



September 24, 2021
(2018-047.026/004)

Mr. Keith Hala
County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Stormwater Engineering Division
Via Email: khala@dpw.lacounty.gov

Subject: September 2021 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. Hala,

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 September 2021 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."

Twice-weekly least Bell's vireo surveys per Section 7 began on April 20, 2021 after preconstruction least Bell's vireo surveys were completed, and sediment removal activities were initiated and were completed by August 31, 2021, after which weekly surveys were conducted through September 15, 2021 per the ITP. Sediment removal activities were completed on August 10, 2021 and site demobilization activities continued through the end of September 2021.

SURVEY METHODS

Focused breeding season surveys for least Bell's vireo in September were conducted in compliance with ITP Condition 7.3.4 for Project activities that are to occur during the vireo's breeding season (March 1 to September 15). 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

Three focused breeding season surveys for least Bell's vireo were conducted during September 2021. 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
09/03/2021	SS	0630	1102	60	74	40	0	0-1	0-1
09/10/2021	SS	0639	1050	70	84	75	10	1-3	1-3
09/15/2021	CT	0600	1025	60	75	100	0	1-3	1-3

CT = Christine Tischer, SS = Shannan Shaffer.

No least Bell's vireos were detected during the September 2021 breeding season surveys.

Brown-headed cowbirds were not observed during the September 2021 breeding season surveys.

DISCUSSION

Three focused breeding season surveys for least Bell's vireo conducted in September 2021 did not detect least Bell's vireo in or within 500 feet of the Project site. September 15, 2021 marked the end of the 2021 breeding season. No breeding least Bell's vireos were documented at the Project site during the 2021 season.

Weekly focused breeding season surveys for least Bell's vireo will resume in March 2022 to support ongoing habitat restoration activities occurring at the Project site.

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: September 24, 2021

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: Sep 3, 2021, 11:07:15 AM

Survey Date

Sep 3, 2021

Observer Name

Shannan Shaffer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:30

Start Temperature

60

Start Wind Speed

0-1

Start Cloud Cover

40

End Time

11:02

End Temperature

74

End Wind Speed

0-1

End Cloud Cover

0

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Incidental Species Observed

CAQU, MODO, ACWO, HOFI, CAKI, CALT, BUSH, CASJ, LEGO, ANHU, NOMO, BLPH, common side-blotched lizard, desert cottontail, western fence lizard, parrot, RTHA, YEWA, AMKE, WTSW, CA ground squirrel, WREN, alligator lizard, BEWR

Log Completed?

Yes

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

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Sep 10, 2021, 10:57:25 AM

Survey Date

Sep 10, 2021

Observer Name

Shannan Shaffer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:39

Start Temperature

70

Start Wind Speed

1-3

Start Cloud Cover

75

End Time

10:50

End Temperature

84

End Wind Speed

1-3

End Cloud Cover

10

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Incidental Species Observed

CAQU, coyote, partots, CALT, ACWO, BUSH, CATH, MODO, NUWO, OATI, AMCR, HOFI, LEGO, ANHU, CASJ, SOSP, WTEN, KILL, COHA, AMKE, desert cottontail, KILL, BGGN, CA ground squirrel, western fence lizard, eastern fox squirrel, BLPH, SPTO

Log Completed?

Yes

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

Submitted by: SoCal_Bio

Submitted time: Sep 15, 2021, 1:58:02 PM

Survey Date

Sep 15, 2021

Observer Name

Christine Tischer

Survey Conditions

Start Time

06:00

Start Temperature

60

Start Wind Speed

1-3

Start Cloud Cover

100

End Time

22:25

End Temperature

75

End Wind Speed

1-3

End Cloud Cover

0

Were Least Bell's Vireo Observed

No

Brown-Headed CowBird Observations

Number of Individuals

0

Incidental Species Observed

ACWO, parrots, ANHU, MODO, BGGN, OATI, LEGO, NUWO, WREN, COHA, BUSH, PHAI, CASJ, BEWR, WIWA, SPTO, CAQU, CALT, HOFI, AMCR, eastern fox squirrel, CA ground squirrel, BLPH, RTHA, OCWA, ALHU, SOSP, KILL, CATH, WAVI. AMKE, RSHA, CORA, COYE, coyote. ECDO, western fence lizard, desert cottontail,

Additional Notes

3 man crew weed whacking in basin north of Johnson field resulting in non-project related dust.

Log Completed?

Yes