

SCREENING FORM FOR LOW-EFFECT HCP DETERMINATIONS

I. Project Information

A. Project name:

504 Lockewood Lane and 701 Sugar Pine Subdivisions Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

B. Affected species:

Mount Hermon June beetle (*Polyphylla barbata*) (federally endangered)

C. Project size (in stream miles and acres):

The 504 Lockewood Lane project site measures 0.855 acre, while the nearby (1 block away) 701 Sugar Pine project site measures 0.903 acre. Construction at both project sites would disturb a total of 1.758 acres. This includes 1.569 acres of Ponderosa pine and Coast Live Oak forest and 0.189 acre of existing residential development, the latter which would be razed to accommodate the proposed project.

D. Brief project description including minimization and mitigation plans:

Mr. Rick Hochler of Hochler Construction, proposes to raze an existing home at the 504 Lockewood Lane site and then subdivide the 0.855 acre parcel into three lots and build one new single-family residences on each new lot. Mr. Hochler also proposes to subdivide the 0.903-acre 701 Sugar Pine site into three parcels and build one new single-family residence on each new lot (i.e., the project proposes to build a total of 6 new units on the 2 parcels). Development would result in removal of 1.758 acres of habitat known or presumed to be occupied by the Mount Hermon June beetle (MHJB). For this reason Mr. Hochler (the applicant) has applied for an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act for the MHJB.

The applicant will purchase prior to permit issuance 1.758 conservation credits for the MHJB from the Ben Lomond Sandhills Preserve of the Zayante Sandhills Conservation Bank to mitigate for the loss of habitat at both project sites. Minimization measures include: a) a construction monitor to oversee construction and provide worker educational awareness training; b) installation of temporary fencing to demarcate the construction work area from the maintained habitat area around selected trees at the property; and c) contractors and employees will participate in an orientation program to learn about the biology of the MHJB and the terms of this HCP. In addition, the trees protected from construction activities will be incorporated into the landscaping of the new homes.

II. Does the HCP fit the following low-effect criteria? *The answer must be "yes" to all three*

questions below for a positive determination. Each response should include an explanation.

A. Are the effects of the HCP minor or negligible on federally listed, proposed, or candidate species and their habitats covered under the HCP prior to implementation of the minimization and mitigation measures?

Yes, the effects are minor or negligible.

Mount Hermon June beetles are known to occur at nearby locations in the surrounding Collado Drive residential neighborhood and at the proposed project site. Abundance of the beetle within the Project Area is unknown, but 1.093 acres of suitable habitat will be removed by the proposed subdivision project. This represents 100 percent of the total existing habitat for the MHJB at the project sites that will be removed over the proposed 5-year permit term. However, habitat quality at the project site is quite degraded, thus we expect this level of habitat removal to have minor effects on the MHJB.

B. Are the effects of the HCP minor or negligible on other environmental values or resources (e.g. air quality, geology and soils, water quality and quantity, socio-economic, cultural resources, recreation, visual resources, etc.) prior to implementation of the minimization and mitigation measures?

Yes, we expect minor or negligible effects on other environmental values and resources at this private property that currently supports a single-family residence.

We expect negligible effects on air quality due to the proposed project. Sources of air pollution due to the project would include dust due to grading, trenching for the foundation and utility hookups, as well as exhaust from vehicles of construction workers and construction equipment. The construction area will be watered down as necessary to minimize dispersal of dust. However, due to the small scope of the project we expect the amount of pollutants from these sources to be very small.

We expect negligible effects on geology and soils due to the proposed project. The construction area at the project site is fairly flat, so erosion is not likely. Existing curbs and gutters at the property will further minimize potential erosion problems from the site.

We expect negligible effects on water quality and quantity due to the proposed project. Water to neighboring properties is currently supplied via an existing underground line from the municipal water company. The new homes will be serviced by the municipal sewer system. Due to the small scope of the project we expect the amount of additional water use to be very low.

We expect negligible socio-economic effects due to the proposed project. The proposed subdivision will provide four new single-family homes in the Whispering Pines residential neighborhood of the City of Scotts Valley.

We expect the proposed project to have negligible effects on cultural resources. A city-wide archaeological study (City of Scotts Valley 1994) was performed that included the project site and revealed no surface evidence of significant archaeological resources.

