

# Memorandum

To: Christine Medak, USFWS  
Project: Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project  
From: Lauren Simpson  
Date: June 11, 2020

**Subject: Weekly Least Bell's Vireo Survey and Noise Monitoring Summary for the Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project; Week of June 1 – June 5, 2020**

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This memorandum has been prepared to summarize the results of the breeding season focused surveys for least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), nest monitoring, and noise monitoring activities conducted by ECORP Consulting, Inc. (ECORP) for Los Angeles County Public Works' (LACPW) Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project (Project) in the City of Pasadena, Los Angeles County, California. The focused breeding season surveys, nest monitoring, and noise monitoring for least Bell's vireo were conducted to comply with Conservation Measure 11b of the USFWS Informal Section 7 Consultation that was issued for the Project which states:

"Noise buffer: Construction noise levels will be restricted to below 60 dBA Leq hourly at 100 feet from areas occupied by the vireo. 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. If vireos are present, noise monitoring will be conducted weekly and must demonstrate that noise levels are less than 60 dBA Leq hourly at specified monitoring locations, no less than 100 feet from the active nest(s) as determined by the biological monitor. Weekly survey reports will be prepared during the nesting season and sent electronically to the CFWO each week that vireos are detected. The weekly reports will identify the location of vireo nest sites and territories within 500 feet of the project."

A summary of least Bell's vireo survey efforts and observations of least Bell's vireo prior to the start of Project activities on May 20, 2020 was provided in the previously transmitted memo covering the period of May, 2020.

A brief summary of the Project activities, focused least Bell's vireo survey and nest monitoring results, and noise monitoring results for the week of June 1, 2020 is provided below. A figure depicting the least Bell's vireo nesting location and territory within 500 feet of the Project site and noise monitoring graphs for the week of June 1, 2020 are included as attachments.

## Project Activities – Week of June 1, 2020

### *Sediment Removal Activities*

Project activities related to sediment removal activities continued during the week of June 1, 2020. All Project activities were monitored by a Designated Biologist. Project activities related to sediment removal activities included the following:

- Preparation of the Project site for resuming sediment removal activities.
- Removal of emergent vegetation along the ESA fence line.
- Installation of the ESA fence along the eastern access road of the Project site.
- Mowing and removal of emergent vegetation within the reservoir.
- Sediment hauling activities began on June 4, 2020.

### *Restoration Activities*

On-site restoration activities were ongoing during the week of June 1, 2020 and included the removal of non-native vegetation from on-site restoration areas using hand tools. No restoration activities occurred within the 300-foot buffer around the least Bell's vireo nest, which was enforced by the monitoring Designated Biologist.

## Least Bell's Vireo Surveys and Noise Monitoring – Week of June 1, 2020

### *Focused Least Bell's Vireo Surveys*

Two focused least Bell's vireo surveys were conducted during the week of June 1, 2020. The two surveys conducted on June 1 and 5, 2020 were conducted as focused breeding season surveys, to be continued twice-weekly for the duration of the least Bell's vireo breeding season (through September 15). Each survey was conducted by a CDFW- and USFWS-approved Designated Biologist for least Bell's vireo surveys. The dates and personnel for each survey are presented in Table 1.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Surveyor</b>
06/01/20	Jill Coumoutso
06/05/20	Lauren Simpson

The least Bell's vireos were documented during both surveys conducted during the week of June 1, 2020. The location of the least Bell's vireo nest and territory are depicted in Attachment A. The male was observed singing within the previously documented territory as well as further north than was previously documented. The territory size was expanded to reflect these observations. The female was observed sitting on the nest on June 5, 2020. Based on the initial observation of incubation on May 21, 2020, the nest may be in the final days of incubation or the female may have been brooding nestlings.

No other observations of least Bell's vireo were documented elsewhere on the Project site during focused surveys conducted the week of June 1, 2020.

*Least Bell's Vireo Noise Monitoring*

Noise monitoring for the week of June 1, 2020 occurred on June 3, 2020. A noise monitoring station was established no less than 100 feet from the active least Bell's vireo nest under the direction of the least Bell's vireo Designated Biologist. Project activities began at 7:07 am. However, due to technical difficulties with the noise monitoring equipment, noise monitoring readings did not begin until 8:43 am. The noise monitor did take notes of all atypical noise events during the period when the equipment was not recording and did not record any atypical construction-related noise during this time. Noise monitoring for Project activities occurred between 8:43 am and 3:22 pm. The monitor ensured that all construction hourly noise levels (Leq) remained below 60 dBA. All hourly Leq measurements were below 60 dBA during the noise monitoring (see Attachment B). Instances where noise levels momentarily exceeded 60 dBA were attributed to the movements of the noise monitor in close-proximity to the noise meter at the start of each hour to program the meter for hourly measurements and to low-flying helicopters that passed above the site regularly throughout the day due to the close proximity of a helicopter landing pad southeast of the Project site.

