



May 7, 2021
(2018-047.026)

Mr. Mark Gim
Los Angeles County Public Works
Stormwater Engineering Division
Via Email: Tgim@dpw.lacounty.gov

Subject: Least Bell's Vireo Preconstruction Surveys for the Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project, in the City of Pasadena, California

Dear Mr. Gim,

This letter report has been prepared to present the results of preconstruction surveys for least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) conducted by ECORP Consulting, Inc. (ECORP) for Los Angeles County Public Works' (LACPW) Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project in the City of Pasadena, Los Angeles County, California. The preconstruction surveys for least Bell's vireo were conducted to comply with Condition 7.3.2 in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Incidental Take Permit (ITP) No. 2081-2016-031-05 that was issued for the Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project (Project), which states:

"The Designated Biologist(s) shall begin surveys 30 days before Covered Activities begin (or after a substantial break in construction monitoring) and shall continue on a weekly basis with one (1) survey conducted no more than (3) days prior to initiation of Covered Activities."

In addition, the surveys were conducted to comply with Conservation Measure 11a of the Informal Section 7 Consultation (Section 7) No. FWS-LA-14B0081-15I0477 for the Project, which states:

"Surveys by the biological monitor will be conducted a minimum of three times on separate days to determine the presence of vireo nest building activities, egg incubation activities, or brood rearing activities within 300 feet of the project area. These surveys will be conducted within the week prior to the initiation of project activities. One survey will be conducted the day immediately prior to the initiation of project activities. If no nests, nesting behavior, or brood rearing activities are detected within 300 feet of the project area, work may commence."

SURVEY METHODS

Preconstruction surveys for least Bell's vireo were conducted in compliance with ITP Condition 7.3.2 and Section 7 Conservation Measure CM 11a for Project activities that are to occur during the vireo's breeding season. Surveys were conducted between dawn and 11 a.m. when weather conditions were favorable in accordance with USFWS 2001 protocol (nesting season)

guidelines.¹ Meandering transects were walked throughout suitable least Bell's vireo habitat areas within 500 feet of the Project boundaries to visually and audibly detect the presence of least Bell's vireo. All bird and wildlife species detected during the survey were recorded on standardized data sheets. All surveys were conducted in compliance with the Nesting Bird Management Plan prepared for the Project.²

RESULTS

Preconstruction least Bell's vireo surveys began on March 1, 2021, 30 days prior to the originally scheduled start of Project activities which was planned for March 31, 2021. Surveys continued weekly, with three surveys occurring during the week prior to the start of Project activities and the final survey occurring the day prior to the start of Project activities. Due to several iterations of postponement of the official start date of Project activities, a total of nine preconstruction least Bell's vireo surveys were conducted between March 1 and April 18, 2021. Each survey was conducted by a CDFW- and USFWS-approved Designated Biologist. The dates, personnel, and weather conditions for each survey are presented in Table 1. Survey datasheets are provided in Attachment A.

Date	Surveyors*	Time		Temperature (°F)		Cloud Cover (%)		Wind Speed (mph)	
		start	end	start	end	start	end	start	end
03/01/21	CT	0630	0940	45	71	0	0	0-1	3-5
03/08/21	CT	0645	1100	54	66	100	95	0-1	1-3
03/18/21	CT	0715	1100	49	74	95	95	0-1	1-3
03/25/21	CT	0715	1100	50	57	85	85	3-5	1-4
03/29/21	LS	0655	1104	46	74	0	0	0-2	0-3
04/08/21	SS	0646	1010	53	72	75	5	0-1	3-5
04/14/21	CT	0625	1100	53	64	100	90	0-1	1-4
04/17/21	JC	0710	1027	52	61	100	10	0	1-3
04/18/21	JC	0710	1021	55	77	0	0	1-3	3-5

* JC = Jill Coumoutso, SS = Shannan Shaffer, LS = Lauren Simpson, CT = Christine Tischer

No least Bell's vireos were detected or observed during the focused preconstruction surveys. Two male brown-headed cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) individuals were detected outside of brown-headed cowbird traps during the preconstruction surveys. A complete list of all birds and other wildlife observed during the preconstruction surveys is provided in Attachment B.

