

**Appendix B:  
Biological Resources Assessment**

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## Biological Resources Assessment Copart Palmdale City of Palmdale, Los Angeles County, California

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

At the request of Copart, Inc., FirstCarbon Solutions (FCS) conducted a biological resources assessment (BRA) for the approximately 81.98-acre project site located in the City of Palmdale, Los Angeles County, California. The proposed project plans to develop a short-term storage yard for the sale of used, damaged, and undamaged vehicles. The survey was performed at the request of Copart to meet compliance with federal, State, and local jurisdictions to determine if development of the property could potentially affect sensitive biological resources located on or adjacent to the property. This report analyzes potential effects on sensitive biological resources and jurisdictional areas associated with the proposed project.

### 1.1 - Project Site Location and History

The proposed project would be located in the greater Antelope Valley at the western end of the Mojave Desert bordered on the south by the San Gabriel Mountains and on the northwest by the Tehachapi Mountains (Exhibit 1). The project site is approximately 81.98 acres and is located at the corner of 40<sup>th</sup> Street East and Avenue L8 in the City of Palmdale, Los Angeles County, California (Exhibit 2). The project site is located in the Lancaster East, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-Minute Topographical Quadrangle Map. The project site is currently vacant and previously used for agricultural purposes. Regional access to the site is provided via Highway 138. Local access to the site is provided via 40<sup>th</sup> Street East.

### 1.2 - Project Description

The proposed project would consist of the development of a vehicle storage facility and an associated office building for an online automobile auction business on a vacant 81.98-acre lot in the City of Palmdale. Project operation includes the short-term storage of used, damaged, or undamaged vehicles including automobiles, watercraft, trailers, and industrial and construction equipment.

On-site facilities would include a 2,448-square-foot office/sales building, vehicle storage lot, customer and employee parking lot, and vehicle loading and unloading area. The vehicle storage lot would have the capacity to store up to 11,000 vehicles, and would consist of a cement-treated base course with an impervious chip seal. The customer and employee parking lot and loading and unloading area would consist of a paved asphalt surface. Stored vehicles would be transported from the loading/unloading area to the storage yard by Caterpillar wheel loaders. When inventory is fully stocked, Copart would operate up to six wheel loaders during business operations. The duration of short-term storage for stored vehicles is 5 to 60 days, on average. The vehicle storage area would be shielded from onlookers and adjacent properties by an 8-foot-high opaque vinyl fence. No nighttime lighting is proposed within the storage lot. Laser scanners would provide nighttime security.

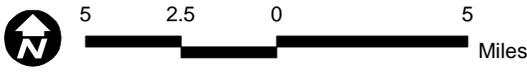
Parking for the project's customer/employee parking lot would consist of 48 stalls, including 44 standard parking stalls, two handicap stalls, and two van stalls. The 81.98-acre site would be broken up into a 1.99-acre building and parking lot area, a 61.07-acre storage yard, 7.18 acres of off-site street dedications, and 11.74 acres of perimeter interceptor flood channels (including landscaping

setbacks). The office building would include a 2,448-square-foot office/sales building on-site and an 8-foot-high opaque vinyl fence surrounding the parking area. Copart employees would have access to the storage lot, and occasionally a customer may be escorted by an employee to view a vehicle before purchase. Vehicles are stored and sold intact. Dismantling, fluid draining, crushing, or parts sales are not proposed.

The project will connect to an off-site gravity sewer collection system located 3,000 feet from the project site within Avenue L and west of 35th Street. The development would include an on-site holding tank and private lift station to transport sewer effluent from the office building on the east side of the project to the off-site sewer connection point on the northwest side of the project. Implementation of water quality/retention basins around the site perimeter is included in development of the project. Domestic and irrigation water for the site would be provided by drilling a new well and installing a storage tank and associated pumps.

