



Marcus H. Bole & Associates
An Environmental Consulting Firm

December 8, 2023

Yuba Sutter Transit Authority
Attn: Adam Hansen, Matt Mauk
2100 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901

EVALUATION OF EXISTING ONSITE BLUE ELDERBERRY PLANTS (*SAMBUCUS SPECIES*), 6035 AVONDALE AVENUE, LINDA, CA. MHBA FILE 0731-2023-3877.

During January of 2022, at the request of the Yuba Sutter Transit Authority, thirty-one (31) elderberry shrubs located at 6035 Avondale Avenue with stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level were evaluated, tagged and listed on a spreadsheet by Marcus H. Bole, M.S. Senior Biologist. An avoidance plan was designed to prevent impacts to the shrubs due to the potential development of the site by the Yuba Sutter Transit Company. On July 4, 2023, the Linda Fire Protection District responded to the property and found approximately one acre of grass, shrubs and trees fully engulfed in fire. A significant number of non-native annual grasses, oleander and elderberry shrubs were destroyed. Quick response by the fire department limited the damage to the property including a homeless camp located onsite (see attached fire report).

This letter format report is a post-fire evaluation of seventeen (17) elderberry shrubs, *Sambucus mexicana*, destroyed by fire and fourteen (14) surviving elderberry shrubs located at 6035 Avondale Avenue. Following the fire on July 4, Marcus H. Bole conducted a post-fire evaluation of the site's remaining elderberry shrubs. It was determined that elderberry shrubs with tag numbers 2 through 14 and 27 through 30 were completely destroyed by fire. During December, 2023, the fire debris was removed from the site by Crowder Tree Service under the direct supervision of Marcus H. Bole. All surviving elderberry shrubs were protected from debris removal operations. The surviving elderberry shrubs are listed on the attached spreadsheet by tag number and location (map). It is anticipated that the 14 surviving shrubs listed on the attached spreadsheet will be protected from future site development in accordance with Avoidance Measures set forth in the United States Fish & Wildlife Service's *Conservation Guidelines for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle*, 9 July 1999 (attached). This concludes our inventory and evaluation of the existing blue elderberry shrubs located at 6035 Avondale Avenue. Questions concerning our finding should be directed to Marcus H. Bole & Associates, Attn: Marcus H. Bole, 104 Brock Drive, Wheatland, CA 95692, phone: 530-633-0117 and email: mbole@aol.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcus H. Bole, M.S. Senior Project Biologist

Enclosures:

Linda Fire Protection District Report dated 08/02/2023
Updated Elderberry Shrub Survey Spreadsheet and Site Map
USFWS Conservation Guidelines for Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle



Linda Fire Protection District
 Station: **1**
 Shifts Or Platoon: **A Shift**

Location: N Beale RD Marysville CA 95901 Avondale Ave	Incident Type: 143 - Grass fire
Lat/Long: N 39° 7' 35.52" W 121° 34' 0.05"	FDID: 58005 Incident #: 2023-1850237 Exposure ID: 74273326 Exposure #: 0 Incident Date: 07/04/2023
Location Type: 2 - Intersection Cross Street, Directions or National Grid: Avondale Ave	

Report Completed by:	Heggstrom , Kyle	ID: 126	Date: 08/02/2023
Report Reviewed by:	Heggstrom , Kyle	ID: 126	Date: 08/02/2023
Report Printed by:	Heggstrom, Kyle	ID: 126	Date: 8/2/2023 Time: 15:26

Structure Type:	Property Use: 931 - Open land or field		
Automatic Extinguishment System Present:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Detectors Present:	<input type="checkbox"/> Cause of Ignition: Cause under investigation
Aid Given or Received:	None	Primary action taken:	11 - Extinguishment by fire service personnel
Losses	Pre-Incident Values		
Property:	Property:	Civilian Injuries: 0	Fire Service Injuries: 0
Contents:	Contents:	Civilian Fatalities: 0	Fire Service Fatalities: 0
Total:	Total:	Total Casualties: 0	Total Fire Service Casualties: 0
Total # of apparatus on call:		4	Total # of personnel on call: 17

