PRECONSTRUCTION BAT SURVEY REPORT

Brethren Hillcrest Gateway Project

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1 INTRODUCTION

On behalf of Brethren Hillcrest Homes, Novaterra Biological Consulting, Inc. (Novaterra) conducted a series of preconstruction bat surveys for the Brethren Hillcrest Gateway Project (Project) located in the City of La Verne, Los Angeles County, California. The surveys were conducted within the entire Project's areas.

The purpose of the preconstruction bat surveys was to identify and assess potential roosting habitat in the trees and structures located within the Project areas. The areas investigated during the survey included those that would be directly and indirectly affected by the construction of the access roads into and out of the reservoir and those that would be removed or potentially impacted during the initial sediment removal process (hereafter "study area"). In addition, the assessment was also conducted to determine the roosting purpose served by the trees and/or structures. This report documents the results of the preconstruction bat surveys.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The Project is located within the City of La Verne in Los Angeles County, California (Figure 1. Project Location and Vicinity). La Verne is approximately 35 miles east of Los Angeles within Pomona Valley at the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains which are located north of the Project.

The proposed project is an update to the Brethren Hillcrest Homes (Hillcrest) Master Plan (Master Plan). Hillcrest consists of 239 residential homes and apartments, 48 assisted living units, 24 dementia beds, and 59 skilled nursing facility beds. The proposed project includes demolition of seven residential homes and construction of nine single-family homes with common area landscaping on 1.19 acres encompassing AINs 8381-010-006, -028, and -033 (Figure 2. Existing Setting).

The seven residential units to be demolished include: one single family home (2692 Park Avenue) and two duplexes (2675 A Street, 2677 A Street, 2681a A Street, and 2681b A Street) within the South Gateway (AIN 8381-010-006), and two single family homes (2730 Park Avenue and 2712 Park Avenue) within the North Gateway (AIN 8381-010-028 and AIN 8381-010-033). Trees and vegetation may also be removed as part of the demolition.

The nine residential units to be constructed include five single-family homes within the South Gateway and four single-family homes within the North Gateway. Each of the nine proposed single-family residential units would be one-story with two bedrooms, two baths, and a two-car garage. The project also includes reconstruction of portions of the curb, gutter, sidewalk, and driveway aprons along the project frontages of Park Avenue and A Street, as well as reconstruction of public paseos traversing these properties to improve the connection between the east and west campuses of the Hillcrest Community.

The 1.19-acre project is located in the southern portion of the city and is surrounded by residential uses on all sides. The residences at 2692 Park Avenue and 2712 Park Avenue were developed prior to 1948, and the remaining residences were developed by 1964.

