

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR MONARCH BUTTERFLY SURVEYS

TO • Tim Morgan, Project Manager

FROM • Chris Mundhenk

DATE • January 26, 2004

SUBJECT • Summary of Results for Playa Del Rey Monarch Butterfly Surveys - 202639

During the months of November and December of 2003, Dr. Richard Arnold of Entomological Consulting Services, Ltd. (ECS) and Chris Mundhenk of ESA conducted surveys for monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) at the Samarkand site (Cluster 9) on a portion of the Playa Del Rey (PDR) project site. Surveys of the site, referred to hereafter as the “survey site,” were conducted on November 14 (ESA), December 6 (ESA), December 12 (ECS) and December 18 (ESA). The purpose of the surveys was to determine the potential use of the survey site as overwintering habitat (also referred to as winter roosting sites) for monarch butterfly.

This memo summarizes the results of the aforementioned surveys conducted in November and December of 2003. For life history information on monarch butterfly, please refer to *Southern California Gas’ Surplus Property in Playa del Rey and Marina del Rey, CA Report on Sensitive Invertebrates* prepared by ECS (Arnold, 2003).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The survey site is located on an undeveloped lot (Cluster 9), located approximately 100 feet northeast of the intersection of Delgany Avenue and 83rd Street. It is situated in a moderately-developed area with single-family residences to the north, east, and west, and multi-family dwellings located to the south of the survey site. The site slopes gently (5-15% down gradient) to the south. Blue-gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*) trees are located predominantly along the northern and western edges of the survey site. These trees are an indicator of potential monarch butterfly overwintering habitat. The survey site is protected from the wind by the surrounding area (trees and offsite buildings), as well as the existing topography of the area.

The nearest reported occurrence of monarch butterfly is on the south edge of the Ballona wetlands. In this area, numerous monarch butterflies were observed in 1988, 1990 and December 1997 in dense eucalyptus grove (CDFG, 2003).

METHODS

As mentioned above, the site was surveyed on four separate occasions (November 14 and December 6, 12, and 18, 2003). Each survey was conducted for a period of 1-2 hours and involved an in-depth scan

of each tree on the site, using binoculars when necessary, looking for roosting monarch butterfly species. Surveys were conducted in the morning to early afternoon with mid- to heavy-cloud cover and temperatures ranging from the low-60s to low-70s. Under these conditions, the potential for viewing roosting monarch butterfly species would be considered moderate to good.

RESULTS

No identifiable roosts were seen during any of the four surveys conducted at the site. One monarch was observed during the November 14 survey visit, but on no other occasion were monarchs observed at the survey site.

CONCLUSIONS

The potential for monarch butterfly to use the survey site as overwintering habitat is considered low. At best, the survey site may serve as a temporary aggregation site, primarily in the fall months, when monarch butterfly species gather for a time before moving on to a more full-term roosting area. For this reason, any tree removal activities at the site should avoid September through December, which represents the optimal period for monarch butterfly species roosting.

REFERENCES

- Arnold, R.A., Entomological Consulting Services, Ltd, August 11, 2003. *Southern California Gas' Surplus Property in Playa del Rey and Marina del Rey, CA Report on Sensitive Invertebrates*, Prepared for Environmental Science Associates.
- California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), 2003. California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) for U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle Venice, Information dated May 2003.