NARRATIVE (1)
<p>Narrative Title: Grass Fire</p> <p>Narrative Author: Gonzalez, Eliacer</p> <p>Narrative Date: 08/02/2023 15:25:07</p> <p>Narrative Apparatus ID: 281</p> <p>Narrative: Arrived at scene to find approx .75 acres of mowed grass and oleander, and other bushes burning at a moderate rate of spread. 265 began a hose lay from the heal of the fire from N. Beale rd. 281 made access into the field and was able to mobile attack the left flank and stop the forward progress. Once contained crews work on mop up. 265 cleared to respond to an additional fire. 3101 arrived at scene and assisted with mop up. Once no smoke or embers were found all units cleared and returned. This fire was mostly started by illegal fireworks.</p>

APPARATUS			
Fire Controlled Date / Time:		7/4/2023 10:51:00 PM	
Unit	281	Unit	250
Type:	Brush truck	Type:	Chief officer car
Use:	EMS	Use:	Other
Response Mode:	Lights and Sirens	Response Mode:	Lights and Sirens
# of People	2	# of People	1
Alarm	07 /04/2023 21:52:00	Alarm	07 /04/2023 21:52:00
Dispatched	07 /04/2023 21:52:00	Dispatched	07 /04/2023 21:52:00
Enroute	07 /04/2023 21:53:00	Enroute	07 /04/2023 21:53:00
Arrived	07 /04/2023 22:01:00	Arrived	07 /04/2023 22:01:00
Cancelled	-- /-- /-- -- :-- :--	Cancelled	-- /-- /-- -- :-- :--
Cleared Scene	07 /04/2023 22:51:00	Cleared Scene	07 /04/2023 22:51:00
In Quarters	-- /-- /-- -- :-- :--	In Quarters	-- /-- /-- -- :-- :--
In Service	07 /04/2023 22:51:00	In Service	07 /04/2023 22:51:00
Unit	276	Unit	3101
Type:	Engine	Type:	Engine
Use:	Suppression	Use:	Suppression
Response Mode:	Lights and Sirens	Response Mode:	Lights and Sirens
# of People	3	# of People	1
Alarm	07 /04/2023 21:52:00	Alarm	07 /04/2023 21:52:00
Dispatched	07 /04/2023 21:52:00	Dispatched	07 /04/2023 21:52:00
Enroute	07 /04/2023 21:53:00	Enroute	07 /04/2023 21:53:00
Arrived	07 /04/2023 22:01:00	Arrived	07 /04/2023 22:01:00
Cancelled	-- /-- /-- -- :-- :--	Cancelled	-- /-- /-- -- :-- :--
Cleared Scene	07 /04/2023 22:51:00	Cleared Scene	07 /04/2023 22:51:00
In Quarters	-- /-- /-- -- :-- :--	In Quarters	-- /-- /-- -- :-- :--
In Service	07 /04/2023 22:51:00	In Service	07 /04/2023 22:51:00
Number Of People not on apparatus: 10			

FIRE			
Acres Burned	None or Less Than One	Acres Burn From Wildland Form	False
Area Of Fire Origin	Highway, parking lot, street: on or near	Heat Source	Undetermined
Item First Ignited	Undetermined	Fire Is Confined To Object Of Origin	
Type Of Material	Undetermined	Cause Of Ignition	Cause under investigation
Factor Contributing To Ignition	Undetermined		
Human Factors Contributing	None		

ARSON

CUSTOM FIELDS FORM	
Tone Call	Yes
Damage to apparatus/equipment	No
CB Varied Times	No
TEMS Call-out	No