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



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ECORP Consulting, Inc.

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Location of Least Bell's Vireo Nest and Territory
- Attachment B – Noise Monitoring Graphs

**ATTACHMENT A**

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Location of Least Bell's Vireo Nest and Territory

Location: N:\2014\2014-003\_008 Devils Gate Mitigation Plan\Map\Stos\_and\_mitigation\_monitoring\2020\DC\_LBVI\_monitoring\_20200528.mxd (WAG)-mguidry 6/10/2020

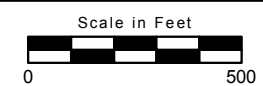
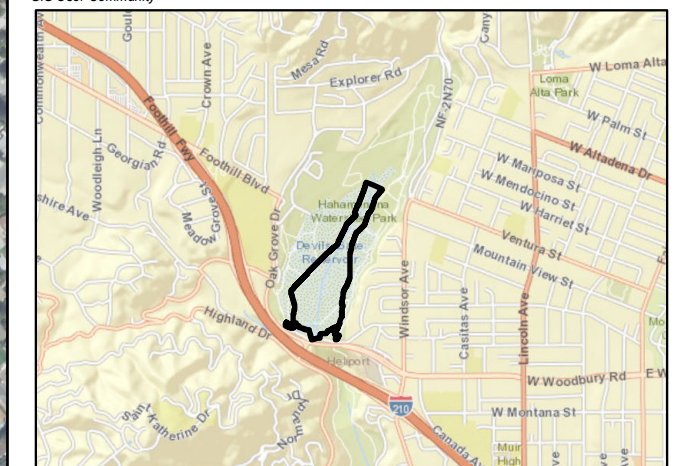
### Figure 1. Least Bell's Vireo Monitoring June 1 - 5, 2020

