



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
6010 Hidden Valley Road, Suite 101
Carlsbad, California 92011



In Reply Refer To:
FWS-EC-LET-11-01

JAN 13 2011

Mr. Tom Alo
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego Region
9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100
San Diego, California 92123

Subject: Draft Addendum No. 4 to Cleanup and Abatement Order No. R9-2004-0258 Former Teledyne Ryan Aeronautical Site, 2701 N. Harbor Drive, San Diego, California

Dear Mr. Alo:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject document. As indicated in the public notice and the addendum, the cleanup and abatement is for wastes discharged to land at the former Teledyne Ryan Aeronautical (TDY) site. Elevated levels of contaminants that were released to land have been found in groundwater beneath the site and in conveyance systems that transported contaminated media from the site to Convair Lagoon and San Diego Bay. The addendum, once executed, should result in cleanup of onsite soils such that remaining contaminant levels will pose no known unacceptable risk to human health, under the commercial/industrial future use conditions proposed for the site. In addition, the addendum, once executed, is expected to prevent waste discharges from the TDY site to Convair Lagoon and San Diego Bay. A subsequent enforcement order will be issued to assess and cleanup wastes discharged from landside sources to the marine sediments of Convair Lagoon and San Diego Bay.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has an interest in remedial actions at the site because of the potential for trust resources to be exposed to and impacted by site-related contaminants. Resources of concern at the TDY site are primarily avian species that feed and/or nest in or near intertidal and shallow water habitats, and the aquatic biota that constitute their diet. These include numerous species of seabirds that nest in dense colonies and feed on fish from San Diego Bay. One such species is the Federal and State-endangered California least tern (*Sternula (Sterna) antillarum browni*), which has a nesting colony at Lindbergh Field bordering the TDY site. When exposed, mudflats, such as those that occur in Convair Lagoon provide feeding habitat for small shorebirds including the federally threatened western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*). Other species of interest include waterfowl, shorebirds, seabirds and marsh birds that occur in great numbers as they stop to feed and/or overwinter in San Diego Bay as part of migrations along the Pacific Flyway. Many of the latter rely heavily on aquatic and/or semi-aquatic invertebrates for their nutrition. Service concerns about biota upon which trust resources rely for food include

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preservation of populations sufficient to support the nutritional needs of listed and migratory species and to ensure that site-related contaminants are not present at unsafe levels in the diet of trust resources.

The former TDY site is a vacant industrial facility that provides little if any habitat for use by wildlife species. The property is to be redeveloped for future commercial/industrial uses that preclude the creation of habitat for wildlife species. Consequently, concerns about risks posed to wildlife by cleanup actions outlined in Addendum No. 4 are very limited, and apply only if soils are considered for uses other than commercial/industrial development, and if means for preventing migration of soil into Convair Lagoon are unsuccessful. At this time, the following comments are offered for the record.

1. While the proposed cleanup levels for contaminants in soil may be protective of human health under commercial/industrial exposure conditions, they would not be considered protective of terrestrial wildlife without further consideration. Risks to terrestrial species should be evaluated if any uses for soils other than those identified in Addendum No. 4 are considered in the future.
2. In the event that soils migrate off site and become sediment in Convair Lagoon, the proposed cleanup levels for contaminants in soils would not be considered protective of aquatic life or aquatic-dependent wildlife.

Again, the Service's concerns about cleanup and abatement planned for this industrial site are very limited, and are contingent upon changes in plans for the soils at the site, or the ability to prevent migration of contaminated site-related particles into Convair Lagoon. Unlike the upland portion of the former TDY site, Convair Lagoon and San Diego Bay provide habitat for many fish and wildlife species. Consequently, the Service looks forward to working extensively with the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board), other State and Federal Trustees, and Teledyne Ryan, Inc. as you move into the assessment and cleanup of wastes discharged from landside sources to the marine sediments of Convair Lagoon and San Diego Bay. The Service appreciates the Regional Board staff's efforts in working with us toward our mutual goal of protecting and restoring San Diego Bay and the Nation's wildlife resources. If you have any questions about comments provided in this letter, please contact Catherine Zeeman of my staff at (760) 431-9440 extension 291.

Sincerely,



Scott A. Sobiech
Deputy Field Supervisor