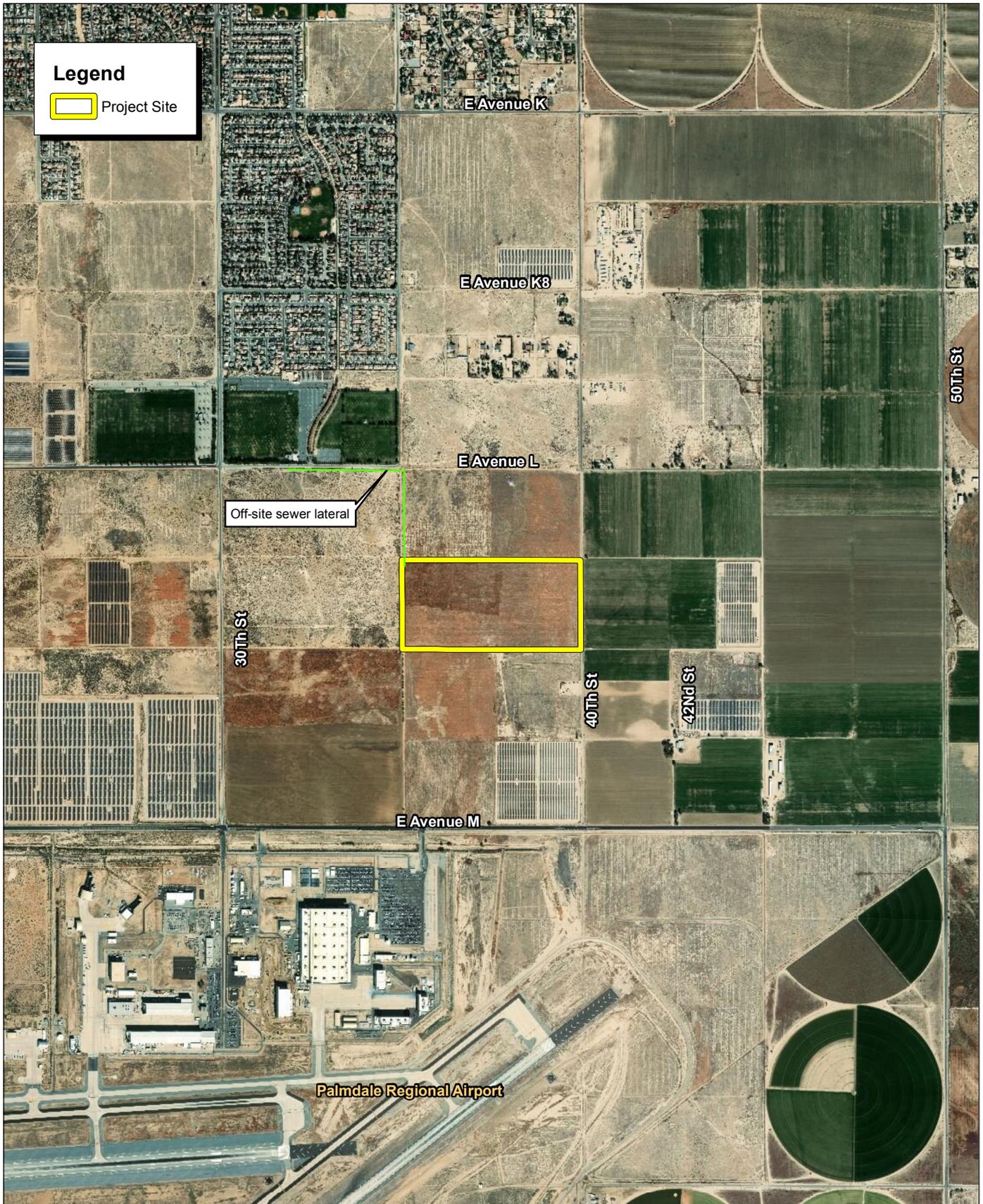


Source: Census 2000 Data, The CaSIL



## Exhibit 1 Regional Location Map

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Source: ESRI Aerial Imagery

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## SECTION 2: REGULATORY SETTING

### 2.1 - Federal

#### 2.1.1 - Endangered Species Act

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has jurisdiction over species listed as threatened or endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA). Section 9 of FESA protects listed species from “take,” which is broadly defined as actions taken to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct.” FESA protects threatened and endangered plants and animals and their critical habitat. Candidate species are those proposed for listing; these species are usually treated by resource agencies as if they were actually listed during the environmental review process. Procedures for addressing impacts to federally listed species follow two principal pathways, both of which require consultation with the USFWS, which administers the FESA for all terrestrial species. The first pathway is the Section 10(a) incidental take permit, which applies to situations where a non-federal government entity must resolve potential adverse impacts to species protected under FESA. The second pathway is Section 7 consultation, which applies to projects directly undertaken by a federal agency or private projects requiring a federal permit or approval.

#### 2.1.2 - Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) implements international treaties between the US and other nations devised to protect migratory birds, their parts, eggs, and nests from activities such as hunting, pursuing, capturing, killing, selling, and shipping, unless expressly authorized in the regulations or by permit. The State of California has incorporated the protection of birds of prey in Sections 3800, 3513, and 3503.5 of the Fish and Game Code. All raptors and their nests are protected from take or disturbance under the MBTA (16 United States Code [USC] § 703, *et seq.*) and California statute (Fish and Game Code [FGC] § 3503.5). The golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are also afforded additional protection under the Eagle Protection Act, amended in 1973 (16 United States Code [USC] § 669, *et seq.*) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC §§ 668–668d).

#### 2.1.3 - Clean Water Act

##### Section 404

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) administers Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA), which regulates the discharge of dredge and fill material into waters of the United States. The USACE has established a series of nationwide permits that authorize certain activities in waters of the United States, if a proposed activity can demonstrate compliance with standard conditions. Normally, the USACE requires an individual permit for an activity that will affect an area equal to or in excess of 0.5 acre of waters of the United States. Projects that result in impacts to less than 0.5 acre can normally be conducted pursuant to one of the nationwide permits, if consistent with the standard permit conditions. The USACE also has discretionary authority to require an Environmental Impact Statement for projects that result in impacts to an area between 0.1 and 0.5

acre. Use of any nationwide permit is contingent on the activities having no impacts to endangered species.