Member Making Report (Chief Kyle Heggstrom): _____

Incident Reviewer (Chief Kyle Heggstrom): _____

Tag #	Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	DGH (")	Canopy	Condition	Remarks	Comments
1	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	25	25	30	fair	39.12647n, -121.56702w, Upland - no holes	4 branches, 2 branches broken
15	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	21	12	15	good	39.12654n, -121.56669w, Upland - no holes	4 branches all broken numerous small branches less than 1-inch
16	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	20	11	15	fair	39.12654n, -121.56680w, Upland - no holes	2 branches, both broken
17	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	27	11	12	good	39.12662n, -121.56690w, Upland - no holes	3 branches, heavily damaged leaning over chain-link fence
18	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	15	12	10	fair	39.12665n, -121.56660w, Upland - no holes	2 branches, 1 broken
19	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	10	8	10	good	39.12653n, -121.56640w, Upland - no holes	2 branches, close together
20	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	20	10	20	fair	39.12663n, -121.56640w, Upland - no holes	3 branches, leaning
21	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	8	7	15	fair	39.12652n, -121.56647w, Upland - no holes	4 branches, trunk over fence, 2 broken banches
22	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	18	6	15	fair	39.12652n, -121.56647w, Upland - no holes	4 branches, trunk over fence
23	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	8	10	15	poor	39.12654n, -121.56643w, Upland - no holes	4 broken branches, leaning
24	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	10	16	15	fair	39.12650n, -121.56634w, Upland - no holes	4 main branches, 3 broken, leaning
25	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	25	12	15	fair	39.12681n, -121.56650w, Upland - no holes	3 main branches, one over fence
26	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	20	8	15	fair	39.12681n, -121.56681w, Upland - no holes	3 broken branches, leaning over fence
31	<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>	Blue Elderberry	20	15	25	poor	39.12934n, -121.56944w, Upland - no holes	By levee, multiple cut and broken branches

Inventory of existing elderberry shrubs located at 6035 Avondale Avenue Linda, California. Inventory conducted on December 1, 2023 by Marcus H. Bole, Senior Biologist, Marcus H. Bole & Associates, Wheatland, CA.



ELDERBERRY SHRUB #1



ELDERBERRY SHRUBS #15-26



ELDERBERRY SHRUB #31

Figure 1: Location of existing blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*) shrubs located at 6035 Avondale Avenue, Linda, California. Yuba County APN 020-030-048.

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, California 95825

Conservation Guidelines for the
Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle
9 July 1999

The following guidelines have been issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to assist Federal agencies and non-federal project applicants needing incidental take authorization through a section 7 consultation or a section 10(a)(1)(B) permit in developing measures to avoid and minimize adverse effects on the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. The Service will revise these guidelines as needed in the future. The most recently issued version of these guidelines should be used in developing all projects and habitat restoration plans. The survey and monitoring procedures described below are designed to avoid any adverse effects to the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. Thus a recovery permit is not needed to survey for the beetle or its habitat or to monitor conservation areas. If you are interested in a recovery permit for research purposes please call the Service's Regional Office at (503) 231-2063.

Background Information

The valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*), was listed as a threatened species on August 8, 1980 (Federal Register 45: 52803-52807). This animal is fully protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). The valley elderberry longhorn beetle (beetle) is completely dependent on its host plant, elderberry (*Sambucus* species), which is a common component of the remaining riparian forests and adjacent upland habitats of California's Central Valley. Use of the elderberry by the beetle, a wood borer, is rarely apparent. Frequently, the only exterior evidence of the elderberry's use by the beetle is an exit hole created by the larva just prior to the pupal stage. The life cycle takes one or two years to complete. The animal spends most of its life in the larval stage, living within the stems of an elderberry plant. Adult emergence is from late March through June, about the same time the elderberry produces flowers. The adult stage is short-lived. Further information on the life history, ecology, behavior, and distribution of the beetle can be found in a report by Barr (1991) and the recovery plan for the beetle (USFWS 1984).

Surveys

Proposed project sites within the range of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle should be surveyed for the presence of the beetle and its elderberry host plant by a qualified biologist. The beetle's range extends throughout California's Central Valley and associated foothills from about the 3,000-foot elevation contour on the east and the watershed of the Central Valley on the west (Figure 1). All or portions of 31 counties are included: Alameda, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Benito, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, Yuba.

If elderberry plants with one or more stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level occur on or adjacent to the proposed project site, or are otherwise located where they may be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed action, minimization measures which include planting replacement habitat (conservation planting) are required (Table 1).

All elderberry shrubs with one or more stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level that occur on or adjacent to a proposed project site must be thoroughly searched for beetle exit holes (external evidence of beetle presence). In addition, all elderberry stems one inch or greater in diameter at ground level must be tallied by diameter size class (Table 1). As outlined in Table 1, the numbers of elderberry seedlings/cuttings and associated riparian native trees/shrubs to be planted as replacement habitat are determined by stem size class of affected elderberry shrubs, presence or absence of exit holes, and whether a proposed project lies in a riparian or non-riparian area.

