

APPENDIX C

Biological Resource Evaluation

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE EVALUATION

Parcels 1 and 2
Tentative Parcel Map 80287 APN 2841-018-035
Section 04, T04N, R15W, S. B. B. & M.
Santa Clarita, California

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pruett Biological Resource Consulting, Inc. (PruettBio) has prepared this biological resource evaluation of Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 2841-018-035. The project consists of 9.97 gross acres (4.03 hectares) located in the southeast 1/4 of Section 04, Township 04 North, Range 15 West, San Bernardino Base and Meridian. The project is within the incorporated limits of the City of Santa Clarita, California.

The project is located within the geographic range of several federal-, and state-listed, threatened and/or endangered plant and animal taxa. Several non-listed, special-status species also have the potential to occur in the vicinity of the project.

The purpose of this report is to document biological resources identified during a reconnaissance-level field study of the project site and include potential biological resources identified during a literature review of the site and vicinity, identify potential impacts to biological resources resulting from the project. Evaluation of potential impacts to plant and animal species are required under federal and state regulation during a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Appendix G thresholds have been used to evaluate potential impacts to the biological resources from the proposed project development. Avoidance and minimization measures for implementation prior to and during project activities are recommended as appropriate.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have not been contacted regarding the preparation of this report. Appendix B, Special-Status Plant and Animal Evaluations, satisfy the requirements for an initial determination of potential impacts under the CEQA Appendix G thresholds. If CEQA threshold determinations warrant, further consultation may be required with CDFW and USFWS. If additional consultation with the agencies results in the need for Application for a California Incidental Take Permit, Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 783.2 outlines requirements for detailed species-specific take analysis, proposed measures to minimize and fully mitigate impacts, compliance monitoring, and funding. A detailed description satisfying Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 783.2 is not required to meet the CEQA Appendix G thresholds.

A literature review was conducted of the site and vicinity, prior to the field study, of the biological resources known to occur based on recorded, direct observation, or potentially occurring in the project impact area based on current or historical habitat conditions. During the field study, existing habitat conditions, direct observations and/or species sign was recorded to assess the potential for occurrence of special-status species. This report includes an evaluation of the potential for those special-status biological resources not observed during the field study, with the potential to occur on the property based on the habitat conditions observed.

The project lies near the southern edge of existing development for the City of Santa Clarita. Parcels 1-4 of the Tentative Parcel Map are bounded on the north, west, and east by single family home development. Land to the south is similarly developed along Sand Canyon Road, and otherwise open space to the southwest. The site is currently impacted from pedestrian and equestrian traffic from the adjacent neighborhood and vegetation fire control.

The federal and state database queries yielded 27 special-status plant species and 48 special-status animal species as potentially occurring within the vicinity of the project site. Of these, 7 plant species, and 18 animal species have federal-, and/or state-listing and are afforded protection under federal or state law.

A query of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) database yielded 45 plants within a nine-quadrangle search of the project. The CNPS tracks plant species that do not meet the CEQA Section 15380 criteria for listing as threatened or endangered and are afforded no protection under federal or state law. A USGS nine-quadrangle query additionally includes a search area beyond a standard 10-mile



radius. Plant species meeting the criteria for Special Status Plants as defined in *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018) and evaluated under CEQA Section 15380 have been included in this report.

Some CRPR 4 taxa may meet the Section 15380 definition of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, and in the definition of CRPR 4, CNPS and CDFW suggest additional reasons for including CRPR 4 taxa in a CEQA analysis. These reasons include Regionally Rare Taxa. Considered locally significant plants, that is, plants that are not rare from a statewide perspective but are rare or uncommon in a local context such as within a county or region (CEQA Guidelines, § 15125, subd. (c)), or as designated in local or regional plans, policies, or ordinances (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G). “Locally rare” has not been generally defined, but in counties where a “locally rare” policy exists, it applies to taxa with only five to 10 known occurrences in that county.

The CNDDDB, iPac, and CNPS lists were cross-referenced for consistency. A separate CNDDDB query for the County of Los Angeles was also generated to evaluate plant species for local significance.

A separate report has been prepared in compliance with Ordinances 89-10 & 05-4 of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code relating to “Oak Tree Preservation & Protection Guidelines”.

The project will not conflict with existing or adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, local or regional conservation plans, or local ordinances protecting biological resources.



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INTRODUCTION

Pruett Biological Resource Consulting, Inc. (PruettBio) has prepared this biological resource evaluation for the proposed development of APN 2841-018-035. The project consists of 9.97 gross acres (4.03 hectares) located in the southeast 1/4 of Section 04, T04, R15, S.B.B.&M. The project lies near the southern edge of existing development for the City of Santa Clarita. The report documents biological resources identified during fieldwork conducted on the project site and those identified through a literature search as potentially occurring based on known observations or historic habitat conditions. The report uses the information collected during the field study and literature search to evaluate potential impacts to biological resources, resulting from the project. The report is intended to assist in the analysis of the proposed project for residential, single-family home development.

A reconnaissance level biological evaluation was prepared by McCormick Biological, Inc. (McCormick), report dated March 2019. A third-party peer review of the MBI evaluation was prepared by Michael Baker International (Baker), report dated 19 July 2023. PruetBio reviewed both documents during the preparation of this report.

Listed plant and animal species are protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Protection of other non-listed, special-status species is afforded under additional regulation including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) impacts to non-listed, special-status species must be evaluated. Where necessary, the report recommends avoidance and minimization measures for implementation prior to and during project activities. The report is intended to provide technical information in support of a CEQA preliminary review. For the purposes of this report, potential impacts to the biological resources of the proposed project were evaluated in accordance with Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* (2021). If CEQA threshold determinations warrant, further consultation may be required with CDFW and USFWS. If additional consultation with the agencies results in the need for Application for a California Incidental Take Permit, Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 783.2 outlines requirements for detailed species-specific take analysis, proposed measures to minimize and fully mitigate impacts, compliance monitoring, and funding. A detailed description satisfying Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 783.2 is not required to meet the CEQA Appendix G thresholds.

PROJECT LEGAL DESCRIPTION

The project consists of 9.97 gross acres (4.03 hectares) of APN 2841-018-035 located in the southeast 1/4 of Section 04, T04, R15, S.B.B.&M.

PROJECT SETTING AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The project lies near the southern edge of existing development for the City of Santa Clarita. The San Gabriel Mountains are comprised of a variety of vegetation cover types including chaparral and coastal scrub, oak woodland, riparian forest and scrub and conifer woodland. The region's climate can be characterized as Mediterranean; with hot, dry summers and cool, moist winters. Summer high temperatures frequently exceed 100 °Fahrenheit (°F); Fall and winter are cool and foggy with occasional snow and temperatures often below freezing.

Rainfall averages 15 inches (38 centimeters) per year per year generally between January and March (Munz and Keck). Drought cycles occur periodically, becoming severe enough that plant and animal populations can experience large fluctuations.

The topography of the site is generally flat at approximately 1720 feet (524 meters) above sea-level. The CDFW California Natural Community of the Project is Coast live oak woodland, Element Code 71.060.01. The rarity ranking for Coast live oak woodland – *Quercus agrifolia* Alliance are listed as: G5=Secure – Common, widespread and abundant; S4= Apparently secure – Uncommon, but not rare in the state; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors. A separate report, in compliance with



Ordinances 89-10 & 05-4 of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code relating to “Oak Tree Preservation & Protection Guidelines” has been prepared for the project. No undisturbed habitat is present on the site or adjacent parcels.



METHODS

LITERATURE REVIEW

PruettBio conducted a literature review to identify known observations and potential for listed, or otherwise special-status, species to occur in the vicinity of the project site. A standard, 10-mile (16-kilometer) radius query was performed. Database records reviewed included:

- **United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) iPac:** The iPac report generates a list of federal-listed species and other resources under the jurisdiction of the USFWS, including designated critical habitat for listed species, National Wildlife Refuge lands, and Wetlands in the National Wetlands Inventory. The list includes resources that are outside of the project site, but that have the potential to be impacted by project activities.
- **USFWS National Wetlands Inventory:** The Wetlands Mapper is an online inventory integrating digital map data and other resources to provide current information regarding the status of national wetlands, riparian, and deepwater habitats.
- **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) WebSoil Survey:** The report is an online database providing soil data produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey, a joint effort of the USDA and other federal, state, and local agencies. The information drawn for the Soil Survey of Kern County, California, Northwestern Part was originally drawn from fieldwork completed in 1981 with soil names and descriptions approved in 1982.
- **California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB-RareFind 5):** The CNDDDB is a database of listed, or otherwise special-status, plant and animal species and sensitive communities maintained by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The information queried for this report included a standard 10-mile radius of the project site.
- **California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants:** CNPS is a private, professional organization that maintains a database evaluating the current conservation status of California's rare, threatened, and endangered plant species. The information queried for this report included a standard 10-mile radius of the project site. The list includes resources that are outside of the project site, but that have the potential to be impacted by project activities based on known historic or current habitat features. The data base was compared to the CNDDDB and iPac queries for consistency.

FIELD STUDY

A reconnaissance-level, biological field study was conducted by Steven P. Pruett on 19 August 2023. The project was surveyed by walking the perimeter and random transects to evaluate all representative habitat features of the site. The field study conducted, allowed for 100% visual coverage of the project site habitat types. Field notes included observations of all plant and wildlife species observed. Direct observations and/or species sign was recorded to assess the potential for occurrence. Land cover types and general habitat conditions were recorded and photographed. Special-status species and habitat features, such as vegetation communities or ephemeral channels, were also recorded and photographed if observed.

Coordinates for important biological resource elements and direct observations of special-status species were recorded using a handheld geographic positioning system unit. All plant taxa encountered were identified to the extent possible given the diagnostic features present. Identifications were made using keys contained in *The Jepson Manual: Vascular Plants of California* and online updates containing revisions to taxonomic treatments (Baldwin et al. 2012; Jepson Flora Project 2015).



