



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION IX**

75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

December 11, 2006

Mr. Jim Bartel  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office  
6010 Hidden Valley Road  
Carlsbad, California 92011

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (FEIR/EIS) and Receipt of an Application for an Incidental Take Permit for the Orange County **Southern Subregion Natural Community Conservation Plan/Master Streambed Alteration Agreement/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/MSAA/HCP)**, Southern Orange County, California (CEQ# 20060454)

Dear Mr. Bartel:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above-referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

EPA reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (DEIR/EIS) and provided comments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on September 12, 2006. We rated the DEIS as Environmental Concerns - Insufficient Information (EC-2) because of concerns regarding the scope of the DEIR/EIS, impacts to air quality, and regulatory coverage for water-related issues. In addition, the relationship between the NCCP/MSAA/HCP and San Juan Creek Watershed/Western San Mateo Creek Watershed (SJ/SM) Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) needed to be clarified.

The FEIS clarified EPA's concerns related to scope, air quality, water quality, and the SAMP. However, we continue to have concerns regarding the quality of information presented in many of the maps referenced in the DEIS. As discussed in our Detailed Comments, the text of the DEIS and the referenced maps should be correlated. This information is important to assist decision-makers understand the full scope of the proposed action. The incorporation or reference to additional tables, more accurate maps, and specific references identifying information in different parts of the document (EIR, EIS, Implementation Agreement, and HCP) may have made the voluminous document easier to read.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this FEIS. When the Record of Decision is signed, please send one copy to the address above (mail code: CED-2). If you have any questions, please contact me or Ann McPherson, the lead reviewer for this project. Ann can be reached at (415) 972-3545 or [mcperson.ann@epa.gov](mailto:mcperson.ann@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/

Paula Bisson, Manager  
Environmental Review Office  
Communities and Ecosystems Division