Figure 1- Project Location and Vicinity

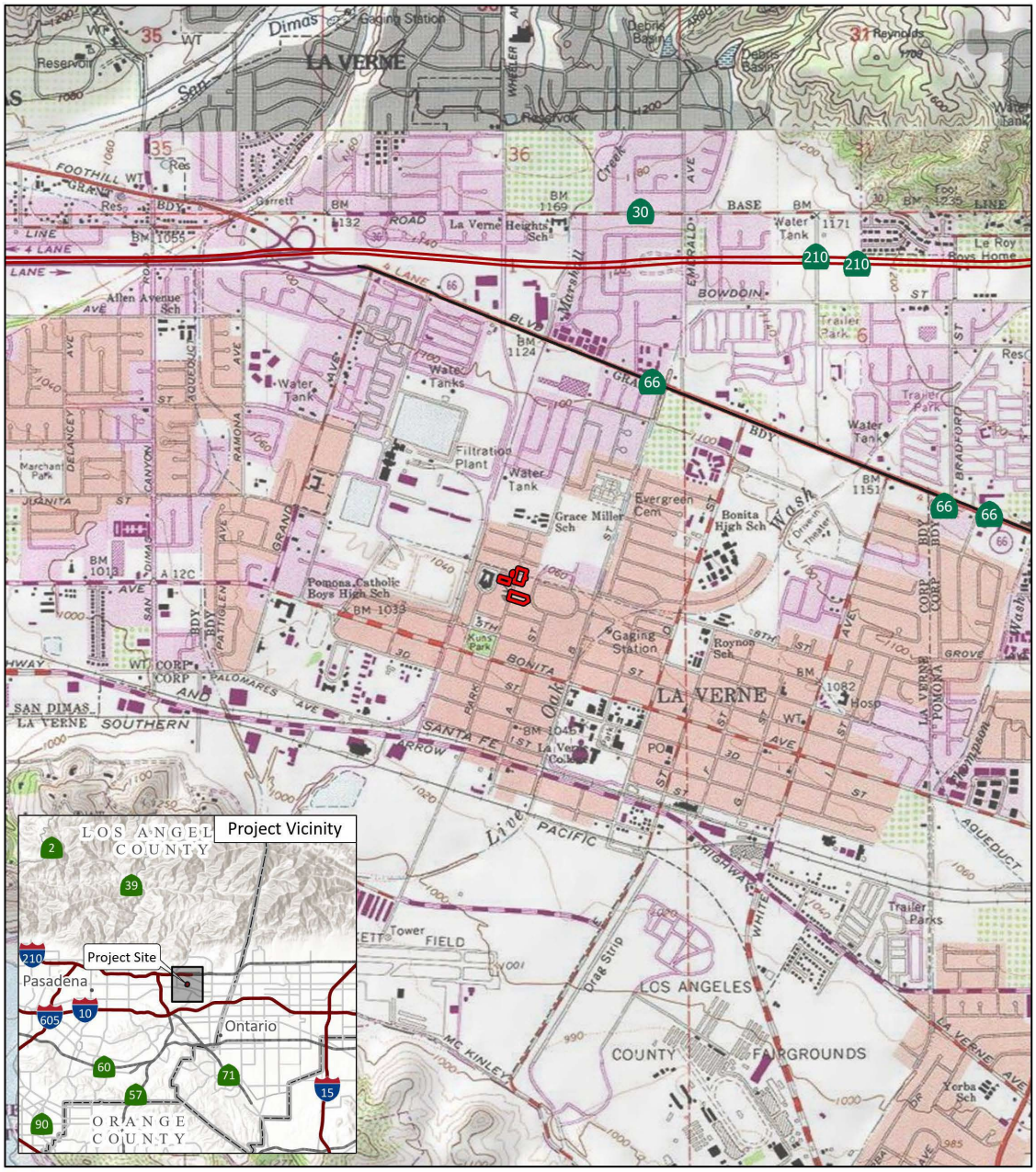

Figure 2- Existing Setting

LSA

Project Site

Photo Location

Site photographs are provided in Figures 3a through 3e.

FIGURE 2

0 63 125
FEET

Brethren Hillcrest Gateway Project
Existing Setting

SOURCE: Nearmap Aerial Imagery (May 1, 2024)

I:\2024\20241974\GIS\Pro\Brethren Hillcrest Master Plan Update\Brethren Hillcrest Gateway Project.aprx (3/7/2025)

3 ROOSTING BATS NATURAL HISTORY

Bat roosts can be separated into two categories: cavity/structure-roosting bats and foliage-roosting bats. Cavity-roosting bats include species which roost in crevices within manmade structures, caves, rock crevices in rocky cliffs, under exfoliating bark, and cavities of snags and trees. (Vonhof and Barclay 1996, Brigham et al. 1997, Ormsbee and McComb 1998, Rabe et al. 1998). Foliage-roosting bats utilize the open foliage of deciduous and coniferous trees, shrubs, and vines as roosts (Barbour and Davis 1969; Constantine 1959). Urban environments provide a low diversity of available potential roost types (Russo and Ancillotto 2015).

3.1 Cavity/Structure-Roosting Bats

Habitats for urban hollow or crevice-roosting bats are in limited supply in cities and towns, where natural features have been replaced by artificial structures such as old buildings, roofs, bridges and culverts (Li and Wilkins 2015). Species such as the Mexican free-tailed bat (Tadarida brasiliensis) prefer abandoned buildings that have high entrances and are surrounded by scarce vegetation while species such as the western mastiff bat (Eumops perotis) usually occupy attics with low entrances of under 2 meters. Less common in urban environments are the presence of large diameter, tall trees or snags as roosting sites, which have demonstrated to be important for roosting especially in more open areas of upland habitat near water sources (e.g., Kurta et al. 1993, Vonhof and Barclay 1996, Brigham et al. 1997, Ormsbee and McComb 1998, Rabe et al. 1998). Tree species and state of decay determine the type of roost features available (e.g., number of natural cavities, amount of peeling bark, presence of woodpecker holes). In urban settings, snags or live trees identified as a hazard because of decay are commonly removed. Tree cavities and artificial structures can be occupied by a single bat (typically males and non- reproductive females) or many bats (maternity colonies). Bats are vulnerable to predation while roosting during the day and presumably must choose roosts that minimize predator access. Therefore, bats may require roosts high in tall trees or in artificial structures that do not allow access to ground predators such as rats.