RESULTS

This section summarizes the results of the field study conducted on the project site and evaluates those results for the known or potential for occurrence of special-status species based on the literature review and database queries and pursuant to statutory regulation. Discussions are provided describing the existing habitat conditions including vegetation communities, land cover and current use; soils; special-status biological resources potentially occurring in the vicinity of the project site; the potential for jurisdictional resources including designated critical habitat and riparian/wetland/water resource features; the potential for wildlife migration corridors and nursery sites; and regional and local policy.

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES AND LAND COVER

The CDFW California Natural Community of the Project is Coast live oak woodland, Element Code 71.060.01. The rarity ranking for Coast live oak woodland – *Quercus agrifolia* Alliance are listed as: G5=Secure – Common, widespread and abundant; S4= Apparently secure - Uncommon, but not rare in the state; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.

SOILS

The USGS soil survey map describes the soil of the project site as Unit CmF, Castaic-Balcom silty clay loams, 30 to 50 percent slopes, Unit MfA, Metz loamy sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes, and Unit YoC, Yolo loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes. The parent material for Unit CmF is residuum weathered from sedimentary rock found on backslopes and side slopes of hills. This soil is comprised of silty clay loam to about 28 inches, with weathered bedrock below to about 32 inches. The soil class is "well-drained" with run-off classified as "very high". The depth to the water table is more than 80 inches. Available water storage is "low". Unit MfA is alluvium found on backslopes and treads of flood plains and alluvial fans. This soil is comprised of loamy sand and stratified sand to loamy sand to a depth of about 60 inches. The soil class is "somewhat excessively drained" with run-off classified as "negligible". The depth to the water table is more than 80 inches. Available water storage is "low". Unit YoC is alluvium derived from sedimentary rock found on backslopes and treads of alluvial fans. This soil is comprised of loam to a depth of about 72 inches. The soil class is "well drained" with run-off classified as "medium". The depth to the water table is more than 80 inches. Available water storage is "high".

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The literature review and database queries yielded 27 special-status plant species as potentially occurring within the vicinity of the project site. Forty-eight animal species were identified as potentially occurring in the region of the project site. No evidence of any listed animal species was observed during the field study. No evidence of otherwise special-status plant or animal species, or animal species sign was observed during the field study.

No focused, protocol-level surveys were conducted for the preparation of this report. The field study was conducted outside of the blooming period for many of the special-status plant species potentially occurring in the vicinity of the project. The project is nested within single-family homes with associated development including horse stables, outbuildings, and introduced landscaping. The project itself is maintained for fire suppression and other vegetation control and is impacted by pedestrian and horse traffic. Focused surveys are not expected to significantly impact the conclusions of this report given the current impacts to the project.

Evaluation of special-status species that were found during the literature review with a potential to occur in the region are included in Appendix B.



Special-Status Plant Species

The federal and state database queries yielded 27 special-status plant species as potentially occurring within the vicinity of the project site. A query of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) database yielded 45 plants within a nine-quadrangle search of the project. A USGS nine-quadrangle query additionally includes a search area beyond a standard 10-mile radius. Plant species meeting the criteria for Special Status Plants as defined in *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018) were evaluated under CEQA Section 15380.

Special-status plant species considered in this evaluation include all plant species that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under ESA or candidates for possible future listing as threatened or endangered under the ESA (50 CFR §17.12).
- Listed or candidates for listing by the State of California as threatened or endangered under CESA (Fish and Game Code §2050 et seq.). A species, subspecies, or variety of plant is endangered when the prospects of its survival and reproduction in the wild are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, over-exploitation, predation, competition, disease, or other factors (Fish and Game Code §2062). A plant is threatened when it is likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future in the absence of special protection and management measures (Fish and Game Code §2067).
- Listed as rare under the California Native Plant Protection Act (Fish and Game Code §1900 et seq.). A plant is rare when, although not presently threatened with extinction, the species, subspecies, or variety is found in such small numbers throughout its range that it may be endangered if its environment worsens (Fish and Game Code §1901).
- Meet the definition of rare or endangered under CEQA §15380(b) and (d). Species that may meet the definition of rare or endangered include the following:
 - Species considered by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) to be “rare, threatened or endangered in California” (Lists 1A, 1B and 2);
 - Species that may warrant consideration on the basis of local significance or recent biological information.
 - Some species included on the California Natural Diversity Database’s (CNDDB) Special Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List (California Department of Fish and Game 2008).
- Considered a locally significant species, that is, a species that is not rare from a statewide perspective but is rare or uncommon in a local context such as within a county or region (CEQA §15125 (c)) or is so designated in local or regional plans, policies, or ordinances (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G). Examples include a species at the outer limits of its known range or a species occurring on an uncommon soil type.

Some CRPR 4 taxa may meet the Section 15380 definition of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, and in the definition of CRPR 4, CNPS and CDFW suggest additional reasons for including CRPR 4 taxa in a CEQA analysis. These reasons include Regionally Rare Taxa. Considered locally significant plants, that is, plants that are not rare from a statewide perspective but are rare or uncommon in a local context such as within a county or region (CEQA Guidelines, § 15125, subd. (c)), or as designated in local or regional plans, policies, or ordinances (CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G). “Locally rare” has not been generally defined, but in counties where a “locally rare” policy exists, it applies to taxa with only five to 10 known occurrences in that county.

The CNDDB, iPac, and CNPS lists were cross-referenced for consistency. A separate CNDDB query for the County of Los Angeles was also generated to evaluate plants for local significance. One of the seven



plant species occurring within a 10-mile radius of the project, California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica californica*), is afforded federal and/or state legal protection. Three CRPR 4 taxa met the definition of “locally rare” with between five and 10 known occurrences drawn from the County of Los Angeles CNDDB query. Those taxa are: *Dudleya densiflora* (San Gabriel dudleya), *Helianthus inexpectus* (Newhall sunflower), and *Lupinus paynei* (Payne’s bush lupine). Focused surveys are not expected to significantly impact special-status plant species.

Precipitation has been well above average to date, resulting in a good year for annual plant species observations. Of the 27 special-status plant species returned during database queries for the project vicinity, 7 species are either federally- or state-listed as threatened or endangered. Although CEQA requires consideration for impacts to locally significant plant species, no mitigation is legally required to compensate for impacts to non-listed plant species. No listed, or otherwise special-status plant species was observed during the fieldwork conducted for the preparation of this report. No listed, or otherwise special-status plant species, has been recorded as occurring within the project site.

Special-Status Animal Species

Special-status animal species considered in this evaluation include those that may occur in the project vicinity that have statutory protections. This includes federal- and state-listed (rare, threatened, or endangered; fully protected) species and candidates for listing under the respective endangered species acts. Species that are of special concern to the CDFW or the USFWS are included in this evaluation. Special-status bird species that are afforded protection under the MBTA which may nest on or within an approximate 10-mile (16-kilometer) radius of the project site are also evaluated. No evidence of any listed animal species was observed during the field study. No evidence of otherwise special-status animal species, or animal species sign was observed during the field study. The mammals evaluated in the Appendix B discussion are included as a result of the federal and state database queries for a 10-mile radius of the project. None of the mammals is expected to occur based on unsuitable habitat and/or range of the individual species.

Designated Critical Habitat

The USFWS iPac report and USFWS Designated Critical Habitat Mapper lists no Designated Critical Habitat (USFWS 2023) on the project site. The eastern edge of Designated Critical Habitat for California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) is approximately 21 miles northwest of the project. Designated Critical Habitat for the Coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) is immediately southwest of the project.

Jurisdictional Water Resource Features

Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) regulates discharge of dredged and fill material into Waters of the United States. Wetlands are included under this jurisdiction. Proposed activities that may result in discharge of material into Waters of the U.S. require a permit review process by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as set forth under CWA section 404(b)(1). Fish and Game Code section 1602 requires any person, state or local governmental agency, or public utility to notify CDFW before beginning any activity that will substantially modify a river, stream, or lake.

A search of the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory resulted in no riparian, wetlands, or other jurisdictional water features mapped on the project site (USFWS 2023). These results are consistent with the observed conditions within the survey area.

Special-Status Natural Communities

No critical habitat was identified by the USFWS iPac query, the CNDDB, or the CNPS Inventory (USFWS 2023, CDFW 2023, CNPS 2023). The CDFW California Natural Community of the Project is Coast live oak woodland, Element Code 71.060.01. The rarity ranking for Coast live oak woodland – *Quercus*



agrifolia Alliance are listed as: G5=Secure – Common, widespread and abundant; S4= Apparently secure - Uncommon, but not rare in the state; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors. A separate report, in compliance with Ordinances 89-10 & 05-4 of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code relating to “Oak Tree Preservation & Protection Guidelines” has been prepared for the project. No undisturbed habitat is present on the site or adjacent parcels.

Wildlife Migration Corridors and Nursery Sites

Wildlife corridors can be defined as connections between wildlife blocks that meet specific habitat needs for species movement generally during migratory periods but seasonally as well. Wildlife corridors generally contain habitat dissimilar to the surrounding vicinity and include examples such as riparian areas along rivers and streams, washes, canyons, or otherwise undisturbed areas within urbanization. Corridor width requirements can vary based on the needs of the species utilizing them. Development of the project would not impact wildlife migration corridors or nursery sites.

Regional and Local Policies

The proposed, modified project will not conflict with existing or adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, local or regional conservation plans, or local ordinances protecting biological resources.

IMPACT ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

CEQA Appendix G thresholds have been used to evaluate potential impacts to the biological resources from the proposed project. Appendix G provides an analysis of the impacts of the proposed project following the standards of CEQA and provides recommendations that, when implemented, would reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels. It is important to note that potential take of any federal- or state-listed species from project activities would require contacting the appropriate wildlife agency (the USFWS and/or the CDFW).

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have not been contacted regarding the preparation of this report. Appendix B, Special-Status Plant and Animal Evaluations, satisfy the requirements for an initial determination of potential impacts under the CEQA Appendix G thresholds. If CEQA threshold determinations warrant, further consultation may be required with CDFW and USFWS. If additional consultation with the agencies results in the need for Application for a California Incidental Take Permit, Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 783.2 outlines requirements for detailed species-specific take analysis, proposed measures to minimize and fully mitigate impacts, compliance monitoring, and funding. A detailed description satisfying Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 783.2 is not required to meet the CEQA Appendix G thresholds.

