



Brian F. Smith & Associates

Archaeological/Historical/Paleontological/Biological/Consulting

8 May 2007

Mr. Manuel Valencia
Rancho Paseo de Valencia
1253 Enterprise Court
Corona, California 92882

Subject: Paleontological resource assessment, Rancho Paseo de Valencia, City of Corona and unincorporated Riverside County, California (Tentative Tract Map 34760; APNs 114-040-019, 114-040-020, 275-100-003 and 275-100-004)

Dear Mr. Valencia:

A paleontological resource assessment has been completed for the Rancho Paseo de Valencia project site (Tentative Tract Map 34760; APNs 114-040-019, 114-040-020, 275-100-003 and 275-100-004), located along the southern edge of the City of Corona and adjacent northeastern edge of the Cleveland National Forest in westernmost Riverside County, California (Attachments 1 and 2). On the U. S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute, 1:24,000 scale, Corona South, California topographic quadrangle, the project site occupies most of the southern half of the southwest quarter of Section 11 and part of the northwest quarter of Section 14, Township 4 South, Range 7 West, San Bernardino Base and Meridian. The parcel comprises 65.28 acres, part being private inholdings in the Cleveland National Forest and part being in unsectioned lands of the Rancho la Sierra land grant. The properties are bounded on the northeast by a pre-existing residential neighborhood along Shepard Crest Drive on the southern edge of the City of Corona.

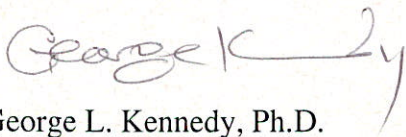
Geologically, the project site lies within the Elsinore fault zone on the northeastern edge of the Santa Ana Mountains (Attachment 3, after C. H. Gray, Jr., D. M. Morton, and F. H. Weber, Jr., 2002, Geologic map of the Corona South 7.5' quadrangle, Riverside and Orange Counties, California (Version 1.0): U. S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 02-21, scale 1:24,000). The sedimentary bedrock in the area is mapped as the Paleocene (~ 60 million year old) Silverado Formation (Tsl on Attachment 3). The Silverado Formation contains a variety of lithologies, including marine and nonmarine sandstone, siltstone and conglomerate (Gray *et al.*, 2002). The formation consists of a basal conglomerate overlain by sequences of sandstone and siltstone. The upper parts of the formation contain carbonaceous shale and lignite beds as well as abundant marine mollusks, such as the diagnostic *Turritella pacheocensis*, a high-spined gastropod. Small patches of old and very old alluvial fan sediments (Qof_g and Qvof_g) are perched on outcrops of the Silverado Formation within the Elsinore fault zone, but are unrelated to modern drainage patterns. Younger alluvial fan sediments (Qyf_g) are also present in the stream canyon in the northern part of the subject property. The Quaternary alluvial fan materials are dominated by gravels and are unlikely to contain significant paleontological resources.

A paleontological collections and records search conducted by the Geology Museum in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of California at Riverside (UCR) (attached), did not identify any previously recorded fossil localities within the project boundaries. However, the Museum's locality records do contain data on several old, but poorly located UCR fossil localities on the northeast side of the Santa Ana Mountains. The fossil record of the Paleocene Silverado Formation (originally attributed to the "Martinez" Formation) in southern California is only poorly known, and the presence of any fossiliferous materials would be important additions to our knowledge of this rock unit and "speak[s] to the need of paleontological monitoring during grading operations" (UCR records search report, attached).

Because of the importance of better understanding the fossil record of animal and plant life following the devastating mass extinction at the end of the Cretaceous Period, the Silverado Formation is assigned a "high paleontological resource sensitivity." The presence of fossiliferous localities along the narrow strip of land within the Elsinore fault zone at the base of the Santa Ana Mountains and the potential for recovery of further paleontological resources justifies implementation of full time paleontological monitoring of mass grading and excavation activities, including utility trenching, etc., in areas mapped as the Silverado Formation in order to mitigate any adverse impacts (loss or destruction) to potential nonrenewable paleontological resources (*i.e.*, Paleocene invertebrate and/or plant fossils). A mitigation program consistent with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), regulations currently implemented by the City of Corona and the County of Riverside, and the proposed guidelines of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology should be implemented. The coarse-grained (gravelly) Quaternary alluvial fan materials are considered unlikely to contain significant paleontological resources are too limited in extent to expect such. Paleontological monitoring should not be required in the alluvial deposits within the limits of the subject properties.

If you have any questions concerning this evaluation, please feel free to contact us at our Poway address. Thank you for the opportunity to have provided paleontological services for this project.

