriole Brown-headed Cowbird Lesser Goldfinch American Goldfinch House Finch House Sparrow



Kerry Lane Preservation Proposal

Appendix D

### **KLPP** Contacts

#### **Co-Chairs:**

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#### Members:

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Mazur, Dan McLaughlin, Susan Penner, Max Pugliese, Roger Rider, Julia Shapiro, Ken & Kelly Storer, Dorothy & Dennis Willahan, Barbara





Photo 1. Upper portion of roject site in foreground, with chaparral vegetation and riparian area below. View is to the southwest

EXHIBIT NO. 15 APPLICATION NO. 4-02-134 PHOTOS



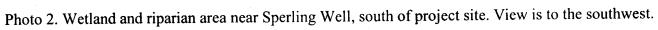




Photo 3. Chaparral habitat on lower portion of project site and Kerry Lane. Riparian corridor is to right of photo. View is to the east.



Photo 4. Project site, with surrounding development and chaparral habitat. Topanga State Park is in the distance. View is to the east.