DISCUSSION

¹ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2001. Least Bell's Vireo Survey Guidelines. U.S. Department of the Interior. Carlsbad, CA, USFWS, 3 pp.

² ECORP Consulting, Inc (ECORP). 2019. Nesting Bird Management Plan, Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project, Los Angeles County, California. Prepared for the Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Water Resource Division. March 2019.

Nine focused preconstruction surveys conducted during the 2021 breeding season did not detect least Bell's vireo in or within 500 feet of the Project site.

During the 2020 breeding season, the first observation of the territorial male that would form the breeding pair for the 2020 season was in early May. It is possible that the breeding pair or their offspring from 2020 will return to the Project site to breed during the 2021 season. Least Bell's vireo Designated Biologists commenced twice-weekly focused surveys for least Bell's vireo after preconstruction surveys were complete. These surveys will continue through the end of the 2021 breeding season.

Prior to the 2020 season, observations of least Bell's vireo previously documented within the Project area had been irregular, and no consistent detection of the species throughout the breeding season had been documented at the site since 2013. At that time, a single male was present, but he was not paired with a female during the breeding season. Additionally, the timing of observations in the early and late periods of the breeding season during subsequent survey years coincides with the seasonal migrations of least Bell's vireos through the Project area. The lack of detection of any individuals throughout nine focused surveys implies that breeding least Bell's vireos were absent from the Project site prior to the initiation of Project activities within the sediment removal area as of April 18, 2021.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this letter report, please contact me at (714) 648-0630 or lsimpson@ecorpconsulting.com.

SIGNED: 

Lauren Simpson
Staff Biologist
ECORP Consulting, Inc.
2861 Pullman Street
Santa Ana, CA 92705

DATE: May 7, 2021

Attachments:

Attachment A: Survey Datasheets
Attachment B: Wildlife Species Observed

ATTACHMENT A

Survey Datasheets

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Mar 1, 2021, 4:52:44 PM

Survey Date

Mar 1, 2021

Observer Name

Christine Tischer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:30

Start Temperature

45

Start Wind Speed

0-1

Start Cloud Cover

0

End Time

09:40

End Temperature

71

End Wind Speed

3-5

End Cloud Cover

0

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed CowBird Observations

Number of Individuals

0

Locations

N/A

Incidental Species Observed

**WCSP, NUWO, MODO, LEGO, RCKI, CASJ, ANHU, ACWO, parrots, CALT, CATH, SPTO, CANG, BEWR, SOSP, C
AQU, NOFL, COHA, HOFI, BGGN, YRWA, CORA, OCWA, BUSH, OATI, WEBL, EUST, HOWR, MALL, WTSW, ROP
I, KILL, RSHA, RTHA, Sceloporus occidentalis, Eastern fox squirrel, coyote (t), dom horse (t), dom dog, gopher
(burrows)**

Log Completed?

Yes

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Mar 8, 2021, 5:12:04 PM

Survey Date

Mar 8, 2021

Observer Name

Christine Tischer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:45

Start Temperature

54

Start Wind Speed

0-1

Start Cloud Cover

100

End Time

11:00

End Temperature

66

End Wind Speed

1-3

End Cloud Cover

95

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed CowBird Observations

Number of Individuals

0

Incidental Species Observed

MODO, CALT, OATI, DEJU, parrots, RCKI, LEGO, CASJ, CAQU, AMCR, CORA, BEWR, CATH, ANHU, NUWO, SP TO, CANG, MALL, HOFI, SOSP, WCSP, E fox squirrel, STJA (pair), YRWA, KILL, NRWS, EUST, ALHU, VGSW (1 5), NOFL, WEBL, RTHA (copulating), w fence lizard, dom horse (t,s), WEME, CEWA, RSHA, HOWR, COHA

Additional Notes

Talked with one person in SW corner who was photographing plants and mushrooms. Met Mike and Scott (biologists with Stillwater) who were monitoring NI crew on west side.