## Section 401

As stated in Section 401 of the CWA, “any applicant for a federal permit for activities that involve a discharge to waters of the State, shall provide the Federal permitting agency a certification from the State in which the discharge is proposed that states that the discharge will comply with the applicable provisions under the Federal Clean Water Act.” Therefore, before the USACE will issue a Section 404 permit, applicants must apply for and receive a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

## 2.2 - State

### 2.2.1 - CEQA Guidelines

The following California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines serve as thresholds of significance for determining the potential impacts to the biological resources identified in this report:

- Has a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as being a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or USFWS.
- Has a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.
- Has a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the CWA (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- Interferes substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impedes the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- Conflicts with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- Conflicts with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

### 2.2.2 - California Endangered Species Act

The State of California enacted the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) in 1984. CESA is similar to FESA but pertains to State-listed endangered and threatened species. CESA requires State agencies to consult with the CDFW when preparing CEQA documents. The purpose is to ensure that the State lead agency actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of habitat essential to the continued existence of those

species, if there are reasonable and prudent alternatives available (FGC § 2080). CESA directs agencies to consult with the CDFW on projects or actions that could affect listed species, directs CDFW to determine whether jeopardy would occur, and allows CDFW to identify “reasonable and prudent alternatives” to the project consistent with conserving the species. CESA allows the CDFW to authorize exceptions to the State’s prohibition against take of a listed species if the “take” of a listed species is incidental to carrying out an otherwise lawful project that has been approved under CEQA (FGC § 2081).

### 2.2.3 - California Fish and Game Code

Under CESA, the CDFW has the responsibility for maintaining a list of endangered and threatened species (FGC § 2070). Sections 2050 through 2098 of the Fish and Game Code outline the protection provided to California’s rare, endangered, and threatened species. Section 2080 of the Fish and Game Code prohibits the taking of plants and animals listed under CESA. Section 2081 established an incidental take permit program for state-listed species. CDFW maintains a list of “candidate species,” which it formally notices as being under review for addition to the list of endangered or threatened species.

In addition, the Native Plant Protection Act of 1977 (NPPA) (FGC § 1900, *et seq.*) prohibits the taking, possessing, or sale within the State of any plants with a State designation of rare, threatened, or endangered (as defined by the CDFW). An exception to this prohibition in the NPPA allows landowners, under specified circumstances, to take listed plant species, provided that the owners first notify the CDFW and give the agency at least 10 days to come and retrieve (and presumably replant) the plants before they are plowed under or otherwise destroyed. Fish and Game Code, Section 1913 exempts from “take” prohibition “the removal of endangered or rare native plants from a canal, lateral ditch, building site, or road, or other right of way.” Project impacts to these species are not considered significant unless the species are known to have a high potential to occur within the area of disturbance associated with construction of the proposed project.

The CDFW also maintains lists of “Species of Special Concern” that serve as species “watch lists.” The CDFW has identified many Species of Special Concern. Species with this status have limited distribution or the extent of their habitats has been reduced substantially, such that their populations may be threatened. Thus, their populations are monitored, and they may receive special attention during environmental review. While they do not have statutory protection, they may be considered rare under CEQA and thereby warrant specific protection measures.

Sensitive species that would qualify for listing but are not currently listed are afforded protection under CEQA. CEQA Guidelines Section 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance) requires that a substantial reduction in numbers of a rare or endangered species be considered a significant effect. CEQA Guidelines Section 15380 (Rare or Endangered Species) provides for the assessment of unlisted species as rare or endangered under CEQA if the species can be shown to meet the criteria for listing. Unlisted plant species on the California Native Plant Society’s (CNPS’s) Lists 1A, 1B, and 2 would typically be considered under CEQA.

Sections 3500 to 5500 of the Fish and Game Code outline protection for fully protected species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. Species that are fully protected by these sections may not be taken or possessed at any time. The CDFW cannot issue permits or licenses that authorize the take of any fully protected species, except under certain circumstances such as scientific research and live capture and relocation of such species pursuant to a permit for the protection of livestock.

Under Section 3503.5 of the Fish and Game Code, it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders of *Falconiformes* or *Strigiformes* (birds of prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto. To comply with the requirements of CESA, an agency reviewing a proposed project within its jurisdiction must determine whether any state-listed endangered or threatened species may be present in the project study area and determine whether the proposed project will have a potentially significant impact on such species. In addition, the CDFW encourages informal consultation on any proposed project that may impact a candidate species.

Project-related impacts to species on the CESA endangered or threatened list would be considered significant. State-listed species are fully protected under the mandates of CESA. “Take” of protected species incidental to otherwise lawful management activities may be authorized under Fish and Game Code Section 206.591. Authorization from the CDFW would be in the form of an Incidental Take Permit.

Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code requires any entity to notify CDFW before beginning any activity that “may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of, or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake” or “deposit debris, waste, or other materials that could pass into any river, stream, or lake.” “River, stream, or lake” includes waters that are episodic and perennial; and ephemeral streams, desert washes, and watercourses with a subsurface flow. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be required if the CDFW determines that project activities may substantially adversely affect fish or wildlife resources through alterations to a covered body of water.

#### **2.2.4 - California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act**

The RWQCB regulates actions that would involve “discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, within any region that could affect the water of the state” (Water Code § 13260(a)), pursuant to provisions of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act. “Waters of the State” are defined as “any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state” (Water Code § 13050(e)).

#### **2.2.5 - California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Concern**

In addition to formal listing under FESA and CESA, species receive additional consideration by the CDFW and local lead agencies during the CEQA process. Species that may be considered for review are included on a list of “Species of Special Concern,” developed by the CDFW. It tracks species in California whose numbers, reproductive success, or habitat may be threatened. In addition to Species of Special Concern, the CDFW identifies animals that are tracked by the California Natural

Diversity Database (CNDDDB), but warrant no federal interest and no legal protection. These species are identified as California Special Animals.