The project would create a significant impact to biological resources, based on the specifications in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, if the following were to occur:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
2. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
3. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;



4. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites;
5. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance;
6. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

In addition to the thresholds enumerated in Appendix G, the City of Santa Clarita requires an evaluation regarding the following question: Will the project affect a Significant Ecological Area or Significant Natural Area as Identified on the City of Santa Clarita Delineation Map?

The following analysis discusses potential impacts associated with the development of the project and provides recommendations where appropriate to further reduce potential impacts.

1. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, by the CDFW, or the USFWS?

The project is nested within single-family homes with associated development including horse stables, outbuildings, and introduced landscaping. The project itself is maintained for fire suppression and other vegetation control and is impacted by pedestrian and horse traffic.

No focused, rare plant surveys were conducted for the preparation of this report. The field study was conducted outside of the blooming period for many of the special-status plant species potentially occurring in the vicinity of the project. One of the seven plant species occurring within a 10-mile radius of the project, California Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica californica*), is afforded federal and/or state legal protection. Three CRPR 4 taxa met the definition of “locally rare” with between five and 10 known occurrences drawn from the County of Los Angeles CNDDB query. Those taxa are: *Dudleya densiflora* (San Gabriel dudleya), *Helianthus inexpectus* (Newhall sunflower), and *Lupinus paynei* (Payne’s bush lupine). Focused surveys are not expected to significantly impact special-status plant species.

Designated Critical Habitat for the Coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) is immediately southwest of the project. Implementation of standard measures for the protection of biological resources including nesting birds are recommended to avoid and minimize potential impact to general wildlife.

Direct impacts, in the form of “incidental take” of a threatened, endangered, or otherwise protected species, are not expected as a result of the development of the proposed project.

A separate report has been prepared in compliance with Ordinances 89-10 & 05-4 of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code relating to “Oak Tree Preservation & Protection Guidelines”.

2. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations, or by the CDFW or the USFWS?

No riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or United States Fish and Wildlife Service exists on the project site. No adverse effect will occur as a result of the development of the proposed project and no mitigation measures are recommended.



3. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No features, identified in wetland categories, appear on the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory mapping (USFWS 2021) on the proposed, modified project site. No federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act were identified during the field study conducted for the preparation of this report. No substantial adverse effect will occur as a result of the development of the project. No mitigation measures are recommended.

4. Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

No migratory wildlife corridors were identified during the literature search or field study. The project will not interfere substantially with the movement of any native fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

5. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

A separate report has been prepared in compliance with Ordinances 89-10 & 05-4 of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code relating to "Oak Tree Preservation & Protection Guidelines".

6. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

The project does not conflict with any Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. No additional mitigation measures are recommended.

A separate report has been prepared in compliance with Ordinances 89-10 & 05-4 of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code relating to "Oak Tree Preservation & Protection Guidelines".

7. Affect a Significant Ecological Area or Significant Natural Area as Identified on the City of Santa Clarita Delineation Map

The SEA Program was originally established as a part of the 1980 County General Plan, to help conserve the genetic and physical diversity within Los Angeles County through designating biological resource areas capable of sustaining themselves into the future. The General Plan 2035 ("General Plan") updated the SEA boundary maps, goals and policies in 2015. SEAs are areas where the County deems it important to facilitate a balance between development and biological resource conservation. Where occurring within SEAs, development activities are carefully reviewed with a key focus on site design as a means for conserving fragile resources such as streams, woodlands, and threatened or endangered species and their habitats.

The project is within the City of Santa Clarita incorporated limits and is therefore not subject to the County of Los Angeles SEA program. The project is subject to the SEA requirements of the City of Santa Clarita, which require a thorough analysis of impacts to ensure that any development within a SEA is highly compatible with its resources.

SEAs are officially designated areas within LA County with irreplaceable biological resources. As specifically described on the Los Angeles County Planning Website: "The SEA Program objective is to conserve genetic and physical diversity within LA County by designating biological resource areas that are capable of sustaining themselves into the future." The SEA Ordinance establishes the permitting,



design standards, and review process for development within SEAs, balancing preservation of the County's natural biodiversity with private property rights.

Of specific note, "the SEA Program does not change the land use designation or the zoning of a property; rather it uses biological review and the application of certain development standards to balance the preservation of the County's natural biodiversity with private property rights."

The proposed land use is compatible and consistent with the existing use of the adjacent parcels. The CEQA Appendix G thresholds, as enumerated above, satisfy the evaluation required under the SEA protocols.



REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A

PROJECT VICINTY AND SITE

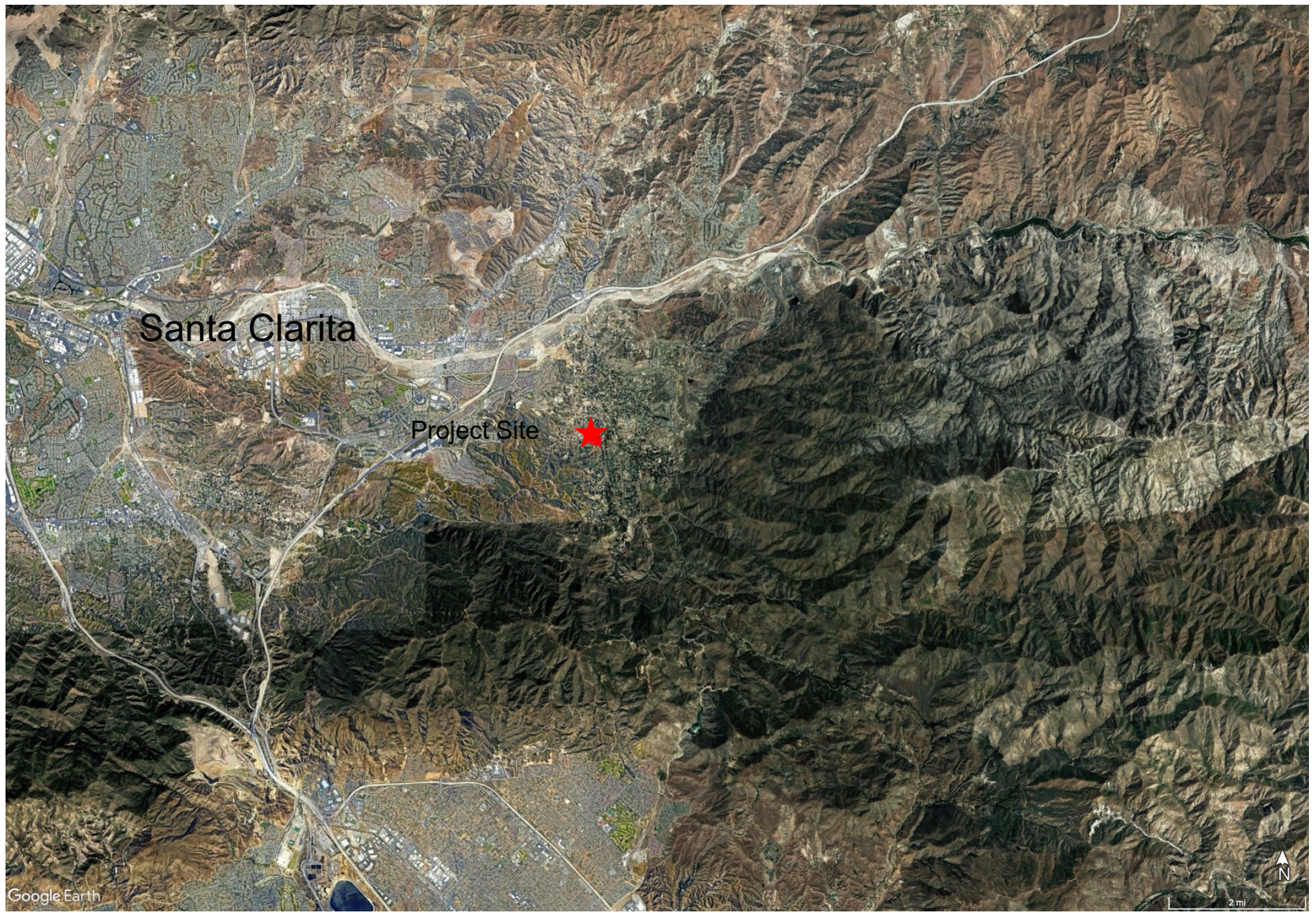


Figure A-1. Aerial photograph of the project vicinity (Google Earth Pro 2023).



Figure A-2. Aerial photograph of APN 2841-018-035 including the project site.