3.2 Foliage-Roosting Bats

Foliage-roosting bats in southern California include western yellow bat (Lasiurus xanthinus), western red bat (Lasiurus blossevillii) and hoary bat (Lasiurus cinereus). They use leaf petioles as roosting sites (Dalquest and Walton 1970). Foliage- roosting bats are known to select sites primarily in medium to large deciduous trees (Barbour and Davis 1969, Shump and Shump 1982a, Shump and Shump 1982b) at the edge of hardwood forest canopies (Barbour and Davis 1969, Constantine 1966, McClure 1942). In urban areas, they may also use dead fronds that encircle palm trees as roosting sites (Hoffmeister 1986). Foliage roost sites are typically considered to consist of a void space within the tree canopy, which is sheltered from above and has an open flyway from underneath.

Tree-roosting (both foliage- and cavity-roosting) bats frequently switch roosts for a variety of reasons, including decreasing commuting costs to foraging areas, seeking out alternate microclimates, avoiding predation, and reducing parasite exposure (Lewis 1995). However, roost- switching in tree bats usually occurs between relatively proximate trees suggesting a degree of faithfulness to a particular forest area (Vonhof and Barclay 1996).

4 METHODS

The preconstruction bat survey entailed a daytime field survey consisting of a habitat assessment to assess potential roost trees and structures, followed by a nighttime acoustic and emergence survey of the study area for bat species. These steps are described below.

4.1 Habitat Assessment

A habitat assessment was performed on June 17, 2025, during the daytime portion of the survey. CDFW approved bat biologists visually examined the external physical features of trees and structures located within the study area for evidence of bat use. This included any potential crevices or entrances to the structure's roof, attics, chimneys and garage; presence of guano, culled insect parts, urine staining, odors associated with bats. Biologists used binoculars to assist with the visual assessment. Biologists also listened for chatter indicative of roosting bats at each tree and structure. During the habitat assessment, trees and structures within the study area were examined for the presence of roosts and classified for their potential as roosting habitat. These roosting types are described below:

- Maternity roosts – Most sensitive. Larger tree cavities, caves, and other types of shelter used by bats during the maternity season to give birth to, nurse, and rear young. They are the most uncommon and sensitive type of bat roost and are only present during the bat maternity season (generally March 1 through September 30).
- Day roosts – Any location that provides routine protection and shelter for bats during their inactive daylight hours. These roosts include hibernacula used during colder periods.
- Night roosts – Temporary resting locations for food digestion between nocturnal foraging bouts, often located adjacent to high-quality foraging habitat.

The survey was conducted within the maternity roosting period (June-August) to identify maternity roosts, if present. There were trees within the study area that may be suitable for night roosting because this type of roosting is temporary. Day roosting requires broader protection from harsh weather, temperature and daylight than is typically provided by trees, because bats generally spend more time in these roosting locations. Tree features considered suitable as colonial day-roosting habitat only include very large cavities or crevices, trees with suspected heart rot (hollow inside), and heavily fissured bark with deep internal spaces. Structures such as roofs and attics would also provide adequate day roosts.

All trees and structures in the study area were inspected for roosting potential. The roosting suitability of each tree was classified based on the following characteristics:

- Structure/Tree Type 1 – Most Suitable. Trees: the presence of loose bark and abundant cavities within the trunk and limbs. Tree is most likely a hollow snag but can also be alive but with significant amount of decay. Tree is typically large in diameter with good sun exposure (i.e., exposed on the southeastern aspect, or taller than the surrounding canopy). Colonial roosting would be possible in a tree with such features. Structures: Several potential crevices that provide entrances to the attic, chimney or home. Lack of potential entrances to potential predators such as rats. Colonial roosting would be possible.

- Structure/Tree Type 2 – Moderately Suitable. Trees: tree with loose bark and large cavities within the trunk and limbs. Tree is typically still alive. Trunk is typically not hollow. Tree is typically large in diameter. Available features may be present but are less likely to support colonial roosting. Solitary roosting in a tree with such features could be possible. Tree has potential for use by foliage-roosting bats. Structure: There are potential crevices and entrances to the attic. Lack of entrances for potential predators such as rats. Less likely to support colonial roosting due to lower number or crevices.
- Structure/Tree Type 3 – Least Suitable. Trees: Minor amounts of loose bark and small trunk and limb cavities are present. Tree is typically smaller in diameter. Available features are unlikely to support cavity or colonial roosting. Solitary roosting (particularly by foliage-roosting species) in a tree with such features would still be possible. Structure: No crevices or entrances to the structure's attic, chimney or home or predators such as rats are present within the home.