Elderberry plants with no stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level are unlikely to be habitat for the beetle because of their small size and/or immaturity. Therefore, no minimization measures are required for removal of elderberry plants with no stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level with no exit holes. Surveys are valid for a period of two years.

Avoid and Protect Habitat Whenever Possible

Project sites that do not contain beetle habitat are preferred. If suitable habitat for the beetle occurs on the project site, or within close proximity where beetles will be affected by the project, these areas must be designated as avoidance areas and must be protected from disturbance during the construction and operation of the project. When possible, projects should be designed such that avoidance areas are connected with adjacent habitat to prevent fragmentation and isolation of beetle populations. Any beetle habitat that cannot be avoided as described below should be considered impacted and appropriate minimization measures should be proposed as described below.

Avoidance: Establishment and Maintenance of a Buffer Zone

Complete avoidance (i.e., no adverse effects) may be assumed when a 100-foot (or wider) buffer is established and maintained around elderberry plants containing stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level. Firebreaks may not be included in the buffer zone. In buffer areas construction-related disturbance should be minimized, and any damaged area should be promptly restored following construction. The Service must be consulted before any disturbances within the buffer area are considered. In addition, the Service must be provided with a map identifying the avoidance area and written details describing avoidance measures.

Protective Measures

1. Fence and flag all areas to be avoided during construction activities. In areas where encroachment on the 100-foot buffer has been approved by the Service, provide a minimum setback of at least 20 feet from the dripline of each elderberry plant.
2. Brief contractors on the need to avoid damaging the elderberry plants and the possible penalties for not complying with these requirements.
3. Erect signs every 50 feet along the edge of the avoidance area with the following information: "This area is habitat of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a threatened species, and must not be disturbed. This species is protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Violators are subject to prosecution, fines, and imprisonment." The signs should be clearly readable from a distance of 20 feet, and must be maintained for the duration of construction.
4. Instruct work crews about the status of the beetle and the need to protect its elderberry host plant.

Restoration and Maintenance

1. Restore any damage done to the buffer area (area within 100 feet of elderberry plants) during construction. Provide erosion control and re-vegetate with appropriate native plants.
2. Buffer areas must continue to be protected after construction from adverse effects of the project. Measures such as fencing, signs, weeding, and trash removal are usually appropriate.
3. No insecticides, herbicides, fertilizers, or other chemicals that might harm the beetle or its host plant should be used in the buffer areas, or within 100 feet of any elderberry plant with one or more stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level.

4. The applicant must provide a written description of how the buffer areas are to be restored, protected, and maintained after construction is completed.
5. Mowing of grasses/ground cover may occur from July through April to reduce fire hazard. No mowing should occur within five (5) feet of elderberry plant stems. Mowing must be done in a manner that avoids damaging plants (e.g., stripping away bark through careless use of mowing/trimming equipment).

Transplant Elderberry Plants That Cannot Be Avoided

Elderberry plants must be transplanted if they can not be avoided by the proposed project. All elderberry plants with one or more stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level must be transplanted to a conservation area (see below). At the Service's discretion, a plant that is unlikely to survive transplantation because of poor condition or location, or a plant that would be extremely difficult to move because of access problems, may be exempted from transplantation. In cases where transplantation is not possible the minimization ratios in Table 1 may be increased to offset the additional habitat loss.

Trimming of elderberry plants (e.g., pruning along roadways, bike paths, or trails) with one or more stems 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level, may result in take of beetles. Therefore, trimming is subject to appropriate minimization measures as outlined in Table 1.

1. **Monitor.** A qualified biologist (monitor) must be on-site for the duration of the transplanting of the elderberry plants to insure that no unauthorized take of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle occurs. If unauthorized take occurs, the monitor must have the authority to stop work until corrective measures have been completed. The monitor must immediately report any unauthorized take of the beetle or its habitat to the Service and to the California Department of Fish and Game.
2. **Timing.** Transplant elderberry plants when the plants are dormant, approximately November through the first two weeks in February, after they have lost their leaves. Transplanting during the non-growing season will reduce shock to the plant and increase transplantation success.
3. **Transplanting Procedure.**
 - a. Cut the plant back 3 to 6 feet from the ground or to 50 percent of its height (whichever is taller) by removing branches and stems above this height. The trunk and all stems measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level should be replanted. Any leaves remaining on the plant should be removed.

