July 13, 2010 NCC-01

Mr. Jack Shubin
North Coast Calvary Chapel
7188 Avenida Encinas
Carlsbad, California 92011

Subject: North Coast Calvary Chapel Open Space Preserve – Annual Report

Dear Mr. Shubin:

This letter report summarizes the results of the 2010 annual (interim) monitoring for the 16.0-acre North Coast Calvary Chapel Open Space Preserve (Preserve) that consists of two non-contiguous parcels located in the southwest portion of the City of Carlsbad (City; Figures 1 and 2). The Preserve is approximately one mile east of Interstate 5 near the northeast corner of Aviara Parkway and Poinsettia Lane. Both parcels are within the City's portion of the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP).

In accordance with the Long-term Management Guidelines and Property Analysis Record for the North Coast Calvary Chapel Open Space Preserve, HELIX Environmental Construction Group (HECG) made several maintenance visits to the Preserve during the monitoring period, and HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX) conducted an annual assessment of the maintenance activities and conducted focused surveys for wart-stemmed ceanothus (*Ceanothus verrucosus*) and coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) in the Preserve. The results of the 2010 assessment and focused surveys are presented herein.

METHODS

Maintenance

HECG made its annual maintenance visits in March 2010. Maintenance activities included exotic plant species and trash removal as well as erosion repair. Exotic plant species and trash removal were accomplished by hand (plant material and trash was bagged and removed from the Preserve); some exotic plant species were also killed in place by spot-spraying with herbicide before they could set seed. Erosion repair was done by hand with shovels and included making repairs of rills and gullies with existing soil.

Annual Monitoring

HELIX conducted an assessment of the effectiveness of the maintenance activities and of the status (i.e., alive or dead) of wart-stemmed ceanothus in the Preserve on June 11, 2010. HELIX also conducted a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), presence/absence survey for the coastal California gnatcatcher in the Preserve (i.e., three site visits: June 11, 19, and 29, 2010) using the most current protocol (USFWS 1997).

RESULTS

Maintenance

HECG removed exotic plant species (specifically pampas grass [*Cortaderia* sp.] and Mexican fan palm [*Washingtonia robusta*]) by hand and performed minor erosion repair. HECG also removed trash and spot-sprayed exotic plant species with herbicide. Finally, HECG completed spot-spraying and performed minor erosion repair consisting of making minor repairs to rills and gullies in the San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) access road. Since there were no significant bare areas following these maintenance tasks, no seed was spread.

Annual Monitoring

Maintenance Monitoring

HELIX did not note any significant issues with exotic plant species, trash, erosion, or trails during the annual maintenance monitoring assessment.

Wart-Stemmed Ceanothus

Of the 15 individuals of wart-stemmed ceanothus previously documented in the Preserve, all but one is still alive. The northernmost individual in the northern parcel has died (Figure 3).

Coastal California Gnatcatcher

During previous annual monitoring, the coastal California gnatcatcher was observed in three locations within the Preserve (one pair in the southern parcel and two individuals in the northern parcel). In 2010, only one individual gnatcatcher was observed, and it was in the northern parcel (Figure 3).

DISCUSSION

Exotic plant species, trash, and erosion are being effectively controlled under the current schedule of maintenance, so additional maintenance beyond what is already occurring is not believed to be necessary at this time.

According to the City's Guidelines for Preserve Management (City's Guidelines; Technology Associates [TAIC] 2009), the loss of one individual wart-stemmed ceanothus is to be tracked by the City via Habitrak through gains and losses to its habitat since it is an A2 Species (species with habitat-based permit conditions). None of this species' habitat has been lost in the Preserve. HELIX will submit a GIS shapefile to the City to document the loss of this individual plant and its location.

The City's Guidelines (Appendix B in TAIC 2009) also state that the most current USFWS protocol should be used to map the locations and abundance of the coastal California gnatcatcher in the Preserve. This protocol was used during the previous annual monitoring survey and this annual monitoring survey, and fewer gnatcatchers were observed this year. Since the habitat in the Preserve has not visibly changed, this reduction in gnatcatcher numbers could just be a natural fluctuation in the population. Future surveys will help make this determination. According to the City's Guidelines, the coastal California gnatcatcher is to be tracked by the City using GIS. Therefore, HELIX will submit a GIS shapefile to the City with the results of this year's survey.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the maintenance activities are effectively controlling exotic plant species, trash, and erosion, no new or additional recommendations are suggested for the next maintenance period.

It is recommended that the lost individual of wart-stemmed ceanothus be replaced with several container stock individuals of this species in winter 2010. The installation of the container stock should occur after the onset of winter rains, and the plants should be watered by hand through the establishment period, if necessary. HELIX will coordinate with HECG to determine the appropriate location(s) for planting and to develop a watering schedule.

In order to comply with the Long-term Management Guidelines and Property Analysis Record for the North Coast Calvary Chapel Open Space Preserve and to be consistent with the City's Guidelines (TAIC 2009), it is recommended that exotic plant species and trash continue to be removed under the current maintenance schedule and that annual monitoring of wart-stemmed ceanothus and the coastal California gnatcatcher continue through at least the end of the contract period with HECG through 2012.

Please contact me should you have any questions regarding the contents of this report.

Sincerely,

Shelby Howard
Restoration Biology and Monitoring Group Manager

cc: Justin Fischbeck – HELIX Environmental Construction Group, Inc.

Figures:

1 Regional Location Map
2 Project Location Map
3 2010 Vegetation and Sensitive Resources

REFERENCES

City of Carlsbad. 1999. Habitat Management Plan for Natural Communities in the City of Carlsbad. December; Final Approval November 2004.

Technology Associates. 2009. Guidelines for Preserve Management. Prepared for the City of Carlsbad Planning Department. July 20.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1997. Coastal California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) Presence/Absence Survey Guidelines. February 28