### 2.2.6 - California Native Plant Society

The CNPS maintains a rank of plant species native to California that has low population numbers, limited distribution, or are otherwise threatened with extinction. This information is published in the Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. Potential impacts to populations of CNPS ranked plants receive consideration under CEQA review. The following identifies the definitions of the CNPS ranks:

- **Rank 1A:** Plants presumed Extinct in California
- **Rank 1B:** Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere
- **Rank 2:** Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more numerous elsewhere
- **Rank 3:** Plants about which we need more information—A Review List
- **Rank 4:** Plants of limited distribution—A Watch List

All plants appearing on CNPS List 1 or 2 are considered to meet the CEQA Guidelines Section 15380 criteria. While only some of the plants ranked 3 and 4 meet the definitions of threatened or endangered species, the CNPS recommends that all Rank 3 and Rank 4 plants be evaluated for consideration under CEQA. This database was queried as part of the project’s methodology and literature review, but query attempts did not result in the identification of CNPS ranked plants.

### 2.2.7 - Habitat Conservation Plan

The project site is not subject to any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan and is therefore subject to regulation by local, State, and federal laws on a case-by-case basis. As there is no adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State Habitat Conservation Plan applicable to the project site, no impact would occur in this regard, and as such, no additional requirements of mitigation measures are recommended.

### 2.2.8 - Regional and Local

If deemed applicable, the proposed project will be required to comply with local and regional ordinances and regulations. Specifically, the following:

#### Palmdale Municipal Code

- **Chapter 14.04:** Preserving Joshua trees and native desert vegetation.

#### Los Angeles County General Plan

- **Policy C/NR 1.2:** Protect and conserve natural resources, natural areas, and available open spaces.
- **Policy C/NR 1.5L:** Provide and improve access to dedicated open space and natural areas for all users that considers sensitive biological resources.

- **Policy C/NR 1.6:** Prioritize open space acquisitions for available lands that contain unique ecological features, streams, watersheds, habitat types and/or offer linkages that enhance wildlife movements and genetic diversity.

While the project site is not within an adopted habitat conservation plan, there are several areas within Los Angeles County designated as Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs), areas within the County with a presence of irreplaceable biological resources.

The Los Angeles County Conservation and Natural Resources Element also outlines policies specifically related to biological resources and SEAs. Cumulatively, there are 21 SEAs and nine Coastal Resource Areas that represent the wide-ranging biodiversity of Los Angeles County, and contain the County's most important biological resources. Each SEA is sized to support sustainable populations of its component species, and includes undisturbed or lightly disturbed habitat along with linkages and corridors that promote species movement. The project site is not within a SEA, and the nearest SEA is located approximately 2 miles from the site.

Policies related to biological resources and SEAs are listed below:

- **Policy C/NR 3.1:** Conserve and enhance the ecological function of diverse natural habitats and biological resources.
- **Policy C/NR 3.2:** Create and administer innovative County programs incentivizing the permanent dedication of SEAs and other important biological resources as open space areas.
- **Policy C/NR 3.3:** Restore upland communities and significant riparian resources, such as degraded streams, rivers, and wetlands to maintain ecological function—acknowledging the importance of incrementally restoring ecosystem values when complete restoration is not feasible.
- **Policy C/NR 3.4:** Conserve and sustainably manage forests and woodlands.
- **Policy C/NR 3.5:** Ensure compatibility of development in the National Forests in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service Land and Resource Management Plan.
- **Policy C/NR 3.6:** Assist state and federal agencies and other agencies, as appropriate, with the preservation of special status species and their associated habitat and wildlife movement corridors through the administration of the SEAs and other programs.
- **Policy C/NR 3.7:** Participate in inter-jurisdictional collaborative strategies that protect biological resources.
- **Policy C/NR 3.8:** Discourage development in areas with identified significant biological resources, such as SEAs.
- **Policy C/NR 3.9:** Consider the following in the design of a project that is located within an SEA, to the greatest extent feasible:
  - Preservation of biologically valuable habitats, species, wildlife corridors and linkages;
  - Protection of sensitive resources on the site within open space;
  - Protection of water sources from hydromodification in order to maintain the ecological function of riparian habitats;
  - Placement of the development in the least biologically sensitive areas on the site (prioritize the preservation or avoidance of the most sensitive biological resources onsite);

- Design required open spaces to retain contiguous undisturbed open space that preserves the most sensitive biological resources onsite and/or serves to maintain regional connectivity;
- Maintenance of watershed connectivity by capturing, treating, retaining, and/or infiltrating storm water flows on site; and
- Consideration of the continuity of onsite open space with adjacent open space in project design.
- **Policy C/NR 3.10:** Require environmentally superior mitigation for unavoidable impacts on biologically sensitive areas, and permanently preserve mitigation sites.
- **Policy C/NR 3.11:** Discourage development in riparian habitats, streambeds, wetlands, and other native woodlands in order to maintain and support their preservation in a natural state, unaltered by grading, fill, or diversion activities.

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## SECTION 3: METHODS

### 3.1 - Literature Review

The literature review provides a baseline from which to evaluate the biological resources potentially occurring on the project site, as well as the surrounding area.

#### 3.1.1 - Existing Documentation

As part of the literature review, an FCS biologist examined existing environmental documentation for the project site and local vicinity. This documentation included biological studies for the area; literature pertaining to habitat requirements of special-status species potentially occurring in the vicinity of the site; and federal register listings, protocols, and species data provided by the USFWS and CDFW. These and other documents are listed in the references section of this report.