- b. Excavate a hole of adequate size to receive the transplant.
- c. Excavate the plant using a Vermeer spade, backhoe, front end loader, or other suitable equipment, taking as much of the root ball as possible, and replant immediately at the conservation area. Move the plant only by the root ball. If the plant is to be moved and transplanted off site, secure the root ball with wire and wrap it with burlap. Dampen the burlap with water, as necessary, to keep the root ball wet. Do not let the roots dry out. Care should be taken to ensure that the soil is not dislodged from around the roots of the transplant. If the site receiving the transplant does not have adequate soil moisture, pre-wet the soil a day or two before transplantation.
- d. The planting area must be at least 1,800 square feet for each elderberry transplant. The root ball should be planted so that its top is level with the existing ground. Compact the soil sufficiently so that settlement does not occur. As many as five (5) additional elderberry plantings (cuttings or seedlings) and up to five (5) associated native species plantings (see below) may also be planted within the 1,800 square foot area with the transplant. The transplant and each new planting should have its own watering basin measuring at least three (3) feet in diameter. Watering basins should have a continuous berm measuring approximately eight (8) inches wide at the base and six (6) inches high.
- e. Saturate the soil with water. Do not use fertilizers or other supplements or paint the tips of stems with pruning substances, as the effects of these compounds on the beetle are unknown.
- f. Monitor to ascertain if additional watering is necessary. If the soil is sandy and well-drained, plants may need to be watered weekly or twice monthly. If the soil is clayey and poorly-drained, it may not be necessary to water after the initial saturation. However, most transplants require watering through the first summer. A drip watering system and timer is ideal. However, in situations where this is not possible, a water truck or other apparatus may be used.

Plant Additional Seedlings or Cuttings

Each elderberry stem measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level that is adversely affected (i.e., transplanted or destroyed) must be replaced, in the conservation area, with elderberry seedlings or cuttings at a ratio ranging from 1:1 to 8:1 (new plantings to affected stems). Minimization ratios are listed and explained in Table 1. Stock of either seedlings or cuttings should be obtained from local sources. Cuttings may be obtained from the plants to be transplanted if the project site is in the vicinity of the conservation area. If the Service determines that the elderberry plants on the proposed project site are unsuitable candidates for

transplanting, the Service may allow the applicant to plant seedlings or cuttings at higher than the stated ratios in Table 1 for each elderberry plant that cannot be transplanted.

Plant Associated Native Species

Studies have found that the beetle is more abundant in dense native plant communities with a mature overstory and a mixed understory. Therefore, a mix of native plants associated with the elderberry plants at the project site or similar sites will be planted at ratios ranging from 1:1 to 2:1 [native tree/plant species to each elderberry seedling or cutting (see Table 1)]. These native plantings must be monitored with the same survival criteria used for the elderberry seedlings (see below). Stock of saplings, cuttings, and seedlings should be obtained from local sources. If the parent stock is obtained from a distance greater than one mile from the conservation area, approval by the Service of the native plant donor sites must be obtained prior to initiation of the revegetation work. Planting or seeding the conservation area with native herbaceous species is encouraged. Establishing native grasses and forbs may discourage unwanted non-native species from becoming established or persisting at the conservation area. Only stock from local sources should be used.

Examples

Example 1

The project will adversely affect beetle habitat on a vacant lot on the land side of a river levee. This levee now separates beetle habitat on the vacant lot from extant Great Valley Mixed Riparian Forest (Holland 1986) adjacent to the river. However, it is clear that the beetle habitat located on the vacant lot was part of a more extensive mixed riparian forest ecosystem extending farther from the river's edge prior to agricultural development and levee construction. Therefore, the beetle habitat on site is considered riparian. A total of two elderberry plants with at least one stem measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level will be affected by the proposed action. The two plants have a total of 15 stems measuring over 1.0 inch. No exit holes were found on either plant. Ten of the stems are between 1.0 and 3.0 inches in diameter and five of the stems are greater than 5.0 inches in diameter. The conservation area is suited for riparian forest habitat. Associated natives adjacent to the conservation area are box elder (*Acer negundo californica*), walnut (*Juglans californica* var. *hindsii*), sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), willow (*Salix gooddingii* and *S. laevigata*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*), button willow (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), and wild grape (*Vitis californica*).