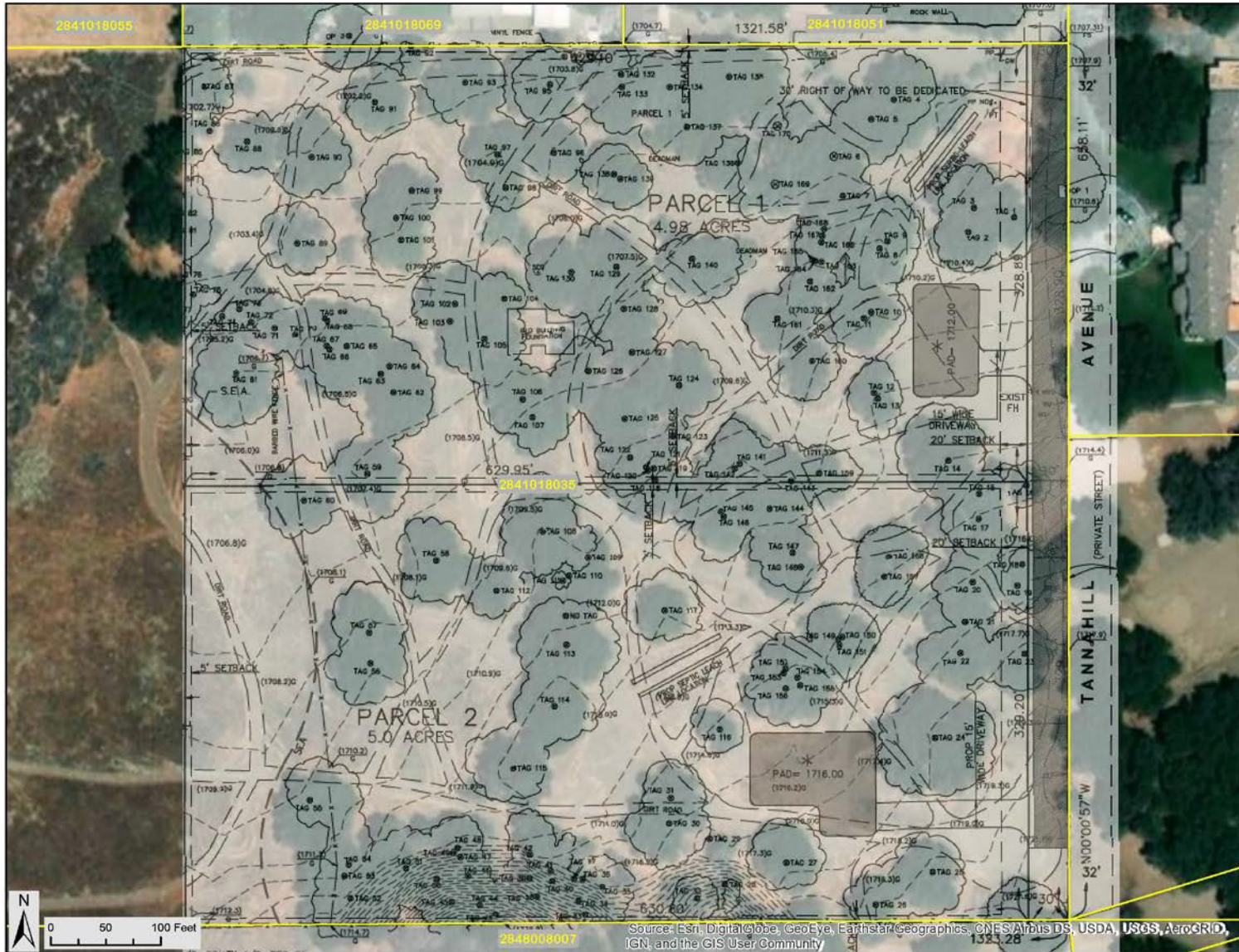


Figure A-3. Aerial photograph of the project site.

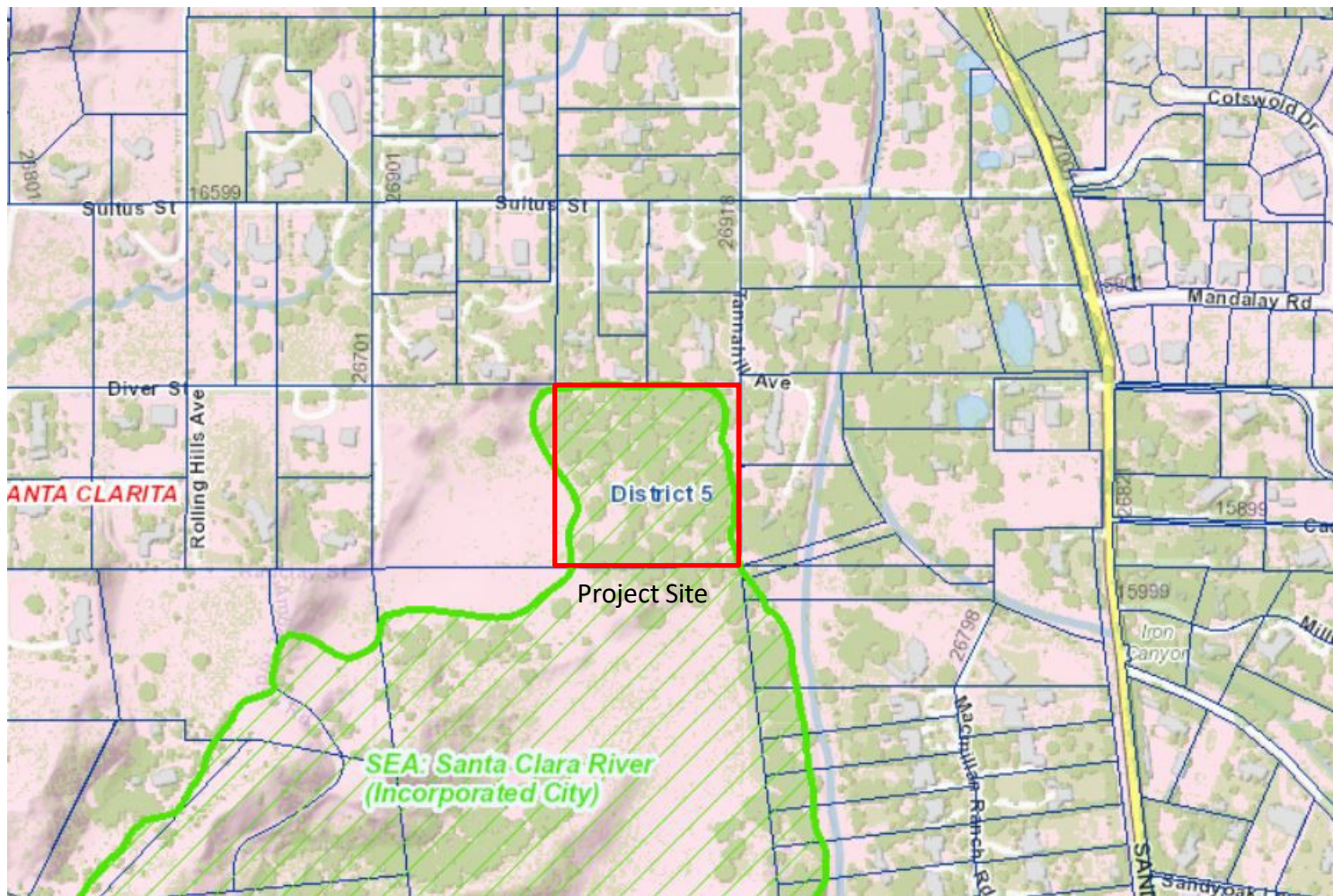


Figure A-4. Map of the project site shown at the edge of the Santa Clara River Project.



Figure A-5. Soil map of the project site (USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service 2023).



Figure A-6. Photograph of the project site taken from the NW corner facing SE (19Aug23).



Figure A-7. Photograph of the project site taken from the SW corner facing NE (19Aug23).



Figure A-8. Photograph of the project site taken from the SE corner facing N (19Aug23).



Figure A-9. Photograph of the project site taken from the NE corner facing S (19Aug23).

APPENDIX B

SPECIAL-STATUS PLANT AND ANIMAL EVALUATION



Table B-1: Special-status Plants That May Occur in the Vicinity of the Project.

Scientific Name Common Name	Status Fed/State/CNPS	Description	Blooming Period	Field Study Results/Potential for Occurrence
<i>Arenaria paludicola</i> Marsh sandwort	E/E/1B.1	Herbaceous annual in the Caryophyllaceae occurring in marshes, swamps and areas that are wet year-round.	May to August	Not Expected. No suitable habitat for marsh sandwort exists on the project site.
<i>Berberis nevinii</i> Nevin's barberry	E/E/1B.1	Herbaceous annual in the Asteraceae found in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grasslands on clay or serpentinite soils between 1,476 and 3,510 feet (450–1,070 meters) in elevation.	May to November	Not Expected. No suitable soils exist for the species.
<i>Calochortus clavatus</i> <i>var. gracillis</i> Slender mariposa-lily	-/1B.2	Perennial bulbiferous herb in the Liliaceae usually found on rocky or clay, serpentinite soils in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grasslands between 246 and 4,265 feet (75–1,300 meters) in elevation.	May to June	Not Observed. Marginal soils exist for the species. The species does not meet the threshold to be considered "locally rare". Focused surveys would not impact the CEQA Appendix G evaluation.
<i>Calochortus palmeri</i> <i>var. palmeri</i> Palmer's mariposa-lily	-/1B.2	Perennial bulbiferous herb in the Liliaceae found in chaparral, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grasslands often on serpentinite soils between 164 and 2,395 feet (50–730 meters) in elevation.	May to July	Not Observed. Marginal soils exist for the species. The species does not meet the threshold to be considered "locally rare". Focused surveys would not impact the CEQA Appendix G evaluation.
<i>Calochortus plummerae</i> Plummer's mariposa-lily	-/1A.2	Perennial bulbiferous herb in the Liliaceae found in chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, and meadows and seeps on mesic soils between 3,281 and 7,841 feet (1,000–2,390 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in the Outer South Coast Ranges in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties, in the Western Transverse Ranges in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties, the Southern Sierra Nevada Foothills through the Western Transverse Ranges in Kern County, the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains in San Bernardino County, and the San Jacinto Mountains in Riverside County.	April to July	Not Observed. Marginal soils exist for the species. The species does not meet the threshold to be considered "locally rare". Focused surveys would not impact the CEQA Appendix G evaluation.



