



STEVEN J. HONGOLA

Senior Ecologist / Biological Program Manager
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Steven J. Hongola serves as a senior ecologist and biological program manager with 12 years of professional experience in the environmental field. His areas of expertise include biological resource assessments, focused surveys for sensitive species, jurisdictional waters and wetlands delineations, habitat restoration and management, conservation planning, and regulatory permitting. He has authored numerous technical reports in support of CEQA/NEPA compliance and regulatory permit acquisition. Mr. Hongola specializes in avian field studies and holds a federal 10(a)(1)(A) permit to conduct protocol surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher. As a program manager within Rincon's biological resources group, Mr. Hongola also co-manages Rincon's team of biologists and oversees the technical aspects of the program, among other responsibilities.

SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Biological Resources Study, Lechuza Beach Access Expansion Project, Malibu, Los Angeles County. Completed a Biological Resources Study of Lechuza Beach on behalf of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA). The study was conducted to document the existing conditions and sensitive biological resources associated with the beach for an access expansion project. The study included vegetation mapping, habitat assessment for sensitive species such as California least tern and western snowy plover, jurisdictional assessment, and analysis of the beach and proposed project as it related to the City of Malibu's Local Coastal Program. The results of the analysis were documented in a Terrestrial Biological Resources Study report submitted to the MRCA.

Habitat Restoration Monitoring, Hollywood Water Quality Improvement Project, Los Angeles County. Managed a long-term habitat restoration project for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's Hollywood Water Quality Improvement Project (HWQIP) at the Hollywood Reservoir. The restoration effort was implemented in order to mitigate for impacts resulting from the HWQIP, specifically the loss of coastal sage scrub habitat. The monitoring effort involved inventorying native and non-native plant species, conducting monthly, quarterly, and annual monitoring surveys, analyzing wildlife use, making recommendations for remedial measures necessary to achieve performance standards, and preparing quantitative monitoring reports.

Biological Studies and CEQA Analysis, Canyon Oaks Project, Calabasas, Los Angeles County. Conducted least Bell's vireo and coastal California gnatcatcher protocol surveys and provided technical QA/QC for a wetland delineation, rare plant surveys, and an oak tree survey. The surveys were completed to supplement an impact analysis and mitigation measures for CEQA review for a proposed residential project in Calabasas. Provided technical review of the survey reports and biological resources section of the project's EIR.

Education

B.S., Evolution and Ecology (Minor - History), University of California, Davis

Professional Experience

Rincon Consultants, Inc. (2008 - Present)
Michael Brandman Associates
(2003 - 2008)
California Waterfowl Association (2002)
University of California, Davis (2002)

Certifications and Affiliations

Federal 10(a)(1)(A) Permit TE 091463-2,
Coastal California Gnatcatcher
CA Scientific Collecting Permit 801034-01
Trained California Rapid Assessment
Method (CRAM) for Wetlands Practitioner
Trained Wetland Delineator (WTI):
Difficult Wetland Situations, Arid West
Supplement, Wetland Delineation Manual
Trained Practitioner: CNPS Vegetation
and Habitat Rapid Assessment Method
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
Workshop and Training
Society of Wetland Scientists
Western Field Ornithologists
CA Society for Ecological Restoration

Areas of Expertise

Technical Report Preparation & QA/QC
Special-Status and Nesting Bird Surveys
Wetland Delineation and CRAM
Habitat Restoration
Conservation Planning
Environmental Policy & Permitting

Coastal California Gnatcatcher Surveys, Honor Rancho Maintenance Project, Los Angeles County. Managed and conducted protocol-level surveys for the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher within the Southern California Gas Company Honor Rancho Storage Field. The surveys were conducted to determine presence/absence of the species within pipeline ROWs prior to vegetation clearance. Prepared a technical report and coordinated with SCG and the wildlife agencies (USFWS, CDFW). Documented more than 50 species utilizing the site over the course of 6 surveys.

Biota Report, Quail Lake Project, Los Angeles County. Project biologist for Leader International's proposed Quail Lake project in the San Andreas SEA near the community of Gorman, Los Angeles County. Conducted spring floral and faunal surveys at the site within mixed woodland, chaparral, and grassland communities to provide additional documentation of biological resources present on the site. Findings presented in a Biota Report reviewed by the SEATAC.

ADDITIONAL PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Biological Resource Assessments

- Distributed Solar Sites (Confidential Client), Antelope Valley, Los Angeles County
- Conejo Mountain Memorial Park Initial Study Biological Assessment, Ventura County
- AT&T Telecommunication Facilities, NEPA and CEQA Compliance, Los Angeles County
- O'Neill Park Sewer Conversion Project, County of Orange

Sensitive Species Surveys

- Wildlife Movement Corridor Study, Tonner Canyon, Los Angeles County
- Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Focused Surveys, Santa Clara River, Watershed Protection District, Ventura County
- Coastal California Gnatcatcher Surveys, San Ramon Canyon Drainage Project, Rancho Palos Verdes
- Desert Tortoise, Burrowing Owl, and Swainson's Hawk Surveys, Distributed Solar Sites, Antelope Valley, Los Angeles County

Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands Delineations and CRAM

- Malibu 2008 – 2014 Housing Element EIR, City of Malibu, Los Angeles County
- New Entrance Road Project, California State University Channel Islands, Ventura County
- CRAM Surveys, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project, Malibu, Los Angeles County
- California Avenue Widening Project, University of California, Irvine, Orange County

Habitat Restoration, Management, and Conservation Planning

- Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, United Water Conservation District, Santa Clara River
- Sulphur Springs and Headlands Properties Restoration Monitoring, West Coast Earth and Environmental, Santa Clarita and Pacific Palisades, Los Angeles County
- The Crosby Long-Term Habitat Management Program, The Crosby at Rancho Santa Fe Homeowners Association, San Diego County
- Coastal Region Conservation Program, Southern California Gas Company, Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties

Avian and Wetlands Research

- Western Snowy Plover and California Least Tern Nest Monitoring, Ormond Beach, Ventura County
- Waterfowl Nesting Success Analysis, Grizzly Island Wildlife Area, Solano County
- Natural Floodplain Restoration, Cosumnes River Preserve, Sacramento County