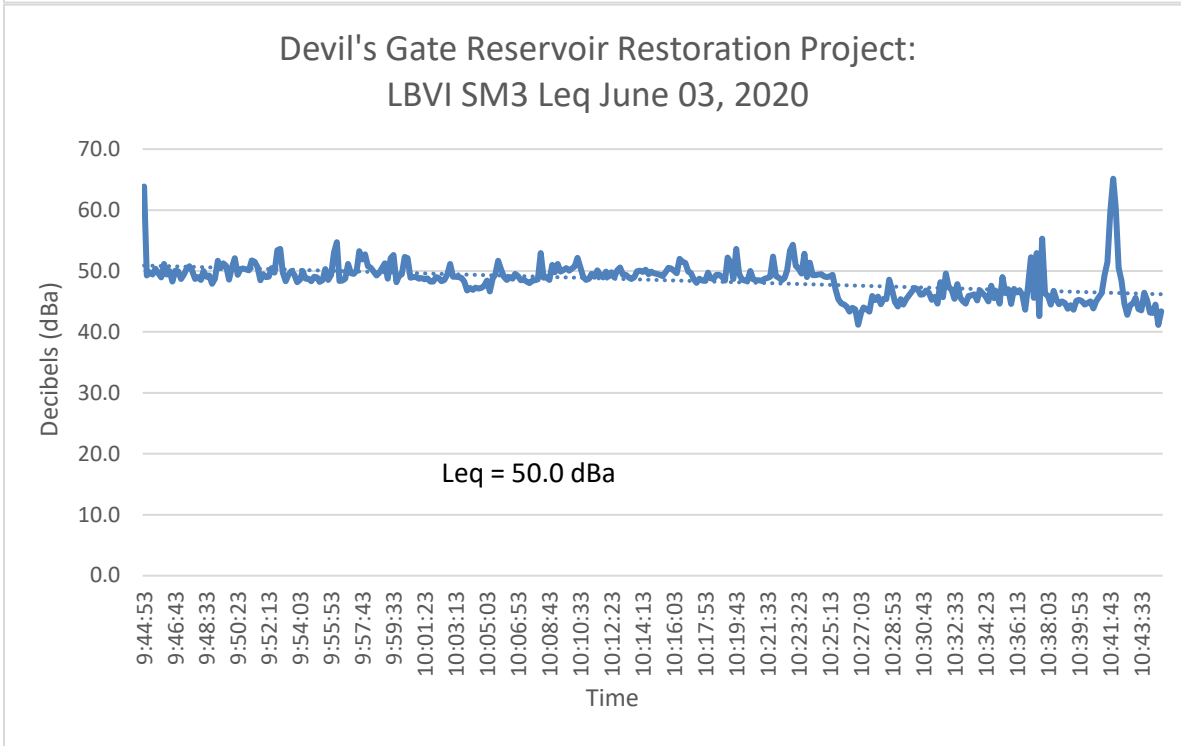
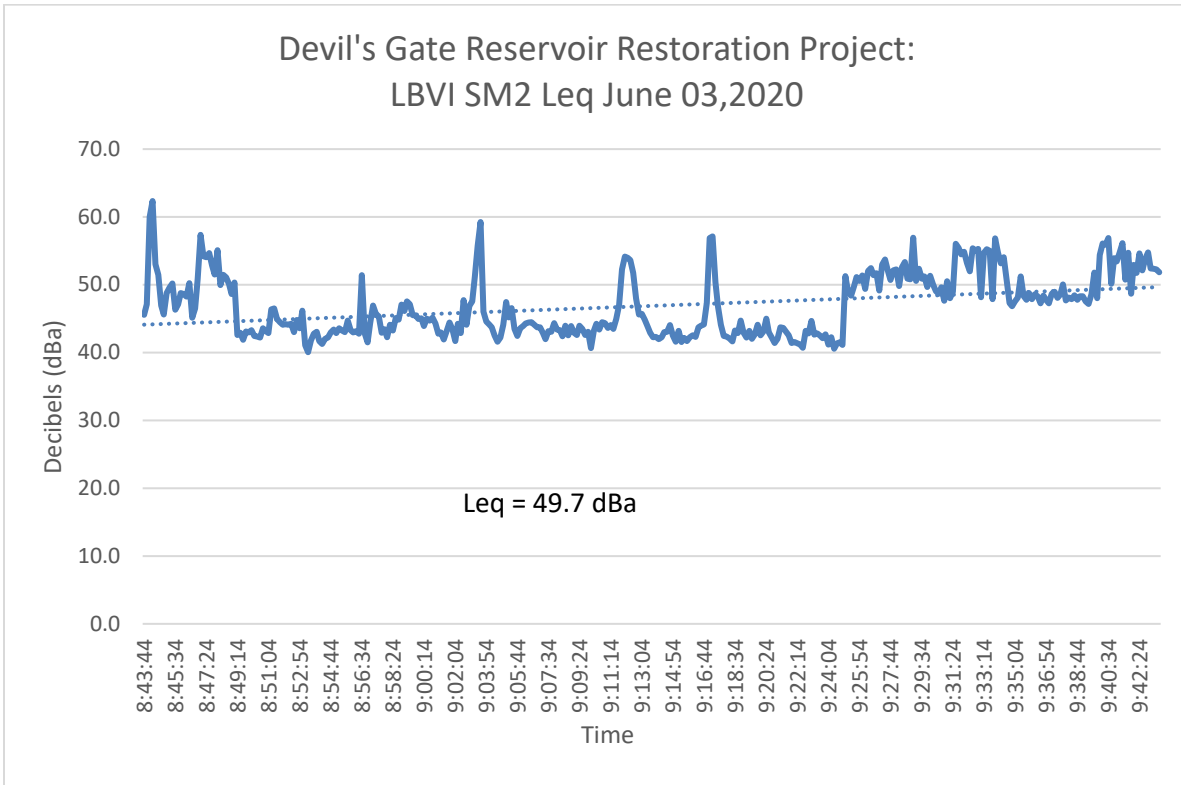
#### Map Features

-  Initial Project Footprint
-  Initial Project Footprint 500' Buffer
-  Least Bell's Vireo Nest
-  Least Bell's Vireo Territory
-  Least Bell's Vireo Nest 300' Buffer