#### 3.1.2 - Topographic Maps and Aerial Photographs

An FCS biologist reviewed current USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map(s) and aerial photographs as a preliminary analysis of the existing conditions within the project site and immediate vicinity. Information obtained from the review of the topographic maps included elevation range, general watershed information, and potential drainage feature locations (USGS 1986). Aerial photographs provide a perspective of the most current site conditions relative to on-site and off-site land use, plant community locations, and potential locations of wildlife movement corridors.

#### 3.1.3 - Soil Surveys

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has published soil surveys that describe the soil series (i.e., group of soils with similar profiles) occurring within a particular area (USDA 1980). These profiles include major horizons with similar thickness, arrangement, and other important characteristics. These series are further subdivided into soil mapping units that provide specific information regarding soil characteristics. Many special-status plant species have a limited distribution based exclusively on soil type. Therefore, pertinent USDA soil survey maps were reviewed to determine the existing soil mapping units within the project site and to establish if soil conditions on-site are suitable for any special-status plant species (Soil Survey Staff 2019) (Appendix A).

#### 3.1.4 - Special-Status Species Database Search

An FCS biologist compiled a list of threatened, endangered, and otherwise special-status species previously recorded within the general project vicinity. The list was based on a search of the CDFW's CNDDDB (CDFW 2019), a special-status species and plant community account database for the Lancaster East, California USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map.

The CNDDDB Biogeographic Information and Observation System (CDFW 2005; CDFW 2018) database was used to determine the distance between known recorded occurrences of special-status species and the project site (Appendix A). As referenced in Section 2.2.6 the CNPS's Electronic Inventory of

Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California database was queried as part of the project's methodology and literature review, but query attempts did not result in the identification of CNPS ranked plants.

### 3.1.5 - Trees

Prior to conducting the reconnaissance-level survey, FCS's biologist reviewed any applicable City and County ordinances pertaining to tree preservation and protective measures and their tree replacement conditions or permits required. Species listed in any applicable ordinances identified on-site were noted and the location was recorded using a handheld GPS unit and identified on a topographic map.

### 3.1.6 - Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

Prior to conducting the reconnaissance-level survey, FCS's biologists reviewed USGS topographic maps and aerial photography to identify any potential natural drainage features and water bodies. In general, all surface drainage features identified as blue-line streams on USGS maps and linear patches of vegetation are expected to exhibit evidence of flows and considered potentially subject to state and federal regulatory authority as "waters of the United States and/or State." A preliminary assessment was conducted to determine the location of any existing drainages and limits of project-related grading activities, to aid in determining if a formal delineation of waters of the United States or State is necessary.

## 3.2 - Field Survey

FCS Biologist, Robert Carroll, conducted the reconnaissance-level field survey on January 24, 2019, with a follow-up survey conducted by FCS Biologist, Brian Mayerle, on June 21, 2019. The purpose of the reconnaissance survey was to ascertain general site conditions and identify potentially suitable habitat areas for various special-status plant and wildlife species. Special-status or unusual biological resources identified during the literature review were ground-truthed during the reconnaissance-level survey. Special attention was paid to sensitive habitats and areas potentially supporting special-status floral and faunal species.

### 3.2.1 - Vegetation

Common plant species observed during the reconnaissance-level survey were identified by visual characteristics and morphology in the field and recorded in a field notebook. Uncommon and less familiar plants were identified off-site with the use of taxonomical guides, such as Clarke et al. (2007), Hitchcock (1971), McAuley (1996), and Munz (1974). Taxonomic nomenclature used in this study follows Baldwin et al. (2012). Common plant names, when not available from Baldwin et al. (2012), were taken from other regionally specific references. Vegetation types and boundaries were noted on aerial photos and through field observation, and digitized using ESRI ArcGIS software® ArcMap 10.0. By incorporating collected field data and interpreting aerial photography, a map of habitat types, land cover types, and other biological resources within the project site was prepared. Habitat types were based on the classification system from *A Guide to Wildlife Habitats of California* (CDFW 1988). Vegetation community and land cover types used to help classify habitat types are

based on Holland (1986) and Oberbauer (1996) and cross-referenced with CDFW's Natural Communities List (CDFW 2010).

### 3.2.2 - Wildlife

Wildlife species detected during the reconnaissance-level survey by sight, calls, tracks, scat, or other signs were recorded in a field notebook. Notations were made regarding suitable habitat for those special-status species determined to potentially occur within the project site (CDFW 2015).

Appropriate field guides were used to assist with species identification during surveys, such as Peterson (2010), Reid (2006), and Stebbins (2003).

### 3.2.3 - Wildlife Movement Corridors

Wildlife movement corridors link areas of suitable wildlife habitat that are otherwise separated by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. Urbanization and the resulting fragmentation of open space areas create isolated “islands” of wildlife habitat, forming separated populations. Corridors act as an effective link between populations.

The project site was evaluated for evidence of a wildlife movement corridor during the reconnaissance-level survey. However, the scope of the biological resources study did not include a formal wildlife movement corridor study utilizing track plates, camera stations, scent stations, or snares. Therefore, the focus of this study was to determine if the change of current land use of the project site may have significant impacts on the regional movement of wildlife. These conclusions are made based on the information compiled during the literature review, including aerial photographs, USGS topographic maps and resource maps for the vicinity, the field survey conducted, and professional knowledge of desired topography and resource requirements for wildlife potentially utilizing the project site and vicinity.