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Fed/State/CNPS	Description	Blooming Period	Field Study Results/Potential for Occurrence
<i>Calystegia peirsonii</i> Peirson's morning-glory	-/I4.2	Rhizomatous perennial herb in the Convolvulaceae found on serpentinite or sedimentary soils in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grasslands between 1,394 and 4,888 feet (425–1,490 meters) in elevation.	April to June	Not Expected. No suitable soils exist for the species.
<i>Centromadia parryi</i> <i>ssp. australis</i> Southern tarplant	-/I1B.1	Annual herb in the Asteraceae found along margins of marshes and swamps, in vernal mesic valley and foothill grasslands, and in vernal pools below 1,575 feet (480 meters) in elevation.	May to November	Not Expected. No suitable soils exist for the species.
<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>fernandina</i> San Fernando Valley spineflower	-/E/1B.1	Annual herb in the Polygonaceae found on rocky, serpentinite soils in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grasslands from 197 and 2,297 feet (60–700 meters) in elevation.	April to August	Not Expected. No serpentine soils exist on the project.
<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>parryi</i> Parry's spineflower	-/I1B.1	Annual herb in the Polygonaceae found on rocky, serpentinite soils in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grasslands from 197 and 2,297 feet (60–700 meters) in elevation.	April to August	Not Expected. No serpentine soils exist on the project.
<i>Deinandra minthornii</i> Santa Susana tarplant	-/Rare/1B.2	Annual herb in the Asteraceae found in coastal bluff, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grasslands below 1,411 feet (430 meters) in elevation.	May to October	Not Expected. The Project is beyond the published range of the species.
<i>Dodecahema leptoceras</i> Slender-horned spineflower	E/E/1B.1	Perennial, rhizomatous herb in the Brassicaceae found in sandy coastal scrub and dunes from 10 to 164 feet (3–50 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Ventura Counties, and Santa Catalina, San Miguel, and San Nicolas Islands.	March to May	Not Expected. The Project is beyond the published range of the species.
<i>Dudleya densiflora</i> San Gabriel dudleya	-/I1B.1	Perennial in the Crassulaceae found in coastal sage scrub, yellow pine forests, and chaparral.	March to June	Not Expected. Beyond the published range of the species.
<i>Harpagonella palmeri</i> Palmer's grapplinghook	-/I4.2	Annual herb found on dry, semi-barren area of chaparral, coastal scrub, and grassland below 1000 meters.	March to April	Not Expected. The Project is not appropriate habitat.
<i>Helianthus inexpectatus</i> Newhall sunflower	-/I1B.1	Perennial herb found in spring fed marsh in willow woodland at 300 meters. Generally within the Western Transverse Range.	August to October	Not Expected. The Project is not appropriate habitat.
<i>Horkelia cuneate</i> var. <i>puberula</i> Mesa horkelia	-/I1B.1	Annual herb found on dry, sandy, coastal chaparral between 70 and 870 meters. Type locality generally along the foothill edge of the Los Angeles basin.	March to July	Not Expected. The Project is not appropriate habitat.
<i>Lepechinia rossii</i> Ross' pitcher sage	-/I1B.2	Annual herb in the Lamiaceae family found on chaparral between 470 and 1200 meters.	May to September	Not Expected. The Project is beyond the published range of the species.



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Fed/State/CNPS	Description	Blooming Period	Field Study Results/Potential for Occurrence
<i>Lepidium virginicum</i> <i>var. robinsonii</i> Robinson's pepper-grass	-/-/4.3	Herbaceous annual in the Brassicaceae found in valley and foothill grasslands on alkaline and adobe clay soils between 1,099 and 3,297 feet (335–1,005 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in the South Inner Coastal Ranges from Kern and San Luis Obispo Counties.	March to May	Not Expected. The Project is beyond the published range of the species.
<i>Lupinus paynei</i> Payne's Bush Lupine	-/-/1B.1	Perennial shrub in the Fabaceae family found on sandy, coastal, and riparian scrub, and valley and foothill grassland between 220 and 420 meters.	March to April	Not Expected. Beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Malacothamnus davidsonii</i> Davidson's bush-mallow	-/-/1B.2	Perennial shrub in the Malvaceae family found on chaparral and coastal scrub between 500 and 700 meters.	May to July	Not Expected. No perennial Malvaceae shrub was observed.
<i>Navarretia fossalis</i> Spreading navarretia	T/-/1B.1	Perennial, rhizomatous herb in the Brassicaceae found in freshwater or brackish marshes and swamps between 16 and 1,083 feet (5–330 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in Los Angeles, Orange, Santa Barbara, San Diego, and San Luis Obispo Counties. Populations historically occurring in San Bernardino County are presumed extirpated.	April to October	Not Expected. No suitable habitat exists for the species.
<i>Navarretia setiloba</i> Piute Mountains navarretia	-/-/1B.1	Annual herb in the Polemoniaceae found in coastal scrub, meadows and swamps, vernal pools, and alkaline, valley and foot hill grassland in mesic soil between 49 and 3,970 feet (15–1,210 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in Alameda, Fresno, Los Angeles, Merced, Monterey, Orange, Riverside, San Benito, Santa Clara, San Diego, and San Luis Obispo Counties. Populations historically occurring in San Bernardino County are presumed extinct.	April to July	Not Expected. The Project is beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Opuntia basilaris</i> var. <i>brachyclada</i> Short-joint beavertail	-/-/1B.2	Perennial in the Cactaceae family found on Creosote Bush Scrub, Chaparral, Joshua Tree Woodland, Pinyon-Juniper Woodland between 1200 and 1800 meters.	April to June	Not Present. No cactus was observed. The Project does not represent suitable habitat.
<i>Orcuttia californica</i> California Orcutt grass	E/E/1B.1	Perennial stem succulent in the Cactaceae found in chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grasslands between 394 and 1,804 feet (120–550 meters) in elevation. Requires vernal pools and wetlands within Valley Grassland occurrences.	April to May	Not Expected. No vernal pools or wetlands exist on the project.
<i>Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum</i> White rabbit-tobacco	-/-/2B.2	Annual herb in the Asteraceae found in cismontane woodland, and valley and foothill grasslands on adobe clay soils between 295 and 2,625 feet (90–800 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in the Southern Sierra Nevada Foothills from Kern County north to Fresno County.	March to April	Not Expected. The Project is beyond the published range of the species.



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Fed/State/CNPS	Description	Blooming Period	Field Study Results/Potential for Occurrence
<i>Rorippa gambellii</i> Gambel's watercress	E/T/1B.1	Perennial herb in the Brassicaceae found in freshwater-marshes.	April to October	Not Expected. No suitable habitat exists on the Project.
<i>Senecio aphanactis</i> Chaparral ragwort	-/1B.2	Perennial, rhizomatous herb in the Selaginellaceae found in cismontane woodland, lower, upper, and subalpine coniferous forest, and pinyon and juniper woodland on granitic, rocky soil between 5,249 and 8,858 feet (1,600–2,700 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Tulare Counties.	July	Not Expected. The Project is well below the published elevation for the species.
<i>Streptanthus campestris</i> Southern jewelflower	-/1B.3	Perennial, rhizomatous herb in the Selaginellaceae found in cismontane woodland, lower, upper, and subalpine coniferous forest, and pinyon and juniper woodland on granitic, rocky soil between 5,249 and 8,858 feet (1,600–2,700 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Tulare Counties.	July	Not Expected. The Project is well below the published elevation for the species
<i>Symphotrichum greatae</i> Greata's aster	-/1B.3	Rhizomatous herb in the Asteraceae found in cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, marshes and swamps, and vernal mesic areas in valley and foothill grasslands. Also found in ditches, streams, and springs below 6,693 feet (2,040 meters) in elevation. Known to occur in San Luis Obispo and Kern Counties, and is more widespread in the southeastern portion of the Transverse and Peninsular Ranges.	July to November	Not Expected. The Project is not suitable habitat for the species.

STATUS: Federal and State Listing Code

- D Delisted
- E Federally or State-listed Endangered
- R Rare
- T Federally or State-listed Threatened

CNPS

- 1A Plants presumed extirpated in California, and either rare or extinct elsewhere
- 1B.1 Plants considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California
- 1B.2 Plants considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; fairly threatened in California
- 2B.1 Plants considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere; seriously threatened in California
- 4.2 Plants of limited distribution in California; fairly threatened in California



Table B-2: Special-status Animals That May Occur in the Vicinity of the Project.

Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal/State	General Habitat	Survey Results/Regional or Nearest Occurrence*
Invertebrates			
<i>Bombus crotchii</i> Crotch bumble bee	-/E(Candidate)	Found in open grasslands and scrub habitats. Historically from sea level to over 8000 feet.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i> Vernal pool fairy shrimp	T/-	Found in vernal pools throughout California. Exist as cysts during the dry season and reproduce when pools are filled with water again.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
<i>Euphydryas editha quino</i> Quino checkerspot butterfly	E/-	Occupies a variety of habitats including grasslands, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, juniper woodland, and semi-desert scrub. Historically distributed throughout the coastal slopes of southern California through the Transverse Ranges and to the edges of the Anza-Borrego Desert.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Currently only known from western Riverside County, southern San Diego County, and northern Baja California, Mexico
Fish			
<i>Catostomus santaanae</i> Santa Ana sucker	T/-	Historically, the Santa Ana sucker occupied upper watershed areas of the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains down to the Pacific Ocean. The Santa Ana sucker is currently found in three disjunct populations that occupy portions of the San Gabriel, Los Angeles, and Santa Ana River basins in Southern California.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
<i>Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni</i> Unarmored threespine stickleback	E/E,SFP	The unarmored threespine stickleback has a very limited distribution, with the southern California population represented in only three drainages; Upper Santa Clara River (extremely limited), Bouquet Creek (extremely limited) and Soledad Canyon Creek (possibly extirpated).	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
<i>Gila orcuttii</i> Arroyo chub	-/CSC	Arroyo chub are native to the streams and rivers of the Los Angeles plain in southern California, including the Los Angeles, San Gabriel, San Luis Rey, Santa Ana, and Santa Margarita Rivers, and Malibu and San Juan Creeks.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
<i>Rhinichthys osculus</i> ssp. 8 Santa Ana speckled dace	-/CSC	Speckled dace occupy a variety of aquatic habitats, but optimal habitat is in perennial streams fed by cool springs and with overhanging riparian vegetation. Optimal spawning habitat is in shallow areas of gravel or gravelly riffle edges with tributary inlets.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
Amphibians			
<i>Anaxyrus californicus</i> Arroyo toad	E/CSC	Found in very specific habitat types including exposed sandy stream sides with stable terraces for burrowing. Generally between 300 and 1000 meters.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal/State	General Habitat	Survey Results/Regional or Nearest Occurrence*
<i>Rana draytonii</i> California red-legged frog	T/CSC	Found in dense, shrubby riparian vegetation associated with deep (0.6 meters, 2 feet), still or slow-moving water; arroyo willow (<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>) seems to be most suitable, but cattails (<i>Typha</i> sp.) and bulrushes (<i>Scirpus</i> sp.) also provide good habitat.	Not Present. No suitable breeding habitat present
<i>Rana muscosa</i> Southern mountain yellow-legged frog	E/E,WL	Lives in high mountain lakes, ponds, tarns, and streams--largely in areas that were glaciated as recently as 10,000 years ago. Alpine lakes used by mountain yellow-legged frogs usually have open shorelines, margins that are grassy or muddy and have a depth greater than 2.5 meters (greater than 8.2 feet). Adults are typically found sitting on rocks along the shoreline, usually where there is little or no vegetation. Larvae are often distributed in the warm water shallow areas along the shoreline during the daytime. Mountain yellow-legged frogs also use stream habitats, especially in the northern part of their range.	Not Present. No suitable breeding habitat present
<i>Spea hammondi</i> Western spadefoot	-/CSC	Central valley and adjacent foothills, Coast Ranges from Point Conception south to the Mexico border; valley-foothill grasslands and valley-foothill hardwood, shallow temporary pools used for breeding, below 1,363 meters.	Not Present. No suitable breeding habitat present
<i>Taricha torosa</i> Coast Range newt	-/CSC	Habitat types associated with this species include oak forests, chaparral, and rolling grasslands. Adults are terrestrial requiring ponds or streams for reproduction.	Not Present. No suitable breeding habitat present.
<i>Rana draytonii</i> California red-legged frog	T/-	Found in dense, shrubby riparian vegetation associated with deep (0.6 meters, 2 feet), still or slow-moving water; arroyo willow (<i>Salix lasiolepis</i>) seems to be most suitable, but cattails (<i>Typha</i> sp.) and bulrushes (<i>Scirpus</i> sp.) also provide good habitat.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
Reptiles			
<i>Anniella spp.</i> California legless lizard	-/CSC	Found in coastal dunes, chaparral, pine-oak woodlands, desert scrub, and sandy washes in warm moist loose soils, below 5,085 feet (1550 meters).	Not Observed/ Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Limited Project size, current habitat disturbance, and surrounding development limit the po Typically found in open sandy areas in deserts, chaparral, grassland, limit the potential of occurrence.
<i>Arizona elegans occidentalis</i> California glossy snake	-/CSC	Common throughout southern California found in desert habitats, chaparral, sagebrush, valley-foothill hardwood, pine-juniper, and annual grasslands from below 1830 meters.	Not Observed/ Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Limited Project size, current habitat disturbance, and surrounding development