Log Completed?

Yes

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Mar 19, 2021, 5:30:41 AM

Survey Date

Mar 18, 2021

Observer Name

Christine Tischer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

07:15

Start Temperature

49

Start Wind Speed

0-1

Start Cloud Cover

95

End Time

11:00

End Temperature

74

End Wind Speed

1-3

End Cloud Cover

0

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed CowBird Observations

Number of Individuals

1

Locations

Male heard NE of old mining pit

Incidental Species Observed

Parrots, SOSP, YRWA, CALT, SPTO, NUWO, WREN, ACWO, NOFL, WCSP, RCKI, HOFI, MODO, CASJ, BUSH, CA TH, LEGO, AMCR, ANHU, CAKI, COHA, BEWR, NRWS, cottontail, coyote, CAQU, VGSW, KILL. RTHA, EUST, BL PH, BGGN, RSHA, PSFL, DOWO, OATI, MALL, WTSW, CANG, CORA, WEBL, HOSP

Log Completed?

Yes

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Mar 25, 2021, 10:10:51 PM

Survey Date

Mar 25, 2021

Observer Name

Christine Tischer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

07:15

Start Temperature

50

Start Wind Speed

3-5

Start Cloud Cover

85

End Time

11:00

End Temperature

57

End Wind Speed

1-4

End Cloud Cover

85

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed CowBird Observations

Number of Individuals

0

Locations

N/A

Incidental Species Observed

ANHU, RCKI, AMCR, BEWR, BUSH, CORA, ACWO, NUWO, WEBL, HOFI, LEGO, CALT, RTHA, NOFL, parrots, C ASJ, CAQU, WCSP, CATH. SPTO, CAKI, coyote (s,t), cottontail (s,o), horse (t), ALHU, MODO, COHA, EUST, YRW A, RSHA, OATI, CANG, MALL, KILL, NRWS, HOOR, COYE, ROPI, PSFL, woodrat (o), BLPH

Log Completed?

Yes

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Mar 29, 2021, 1:12:10 PM

Survey Date

Mar 29, 2021

Observer Name

Lauren Simpson

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:55

Start Temperature

46

Start Wind Speed

0-2

Start Cloud Cover

0

End Time

11:04

End Temperature

74

End Wind Speed

0-3

End Cloud Cover

0

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed CowBird Observations

Number of Individuals

0

Incidental Species Observed

Lego, webl, bewr, modo, nuwo, parrot sp, acwo, hofi, cora, cago, sosp, wcsp, bush, calt, caqu, wren, anhu, blp h, alhu, coye, casj, eust, weme, spto, cottontail, yrwa, ca ground squirrel, cath, rtha, oati, deju, w fence lizard, c oha, dowo, wtsw, lisp, mall, caki, side blotched lizard

Additional Notes

no LBV observed. 2 new nests added ANHU_8 and LEGO_1

Log Completed?

Yes

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Apr 8, 2021, 11:23:20 AM

Survey Date

Apr 8, 2021

Observer Name

Shannan Shaffer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:46

Start Temperature

53

Start Wind Speed

0-1

Start Cloud Cover

75

End Temperature

72

End Wind Speed

3-5

End Cloud Cover

5

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Incidental Species Observed

ACWO, AMCR, LEGO, CASJ, CALT, CAQU, SOSP, BUSH, SPTO, AMRO, NUWO, BGGN, BEWR, MODO, ANHU, CATH, green parrot, NOMO, HOFI, WREN, CORA, PHAI, NRWS, WTSW, coyote

Log Completed?