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## SECTION 4: RESULTS

The reconnaissance-level field survey was conducted by FCS Biologist, Robert Carroll, on January 24, 2019 with a follow-up survey for the sewer alignment by FCS Biologist, Brian Mayerle, on June 21, 2019. Weather conditions during the January field survey were overcast with light gusts of wind and a temperature of 65°F (degrees Fahrenheit), while the June survey was clear with temperatures approaching 90 degrees.

### 4.1 - Environmental Setting

The proposed project is located on a vacant, disturbed parcel of land. It was evident from the field survey that the project site was formerly used for agricultural purposes. No undisturbed habitat or natural lands exist within the immediate lot; however, the surrounding parcels included an active farm, other disturbed parcels, desert scrub, and Joshua tree woodland habitat.

#### 4.1.1 - Topography

The project site contains slightly undulating topographical features, likely a result from the former production row crops. The project site is approximately 2,462 feet above sea level and the surrounding areas are relatively flat.

#### 4.1.2 - Soils

The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates that the soils on the site consist of Cajon loamy sand (14 percent), Hesperia loamy fine sand (20.1 percent), Rosamond fine sandy loam (21.1 percent), and Rosamond loam (44.8 percent) (Exhibit 3).

- Cajon sandy loam has negligible to low runoff and moderately rapid permeability. Typically slightly alkaline or moderately alkaline, although some pedons are neutral.
- Hesperia loamy fine sand are well drained with negligible to low runoff, and moderate rapid permeability. Primarily derived from granite and related rocks.
- The Rosamond Soil Series is formed in material weathered from granitic alluvium. The soil is well drained with medium runoff and moderate to moderately slow permeability.

### 4.2 - Vegetation Communities

A search of the USFWS Critical Habitat Portal revealed that the project does not contain identified critical habitat for any federally listed species (USFWS 2011). The project will have no impacts on any USFWS designated Critical Habitat, and there are no designated refuges within the project boundaries.

### 4.2.1 - Disturbed

Disturbed land is classified as areas that have been physically disturbed (by previous legal human activity) and are no longer recognizable as a native or naturalized vegetation association, but continues to retain a soil substrate. Typically, vegetation, if present, is nearly exclusively composed of non-native plant species such as ornamentals or ruderal exotic species that take advantage of disturbance, or shows signs of past or present animal usage that removes any capability of providing viable natural habitat for uses other than dispersal. Examples of disturbed land include areas that have been graded, repeatedly cleared for fuel management purposes and/or experienced repeated use that prevents natural revegetation (i.e., dirt parking lots, trails that have been present for several decades), recently graded firebreaks, graded construction pads, construction staging areas, off-road vehicle trails, and old home-sites. The site contains ruderal vegetative cover dominated by Russian thistle (*Salsola iberica*), and smaller areas of fourwing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), red stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), and bur clover (*Medicago polymorpha*). The entirety of the project site consists of a disturbed vegetative community due to past agricultural uses on-site (Exhibit 4).

## 4.3 - Wildlife

The vegetation community and land cover types discussed above provide habitat for a number of local wildlife species. Wildlife activity was low during the field survey and consisted of avian and mammal species. The following are brief discussions of wildlife species observed within the project site during the field survey, separated into taxonomic groups.

### 4.3.1 - Birds

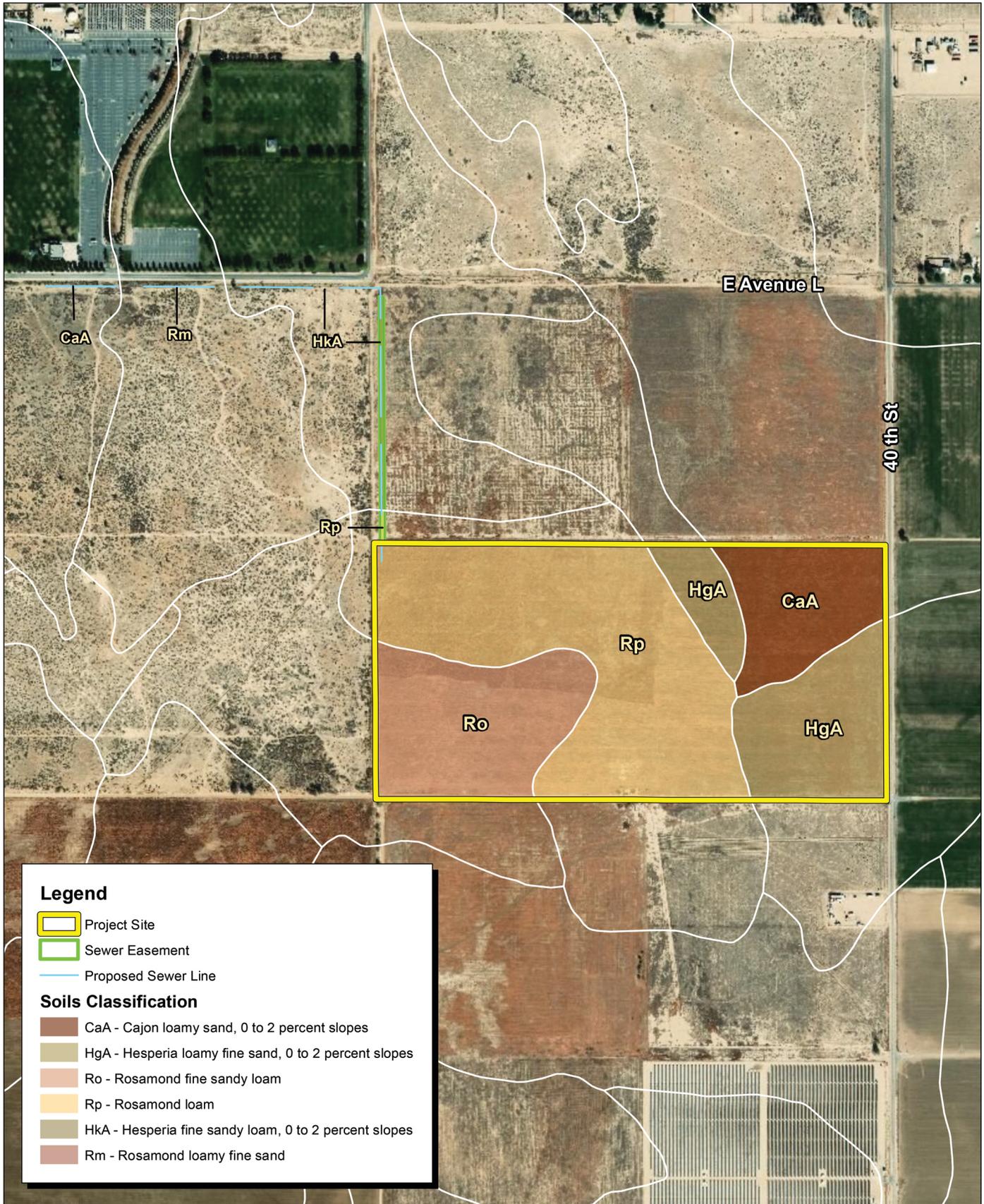
Species observed during the site visit include the northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), and scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*).

