

Dale F. Mitchell  
8300 North Marion Avenue  
Clovis, Ca. 93619

Mr. Dwight Kroll, AICP  
Director, Division of Planning and Development Services  
1033 Fifth Street  
City of Clovis, CA 93612

February 20, 2018

Subject: Biological Assessment for the Dry Creek Preserve Area

Dear Director Kroll:

I have owned property and personally resided at the above address, located within the Dry Creek Preserve portion of the Clovis Sphere of influence, for a period of 34 years since 1983. As a long-time resident and a trained biologist (please see below), I have become intimately familiar with the floral and faunal resources of the Dry Creek Preserve area. My wildlife related activities have included almost perpetual casual wildlife observations as well as more structured surveys within the area, including: (i) 25 years of continuous terrestrial and aquatic invertebrate collections, (ii) multi-seasonal native plant observations and collections, and (iii) numerous vertebrate wildlife surveys using direct observation, track plates, night spotlight surveys, set trail cameras at numerous bait station locations, and other survey methods. These inclusive surveys and collections have covered much of the accessible Dry Creek Preserve landscape.

I have carefully reviewed the Biological Assessment Report by Peak Environmental, LLC., pertaining to adoption of the City of Clovis 2014 General Plan, which included surveys and assessments made within the Dry Creek Preserve area, bounded by Nees Avenue on the South, Dry Creek on the west, and Fresno Irrigation District's Enterprise Canal on the north and east (approximately 850 total acres, including road rights of way). I have also reviewed the Biological Assessment performed by Argonaut Ecological, Inc., pertaining to a proposed 46-acre residential development by Woodside Homes Inc., located within the north-central portion of the Dry Creek Preserve on the west side of Fowler Avenue, north of Teague Avenue. More recently, I have reviewed the Environmental Report prepared by Argonaut Environmental in regard to the Dry Creek Preserve Master Plan. Based upon my own surveys and familiarity with the Dry Creek Preserve-associated floral and faunal community, I believe the three aforementioned Biological Assessments do adequately describe the biological resources present within their respective locations. I believe the latter survey is fully adequate to represent the entire extent of the landscape and natural habitat areas within the Dry Creek Preserve. I believe the lists of plant and wildlife species provided by the above consultants are both comprehensive and accurate, and the surveys, as described in detail in each of the Biological Reports, were properly conducted. I base my above conclusions about the three reports upon my own observations of the area, characterized by: 1) homogeneity of the topography, habitat types and conditions over the area, 2) similarity across the area's history of land uses and land use changes, including widespread historical discing, leveling and irrigation, 3) general homogeneity of the area's native and introduced plant associations across the area, 4) regional and state-wide ubiquity in the ranges of the vertebrate and invertebrate wildlife species present within the area, and 5) absence of occurrence records of endemic, rare or endangered

species, or California-listed Animal or Plant Species of Special Concern. I believe I am qualified to perform professional biological surveys and assessments and to provide expert opinions, based upon my education and history of related employment and specific training, as below.

Education:

I earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology from California State University Fresno (1971), followed by 38 Semester-Units of post-graduate credit there, emphasizing the fields of Fisheries, Aquatic Biology, Fish Pathology, and Wildlife Biology-Management. I later accumulated 14 additional Quarter-Units of graduate credit in Fisheries Science from U.C. Davis, over a 15-year period, concurrent with the employment history provided below.

Employment History and Experience:

I was employed by the California Department of Fish and Game (now Dep't of Fish and Wildlife) in the following capacities:

- 1) Aquatic/Fisheries Research Biologist (1972-1982),
- 2) Environmental Scientist - Associate Biologist Fisheries and Wildlife (1982-1988),
- 3) Regional Environmental Services Supervisor (1988-1998),
- 4) Environmental Program Manager-Deputy Regional Manager for the 12-county DFW Central Region, (1998-2009), prior to retiring in December 2009.

In the above capacities, I personally performed literally hundreds of site-specific biological surveys, involving the technical methods described above. I also performed aquatic research using other more detailed Aquatic Resource survey and modelling methodologies. I prepared numerous reports and technical publications, and provided expert witness testimony in numerous evidentiary proceedings and court trials. I became trained and certified in use of the Department's Natural Diversity Database and Wildlife Habitat Relationships Model. I also became certified to use the US Fish and Wildlife Service's National Instream Flow Assessment Models, the USFWS Habitat Evaluation Procedures methodology, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Procedures, and other nationally recognized methodologies for environmental or biological assessment. I am a long-time member of natural resource related professional organizations, including the American Fisheries Society (Certified Fishery Biologist) and The Wildlife Society.

If you have questions about either my above-described surveys/conclusions or about my personal qualifications, please do not hesitate to contact me directly either at the above address, by telephone at (559) 999-1758, or by e-mail at [dmitchellclovis@aol.com](mailto:dmitchellclovis@aol.com). Thank you for giving consideration to my recommendations.

Sincerely,



Dale F. Mitchell