4.2 4.2 Visual Observations and Acoustic Monitoring

Approximately 30 minutes before sunset two handheld acoustic bat monitoring systems (Anabat™ Express passive bat detectors) were set up with a tripod within the study area (Figure 3. Anabat™ Unit 1 and Unit 2 Placement). One was set up in North Gateway and the second one was set up in South Gateway (Figure 3. Study Area). Three biologists conducted emergence surveys. Two were located in South Gateway, one moitored the main house and maple tree while the other biologist monitored the 4 duplexes. The third biologist monitored the two homes in North Gateway. The visual surveys were conducted from 30 minutes before sunset to approximately 120 minutes after sunset. Visual surveys were assisted by the use of night-vision goggles and thermal imaging. During the surveys, each observer was positioned so that they could observe and count bats as the bats exited the potential structures and roost tree assigned. Any bats observed emerging from the vicinity of the survey area would be tallied immediately.

Acoustic surveys were the primary source of data for determining if foliage-roosting species were present within the study area, as visual inspection of trees is not a viable survey technique for these types of bats. The acoustic monitoring was timed to capture the window of bat emergence from roosting areas. The monitoring time from 30 minutes before sunset to 120 minutes after sunset was considered sufficient to conduct out-flight counts, since most roosting bats typically exit their roosts shortly after sunset. The survey was conducted when the moon was in Waning Gibbous when it had an illumination of 62% to avoid the full moon phase as some bats are known to be "lunar phobic" and will avoid emergence or reduce activity levels on evenings when the moon is bright (Lang et al. 2006).

Active collection of echolocation calls during surveys allows for the best quality of diagnostic calls and, in combination with passive monitoring (i.e., Anabat™ units), provides context for the investigator (O'Farrell et al. 1999). For analyses, only the best representative calls per unit per night were used for identification to species level. Qualitative call characteristics (inflection, shape), known call frequency parameters, and a reference library were used to identify calls to the species level or "phonic group" (a species pair or group of species with similar characteristic call frequency that could not be distinguished to species level due to call similarity or quality of the call sequence, respectively) (O'Farrell et al. 1999, USGS 2005). There are generally three groups of bat species that are grouped into phonic groups for the purposes of acoustic analysis

due to the high degree of similarity of their echolocation calls. These groups are the 50kHz Myotis group (50kMyo) which includes California myotis (Myotis californicus) and Yuma myotis (Myotis yumanensis), the 40kHz Myotis group which includes little brown myotis (Myotis lucifugus), long-legged myotis (Myotis volans), and small-footed myotis (Myotis ciliolabrum), and the Q25 phonic group which includes the silver-haired bat (Lasionycteris noctivagans), big brown bat (Eptesicus fuscus), and Mexican free-tailed bat (Tadarida brasiliensis

Figure 3 – Acoustic Monitoring Locations

5 RESULTS

5.1 Habitat Assessment

All structures and trees throughout the entire study area were evaluated for bat roosting potential. All seven of the structures to be demolished were ranked as Type 3 – Least Suitable (Appendix A). All of the buildings in this area had been previously treated by a pest management company due to a rat infestation. All gaps around doors, windows, and seams were sealed with foam (Figures 4 and 6). Vents and chimneys all had exclusionary metal netting (Figure 5). One maple tree in the study area received a ranking of Type 2 – Moderately suitable within the study area, the rest identified were not suitable (Appendix A). The maple measured 42 inches dbh and had a large cavity on top of a dead branch on the SE facing side of the tree.

Evidence of bat presence such as guano, culled insect parts, urine staining or odors were not detected on or in the vicinity of any of the structures or trees inspected for roost suitability.

5.2 Visual Observations and Acoustic Monitoring

The acoustic and visual emergence survey was conducted the evening following the daytime habitat assessment. Environmental conditions encountered during the survey were optimal with clear skies, mild winds, and appropriate temperatures to observe bat activity (Appendix A).

Visual out-flight observations with the use of thermal imaging were performed on all potential roosting structures and trees. No bats were observed emerging from any of the seven structures or the maple tree identified as a potential roost sites during emergence surveys.

Analysis of the echolocation recordings found no species were confirmed to be present during the nighttime surveys

Figure 4 – Door exclusion with spray foam

Figure 5 – Gable vent exclusion with netting

Figure 6 – Exclusion of seams with spray foam

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study area was not occupied by bats during the survey period and bats were not observed making out-flights from the vicinity of the structures and trees within the study area. This was likely due to the urban setting. The project area is in a residential neighborhood with bright lights, moderate insect presence in between two major highways and far from less developed areas such as city parks or golf courses. The structures, while older, did not have any potential crevices or access to the inside of the house due to the exclusionary foam and netting previously placed. Additionally, a great horned owl (Bubo virginianus) was heard and striped skunks (Mephitis mephitis) were seen during the survey which may pose a perceived predation risk to foraging bats.