### 4.3.2 - Mammals

Several desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) were visually observed during the site visit. Coyote (*Canis latrans*) scat and tracks were observed throughout the project site.

## 4.4 - Trees

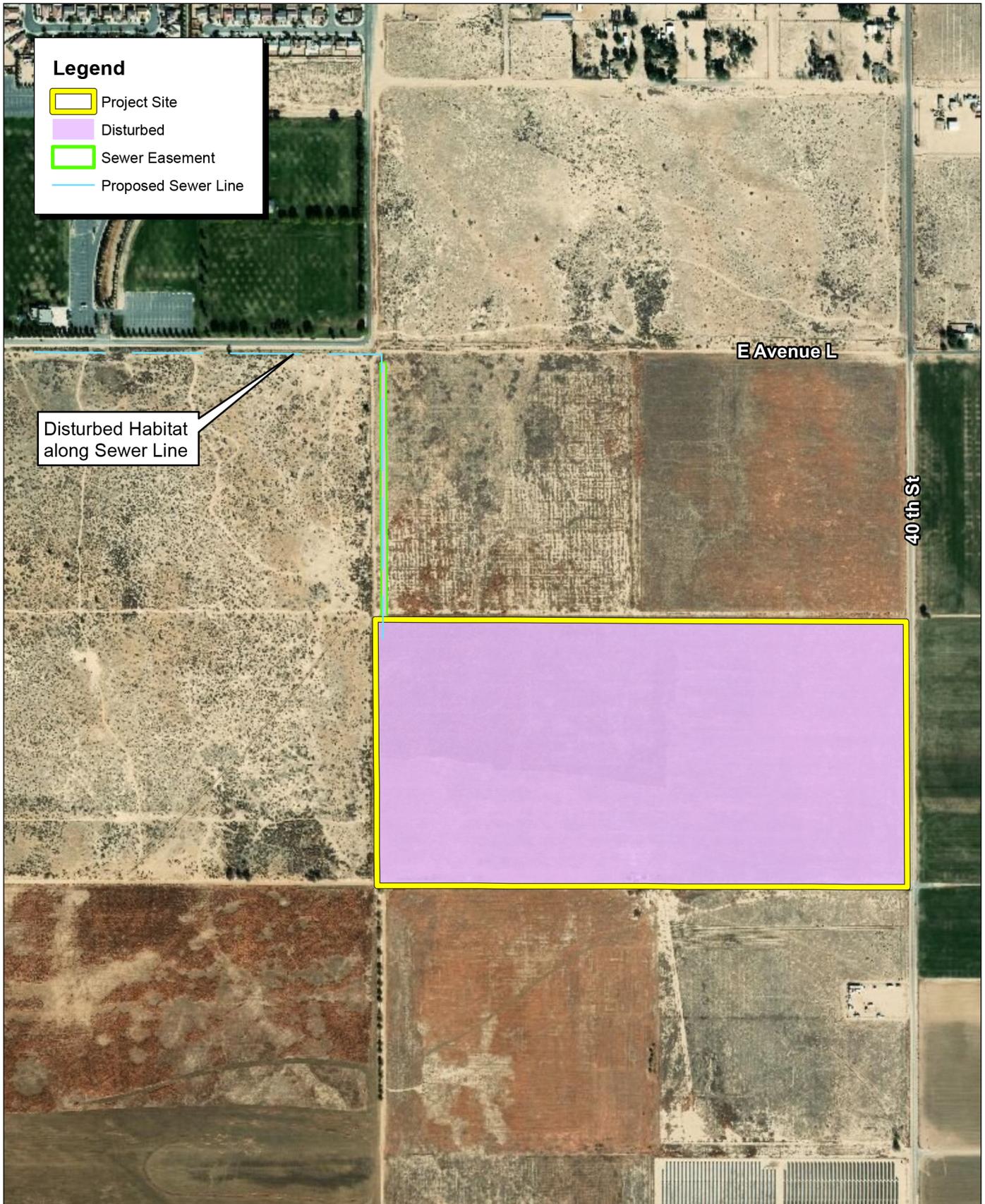
The site contains one unidentifiable tree, in poor condition at the southeast corner of the site. Additionally, adjacent parcels support large clusters of Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*).