Yes

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Apr 17, 2021, 6:42:28 AM

Survey Date

Apr 14, 2021

Observer Name

Christine Tischer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:25

Start Temperature

53

Start Wind Speed

0-1

Start Cloud Cover

100

End Time

11:00

End Temperature

64

End Wind Speed

1-4

End Cloud Cover

90

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed Cowbird Observations

Number of Individuals

1

Locations

1 adult male flyover heard/seen in west while surveying DG-5.

Incidental Species Observed

CASJ, BEWR, MODO, SPTO, CALT, CATH, BUSH, COYE, CAQU, NUWO, coyote (x4), woodrat (middens), COHA, CANG, SOSP, BHGR, AMCR, parrots, WREN, STJA (1), YEWA, ANHU, CORA, ACWO, BHCO, WCSP, ATFL, NRW S, KILL, MALL (pair), BASW, HOFI, ALHU, RTHA, CA ground squirrel, BLPH, LEGO, WEBL, WIWA (v), side-blotched lizard, CA treefrog (v), Crotch bumble bee, yellow-faced bumble bee, cabbage white, desert cottontail, western fence lizard, EUST, LAGO

Log Completed?

Yes

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Apr 18, 2021, 9:14:22 AM

Survey Date

Apr 17, 2021

Observer Name

Jill Coumoutso

Survey Conditions

Start Time

07:10

Start Temperature

52

Start Wind Speed

0

Start Cloud Cover

100

End Time

10:27

End Temperature

61

End Wind Speed

1-3

End Cloud Cover

10

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Incidental Species Observed

ACWO Coyote

BUSH Desert cottontail

CASJ

HOFI

CANG

SPTO

COYE

HOWR

HUVI

STJA

CAQU

ANHU

CATH

YWAR

BTGW

OCWA

AMRO

BLPH

ATFL

SOSP

YRWA

WCSP

OATI

COHA

BEWR

HOOR

CORA

MODO

PARROTS

Log Completed?

Yes

Least Bell's Vireo Log for Devils Gate (Environmental Conditions)

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Apr 18, 2021, 10:23:45 AM

Survey Date

Apr 18, 2021

Observer Name

Jill Coumoutso

Survey Conditions

Start Time

07:10

Start Temperature

55

Start Wind Speed

1-3

Start Cloud Cover

0

End Time

10:21

End Temperature

77

End Wind Speed

3-5

End Cloud Cover

0

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Incidental Species Observed

BEWR

ACWO

NUWO

ANHU

ALHU

YWAR

HOOR

HOWR

CASJ

CORA

OCWA

CALT

SPTO

CAQU

HOFI

BUSH

BHGR

SOSP

CATH

COYE

BGGN

Side blotched lizard

Log Completed?

Yes

Wildlife Species Observed

Scientific Name	Common Name
INSECTS	
Apidae	Bees
<i>Bombus crochii</i>	Crotch bumble bee
<i>Bombus vosnesenskii</i>	yellow-faced bumble bee
Pieridae	Pierid Butterflies
<i>Pieris rapae</i>	cabbage white
REPTILES	
Phrynosomatidae	Spiny Lizards
<i>Sceloporus occidentalis</i>	western fence lizard
<i>Uta stansburiana</i>	common side-blotched lizard
AMPHIBIANS	
Hylidae	New World Tree Frogs
<i>Pseudacris hypochondriaca</i>	Baja California tree frog
BIRDS	
Accipitridae	Hawks
<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Cooper's hawk
<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	red-tailed hawk
<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	red-shouldered hawk
Aegithalidae	Bushtits
<i>Psaltriparus minimus</i>	bushtit
Anatidae	Ducks, Geese, and Swans
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	mallard
<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Canada goose
Apodidae	Swifts
<i>Aeronautes saxatalis</i>	white-throated swift
Bombycillidae	Waxwings
<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	cedar waxwing
Cardinalidae	Cardinals
<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>	black-headed grosbeak
Charadriidae	Plovers, Dotterels, and Lapwings
<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	killdeer
Columbidae	Pigeons and Doves
<i>Columba livia*</i>	rock pigeon
<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	mourning dove
Corvidae	Jays and Crows
<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>	California scrub-jay
<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	American crow
<i>Corvus corax</i>	common raven
<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>	Steller's jay
Fringillidae	Finches