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal/State	General Habitat	Survey Results/Regional or Nearest Occurrence*
			limit the potential of occurrence.
<i>Aspidoscelistigris stejnegeri</i> Coastal whiptail	-/CSC	Found in woodland, chaparral, riparian areas, or desert n coastal Southern California, mostly west of the Peninsular Ranges and south of the Transverse Ranges, and north into Ventura County.	Not Observed/ Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Limited Project size, current habitat disturbance, and surrounding development limit the potential of occurrence.
<i>Emys marmorata</i> Western pond turtle	-/CSC	Completely aquatic requiring calm waters such as pools or streams with vegetation banks or logs for basking. Will utilize upland habitat up to about 0.5 kilometers from water.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i> Coast horned lizard	-/CSC	Inhabits valley-foothill hardwood, coniferous and riparian, as well as pine-cypress, juniper, and annual grasslands, in Sierra Nevada below 3,937 feet (1,200 meters) and in mountains of Southern California and into the adjacent valleys.	Not Observed/ Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Limited Project size, current habitat disturbance, and surrounding development limit the potential of occurrence.
<i>Thamnophis hammondi</i> Two-striped garter snake	-/CSC	Primarily aquatic and generally found around pools, creeks, cattle tanks, and other water sources. Habitats include oak woodland, chaparral, and coniferous forest.	Not Present. No suitable habitat present.
Birds			
<i>Accipiter cooperii</i> Cooper's Hawk	-/WL	Found throughout southern Canada and the United States in a variety of habitat types associated with deciduous and mixed forests and open woodland habitats. Nests in coniferous, deciduous, and mixed woods, typically those with tall trees and with openings or edge habitat nearby. Increasing associated with suburban areas	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Suitable nesting habitat on the site.
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i> Tricolored blackbird	-/T(CSC)	Forages in grasslands, wetlands, rice fields, croplands, and weedy uplands dominated by mustards and thistles, etc.; breeds in marshes containing heavy growth of bulrushes, cattails, and blackberries; found throughout the Central Valley.	Not Observed/Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat on the site. Potential for marginal foraging habitat in farmlands in the vicinity of the project.
<i>Almophilia ruficeps canescens</i>	-/WL	Inhabits oak woodlands and dry uplands with grassy vegetation and bushes. It is often found near rocky outcroppings. The species	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal/State	General Habitat	Survey Results/Regional or Nearest Occurrence*
Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow		is also known from coastal scrublands and chaparral areas between 910 and 1830 meters.	in the Project Vicinity. Suitable nesting habitat in the vicinity of the site.
<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i> Grasshopper sparrow	-/CSC	Breeds in lowlands and foothills west of the Sierra Nevada-Cascade crest through most of California. Occurs in dense, dry grasslands with tall forbs and sparse shrubs.	Not Observed/Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Typical associated habitat is not present.
<i>Artemisiospiza belli belli</i> Bell's sage sparrow	-/WL	Inhabits coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Also year-round residents of some sage scrub habitat on the California coastal slope and foothills.	Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Typical associated habitat is not present.
<i>Athene cunicularia</i> Burrowing owl	-/CSC	Inhabits dry, open grasslands, rolling hills, desert floors, prairies, savannas, agricultural land, and other areas of open, bare ground. These owls will also inhabit open areas near human habitation, such as housing developments, airports, golf courses, shoulders of roads, railroad embankments, and the banks of irrigation ditches and reservoirs.	Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Typical associated habitat is not present.
<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> Golden eagle	-/SFP	Uncommon permanent resident and migrant throughout California except center of the Central Valley; forages in rolling foothills, mountain areas, sage-juniper flans and desert areas, below 12,575 feet (3,833 meters), nests on cliffs and in large trees in open areas, very susceptible to human disturbance.	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat on the project site.
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i> Swainson's hawk	-/T	Riparian and sometimes large isolated trees used for nesting; grasslands and agricultural lands used for foraging; in California, breeds primarily in the Sacramento Valley, with occasional nesting to the south through Kern County; migrate through the Central and San Joaquin Valleys to their wintering grounds in South America.	Not Observed/Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting sites on the project..
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i> Western yellow-billed cuckoo	T/E	Nests in walnut and almond orchards in California, natural nesting habitat is in cottonwood-tree willow riparian forest. Known populations of breeding western yellow-billed cuckoo are several disjunct locations in California, Arizona, and western New Mexico.	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat on the project site.
<i>Elanus leucurus</i> White-tailed kite	-/, SFP	Associated habitats include open grasslands, savannas, agriculture, wetlands, oak woodland and riparian areas with associated open space.	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Suitable nesting habitat.
<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i> Southwestern willow flycatcher	E/E	Breeds in dense riparian tree and shrub habitat associated with rivers, lakes, and other wetlands.	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat on the project site.



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal/State	General Habitat	Survey Results/Regional or Nearest Occurrence*
<i>Eremophila alpestris actia</i> California horned lark	-/WL	Resident throughout California from the coast to the deserts up to alpine dwarf-shrub habitat above tree line.	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat on the project site.
<i>Falco mexicanus</i> Prairie falcon	-/WL	Found in generally dry, open country such as plains, prairies, and deserts, and can be relatively common in canyon country, where it is attracted to the nesting sites afforded by cliffs and rock outcrops.	Not Observed/Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat on the project site.
<i>Gymnogyps californianus</i> California condor	E/E, SFP	Forage over wide areas of open rangelands, roost on cliffs and in large trees and snags and occur mostly between sea-level and 2,743 meters (9,000 feet), and nests from 610 to 1,981 meters (2,000–6,500 feet). Require vast expanses of open savannah, grasslands, and foothill chaparral, with cliffs, large trees, and snags for roosting and nesting.	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat present. Designated Critical Habitat 21 miles north of the project site.
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> Bald Eagle	D/E, SFP	Uncommon permanent resident and migrant throughout California except center of the Central Valley; forages in rolling foothills, mountain areas, sage-juniper flans and desert areas, below 12,575 feet (3,833 meters), nests on cliffs and in large trees in open areas, very susceptible to human disturbance.	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat on the project site.
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i> Loggerhead shrike	-/CSC	Common resident and winter visitor in lowlands and foothills throughout California; species prefers open habitats with scattered shrubs, trees, posts, fences, utility lines, or other perches; nests on stable branches in densely-foliaged shrubs or trees, usually well-concealed.	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Suitable habitat on the project site.
<i>Polioptila californica californica</i> Coastal California gnatcatcher	T/CSC	Occurs within a very limited distribution of coastal sage scrub. This habitat is characterized by low shrubs generally dominated by California sagebrush, buckwheat, salvia, and prickly-pear cactus	Not Observed/Moderate Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. Designated Critical Habitat immediately southwest of the project.
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> Least Bell's vireo	E/E	Inhabits low, dense riparian growth along water or along dry parts of intermittent streams. Typically associated with willow, cottonwood, baccharis, wild blackberry, or mesquite in desert localities.	Not Observed/Low Probability of Occurrence in the Project Vicinity. No suitable nesting habitat on the project site.
Mammals			
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i> Pallid bat	-/CSC	Throughout Californian except high Sierra Nevada from Shasta County south to Kern County and the northwestern corner of the	Not Present No suitable habitat on the project.