Sincerely,

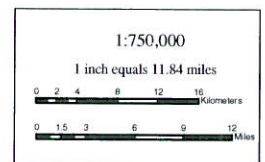


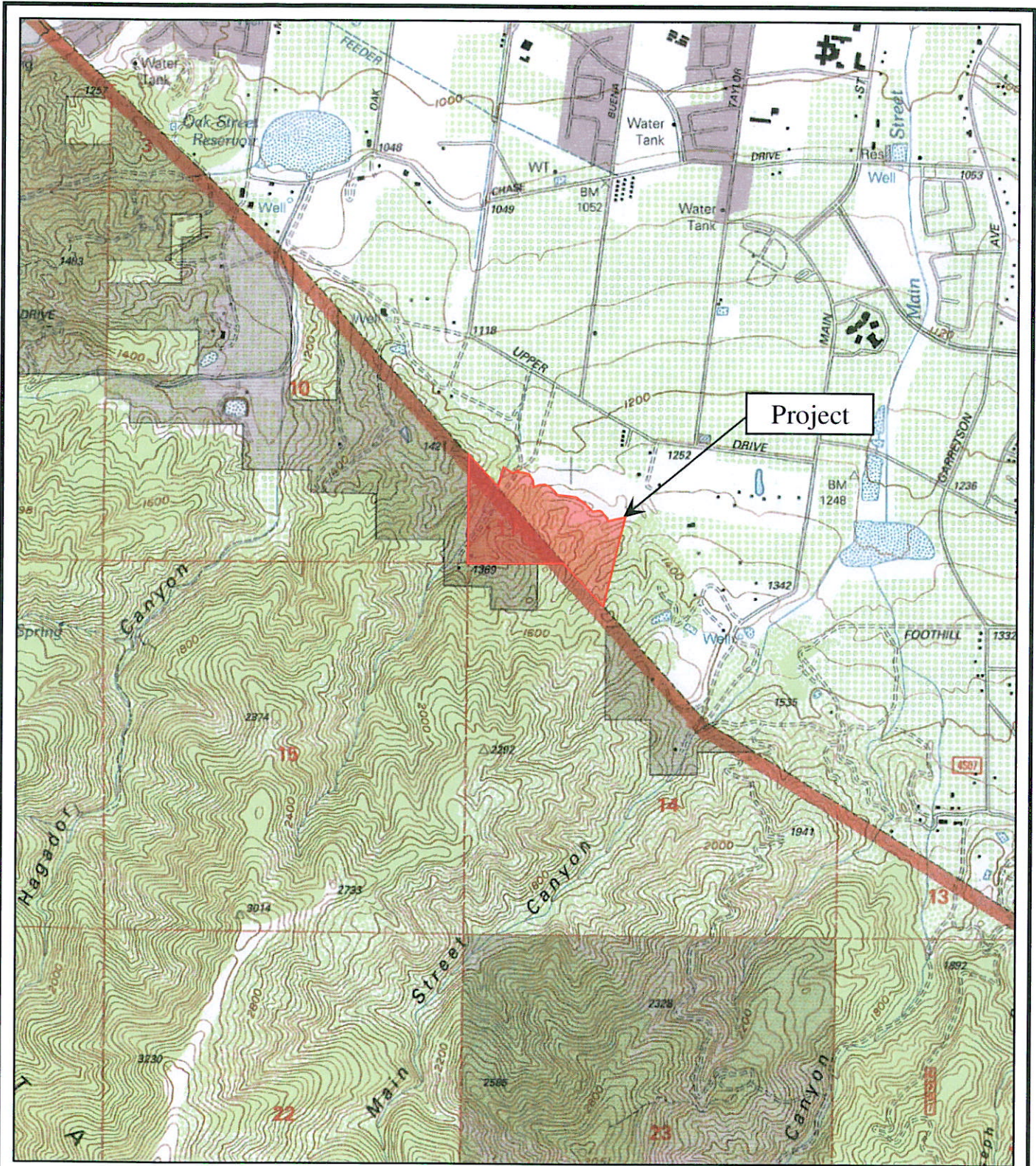
George L. Kennedy, Ph.D.
Senior Paleontologist

Attachments: Index maps, geologic map, records search report



Attachment 1
General Location Map
 The Rancho Paseo de Valencia
 Paleontological Assessment Project



