



## HAMILTON BIOLOGICAL

---

November 29, 2012

Hannah Koo  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Public Works  
900 South Fremont Avenue  
Alhambra, CA 91803

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF EXISTING BIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS AT OXFORD BASIN  
MARINA DEL REY, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

Dear Hannah,

At the request of the Department of Public Works (Department), Hamilton Biological has conducted a biological reconnaissance survey to evaluate whether conditions at Oxford Basin remain consistent with those described in the *Biological Evaluation of Oxford Basin, Marina del Rey, Los Angeles County, California* (Hamilton Biological, Inc., plan dated November 22, 2010). The Department has requested this evaluation as part of planning of the Oxford Retention Basin Multi-Use Enhancement Project.

### **METHODS**

Prior to conducting the survey, I reviewed the above-referenced biological report. I conducted the reconnaissance survey on November 15, 2012, from 8:00 to 10:25 a.m. Skies were 100% overcast, winds were light, and temperatures ranged from 55 to 62° F. During the first 90 minutes of the survey, I was joined by Stephen Zurek of the Department and Rick Ware of Coastal Resources Management. During the survey, I recorded all terrestrial vertebrate wildlife species detected (by sight, sound, tracks, scat, or other sign). I compared the limits of vegetation communities around Oxford Basin with those mapped by Hamilton Biological in 2010.

### **RESULTS**

Road construction was taking place along Admiralty Way, directly south of Oxford Basin, at the time of the survey; this did not affect my ability to conduct the survey, and the road work did not extend into the survey area.

### **Vegetation**

I observed no substantial change in the extent, species composition, or vigor of native wetland vegetation along the edge of the open water of the Basin.

At the southwestern end of the Basin, much of the non-native landscaping that had been present in 2010 had been removed or thinned out.

On the upland slopes surrounding the Basin, scattered non-native plants had died and/or been removed, but this did not change the limits of any plant communities or seem likely to affect their value as habitat for wildlife.

In 2010, much of the non-native Small-flowered Myoporum (*Myoporum laetum*) planted around the Basin was in very poor condition, likely due to an infestation of the Myoporum Thrip (*Klambothrips myopori*)<sup>1</sup>, but during the current survey most of these plants appeared to be healthier. Whether healthy or not, a near-monoculture of myoporum with understory of non-native grasses and weeds, as found at Oxford Basin, provides habitat of marginal value for wildlife.

None of the differences observed in the non-native upland vegetation around Oxford Basin in 2012 versus 2009/2010 represents a substantial change in the plant resources of Oxford Basin.

### Wildlife

I observed the tracks of one mammal species – either a Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) or Striped Skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*) – and detected 22 bird species. All of these birds and mammals were recorded at Oxford Basin by Dan Cooper and Robert Hamilton during a series of more than 20 surveys conducted in 2009 and 2010 (*Biological Evaluation of Oxford Basin, Marina del Rey, Los Angeles County, California*). Table A, below, shows the status of these 22 bird species in 2009/2010 and specifies the number of each species detected during my survey in 2012.

**Table A. Bird Species at Oxford Basin in 2009/2010 and on November 15, 2012**

Family	Species	2009/2010 Study	Nov. 15, 2012
Waterfowl	Mallard <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Up to 23 during fall/ winter; <5 during spring; pair with 5 young on 28 May 2010.	2
	American Wigeon <i>Anas Americana</i>	Up to 89 in winter (Nov. - Mar.)	2
	Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i>	Up to 6 in winter (Dec. - Feb.)	2
Grebes	Pied-billed Grebe <i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	Five in fall (23 Oct.), 1 through winter	1

<sup>1</sup> Hamilton Biological, Inc. 2010. Conservation and Management Plan for Marina del Rey, Los Angeles County, California. Report dated September 16, 2010, prepared for the Department of Beaches & Harbors and Department of Public Works.

Family	Species	2009/2010 Study	Nov. 15, 2012
<b>Pelicans/ Cormorants</b>	Double-crested Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	Up to 3 in fall	3
<b>Large waders</b>	Great Blue Heron <i>Ardea Herodias</i>	1 on 3 dates	1
	Great Egret <i>Ardea alba</i>	1-2 through early winter	1
	Snowy Egret <i>Egretta thula</i>	Up to 3 year-round	1
<b>Shorebirds</b>	Killdeer <i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	1-2 in spring	4
<b>Gulls/Terns</b>	Ring-billed Gull <i>Larus delawarensis</i>	2 on 12 Jan.	1
<b>Doves</b>	Rock Pigeon <i>Columba livia</i>	3-4 in spring	5
	Mourning Dove <i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Up to 27 in late fall; single-digits rest of year	3
<b>Hummingbirds</b>	Anna's Hummingbird <i>Calypte anna</i>	Up to 11, with juveniles heard in myoporum grove (24 Feb.)	9
	Allen's Hummingbird <i>Selasphorus sasin</i>	2 on 27 Apr.	2
<b>Kingfisher</b>	Belted Kingfisher <i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>	1 on three dates in fall/winter	1
<b>Flycatchers</b>	Black Phoebe <i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	Up to 3 year-round	1
<b>Jays/Crows</b>	American Crow <i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	Up to 5; nesting observed in my- oporum (25 Mar.) and in surround- ing residential area	4
<b>Misc. songbirds</b>	Ruby-crowned Kinglet <i>Regulus calendula</i>	Up to 4 in winter	2
	Northern Mockingbird <i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	1 on 3 dates	2
<b>Wood-warblers</b>	Orange-crowned Warbler <i>Vermivora celata</i>	1 on 3 dates	2

Family	Species	2009/2010 Study	Nov. 15, 2012
	Yellow-rumped Warbler <i>Dendroica coronata</i>	Up to 15 in winter (all but 1 were "Audubon's")	13
	Townsend's Warbler <i>Dendroica townsendi</i>	Up to 3 in winter/spring	2

Cooper and Hamilton recorded a total of 51 bird species over the course of 20+ surveys, but only a subset of this number was observed during any single survey; and the numbers of most species vary considerably from visit to visit as birds fly between the Basin and surrounding areas, and as flocks of certain species stop over for short periods during their migrations. The diversity and quantities of birds detected on November 15, 2012, were consistent with results obtained during our previous fall surveys of Oxford Basin.

## CONCLUSION

For the reasons discussed in this report, I conclude that the vegetation and terrestrial vertebrate fauna observed at Oxford Basin on November 15, 2012, were comparable to those documented in the *Biological Evaluation of Oxford Basin, Marina del Rey, Los Angeles County, California* (Hamilton Biological, Inc., 2010). I do not identify any steps that would be warranted to update the biological baseline as the County continues its planning and eventual implementation of the Oxford Retention Basin Multi-Use Enhancement Project.

I appreciate the opportunity to continue biological investigations of Oxford Basin. If you have questions, please send e-mail to [robb@hamiltonbiological.com](mailto:robb@hamiltonbiological.com) or call me at 562-477-2181.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Hamilton  
President, Hamilton Biological, Inc.  
<http://hamiltonbiological.com>