Minimization (based on ratios in Table 1):

- Transplant the two elderberry plants that will be affected to the conservation area.
- Plant 40 elderberry rooted cuttings (10 affected stems compensated at 2:1 ratio and 5 affected stems compensated at 4:1 ratio, cuttings planted:stems affected)
- Plant 40 associated native species (ratio of associated natives to elderberry plantings is 1:1 in areas with no exit holes):
 - 5 saplings each of box elder, sycamore, and cottonwood
 - 5 willow seedlings
 - 5 white alder seedlings
 - 5 saplings each of walnut and ash
 - 3 California button willow
 - 2 wild grape vines
 - Total: 40 associated native species
- Total area required is a minimum of 1,800 sq. ft. for one to five elderberry seedlings and up to 5 associated natives. Since, a total of 80 plants must be planted (40 elderberries and 40 associated natives), a total of 0.33 acre (14,400 square feet) will be required for conservation plantings. The conservation area will be seeded and planted with native grasses and forbs, and closely monitored and maintained throughout the monitoring period.

Example 2

The project will adversely affect beetle habitat in Blue Oak Woodland (Holland 1986). One elderberry plant with at least one stem measuring 1.0 inch or greater in diameter at ground level will be affected by the proposed action. The plant has a total of 10 stems measuring over 1.0 inch. Exit holes were found on the plant. Five of the stems are between 1.0 and 3.0 inches in diameter and five of the stems are between 3.0 and 5.0 inches in diameter. The conservation area is suited for elderberry savanna (non-riparian habitat). Associated natives adjacent to the conservation area are willow (*Salix* species), blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*), interior live oak (*Q. wislizenii*), sycamore, poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), and wild grape.

Minimization (based on ratios in Table 1):

- Transplant the one elderberry plant that will be affected to the conservation area.
- Plant 30 elderberry seedlings (5 affected stems compensated at 2:1 ratio and 5 affected stems compensated at 4:1 ratio, cuttings planted:stems affected)

- Plant 60 associated native species (ratio of associated natives to elderberry plantings is 2:1 in areas with exit holes):

20 saplings of blue oak, 20 saplings of sycamore, and 20 saplings of willow, and seed and plant with a mixture of native grasses and forbs

- Total area required is a minimum of 1,800 sq. ft. for one to five elderberry seedlings and up to 5 associated natives. Since, a total of 90 plants must be planted (30 elderberries and 60 associated natives), a total of 0.37 acre (16,200 square feet) will be required for conservation plantings. The conservation area will be seeded and planted with native grasses and forbs, and closely monitored and maintained throughout the monitoring period.

Conservation Area—Provide Habitat for the Beetle in Perpetuity

The conservation area is distinct from the avoidance area (though the two may adjoin), and serves to receive and protect the transplanted elderberry plants and the elderberry and other native plantings. The Service may accept proposals for off-site conservation areas where appropriate.

1. **Size.** The conservation area must provide at least 1,800 square feet for each transplanted elderberry plant. As many as 10 conservation plantings (i.e., elderberry cuttings or seedlings and/or associated native plants) may be planted within the 1800 square foot area with each transplanted elderberry. An additional 1,800 square feet shall be provided for every additional 10 conservation plants. Each planting should have its own watering basin measuring approximately three feet in diameter. Watering basins should be constructed with a continuous berm measuring approximately eight inches wide at the base and six inches high.

The planting density specified above is primarily for riparian forest habitats or other habitats with naturally dense cover. If the conservation area is an open habitat (i.e., elderberry savanna, oak woodland) more area may be needed for the required plantings. Contact the Service for assistance if the above planting recommendations are not appropriate for the proposed conservation area.

No area to be maintained as a firebreak may be counted as conservation area. Like the avoidance area, the conservation area should connect with adjacent habitat wherever possible, to prevent isolation of beetle populations.

Depending on adjacent land use, a buffer area may also be needed between the conservation area and the adjacent lands. For example, herbicides and pesticides are

often used on orchards or vineyards. These chemicals may drift or runoff onto the conservation area if an adequate buffer area is not provided.

