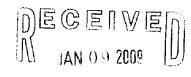


## COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

TRANSPORTATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY

## **Environmental Programs Department**



January 7, 2009

RIVERSIDE COUNTY
FRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Ms. Cathy Bechtel Riverside County Transportation Commission P.O. Box 12008 Riverside, CA 92502-2208

Re: Draft EIR/EIS for the Mld County Parkway Project

Dear Ms. Bechtel:

The Environmental Programs Department (EPD) appreciates the opportunity to review the abovereferenced document. As a permittee under the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) is identified as the lead agency for the project. The MSHCP identifies the project as a covered activity, and as such, requires review and concurrence by the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). While EPD is not an approving agency, we offer the following comments and requests:

- The list of acronyms was placed in Appendix G, Volume II, of the document. EPD suggests placing the list near the beginning of the document and including a "Definition of Terms" as well.
- The original biological information collected for the preparation of the document should be included in the document as an Appendix. The information should include, but not be limited to, methodology, tables, and maps showing species' populations, etc.
- Under 3.17.2.3 Wildlife Corridors/Habitat. Fragmentation appears to be addressed
  through the application engineering controls that will minimize the impacts to
  linkages and cores. Although locations of bridges and wildlife crossings are
  presented in Appendix I, no discussion of the size or function for these crossings was
  found throughout the document. Additional details that briefly describe the size,
  length, and rationale for location selection relative to their function should be
  provided. This information would benefit permittees when evaluating adjacent
  projects for MSHCP consistency.
- Page 3.17-3, Figures 3.17.1a and 3.17.1b "Cores and Linkages" shown in the Figures
  are confusing and misleading to the reader. The map should identify criteria area
  cells and where wildlife crossing will occur along the MCP.
- EPD recognizes that additional mitigation areas will be set aside by the RCTC as a result of the equivalency analysis process. EPD requests a map identifying those areas after they have been secured by RCTC.

Ms. Cathy Bechtel January 7, 2009 Page 2

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please don't hesitate to contact me at (951) 955-2009.

Sincerely,

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT** 

Ken Baez Principal Planner

KB:kh

xc: Kathleen Browne