

**SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY**

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May 24, 2010

Mr. Vern Umetsu  
City of Simi Valley  
2929 Tapo Canyon Road  
Simi Valley, California 93063-2199

**Conditional Use Permit No. CUP-S-686, 744 West Los Angeles Avenue**

Dear Mr. Umetsu:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) has maintained the position since its 2006 comment letter on the subject project that no development should be permitted south of Alamos Creek on the subject property. Because the inter-mountain range habitat linkage between the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills is already tightly constricted on either side of Los Angeles Avenue, the linkage must be much broader on the subject property than is proposed. Based on the City's processing of the project since 2006, it appears that the City is vested in providing additional development area than the existing occupied pad located north of Alamos Creek. The Conservancy asserts that the proposed plan provided to staff in April will result in unavoidable significant adverse impacts to this inter-mountain range wildlife corridor. Our goal is to have the development footprint substantially reduced before a CEQA document is circulated.

Under optimal regulatory conditions, the channel of Alamos Creek could be pushed further east within the scoured flood plain. That increment of channel movement could then be captured as additional development area north of Alamos Creek. We understand that Army Corps and Department of Fish and Game requirements would make such a change difficult. However, we throw that idea onto the table to substantially reduce the proposed project impacts and avoid the project and regulatory complexity of bridging Alamos Creek with railroad cars. The Conservancy would support such a novel project alteration with the regulatory agencies.

In any case we are encouraged by recent City staff response to the applicant stating the Biological Resources Technical Report will need to be revised to show the drainage overflow/wildlife corridor improvement to be entirely on the property of the proposed

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contractor storage yard. We applaud the City for the directing the applicant to mitigate for the wildlife corridor on the subject property rather than shifting almost fifty percent of the mitigation burden to the City Sanitation facility.

Lastly, the placement of dissipaters, detention basins, and culverts in and along the provided narrow wildlife corridor would have detrimental effects on wildlife use of the site and the quality of habitat. We urge the City to continue to steer the applicant in the direction of widening the wildlife corridor and providing substantially more onsite riparian habitat.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Edelman of our staff at 310-589-3200, ext. 128.

Sincerely,

RON SCHAFER  
Chairperson