2. Long-Term Protection. The conservation area must be protected in perpetuity as habitat for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. A conservation easement or deed restrictions to protect the conservation area must be arranged. Conservation areas may be transferred to a resource agency or appropriate private organization for long-term management. The Service must be provided with a map and written details identifying the conservation area; and the applicant must receive approval from the Service that the conservation area is acceptable prior to initiating the conservation program. A true, recorded copy of the deed transfer, conservation easement, or deed restrictions protecting the conservation area in perpetuity must be provided to the Service before project implementation.

Adequate funds must be provided to ensure that the conservation area is managed in perpetuity. The applicant must dedicate an endowment fund for this purpose, and designate the party or entity that will be responsible for long-term management of the conservation area. The Service must be provided with written documentation that funding and management of the conservation area (items 3-8 above) will be provided in perpetuity.

3. Weed Control. Weeds and other plants that are not native to the conservation area must be removed at least once a year, or at the discretion of the Service and the California Department of Fish and Game. Mechanical means should be used; herbicides are prohibited unless approved by the Service.
4. Pesticide and Toxicant Control. Measures must be taken to insure that no pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, or other chemical agents enter the conservation area. No spraying of these agents must be done within one 100 feet of the area, or if they have the potential to drift, flow, or be washed into the area in the opinion of biologists or law enforcement personnel from the Service or the California Department of Fish and Game.
5. Litter Control. No dumping of trash or other material may occur within the conservation area. Any trash or other foreign material found deposited within the conservation area must be removed within 10 working days of discovery.
6. Fencing. Permanent fencing must be placed completely around the conservation area to prevent unauthorized entry by off-road vehicles, equestrians, and other parties that might damage or destroy the habitat of the beetle, unless approved by the Service. The applicant must receive written approval from the Service that the fencing is acceptable prior to initiation of the conservation program. The fence must be maintained in perpetuity, and must be repaired/replaced within 10 working days if it is found to be damaged. Some conservation areas may be made available to the public for appropriate recreational and educational opportunities with written approval from the Service. In

these cases appropriate fencing and signs informing the public of the beetle's threatened status and its natural history and ecology should be used and maintained in perpetuity.

7. **Signs.** A minimum of two prominent signs must be placed and maintained in perpetuity at the conservation area, unless otherwise approved by the Service. The signs should note that the site is habitat of the federally threatened valley elderberry longhorn beetle and, if appropriate, include information on the beetle's natural history and ecology. The signs must be approved by the Service. The signs must be repaired or replaced within 10 working days if they are found to be damaged or destroyed.

Monitoring

The population of valley elderberry longhorn beetles, the general condition of the conservation area, and the condition of the elderberry and associated native plantings in the conservation area must be monitored over a period of either ten (10) consecutive years or for seven (7) years over a 15-year period. The applicant may elect either 10 years of monitoring, with surveys and reports every year; or 15 years of monitoring, with surveys and reports on years 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, and 15. The conservation plan provided by the applicant must state which monitoring schedule will be followed. No change in monitoring schedule will be accepted after the project is initiated. If conservation planting is done in stages (i.e., not all planting is implemented in the same time period), each stage of conservation planting will have a different start date for the required monitoring time.

Surveys. In any survey year, a minimum of two site visits between February 14 and June 30 of each year must be made by a qualified biologist. Surveys must include:

1. A population census of the adult beetles, including the number of beetles observed, their condition, behavior, and their precise locations. Visual counts must be used; mark-recapture or other methods involving handling or harassment must not be used.
2. A census of beetle exit holes in elderberry stems, noting their precise locations and estimated ages.
3. An evaluation of the elderberry plants and associated native plants on the site, and on the conservation area, if disjunct, including the number of plants, their size and condition.
4. An evaluation of the adequacy of the fencing, signs, and weed control efforts in the avoidance and conservation areas.

5. A general assessment of the habitat, including any real or potential threats to the beetle and its host plants, such as erosion, fire, excessive grazing, off-road vehicle use, vandalism, excessive weed growth, etc.

The materials and methods to be used in the monitoring studies must be reviewed and approved by the Service. All appropriate Federal permits must be obtained prior to initiating the field studies.

