

**SCREENING FORM FOR LOW-EFFECT HCP DETERMINATIONS
and Environmental Action Statement**

I. Project Information

- A. **Project name:** The Offices at Parkshore, in Lake Forest Technical Center, Folsom, Sacramento County, California.
- B. **Affected species:** valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*)
- C. **Project size:** 6.5 acres
- D. **Brief project description:** Grading of 6.5 acres and construction of nine new office buildings totaling 74,435 ft², a 377-space parking lot, driveways, and associated infrastructure in the established Lake Forest Technical Center.
- E. **Minimization and Mitigation Plans:** The project Applicant has proposed to follow the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) 1999 *Conservation Guidelines for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle*; i.e. the Applicant will purchase 11-23 valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB) credits at a Service-approved conservation bank, and will transplant the 39 resident elderberry plants growing at the project site (with basal trunk diameters \geq 1 inch) to a Service-approved conservation bank.

II. Does the proposed Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) fit the low-effect criteria in the HCP Handbook?

- 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 mitigation plan?**

Yes, effects would be minor or negligible. Overall VELB habitat-conditions at the project site are poor: native plants typically associated with VELB habitat (elderberry plants) are absent; disturbance from past surface mining and grazing within the proposed project area is extensive; development has already occurred on three sides of the proposed project area, including office buildings, a self-storage unit, and roads. The HCP will conserve VELB habitat by moving elderberry plants to a Service-approved conservation bank and by purchasing VELB credits at the same conservation bank.

- 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 mitigation plan?**

According to the *Initial Study for the Offices at Parkshore Drive* (City of Folsom Community Development Department, 2005), the effects of the project would be minor or negligible on the environmental resources listed above. In addition, effects of the proposed project would be minor prior to any mitigation. According to the *Initial Study for the Offices at Parkshore Drive*, the only potential impact that might result is construction storm-water runoff. However, the proposed project is small in nature and effects from run-off would be less-than-significant as the construction will implement storm-water runoff best management plans (BMPs) required by the City of Folsom and the State Building Code. The HCP will have no significant effect on air quality, geology and soils, water quality and quantity, socio-economic, cultural resources, recreation, visual resources,

- 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?**

This HCP, considered with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable similarly situated projects would not result in a significant cumulative effect to environmental values or resources. Elderberry shrubs, the host plant for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, are common throughout the greater Folsom-Sacramento area and elsewhere throughout the range of this species.

III. Do any of extraordinary circumstances exceptions to categorical exclusions apply to this HCP? (From 516 DM 2, Appendix 2)

Would implementation of the HCP:

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

No. According to the *Initial Study for the Offices at Parkshore Drive*, the proposed project will have less-than-significant adverse effects or no impact on public health or safety.

- 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. There are no unique geographic characteristics of any type in or near the project site or the Service-approved conservation bank described in the HCP.

C. Have highly controversial environmental effects?

No. No substantial dispute exists as to the size, nature, or effect of the proposed project; the project does not have highly controversial effects. Rick Kuyper spoke with Steve Banks from the City of Folsom's Community Development Department. Steve Banks stated that they received no public or agency comment letters on this project or on the *Initial Study for the Offices at Parkshore Drive*. The proposed HCP has no controversial environmental effects.

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

No. According to the *Initial Study for The Offices at Parkshore Drive*, all potential effects of the project are understood. None of the potential environmental effects could be considered unique, and they do not involve unknown risks to the environment. There are no uncertain or potentially significant impacts expected from the proposed project or the proposed HCP.

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

No. The proposed project site is in an established industrial office park; development of the site will not establish a precedent for future actions in the area or region. The Applicant's HCP is proposing compensation consistent with other projects that adversely affect the valley elderberry longhorn beetle.

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

No. Other development has occurred adjacent to the project site, including office and commercial development, and a self-storage business. The 6.5 acres is the only undeveloped section in this area. The proposed project is not directly related to these other actions. According to the *Initial Study for the Offices at Parkshore*, the project will not result in cumulative effects to any resource. The HCP is not related to other actions.

