



COAST RIDGE ECOLOGY^{LLC}

BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS • MONITORING • PERMITTING • RESEARCH

May 28, 2026

Shon Webb
33 Montego Key
Novato, CA 94949

Subject: *Biological Site Assessment of Wetland Boundary for the Property at 33 Montego Key, Novato, California (APN 157-201-05)*

Dear Mr. Webb:

This report provides an assessment of the tidal marsh wetlands associated with Novato Creek, and the wetland boundary on the property at 33 Montego Key, Novato, California. The homeowner is proposing to build a living room addition to the existing home on site.

Novato Creek is a perennial creek and tidal estuary that flows into San Pablo Bay just east of Highway 37, approximately two miles east of the property. The property is defined as a City-Centered Corridor per the Marin County Marin Countywide Plan (MCP)¹ Environmental Corridors Map. The creek is shown as a perennial creek on the USGS Petaluma Point 7.5 minute quadrangle (2025).

Methods

On May 8, 2026, CRE biologists, Amanda Smith and Patrick Kobernus², conducted a site visit and assessed the proposed project footprint and wetland vegetation near the property. The wetland boundary near the property at 33 Montego Key was determined by discerning the change between wetland and upland vegetation and was mapped using a handheld submeter GPS (EOS Arrow 100 GNSS receiver). The distance from the wetland boundary and the outward edge of the proposed home addition were then measured with a field tape measure.

Results

The dominant wetland vegetation within the tidal marsh wetland adjacent to the property are pickleweed (*Salicornia pacifica*) and California cord grass (*Sporobolus foliosus*) with invasive iceplant (*Carpobrotus edulis*) being subdominant. Other plant species identified include seashore saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), marsh jaumea (*Jaumea carnosa*), Oregon gumplant (*Grindelia stricta* var. *angustifolia*), and non-native creeping saltbrush (*Atriplex prostrata*). Based on the wetland boundary delineation completed by A. Smith and P. Kobernus, the wetland boundary is located 50 feet from the edge of proposed construction. The wetland boundary is also 5 feet beyond (west of) the backyard fence (see Figure 1), and there is an elevation drop from the back fence of the property towards the wetland. Site conditions (i.e., elevation,

¹ Marin County Plan Environmental Corridors Map 1-2 pg. 1.1-2.

https://planning.smcgov.org/sites/planning.smcgov.org/files/documents/files/SMC_Midcoast_LCP_2013.pdf

² Qualifications for each biologist are provided at the end of this report.

hydrology, and soils) within the backyard are not conducive for wetlands to develop, as soils on the property consist of upland soils that currently support ornamental plant species and a vegetable garden.

The 50-foot distance between the proposed home addition and the wetland exceeds the Marin County MCP BIO-3.1³ requirement for City-Centered Corridors stating, "For parcels less than 0.5 acres in size, a minimum 20-foot development setback from the wetlands is required". This 50-foot distance from development also maintains the 10-foot landward species refuge area per Marin County MCP BIO-5.1⁴. Based on these results, no impacts to Novato Creek or the tidal marshlands associated with Novato Creek are expected.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Amanda Smith
Associate Biologist II

Applicable Sections/ Definitions from the Marin County MCP :

BIO-3.1 Protect Wetlands

City-Centered Corridor:

For parcels less than 0.5 acres in size, a minimum 20-foot development setback from wetlands is required. The developed portion(s) of parcels (less than 0.5 acres in size) located behind an existing authorized flood control levee or dike are not subject to a development setback

BIO-5.1 Protect the Baylands Corridor

For small parcels (2 acres or less in size), encourage property owners where suitable habitat exists to preserve up to 10 feet landward of mean high tide as a species refuge area for high water events. Site constraints, opportunities for avoidance of sensitive biological resources, and options for alternative mitigation, may also be considered.

³ Marin County Plan pg. 2.4 - 17.

https://planning.smcgov.org/sites/planning.smcgov.org/files/documents/files/SMC_Midcoast_LCP_2013.pdf

⁴ Marin County Plan pg. 2.4 - 35.

https://planning.smcgov.org/sites/planning.smcgov.org/files/documents/files/SMC_Midcoast_LCP_2013.pdf

Figure 1:



Photographs:

