

May 13, 2020
(2018-047.019/004)

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

Subject: March 2020 Summary of Least Bell's Vireo Breeding Season 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 summarize the results of the breeding season focused surveys for least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) conducted in March 2020 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 focused breeding season surveys for least Bell's vireo were conducted to comply with Condition 7.3.4 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 that if Covered Activities are proposed during the least Bell's vireo breeding season (defined as March 1 to September 15):

"The Designated Biologist(s) shall continue weekly focused surveys within 500 feet of Covered Activities in Covered Species habitat during the breeding season to determine the presence of Covered Species;"

Per Conservation Measure 11b of the USFWS Informal Section 7 Consultation, if sediment removal is conducted between March 15 and August 31 "twice weekly surveys for the vireo will be conducted by the biological monitor in areas of suitable habitat within 500 feet of proposed construction activities to determine the presence of vireo nest building activities, egg incubation activities, or brood rearing activities."

No sediment removal activities were conducted during March of 2020. As such, weekly breeding season focused least Bell's vireo surveys (per ITP Condition 7.3.4) were conducted beginning the first week of March 2020 prior to the start of preconstruction least Bell's vireo surveys (initiated March 16, 2020 to accommodate an anticipated start date of April 16, 2020, currently ongoing). Twice-weekly least Bell's vireo surveys per the Section 7 will begin after preconstruction least Bell's vireo surveys are completed, and sediment removal activities are initiated.

SURVEY METHODS

Focused breeding season surveys for least Bell's vireo were conducted in compliance with ITP Condition 7.3.4 and Section 7 Conservation Measure CM 11b for Project activities that are to occur during the vireo's breeding season (March 1 to August 31). 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

Two focused breeding season surveys for least Bell's vireo were conducted during the first two weeks of March 2020. Beginning March 16, preconstruction least Bell's vireo surveys were initiated and continued through the end of March (results to be presented in the Preconstruction Least Bell's Vireo Survey Report). Each survey was conducted by a CDFW- and USFWS-approved Designated Biologist for least Bell's vireo surveys. The dates, personnel, and weather conditions for each survey are presented in Table 1. Field 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
03/04/20	LS	0615	1030	42	67	0	15	0-3	0-3
03/12/20	LS	0700	1045	50	56	0	100	0-3	1-4

LS = Lauren Simpson

No least Bell's vireos were detected during the March 2020 breeding season surveys.

Brown-headed cowbirds were not observed during March 2020 breeding season surveys.

DISCUSSION

Two focused breeding season surveys for least Bell's vireo conducted in March 2020 did not detect least Bell's vireo in or within 500 feet of the Project site. Preconstruction least Bell's vireo surveys are ongoing until project activities begin, at which point twice-weekly focused breeding season surveys at the Project site will continue until the end of the breeding season (September 15).

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.

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 13, 2020

Attachments:

Attachment A: Survey Datasheets

ATTACHMENT A

Survey Datasheets

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

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Mar 4, 2020, 12:11:21 PM

Survey Date

Mar 4, 2020

Observer Name

Lauren Simpson

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:15

Start Temperature

42

Start Wind Speed

0-3

Start Cloud Cover

0

End Time

10:30

End Temperature

67

End Wind Speed

0-3

End Cloud Cover

15

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed CowBird Observations

Number of Individuals

0

Incidental Species Observed

SPTO CASJ lego WCSP BEWR Cora ACWO, NUWO cago parrot sp, AMCR, MODO, ANHU, webI CALT hofi, SOS P Coye, CATH, Ecco, CAQU EUST Bush caki bggn RTHA, RCKI, wren Greg, BLPH Ca ground squirrel, kill, NRW S mall Euwi WTSW cottontail, NOFL, YRWA ALHU dowo Deju howr

Additional Notes

No lbv observed

Log Completed?

Yes

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

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Mar 12, 2020, 11:43:33 AM

Survey Date

Mar 12, 2020

Observer Name

Lauren Simpson

Survey Conditions

Start Time

07:00

Start Temperature

50

Start Wind Speed

0-3

Start Cloud Cover

0

End Time

10:45

End Temperature

56

End Wind Speed

1-4

End Cloud Cover

100

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed CowBird Observations

Number of Individuals

0

Incidental Species Observed

**Parrot sp. MODO BEWR ACWO WCSP BUSH HOWR CAGO SOSP COYE SPTO CORA LEGO CALT ANHU BLPH
CASJ OATI MALL NRWS YRWA DEJU NUWO RCKI HOFI WTSW PSFL CATH WREN CAQU HETH CAKI RTHA N
OFL ALHU coyote (heard)**

Additional Notes

No lbv observed. Bird activity high. Rain began at 1040

Log Completed?

Yes