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

No. According to the *Initial Study for the Offices at Parkshore Drive*, no project impacts to this resource will occur. The Service-approved conservation bank described in the HCP does not contain properties that are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

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

No. The proposed construction project could adversely affect the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. The project site supports degraded remnants of scrub and oak woodland vegetation, including habitat (e.g., elderberry shrubs) for the beetle. Elderberry plants are present in three locations in the project site. Thirty-nine of these elderberry plants exhibit stems with basal diameters equal to or greater than one inch, which is a sufficient size to be habitat for the beetle. An inventory identified a single beetle exit-hole, indicating that the species is likely present in the project site. All resident elderberry plants would be permanently removed from the project site to accommodate the proposed project.

The Applicant will avoid and minimize take and adverse project-effects to the beetle by fully implementing this Habitat Conservation Plan. The Applicant will mitigate the impacts of taking the beetle by transplanting the 39 elderberry shrubs from the project site to a Service-approved conservation bank, and by purchasing 11 habitat credits for the beetle at the same conservation bank. Each habitat credit includes an established ratio of elderberry seedlings and native riparian plant seedlings. Transplanting outside of the dormant period for elderberry shrubs, November 16 to February 15, would increase the likelihood of adult beetles and larvae being killed or injured. Therefore, the Applicant has agreed to purchase 12 additional habitat credits from the conservation bank (i.e. a total of 23 credits) if the elderberry shrubs are transplanted during the active growing season. The Applicant's HCP also describes measures and funding sources that ensure the elements of the Plan would be implemented in a timely manner, actions to be taken if unforeseen events occur, and other required elements. Therefore, implementation of the Applicant's HCP would not have adverse effects on listed or proposed species.

The proposed project is not within or adjacent to designated critical habitat for this species, therefore, critical habitat would not be affected.

I. Have adverse effects on wetlands, floodplains occurred, or could the proposed project 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. According to the *Initial Study for The Offices at Parkshore*, the proposed project will have no impacts on wetlands or floodplains. The proposed project is not a water development project. The Service-approved conservation bank described in the HCP does not contain these resources and the HCP will not affect wetlands.

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

No. The proposed project appears to comply with all applicable laws.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION STATEMENT

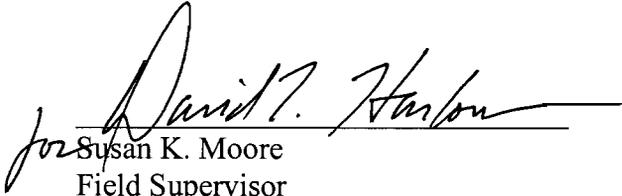
Within the spirit and intent of the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other statutes, orders, and policies that protect fish and wildlife resources, I have established the following administrative record. Based on the analysis above, the HCP for the Offices at Parkshore, Sacramento County, California, qualifies as a "Low-Effect" HCP as defined in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Conservation Planning Handbook (November 1996). The extraordinary circumstances defined in 516 DM 2 Appendix 2 were fully considered, and the proposed action does not fall within any exception to the Categorical Exclusions. This action fits categorical exclusion C(2) of 516 DM 8.5, and can be categorically excluded from NEPA as provided by 40 CFR 1508.4, 516 DM 2, and 516 DM 8. Therefore, a more extensive NEPA process is unwarranted, and no further NEPA documentation will be made.

Other supporting documents (list):

1. City of Folsom, Community Development Department. August 2005. Environmental Impact Analysis, CEQA Initial Study for The Offices at Parkshore PN04-633. 50 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630. 21 pp.
2. City of Folsom. August 5, 2005. Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Offices at Parkshore, Request for Site/Architectural Design Review Approval (PN 04-663). 50 Natoma Street, Folsom, CA 95630. One page.
3. Mark III Engineering Contractors. November 2005. Low-Effect Habitat Conservation Plan for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle at The Offices at Parkshore (APNs 071-0530-17 and 071-0530-18) in Folsom, Sacramento County, California. 5101 Florin-Perkins Road, Sacramento, CA 95826. 38 pp.

4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). 1999. Conservation guidelines for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office, Sacramento, CA. 13pp.

Signature Approval:

for Susan K. Moore

Field Supervisor
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office

9/15/06
Date