

Native Tree Assessment and Tree Protection Plan

**Rancho Malibu Resort
4000 Malibu Canyon Road, Malibu, CA**

**Prepared for
Green Acres, LLC.**
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February 2012

INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for the proposed Rancho Malibu Resort project, located at 4000 Malibu Canyon Road, Malibu, California, in accordance with the City of Malibu's Local Implementation Program (LIP) and native tree protection ordinance (LIP Section 5.3). This report provides an inventory of all trees found within the project boundary, and a health assessment of native trees on the three (3) subject parcels: APN No.'s 4458-030-007, 4458-028-019, and 4458-028-015.

Per the native tree protection ordinance, native oak (*Quercus* spp.), California walnut (*Juglans californica*), western Sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) trees, with at least one trunk measuring six inches or more in diameter, or a combination of any two trunks measuring a total of eight inches or more in diameter, measured at four and one-half feet above natural grade are protected and require a tree protection plan (City of Malibu, 2002).

LOCATION

The proposed project includes three parcels totaling 25.2 acres, and is located at the junction of Malibu Canyon Road, the Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), and Civic Center Way in the City of Malibu, Los Angeles County, California.

SITE CONDITIONS

The project site is a former horticultural nursery on a bluff approximately 225 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) with steep slopes to the north and northeast. The bluff is bisected by a network of drivable dirt roads remaining from the former horticultural nursery. No structures remain on the property, but vagrant activity is evident.

The majority of the project site is comprised of remnant and successional coastal sage scrub, with abandoned/escaped nursery and ornamental plants and open patches dominated by two native herbaceous species, alkaline saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) and fascicled tarplant (*Deinandra fasciculata*) (Rincon Consultants, 2011). Within the former nursery footprint, non-native trees include cork oak (*Quercus suber*), Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), European olive (*Olea europia*), Tasmanian blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), and Brazilian pepper tree (*Schinus terebenthifolius*). The slopes are comprised largely of intact native coastal sage scrub. The successional coastal sage scrub is dominated by laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*).

METHODS

This report documents the findings of the tree assessment conducted at the site on February 16, 2012 by Rincon biologist Stephanie Lopez (arborist certification pending) and senior botanist Cher Batchelor, under the direction of certified arborist Julie Broughton.

During the site visit all trees were identified to the lowest taxonomic level possible. For each tree assessed, tree height, canopy width and trunk diameter at breast height (DBH, four and one-half feet above natural grade) was determined. Tree height and canopy width was visually estimated and DBH was measured using a Forestry Suppliers English unit diameter tape and/or tree calipers. GPS data points were collected for all

native trees with a Trimble GeoXT unit with sub-meter accuracy. A site map depicting the location of all native trees is provided in the attached map.

RESULTS

The project site does not contain any native trees that meet the City's requirements for protection. Native trees were observed on site, however, none meet the size criteria for protection or were within the project boundaries. One oak meeting the size criteria was observed on site, but was identified as a cork oak (*Quercus suber*) that is native to southwestern Europe and northern Africa (Bringham, 2005). Three native qualifying California walnuts were observed to the east and outside the project boundary.

The location of all native tree species was documented regardless of size. The size of each native species tree was assessed and representative photographs were taken. While not protected, the attached map illustrates the location of all native trees observed within and immediately adjacent to the project boundaries, including the non-native cork oak and the three California walnuts located outside of the project site.

Native trees that were observed but did not meet the City's criteria for protection were coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), walnut and toyon. The majority of coast live oaks were observed as basal re-sprouts in row crops from the previous nursery. The coast live oaks appear to have been burned and subsequently cut at the base.

Six walnut trees observed within the project boundary were multi-trunked and did not meet the City's minimum combined 2-trunk 8-inch DBH requirement for protection. With the exception of one walnut along the eastern boundary, which was in declining health and had broken limbs, the trees were generally healthy with new shoot growth and no sign of disease.

Numerous toyon were observed on the bluff top and scattered throughout the coastal sage scrub on the north and northeast facing slopes. None of the toyon meet the City's minimum combined 2-trunk 8-inch DBH requirement for protection, but were generally healthy with new shoot growth and no sign of disease.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

While unprotected native tree species are present within the site and numerous trees will be removed due to the proposed project, no protected native trees are present within the project boundaries. Therefore, potential construction and post-construction impacts would not occur and no alternatives or mitigation measures are recommended.

References

Bringham, Steve, 2005. *Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates, The Trees of San Diego*, San Diego Horticultural Society.

City of Malibu, 2002. *Local Implementation Plan, Chapter 5 – Native Tree Protection Ordinance*, Adopted September 13, 2002.

Rincon Consultants, Inc, 2011. *Revised Biological Inventory Report for the Rancho Malibu Resort Project*.

PHOTO PLATE



Photo 1. View of cork oak tree (*Quercus suber*) located on bluff top.



Photo 2. View of coast live oak trees re-sprouting from burnt and cut bases located on bluff top.



Photo 3. View of base of coast live oak trees.



Photo 4. View of walnut tree within project boundary that did not meet size criteria for protection

PHOTO PLATE



Photo 5. View of walnut tree located outside the project site boundary to the east.



Photo 6. View of toyon on bluff edge above steep north facing slope.



Bing Maps Aerial: (c) 2010 Microsoft Corporation and its data suppliers.

Legend

Site Boundary

100-ft Buffer

Proposed Project Boundary

***Tree Species**

Coast Live Oak - *Quercus agrifolia*

Cork Oak - *Quercus suber*

Toyon - *Heteromeles arbutifolia*

Walnut - *Juglans californica*

Coast Live Oak Concentration

*Please note: no native trees within the project boundary meet the size criteria for protection.



Native Tree Map