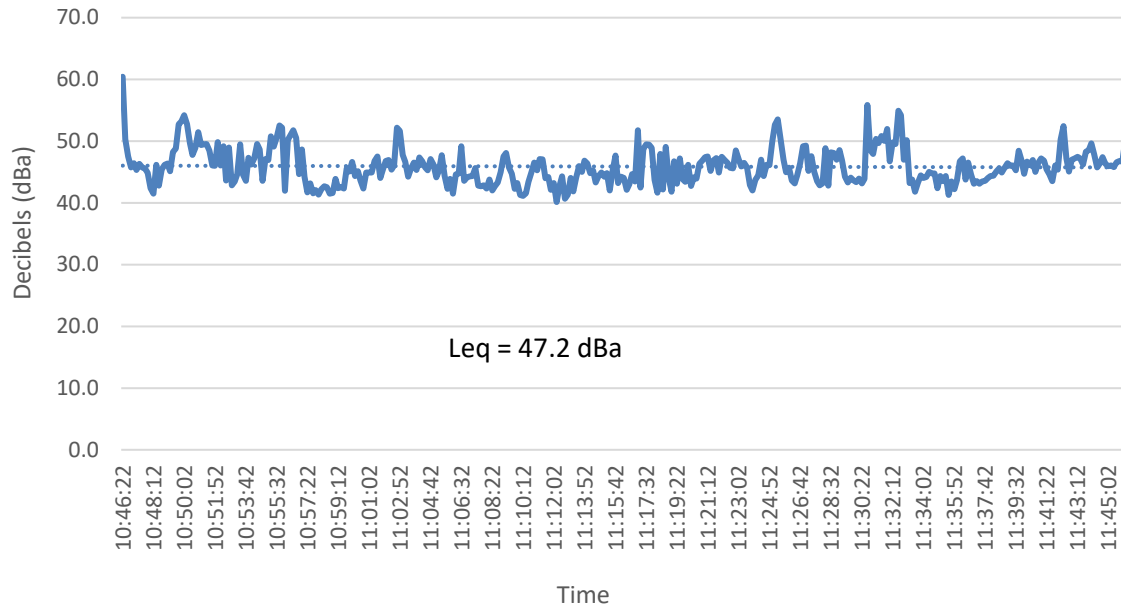


Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

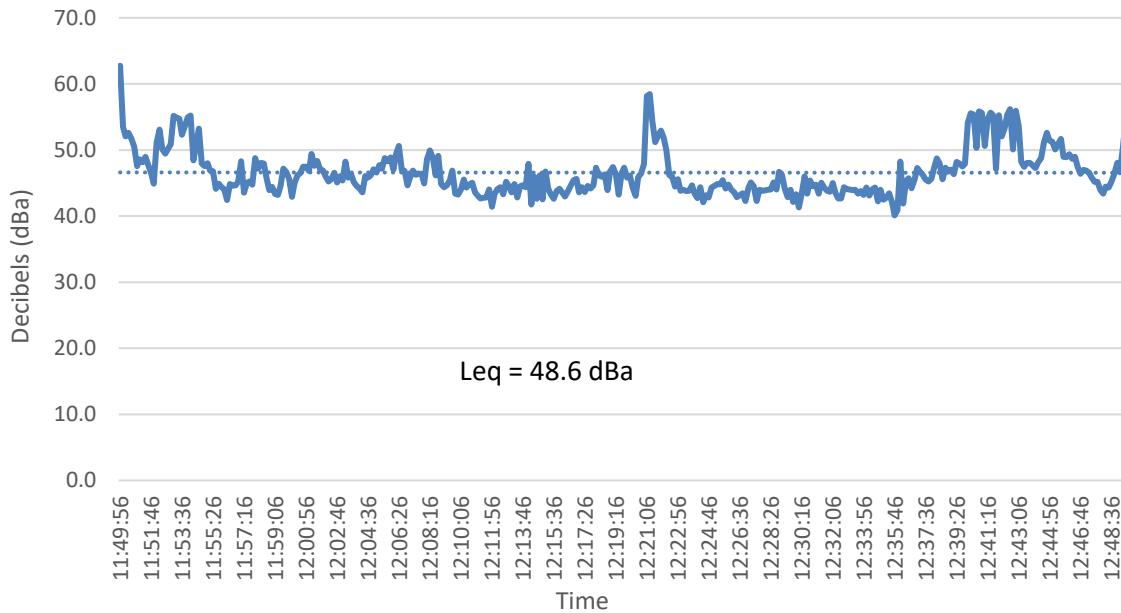




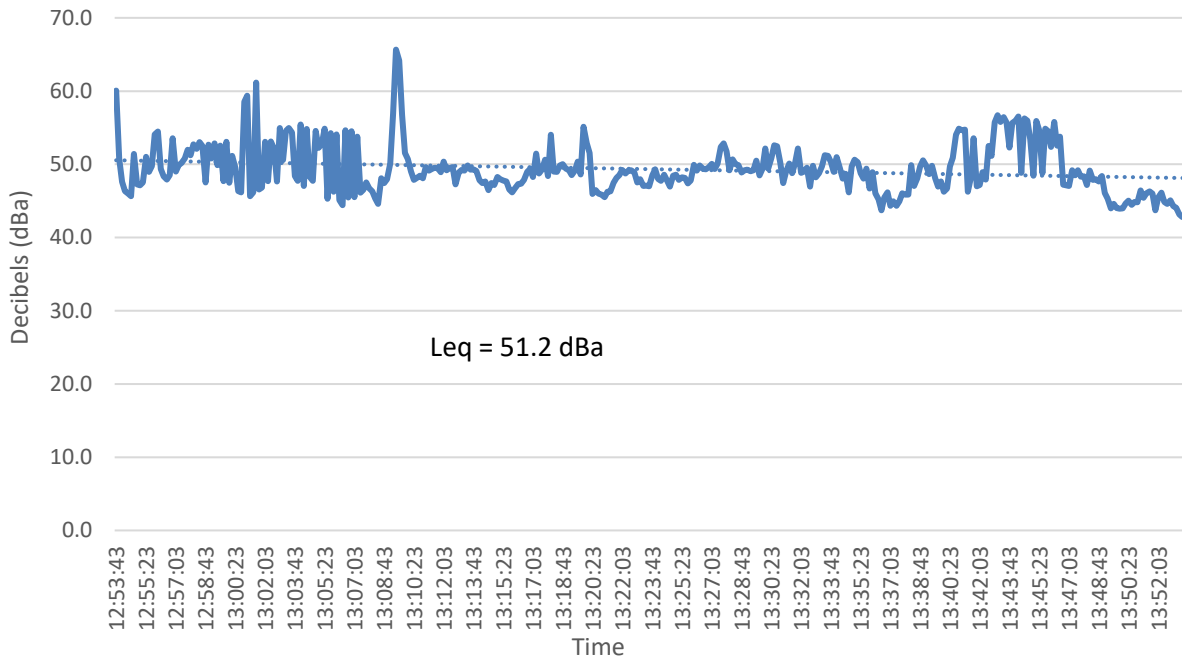
Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project:  
LBVI SM4 Leq June 03, 2020



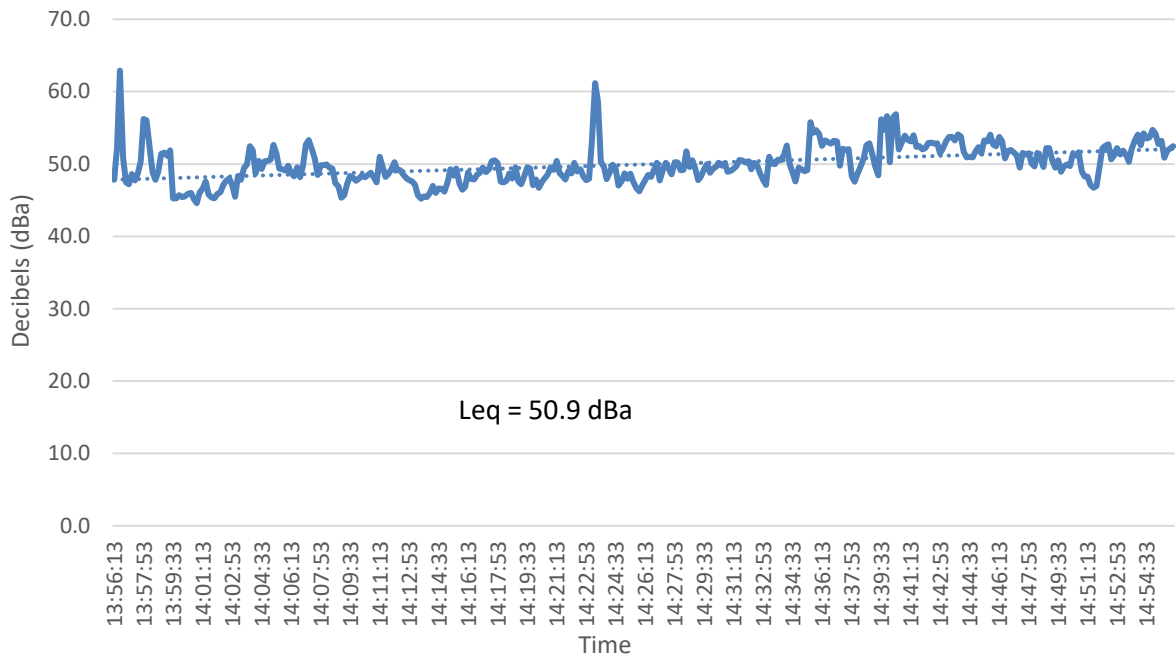
Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project:  
LBVI SM5 Leq June 03, 2020



Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project:  
LBVI SM6 Leq June 03, 2020



Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project:  
LBVI SM7 Leq June 03, 2020





Devil's Gate Reservoir Restoration Project:  
LBVI SM8 Leq June 03, 2020