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal/State	General Habitat	Survey Results/Regional or Nearest Occurrence*
		state; grasslands, shrub lands, woodlands, and forest habitats; roosts in caves, crevices, mines and hollow trees.	
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> Townsend's big-eared bat	-/CSC	Occurs throughout California except at the highest elevations; requires caves, mines, tunnels, or other structures for roosting; prefers moist habitats, feeding from brush or trees along habitat edges.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Euderma maculatum</i> spotted bat	-/CSC	Habitat types include open and dense deciduous and coniferous forests, hay fields, deserts, marshes, riparian areas, and dry shrub-steppe grasslands; roosts in undisturbed cliff faces.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i> Western mastiff bat	-/CSC	Open, semi-arid to arid habitats, including conifer and deciduous woodlands, annual and perennial grasslands, chaparral, desert scrub, and urban areas; roosts in cliff faces, as well as high buildings, trees, and tunnels; uncommon resident in southwestern San Joaquin Valley.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i> Hoary bat	-/-	Open habitats or habitat mosaics with access to trees for cover and open areas or habitat edges for feeding.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Lepus californicus bennettii</i> San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit	-/-	Occupies a variety of habitat types including savannah, scrub, forest, grasslands, and desert.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Macrotus californicus</i> California leaf-nosed bat	-/CSC	Found in caves and abandoned mines in deserts of northern Mexico, baja California, southern Arizona, southern California and southern Nevada America.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Neotamias speciosus speciosus</i> Lodgepole chipmunk	-/CSC	Habitat types include subalpine mixed conifer forests containing lodgepole pine, red fir, and Jeffery pine generally between 1,500 and 3,300 meters. Also known to occur in woodlands including white fir, Douglas fir, ponderosa pine, sugar pine, incense cedar, and California black oak.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Beyond the current published range of the species.
<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i> San Diego desert woodrat	-/CSC	Found in sagebrush scrub and chaparral of southwestern California and northwestern Baja California. Additional disconnected groups occur in California in the vicinity of the southern San Joaquin Valley and southern Sierra Nevada	Not Observed/Not Expected. No Neotoma middens observed during the field study.
<i>Onychomys torridus ramona</i> Southern grasshopper mouse	-/CSC	Found in valley grasslands habitats, blue oak savanna, desert associations dominated by annual grasses and California ephedra, alkali sink scrub, saltbush scrub, and upper Sonoran shrub associations, dominated by ephedra.	Not Observed/Not Expected. Uncommon in valley foothill and montane riparian habitat.



Scientific Name Common Name	Status Federal/State	General Habitat	Survey Results/Regional or Nearest Occurrence*
<i>Taxidea taxus</i> American badger	-/CSC	Uncommon resident found through California; in less disturbed grassland and shrubland habitats in San Joaquin Valley.	Not Present. No badger burrows or other sign observed during the field study.

STATUS:

Federal

- S Listed as a BLM Sensitive Species
- D Delisted
- E Listed as Endangered
- PT Proposed as Threatened
- T Listed as Threatened
- C Candidate for Endangered Status

State

- CSC California Department of Fish and Wildlife Designated Species of Special Concern
- D Delisted
- E Listed as Endangered
- SFP California Department of Fish and Wildlife Designated Fully Protected
- T Listed as Threatened

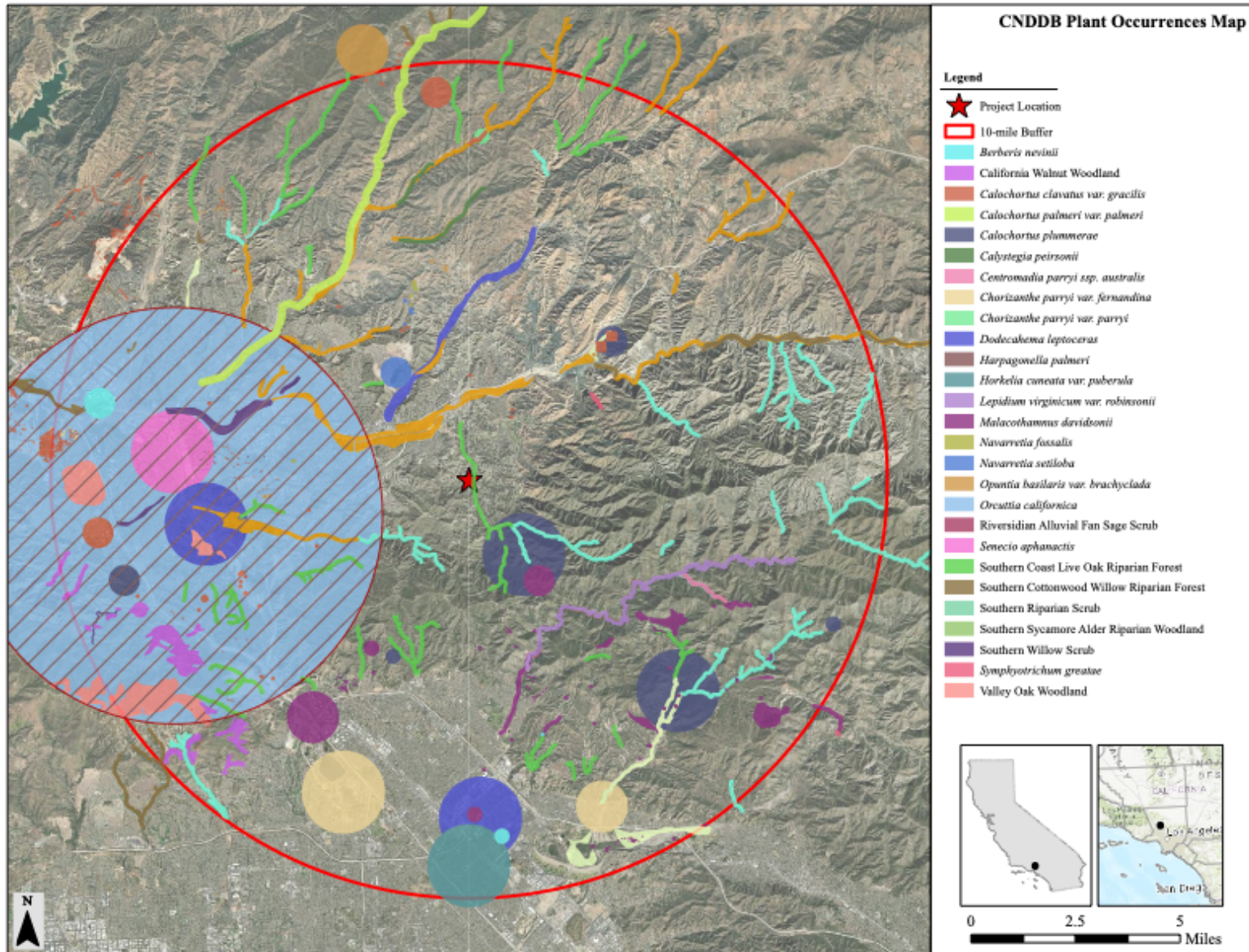


Figure B-1. CNDDDB special-status plant species occurrences within a 10-mile radius of the project (CDFW 2023).

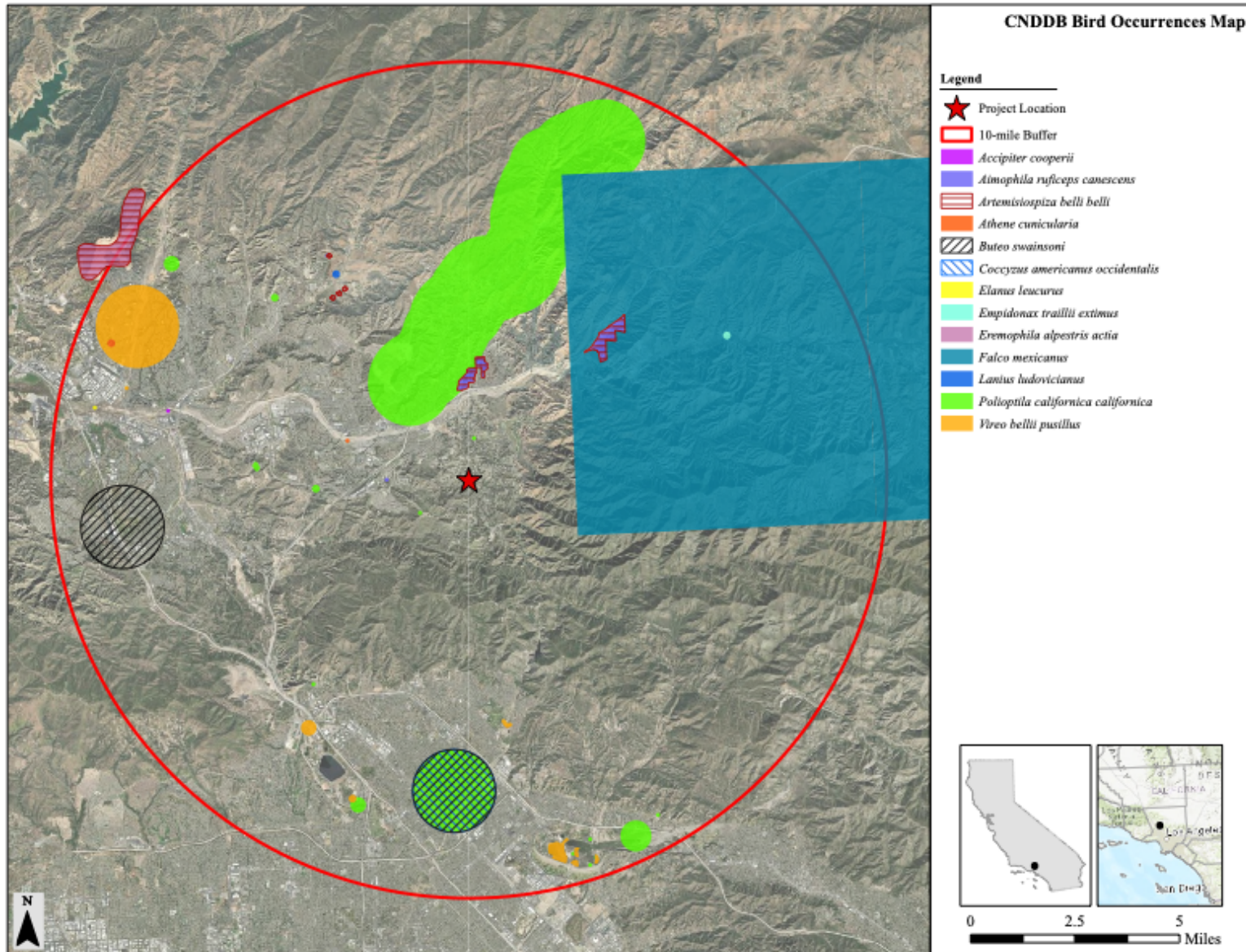


Figure B-2. CNDDDB special-status bird species occurrences within a 10-mile radius of the project (CDFW 2023).