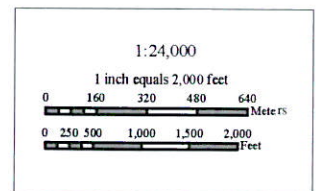


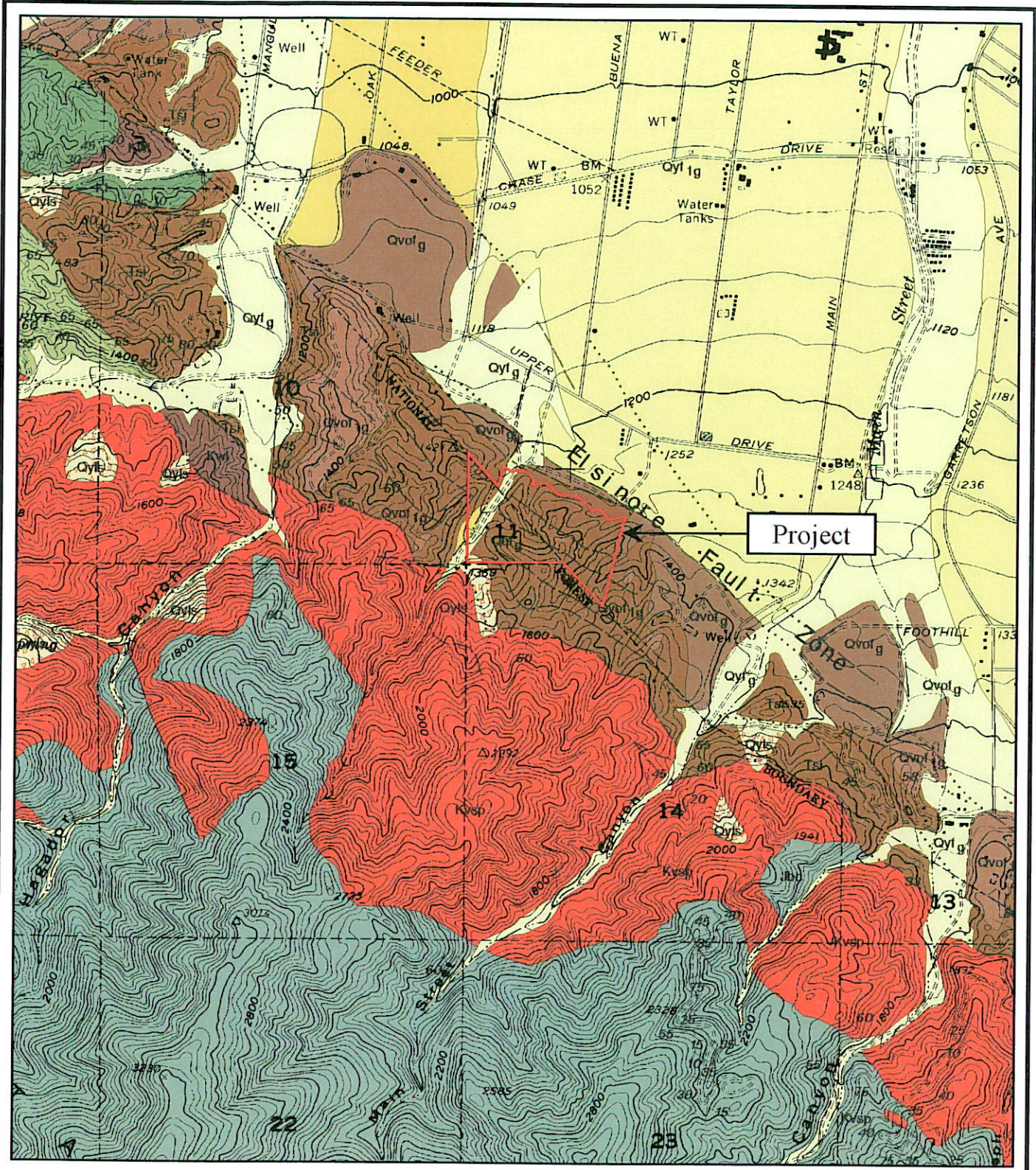
Attachment 2

Project Location Map

The Rancho Paseo de Valencia
Paleontological Assessment Project

USGS Corona South Quadrangle (7.5 minute series)

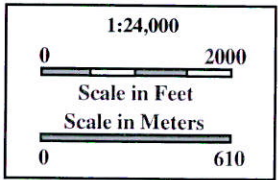




Attachment 3 Geologic Map

The Rancho Paseo de Valencia
Paleontological Assessment Project

Geology after Gray *et al.*, 2002



ATTACHMENT 4

**Museum Letter
University of California, Riverside**



GEOLOGY MUSEUM

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Dr. George Kennedy
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Poway, California 92064

Dear Dr. Kennedy,

RE: Rancho Paseo de Valencia Paleo Assessment, BFS #07-069.

A search of our invertebrate fossil locality files has turned up several sites from within the Silverado Formation. All are fairly old and poorly located. Although it cannot be determined whether some might fall within the project boundaries, they speak to the need of Paleontological monitoring during grading operations. "G.W." probably refers to Gordon White, who collected for Shell Oil in the early 1930s. Almost any Paleocene formation was called "Martinez" at the time these were collected.

UCR 1070 was collected by Shell Oil and merely says "Martinez Fm., G.W. 12, North end Santa Ana Mtns." The specimens include one largely complete *Ostrea* and two unidentified, smaller pelecypod valves.

UCR 1085 was also collected by Shell Oil and says "Martinez Fm., G.W. 15, N.E. slope of Santa Ana Mts." That collection consists of three fragments and two more complete valves identified as "*Pedalion* n. sp. A."

UCR 4031 was collected by Charles Weaver of the University of Washington. Silverado Formation, 18,000 feet SW from Sierra Peak, Black Star Canyon Quadrangle. There is one specimen of *Gyrineum* (*Semiranella*) n.sp. that is figured in an unpublished Weaver manuscript on Paleocene west coast mollusks.

UCR 4147 was collected by Ruth Kirkby and is described as "Martinez, Elsinore Quad., Hillside above road working storage yard on main road east of Elsinore, Temescal Canyon, Moulton Ranch (?)". That collection consists of numerous angiosperm leaves, all unidentified.

Yours truly,

Dr. Marilyn Kooser
Senior Museum Scientist