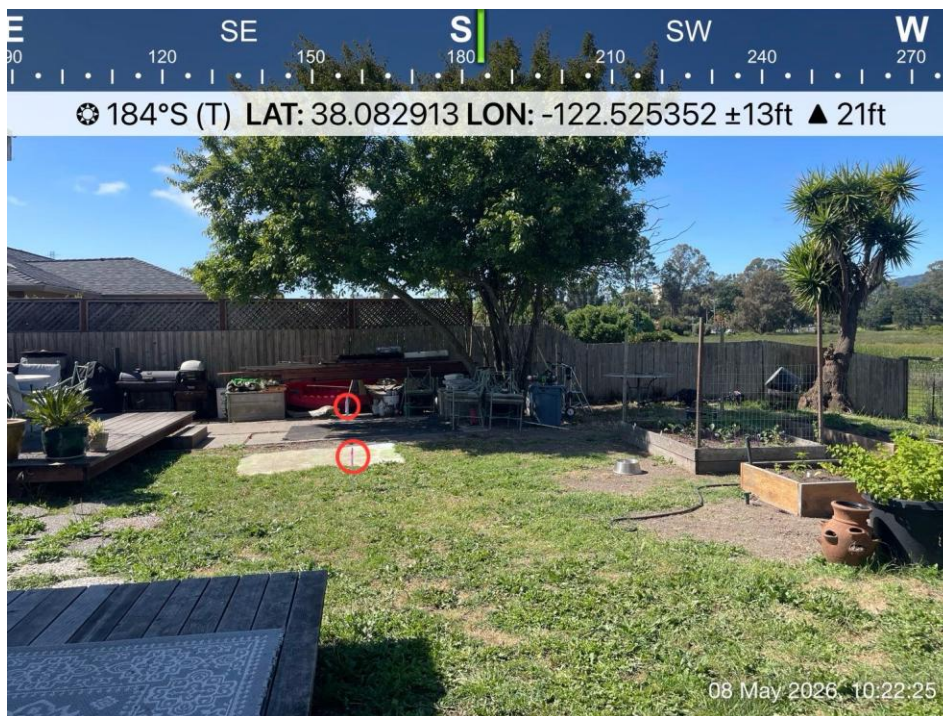


Photo 1: 33 Montego Key backyard. Project area on the eastern side demarcated using stakes with pink flagging and circled in red. Backyard fence on the western side with wetland boundary 50 feet from project area.



Photo 2: Representative project area photo. Edge of living room extension demarcated with stakes with pink flagging and circled in red.

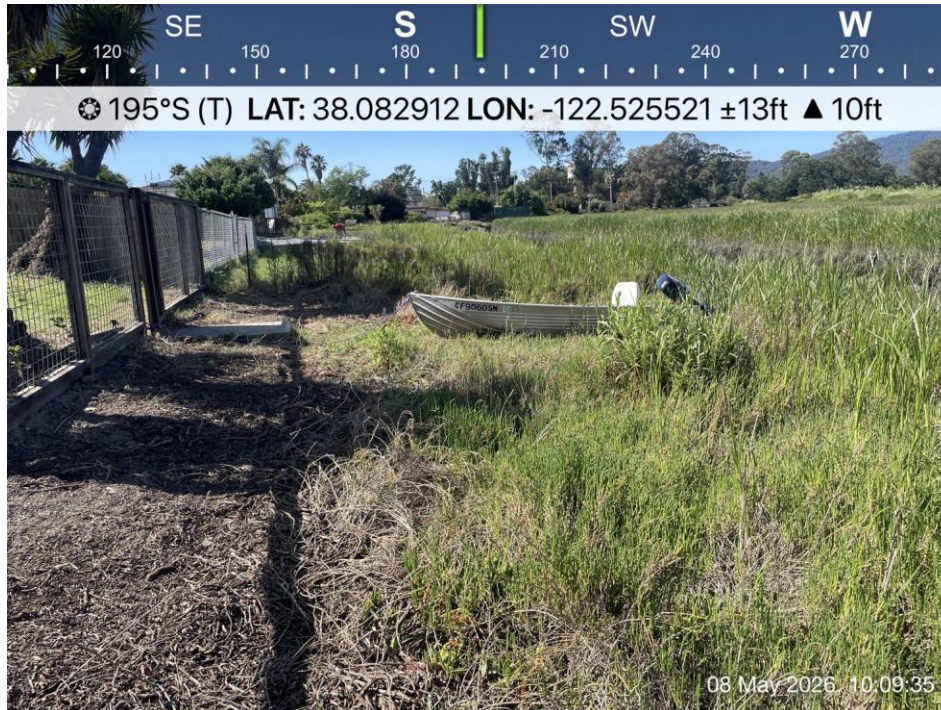


Photo 3: Edge of marsh wetland 5 feet west of backyard fence. Iceplant vegetation recently cleared by homeowner prior to survey.