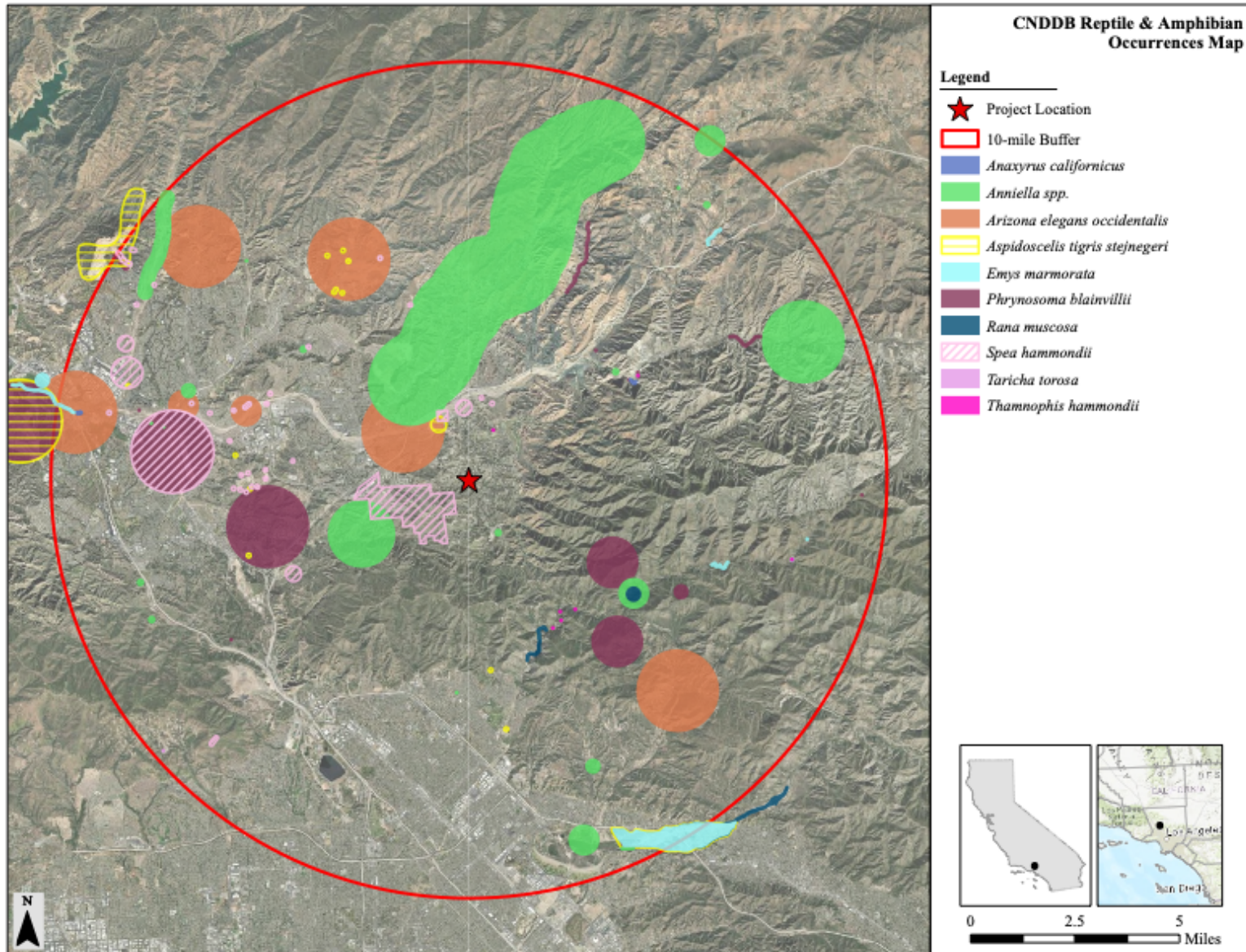


Figure B-3. CNDDDB special-status amphibian and reptile species occurrences within a 10-mile radius of the project (CDFW 2023).

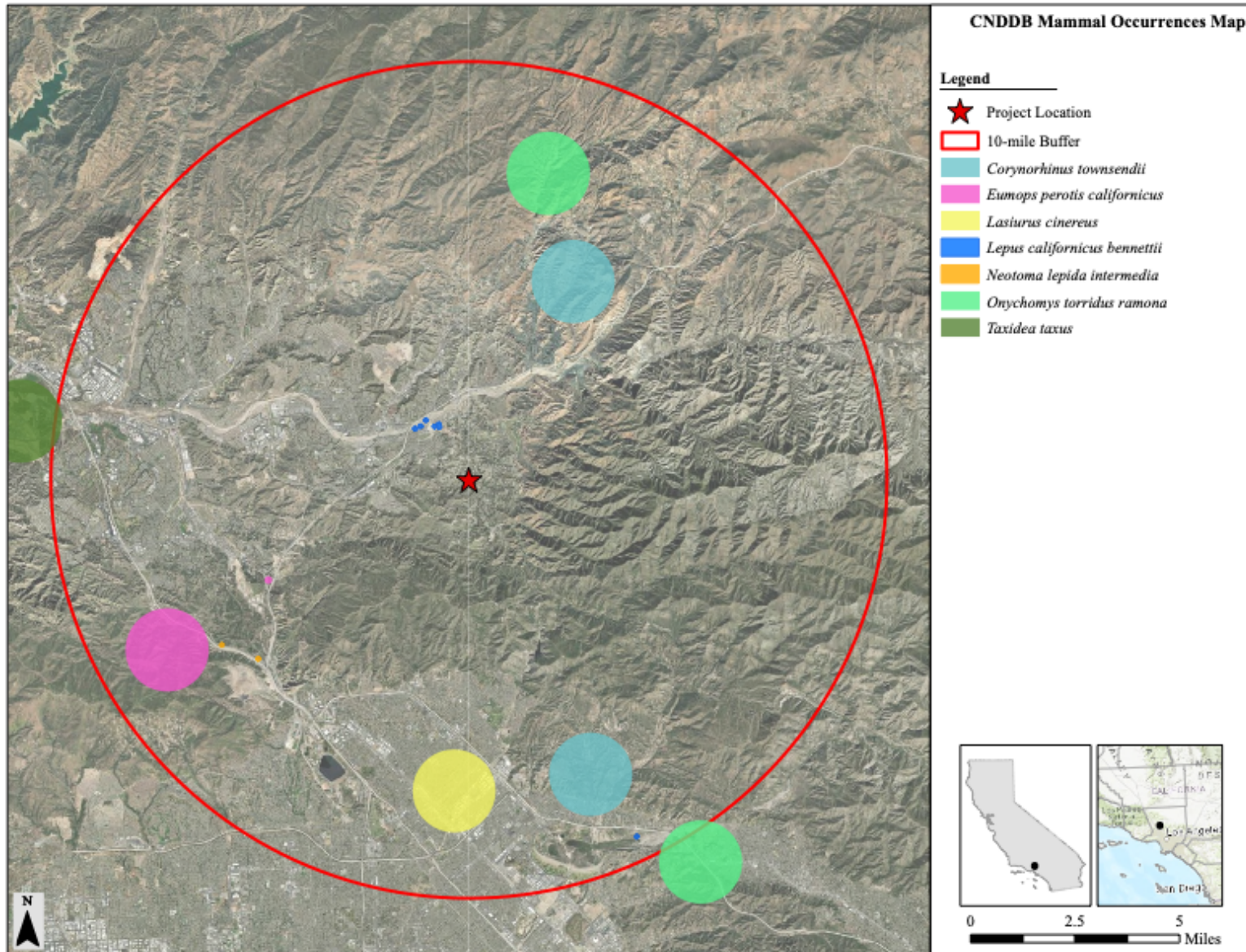


Figure B-4. CNDDDB special-status mammal species occurrences within a 10-mile radius of the project (CDFW 2023).

APPENDIX C

PLANTS AND ANIMALS OBSERVED ON THE PROJECT

FIELD STUDY CONDUCTED
19 August 2023



Table C-1. Vascular plant species observed during the field study conducted on the project site.

Scientific Name	Common Name
Adoxaceae	
<i>Sambucus</i> sp.	Elderberry
Amaranthaceae	
<i>Amaranthus albus</i>	Tumble pigweed
Asteraceae	
<i>Ambrosia acanthicarpa</i>	Flatspine bur ragweed
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	California sagebrush
<i>Pseudognaphalium californicum</i>	California cudweed
<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>	Horseweed
Boraginaceae	
<i>Amsinckia menziesii</i>	Fiddleneck
<i>Phacelia ramosissima</i>	Branching phacelia
Brassicaceae	
<i>Sisymbrium irio</i>	London rocket
<i>Sisymbrium altissimum</i>	Jim Hill mustard
Chenopodiaceae	
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Lamb's quarters
<i>Salsola tragus</i>	Russian thistle
Euphorbaceae	
<i>Euphorbia</i> sp.	Spurge
Fagaceae	
<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coast live oak
Geraniaceae	
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Redstem filaree
Grossulariaceae	
<i>Ribes rubrum</i>	Currant
Lamiaceae	
<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	Horehound
Poaceae	
<i>Avena fatua</i>	Slender wild oat

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Bromus madritensis ssp. rubens</i>	Red brome
<i>Cynodon</i> sp.	Bermuda grass
<i>Digitaria</i> sp.	Crabgrass
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>	Farmer's foxtail
<i>Schismus arabicus</i>	Mediterranean grass
<i>Poa annua</i>	Annual bluegrass
Rosaceae	
<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Chokecherry
Solanaceae	
<i>Datura wrightii</i>	Jimsonweed

Table C-2. Vertebrate animal species observed during the field study conducted on the project site.

Scientific Name	Common Name
Birds	
<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>	Scrub Jay
<i>Corvus corax</i>	Common raven
<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>	House finch
<i>Sayornis saya</i>	Say's phoebe
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	European starling
<i>Zenaidura macroura</i>	Mourning dove
Mammals	
<i>Otospermophilus beecheyi</i>	California ground squirrel
<i>Thomomys bottae</i>	Pocket gopher (burrow)

