COAST RIDGE ECOLOGY LLC
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August 13, 2020

Rod Lacasia
4 El Sereno Drive
San Carlos, CA 94070

Subject: *Assessment of Riparian Boundary on the Lacasia Property (APN 047-105-020) in El Granada, California.*

Dear Mr. Lacasia:

This letter is in response to a request for information from County Planner Camille Leung regarding your property (APN 047-105-020) on San Carlos Avenue, in the unincorporated El Granada area of San Mateo County (County File No. PLN 2004-00398).

I mapped the riparian vegetation (associated with the Montecito riparian corridor) boundary line on the property (by hand) using tape flagging by ascertaining where the riparian corridor met the 'greater than 50% cover' requirement as stated in section 7.11 of the San Mateo County LCP[1]. The arroyo willow is the dominant riparian vegetation along this corridor, and this vegetation was used to determine the corridor boundary. Based on the riparian corridor boundary delineation that I did, both the 30-foot and 50-foot riparian buffers were calculated and these are shown along with the riparian corridor boundary on the Boundary and Topographic Map prepared by Turnrose Engineering in May 2020.

The unnamed creek that runs through the Montecito riparian corridor is located over 150 feet west of the Lacasia property. The creek is shown as a perennial creek (solid blue line) on the 1997 USGS Montara Mountain 7.5 minute quadrangle map. The creek is shown as an intermittent stream on the 1949 version of this same map. The USGS defines a perennial stream as "*a stream that normally has water in its channel at all times*."[2] On August 10, 2020, there was no standing water or flow in the channel, with some saturated mud in places. The creek has an approximate channel width of 5 feet and is incised approximately 5 feet (channel banks). Based on this recent site visit and previous visits to the property where I have not seen water in the creek, it seems the creek is functioning more like an intermittent creek.

The project as designed will be located within an upland on the northeast side of the lot to maintain the maximum distance possible from the riparian corridor, and within the only potentially developable space due to the constrictions from the riparian corridor. The single-family home would be located on the uphill portion of the lot, within 4 inches of the easterly property line, essentially a zero set back condition at the front of the property at San Carlos Avenue. Vegetation within the development footprint is all upland plant species, with the dominant species being French broom (*Genista monspessulana*) and Pampas (jubata) grass

[1] County of San Mateo Local Coastal Program Policies.
https://planning.smcgov.org/sites/planning.smcgov.org/files/documents/files/SMC_Midcoast_LCP_2013.pdf

[2] https://water.usgs.gov/waterbasics_glossary.html#:~:text=Perennial%20stream%20%2D%20A%20stream%20that,other%20surfaces%20on%20lake%20bottoms.

(*Cortaderia jubata*), both highly invasive non-native plant species. The plans show that the home would be built mostly outside of the 30-foot riparian corridor buffer area, with the exception of the southwest corner of the house which would come within 21 feet (Plans dated 7/15/2020 for New Residence).

Based on the current design and location of the home, I believe any potential impact from the proposed home construction to the Montecito Riparian Corridor has been minimized to the fullest extent in compliance with LCP sections 7.7, 7.11 and 7.12 (cited below).

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Patrick Kobernus
Principal Biologist

References:

Plans for 779 SAN CARLOS AVE, EL GRANADA, CALIFORNIA, NEW RESIDENCE. Plans drawn by Rod Lacasio-Barrios. 07/15/2020.

Applicable Sections/ Definitions from the San Mateo County LCP:

7.7 Definition of riparian corridors
Define riparian corridors by the "limit of riparian vegetation" (i.e., a line determined by the association of plant and animal species normally found near streams, lakes and other bodies of freshwater: red alder, jaumea, pickleweed, big leaf maple, narrow-leaf cattail, arroyo willow, broadleaf cattail, horsetail, creek dogwood, black cottonwood, and box elder). Such a corridor must contain at least a 50% cover of some combination of the plants listed.

7.11 Establishment of buffer zones

a. On both sides of riparian corridors, from the "limit of riparian vegetation" extend buffer zones 50 feet outward for perennial streams and 30 feet outward for intermittent streams.

b. Where no riparian vegetation exists along both sides of riparian corridors, extend buffer zones 50 feet from the predictable high water point for perennial streams and 30 feet from the midpoint of intermittent streams.

7.12 Permitted uses in buffer zones
Within buffer zones, permit only the following uses: (1) uses permitted in riparian corridors; (2) residential uses on existing legal building sites, set back 20 feet from the limit of riparian vegetation, only if no feasible alternative exists, and only if no other building site on the parcel exists; (3) on parcels designated on the LCP Land Use Plan Map: Agriculture, Open Space, or Timber Production, residential structures or impervious surfaces only if no feasible alternative exists; (4) crop growing and grazing consistent with Policy 7.9; (5) timbering in "streamside corridors" as defined and controlled by State and County regulations for timber harvesting; and (6) no new residential parcels shall be created whose only building site is in the buffer area.