Photo 4: Tidal marsh wetland composed of primarily pickleweed (*Salicornia pacifica*) and California cord grass (*Sporobolus foliosus*).



Patrick Kobernus

Principal Wildlife Biologist, Coast Ridge Ecology, LLC

EDUCATION:

MS Ecology, Cal-State University East Bay

BA English, Creative Writing, Sonoma State University

PERMITS/CERTIFICATES:

- Certified Wetland Delineator

- USFWS 10(a)(1)(A): California Red-legged Frog, San Francisco garter snake and California tiger salamander

- CDFW Scientific Collecting Permit

Patrick Kobernus is a Principal Biologist and Managing Member of Coast Ridge Ecology and has over 30 years of experience as a professional wildlife biologist. He currently manages a staff of 10 biologists and environmental specialists. He has extensive experience in San Mateo County, and is experienced in conducting wildlife surveys for mammals (including marine mammals), birds, amphibians, reptiles, fish, insects and in supervising biological monitoring crews, endangered species surveys, rare plant mapping, and overseeing habitat management and restoration projects. Mr. Kobernus has conducted biological surveys within coastal redwood forest, oak woodlands, coastal and montane riparian, vernal pool, valley needlegrass grasslands, coastal scrub, coastal prairie, serpentine grasslands, coastal dune, freshwater ponds, creeks, rivers and marshes, and saltmarsh habitats, among others.

Mr. Kobernus has conducted extensive surveys and consulted on mitigation efforts for species such as Townsend's big-eared bat, California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, San Francisco garter snake, Alameda whipsnake, western pond turtle, steelhead, San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, mission blue butterfly, San Bruno elfin butterfly, Callippe silverspot butterfly and rare serpentine, coastal prairie and riparian plants. Mr. Kobernus has worked closely with the USFWS, NMFS, USACOE, RWQCB and local jurisdictions to develop suitable avoidance measures, relocation plans and mitigation efforts for special status species.

Mr. Kobernus has extensive experience in preparing Local Coastal Program biological impact forms, California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreements, section 404 permit applications with the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and 401 Certification applications with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. Mr. Kobernus is a trained wetland delineator in the ACOE delineation methodology (wetland training institute, March, 2001), and has received specialty training in applied hydric soils.

MARINE MAMMALS AND FISHERIES EXPERIENCE

Mr. Kobernus has provided biological monitoring for a number of Port of San Francisco projects since 2013. Projects Mr. Kobernus has provided marine mammal monitoring support include Pier 19 America's Cup and Islais Creek Dredging project, among others. Mr. Kobernus also conducted a special study on Pacific harbor seals for PGE for dock removal at East Harbor in San Francisco in 2025, and has served as lead monitor for marine mammal monitoring for the PGE Pier 39 Pile Driving and Remediation Project, San Francisco, in 2025.

Mr. Kobernus has conducted visual, dipnet, seine, trapping, and e-fishing surveys for steelhead within Marin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Alameda Counties since 1998. He is familiar with native and nonnative coastal fish species and has worked closely with National Marine Fisheries Service in conducting dewatering and fish capture and relocation for a variety of public and private sector clients.

Trainings And Affiliations

Wetland Delineation Training Certificate, Wetland Training Institute, California (2011)

The Wildlife Society, Bat Conservation and Management, and Wildlife Acoustics Bat Trainings (2006, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2026)

California Tiger Salamander Workshop, Livermore, CA (2013)

Aquatic Species Survey Techniques Workshop, Santa Rosa, Ca (2008, 2010)

Foothill Yellow Legged Frog Training (2025)

Pacific Herring Observer Training (2017)

Rare Pond Species Survey Techniques Workshop, Laguna de Santa Rosa, Santa Rosa California (2016)

Marine Mammal Observer Training, Marine Mammal Center (2025, 20226)

Publications/Presentations

Kobernus, P., 2012. Managing a Mountain: The San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation Plan, Fremontia, Vol. 40, No. 2, May 2012.

Longcore, T.; Lam, C. S.; Kobernus, P.; Polk, E.; Wilson, J.P., 2010. Extracting useful data from imperfect monitoring schemes: endangered butterflies at San Bruno Mountain, San Mateo County, California (1982–2000) and implications for habitat management. *Journal of Insect Conservation*, 2010.