No bat species were identified during the surveys and should be considered absent from the study area at this time.

7 CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present the data and information required for this biological evaluation, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. Field work conducted for this assessment was performed by me or under my direct supervision. I certify that I have not signed a non-disclosure or consultant confidentiality agreement with the project applicant or the applicant's representative and that I have no financial interest in the project.

DATE: 7/06/24 SIGNED: 

Mikaila Buchanan
Senior Biologist

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9 APPENDIX A

Brethren Hillcrest Gateway Project **Date:** 6/17/25

Surveyor Names: ANGELICA MENDOZA, MIKAILA BUCHANAN, AUBRY MCSWEENY

Targeted Species: ROOSTING BATS

Emergence Survey Conditions					
	Time	**Temp (F)**	**Wind (mph)**	**% Cloud Cover**	**Moon Phase**
Start	19:30	88	1-3	0	WANING GIBBOUS 62%
Stop	22:00	76	1-3	0	WANING GIBBOUS 62%

Sunset Time: 20:07 **Type of Equipment Used:** ATN NVM14-4 NVG, TELOS XP50 THERMAL MONO ANABAT CHORUS, ECHO METER TOUCH 2 PRO

Suitable Habitat / Species Observations	
Observer Location	**Notes (time of first bat observation, level of bat activity, approximate number of bats observed and where, etc.)**
HOUSE 1	34.106163, -117.776492 * ANABAT 34.106019, -117.776264 MALE/W snag branch. ENTIRE HOUSED SEALED, EXCLUSION REDUCES BAT ROOSTING POTENTIAL
HOUSE 2	34.106792, -117.776196 NO SUITABLE HABITAT FOR BAT ROOSTING DUE TO EXCLUSION.
HOUSE 3	34.106799, -117.76216 * ANABAT 34.107035, -117.775798

Additional Notes:
MODERATE BAT HABITAT, EXCLUSION PERFORMED FOR RODENTS ALSO EFFECTIVE FOR BATS. MODERATE INSECT ACTIVITY, BRIGHT STREET AND PORCH LIGHTS THROUGHOUT THE STUDY AREA, NO BATS WERE OBSERVED OR AUDIO DETECTED DURING THE SURVEY, BIOLOGIST ARRIVED AT 1800 TO PERFORM A BAT HABITAT ASSESSMENT AND INSPECT ALL POSSIBLE ROOSTING LOCATIONS, ANABAT LOCATIONS AT HOUSE 1 & 3 AND ECHOMETERS CARRIED THROUGHOUT.

Incidental Species Observed: (include sign; tracks, carcass, feathers, scat, etc.)
CORA, NOMO, WESTERN FENCE LIZARD, CDHA, HOFI, MODO, CALT, BLPH, AMCR, CSJA, HOSP, SKUNKS (2) HOUSES INSPECTED FOR GUANO (perimeter) and URINE STAINS WITH BLACK LIGHT.

Roost Assessment Datasheet

Project: BRETHREN **Date:** 6/17/25 **Personnel:** Angelica Mendoza, Mikaila Buchanan, Aubry McSweeny

ID/Coordinates	Notes	Ranking
34.105962 -117.776155 maple	Mature maple. Exfoliating bark with snag on SE facing branch 18'-20' up. Approximate DBH 42" Large cavity in snag branch.	2
House 1 34.106163 -117.776492	Main house + Far subunits and 2 garage, 2681, 2683, 2675, 2677. All houses inspected / boarded 2 street lights and large flood light / porch lights visible. Two skunks foraging on property	1
House 2 34.106792 -117.776196	Minor areas required sealing. Recently vacated. Garage and back shed sealed. Bright street lights visible from house. Street fully illuminated. Ornamental plants in yard. 2-Two Ash trees north of fence, next to property. No exfoliating bark or cavity	3
House 3 34.106799 -117.776266	House completely sealed. Covered patio w/ corrugated roofing. Chimney sealed. House boarded. All vents have screens + or sealant. Bird whitewash on back step. Recently vacated. Rat sign noted, points of entry sealed. Mature Mulberry - No cavity or exfoliating bark	3
House 3 cont:	Ginkgo biloba + Large london plane (no cavity or exfoliating bark. Mexican Weeping Pine + Monterey Cypres adjacent to property on South side. No exfoliating bark or cavity.	