Reports. A written report, presenting and analyzing the data from the project monitoring, must be prepared by a qualified biologist in each of the years in which a monitoring survey is required. Copies of the report must be submitted by December 31 of the same year to the Service (Chief of Endangered Species, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office), and the Department of Fish and Game (Supervisor, Environmental Services, Department of Fish and Game, 1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento, California 95814; and Staff Zoologist, California Natural Diversity Data Base, Department of Fish and Game, 1220 S Street, Sacramento, California 95814). The report must explicitly address the status and progress of the transplanted and planted elderberry and associated native plants and trees, as well as any failings of the conservation plan and the steps taken to correct them. Any observations of beetles or fresh exit holes must be noted. Copies of original field notes, raw data, and photographs of the conservation area must be included with the report. A vicinity map of the site and maps showing where the individual adult beetles and exit holes were observed must be included. For the elderberry and associated native plants, the survival rate, condition, and size of the plants must be analyzed. Real and likely future threats must be addressed along with suggested remedies and preventative measures (e.g. limiting public access, more frequent removal of invasive non-native vegetation, etc.).

A copy of each monitoring report, along with the original field notes, photographs, correspondence, and all other pertinent material, should be deposited at the California Academy of Sciences (Librarian, California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118) by December 31 of the year that monitoring is done and the report is prepared. The Service's Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office should be provided with a copy of the receipt from the Academy library acknowledging receipt of the material, or the library catalog number assigned to it.

Access. Biologists and law enforcement personnel from the California Department of Fish and Game and the Service must be given complete access to the project site to monitor transplanting activities. Personnel from both these agencies must be given complete access to the project and the conservation area to monitor the beetle and its habitat in perpetuity.

Success Criteria

A minimum survival rate of at least 60 percent of the elderberry plants and 60 percent of the associated native plants must be maintained throughout the monitoring period. Within one year of discovery that survival has dropped below 60 percent, the applicant must replace failed plantings to bring survival above this level. The Service will make any determination as to the

applicant's replacement responsibilities arising from circumstances beyond its control, such as plants damaged or killed as a result of severe flooding or vandalism.

Service Contact

These guidelines were prepared by the Endangered Species Division of the Service's Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office. If you have questions regarding these guidelines or to request a copy of the most recent guidelines, telephone (916) 414-6600, or write to:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services
2800 Cottage Way, W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825

Conservation Guidelines for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle



Figure 1: Range of the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle

Literature Cited

Barr, C. B. 1991. The distribution, habitat, and status of the valley elderberry longhorn beetle *Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Sacramento, California.

Holland, R.F. 1986. Preliminary descriptions of the terrestrial natural communities of California. Unpublished Report. State of California, The Resources Agency, Department of Fish and Game, Natural Heritage Division, Sacramento, California.

USFWS. 1980. Listing the valley elderberry longhorn beetle as a threatened species with critical habitat. Federal Register 45:52803-52807.

USFWS. 1984. Recovery plan for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Endangered Species Program; Portland, Oregon.

Table 1: Minimization ratios based on location (riparian vs. non-riparian), stem diameter of affected elderberry plants at ground level, and presence or absence of exit holes.

Location	Stems (maximum diameter at ground level)	Exit Holes on Shrub Y/N (quantify) ¹	Elderberry Seedling Ratio ²	Associated Native Plant Ratio ³
non-riparian	stems $\geq 1''$ & $\leq 3''$	No:	1:1	1:1
		Yes:	2:1	2:1
non-riparian	stems $> 3''$ & $< 5''$	No:	2:1	1:1
		Yes:	4:1	2:1
non-riparian	stems $\geq 5''$	No:	3:1	1:1
		Yes:	6:1	2:1
riparian	stems $\geq 1''$ & $\leq 3''$	No:	2:1	1:1
		Yes:	4:1	2:1
riparian	stems $> 3''$ & $< 5''$	No:	3:1	1:1
		Yes:	6:1	2:1
riparian	stems $\geq 5''$	No:	4:1	1:1
		Yes:	8:1	2:1

¹ All stems measuring one inch or greater in diameter at ground level on a single shrub are considered occupied when exit holes are present anywhere on the shrub.

² Ratios in the *Elderberry Seedling Ratio* column correspond to the number of cuttings or seedlings to be planted per elderberry stem (one inch or greater in diameter at ground level) affected by a project.

³ Ratios in the *Associated Native Plant Ratio* column correspond to the number of associated native species to be planted per elderberry (seedling or cutting) planted.