Presenter. 1999. Assessment of Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) Presence and Habitat in San Lorenzo Creek. Urban Streams Conference, April 1999. Presentation of Master's thesis on steelhead in San Lorenzo Creek and San Francisquito Creek, which included stream habitat mapping, an assessment of physical and velocity barriers to steelhead in relation to steelhead swimming speeds, macroinvertebrate sampling, and visual, electrofishing, trapping and snorkeling surveys for steelhead adults, parr, and downstream migrants (smolts).



Amanda Smith

Associate Biologist, Coast Ridge Ecology, LLC

Amanda Smith is an experienced field biologist in Northern California, where she has worked in environmental consulting since 2021. Ms. Smith has provided a wide range of biological support services across the Bay Area and Central California, including pre-construction surveys, nesting bird and raptor surveys, roosting bat assessments, rare plant surveys, aquatic species monitoring, and compliance monitoring. Ms. Smith has supported public and private sector clients, including Caltrans, EBMUD, PG&E, and multiple resource conservation districts on projects ranging from habitat restoration and wildfire fuels reduction to routine maintenance and seismic retrofits. She is familiar with interpreting permit and mitigation measures outlined under CEQA, NEPA, CDFW, USFWS, USACE, and RWCCB.

EDUCATION:

*BA Environmental
Studies and Biology,
University of California,
Santa Cruz*

Ms. Smith has four years of experience in avian monitoring, nesting bird surveys, and protocol-level surveys, including white-tailed kite, Swainson's hawk, Northern goshawk, burrowing owl, marbled murrelet, and tricolored blackbird; nesting bird surveys across Northern California; nest searches and focused surveys for shorebirds in the San Francisco Bay Area; protocol-level burrowing owl surveys; and tricolored blackbird active colony monitoring.

Ms. Smith has conducted extensive surveys and attended workshops and trainings for special status species in the San Francisco Bay Area such as California red-legged frog, San Francisco garter snake, spadefoot toad, foothill yellow-legged frog, California tiger salamander, Alameda whipsnake, western pond turtle, steelhead, Pacific herring, San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat, salt marsh harvest mouse, and California giant salamander. She is also an experienced biological monitor for construction and restoration projects, and has gained experience with identifying impacts, working with clients and contractors on avoidance, and relocating special status species.

Representative Project Experience

<i>West of Bayshore Improvement Project</i> <i>San Francisco International Airport, San Mateo County</i> 2022-2024	Ms. Smith was a monitor for a wetland enhancement project in Millbrae, CA, where she relocated tadpole, metamorphe, and adult California red-legged frogs, and adult San Francisco garter snakes.
<i>Reclamation Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project</i> <i>USBR Battle Creek, Tehama County</i> 2025	Ms. Smith conducted riparian bird and bat surveys for a salmonid restoration project in Manton, CA. She installed acoustic monitors and assessed potential roosting habitat for bats and surveyed for special status riparian birds including the yellow-breasted chat and little willow flycatcher.
<i>Novato Creek Levee Nesting Bird Surveys</i> <i>Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Novato</i> April 2025	Ms. Smith conducted preconstruction and nesting bird surveys for a vegetation management project along the Novato Creek Levee in Novato, CA. As part of the project, she provided an environmental training to vegetation removal crews. During her surveys, Ms. Smith identified multiple active nests including those of mallard, killdeer, northern harrier, common yellowthroat, and American crow species. She also documented the presence of a western pond turtle and conducted habitat assessments for pickleweed.
<i>Butterfly Host and Nectar Plant Survey</i> <i>PG&E Short Cycle Program, Fairfield</i> April 2025	Contracted under Stantec, Ms. Smith conducted a butterfly host and nectar plant survey in advance of a power pole replacement project in Fairfield, CA. As part of the project, she surveyed for key host plant species including lupine for the Mission blue butterfly, California golden violet (<i>Viola pedunculata</i>) for the Callippe silverspot butterfly, and Pacific stonecrop (<i>Sedum spathulifolium</i>) for the San Bruno elfin butterfly.
<i>Nesting Bird and Pickleweed Survey</i> <i>City of Mountain View – Irrigation Pump Station and Coast Casey Pump Station, Mountain View</i> February 2025	Ms. Smith conducted nesting bird and pickleweed surveys for a vegetation management, landfill cap repair, and infrastructure replacement project in Mountain View, CA. Ms. Smith delineated areas of observed pickleweed within the survey area and evaluated habitat suitability for sensitive species including salt marsh harvest mouse and salt marsh wandering shrew.