<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>	house finch
<i>Spinus lawrencei</i>	Lawrence's goldfinch
<i>Spinus psaltria</i>	lesser goldfinch
Hirundinidae	Swallows
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	barn swallow
<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	cliff swallow
<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	northern rough-winged swallow
<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>	violet-green swallow
Icteridae	New World Blackbirds
<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>	hooded oriole
<i>Molothrus ater</i>	brown-headed cowbird
<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>	western meadowlark
Mimidae	Mockingbirds and Thrashers
<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	northern mockingbird
<i>Toxostoma redivivum</i>	California thrasher
Odontophoridae	Quails and Partridges
<i>Callipepla californica</i>	California quail
Paradoxornithidae	Wrentits
<i>Chamaea fasciata</i>	wrentit
Paridae	Titmice
<i>Baeolophus inornatus</i>	oak titmouse
Parulidae	Wood-warblers
<i>Cardellina pusilla</i>	Wilson's warbler
<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	common yellowthroat
<i>Oreothlypis celata</i>	orange-crowned warbler
<i>Setophaga coronata</i>	yellow-rumped warbler
<i>Setophaga nigrescens</i>	black-throated gray warbler
<i>Setophaga petechia**</i>	yellow warbler
Passerellidae (previously Emberizidae)	Sparrows and Towhees
<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	dark-eyed junco
<i>Melospiza lincolni</i>	Lincoln's sparrow
<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	song sparrow
<i>Melospiza crissalis</i>	California towhee
<i>Passer domesticus*</i>	house sparrow
<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>	spotted towhee
<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	white-crowned sparrow
Picidae	Woodpeckers
<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	northern flicker
<i>Dryobates pubescens</i>	downy woodpecker
<i>Picoides nuttallii</i>	Nuttall's woodpecker
<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>	acorn woodpecker
Polioptilidae (previously Silviidae)	Gnatcatchers
<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>	blue-gray gnatcatcher
Psittacidae	Old World Parrots
<i>Amazona sp.*</i>	parrot sp.
Ptiliognatidae	Silky flycatchers

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>	phainopepla
Regulidae	Kinglets
<i>Regulus calendula</i>	ruby-crowned kinglet
Sturnidae	Starlings
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> *	European starling
Trochilidae	Hummingbirds
<i>Calypte anna</i>	Anna's hummingbird
<i>Selasphorus sasin</i>	Allen's hummingbird
Troglodytidae	Wrens
<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	Bewick's Wren
<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	house wren
<i>Sialia mexicana</i>	western bluebird
<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	American robin
Tyrannidae	Tyrant Flycatchers
<i>Empidonax difficilis</i>	Pacific-slope flycatcher
<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>	ash-throated flycatcher
<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	black phoebe
<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>	Cassin's kingbird
Vireonidae	Vireos
<i>Vireo huttoni</i>	Hutton's vireo
MAMMALS	
Canidae	Dogs, Wolves, and Foxes
<i>Canis latrans</i>	coyote
Cricetidae	New World Rats and Mice
<i>Neotoma fuscipes</i>	dusky-footed woodrat
Geomyidae	Gophers
<i>Thomomys bottae</i>	Botta's pocket gopher
Leporidae	Hares and Rabbits
<i>Sylvilagus audubonii</i>	desert cottontail
Sciuridae	Squirrels
<i>Otospermophilus beecheyi</i>	California ground squirrel
<i>Sciurus niger</i>	eastern fox squirrel

*Nonnative species

**CDFW California Species of Special Concern/CDFW Fully Protected Species

*** Federally and/or State-Listed Endangered or Threatened