We expect the proposed projects to have negligible effects on recreation. The Plan areas are privately-owned land that is not open to the public. No changes in public access are proposed.

We expect the proposed subdivision project to have minor effects on visual resources. Because the proposed subdivision sites are located within the Whispering Pine neighborhood and surrounded by existing single-family homes, it will only be partially visible from nearby streets in the Whispering Pines neighborhood. Additionally, proposed landscaping and the maintenance of several Ponderosa pine and Coast Live oak trees will help to visually screen the new homes from other properties.

We expect the project to have minor noise effects on the environment. There will be a temporary increase in noise due to the use of tools and equipment during construction. However, because the construction will occur over a relatively short time, we expect these effects to be minor.

C. Would the impacts of this HCP, considered together with the impacts of other past, present and reasonably foreseeable similarly situated projects not result, over time, in cumulative effects to environmental values or resources which would be considered significant?

Yes. Minor impacts to the MHJB are expected, both individually and cumulatively, but these effects are not considered significant. No more than 1.758 acres of MHJB habitat are expected to be permanently impacted by the covered activities. In addition, this project is located in an established residential community.

III. Do any of the exceptions to categorical exclusions apply to this HCP? (form 516 DM 2.3, Appendix 2) *If the answer is “yes” to any of the questions below, the project can not be categorically excluded from NEPA. Each “no” response should include an explanation.*

Would implementation of the HCP:

A. Have significant adverse effects on public health or safety?

No. No impacts due to hazardous materials are expected. The proposed subdivision projects are located in an area of moderate seismic activity, but the new residences would be built to the California Building Code, which contains regulations to protect structures within active seismic areas.

B. Have adverse effects on such unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic

rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains, or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks?

No. Cultural resources have not been located on either project site. The project sites are privately owned; thus no adverse effects are expected on park, recreation, or refuge lands, wilderness areas, or wild and scenic rivers. Covered activities are not located within an area that includes prime farmlands, sole or principal aquifers, or floodplains. No wetlands are known from either project site. Impacts to ecologically significant areas within the Plan areas are expected to be minor or negligible before implementation of the mitigation measures.

C. Have highly controversial environmental effects?

No. The proposed residential subdivision projects are not expected to result in any highly controversial environmental effects.

D. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?

No. Covered activities include routine construction in accordance with the California Building Code and established conservation measures. Implementation of the HCP would not have uncertain effects or unknown risks.

E. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?

No. This HCP does not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions that will potentially cause significant environmental effects. In addition, we are not aware of any future actions that will be affected by the 504 Lockwood Lane and 701 Sugar Pine Subdivisions HCP.

F. Be directly related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects?

No. We are not aware of any future actions directly related to the 504 Lockwood Lane and 701 Sugar Pine Subdivisions HCP; therefore, no significant cumulative effects are expected to occur.

G. Have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?

No. A search of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) revealed no NRHP properties within the Plan area.

H. Have adverse effects on listed or proposed species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species?

No. Critical habitat for the MHJB has not been designated as of this time, therefore none will be affected. MHJB is known to occur within the 701 Sugar Pine Plan area and is presumed to occur within the 504 Lockewood Lane Plan area (based on its occurrence at nearby properties), but its abundance is unknown. The amount of MHJB habitat at the project sites that will be affected is approximately 1.758 acres. Because this habitat has already been degraded by prior land uses and activities at both project sites, we expect this level of habitat removal to have minor effects on the MHJB.

I. Have adverse effects on wetlands, floodplains or be considered a water development project thus requiring compliance with either Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act?

No. Approval of the HCP and its covered activities will not have any adverse effects on wetlands or floodplains. Water development is not included in the proposed project.

J. Threaten to violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment?

No. The proposed HCP is compliant with all applicable federal, state, and local environmental laws and requirements. The Plan area does not include tribal land.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION STATEMENT

Based on the analysis above, the Collado Drive Subdivision HCP qualifies for a categorical exclusion as defined in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service *Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook*. Therefore, this action is categorically excluded from further NEPA documentation as provided by 516 DM 2, Appendix 1 and 516 DM 6, Appendix 1.

Other supporting documents (list): 504 Lockewood Lane and 701 Sugar Pine Subdivisions Habitat Conservation Plan in Santa Cruz County, CA, with attachments.

Concurrence:

(1) Assistant Field Supervisor

Date

(2) Field Supervisor

Date