Source: ESRI Aerial Imagery, USDA Soils Data, Antelope Valley Area.



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Source: ESRI Aerial Imagery



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## SECTION 5: SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The following section discusses the existing site conditions and potential for special-status biological resources to occur within the project site.

### 5.1 - Special-Status Plant Communities

Special-status plant communities are considered sensitive biological resources based on federal, State, or local laws regulating their development, limited distributions, and habitat requirements of special-status plant or wildlife species that occur within them. The past use of the project site as an agricultural field and the proliferation of non-native/invasive vegetation that resulted from these past disturbance events preclude the presence of special-status plant communities. Furthermore, the project site lacks the habitat requirements (e.g. seeps, washes, alkaline clay flats) for special-status plant communities. There are no special-status plant communities within the project boundaries. Because of the lack of special-status plant communities, this issue is not addressed in the impact analysis and recommendations section of this document.

### 5.2 - Special-Status Plant Species

The Special-Status Plant Species Table (Appendix B-1) identifies five special-status plant species that have been recorded to occur within the Lancaster East, California topographic quadrangle (USGS 1986), as recorded by the CNDDDB (CDFW 2019). The table also includes the species' status, required habitat, and potential to occur within the project site. All special-status plant species have been determined unlikely to occur on-site. The project site is highly disturbed and lacks suitable habitat conditions, most notably aquatic features or suitable soil conditions, to support any special-status plant species; further, no special-status plant species were found on the project site. These species have been included in the table, in order to justify their exclusion from further discussion. Because of the lack of special-status plant species on site, this issue is not addressed in the impact analysis and recommendations section of this document.

### 5.3 - Special-Status Wildlife Species

The Special-Status Wildlife Species Table (Appendix B-2) identifies eight special-status wildlife species, including State threatened species, and State Species of Special Concern that have been recorded in the CNDDDB (CDFW 2019) as occurring within the Lancaster East, California topographic quadrangle (USGS 1986). The table also includes the species' status, required habitat, and potential to occur within the project site. The Northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*) and the coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) were determined unlikely to occur on-site based on lack of suitable habitat; the project site lacks both soils with high moisture content and does not contain any sandy wash features. Additionally, all documented occurrences for these two species are located on the periphery of the 3-mile buffer, as depicted in Exhibit 5.

The remaining six wildlife species; burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*), mountain plover (*Charadrius montanus*), Swainson's

hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*) have the potential, albeit low, to occur on-site. These six species have been included in the impact analysis section of this document. Species not discussed in the analysis have been included in the table to justify their exclusion from further discussion.

## 5.4 - Nesting Birds

Areas adjacent to the project site and along the site's perimeter contain trees and vegetation that may provide potential habitat for non-special-status migratory raptors and passerine bird species protected by the MBTA.

Construction activities could disturb nesting and breeding birds in trees and shrubs within and around the construction site. Potential impacts on special-status and migratory birds that could result from the construction and operation of the project include the destruction of eggs or occupied nests, mortality of young, and the abandonment of nests with eggs or young birds prior to fledging. If these species were found to be present, impacts to these species would be significant. The project would likely be required to conduct pre-construction nesting bird surveys to reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less than significant level.

## 5.5 - Wildlife Movement Corridors

The project site does not contain any creeks, washes, or waterways, which provide significant wildlife movement corridors within projects greater vicinity. The site does not contain any prominent features expected to convey wildlife movement, as the vegetation within the site is composed of non-native/invasive species. Parcels within the projects vicinity include an active farm with fencing to the east and solar farm to the south. In addition, there is a moderately trafficked roadway located directly east of the site, further hindering the likelihood of wildlife movement occurring on the project site.

Areas near the project site with the potential to serve as wildlife movement corridors include Amargosa Creek and Little Rock Wash. Both of these features are outside of the immediate vicinity of the site, and therefore the project would not impact wildlife movement. As such, potential impacts are not addressed in the impact analysis and recommendations section of this document.

## 5.6 - Trees

One, unidentifiable tree is located in the southeast corner of the project site and a number of Joshua trees are located on a lot adjacent to the project site. Currently, project design measures do not require the removal of any trees. As such, this resource category is not addressed in the impact analysis and recommendations section of this document.

## 5.7 - Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

An assessment of potentially jurisdictional features was conducted as part of the literature review and reconnaissance-level survey for the project site. The project site does not contain any wetlands or other areas designated as waters of the United States and no further studies or regulatory

permitting would be required. Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the CWA. Lastly, because no jurisdictional features or riparian habitat are within project boundaries, these potential impacts are not addressed in the impact analysis and recommendations section of this document.

## **5.8 - Habitat Conservation Plan**

The project site does not fall within any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, regional or local, and will not have to adhere to rules or regulations of any other Habitat Conservation Plan. In addition, as mentioned above in Section 2.2.8, the project site is not located within an SEA. As such, this topic is not addressed in the impact analysis and recommendations section of this document.

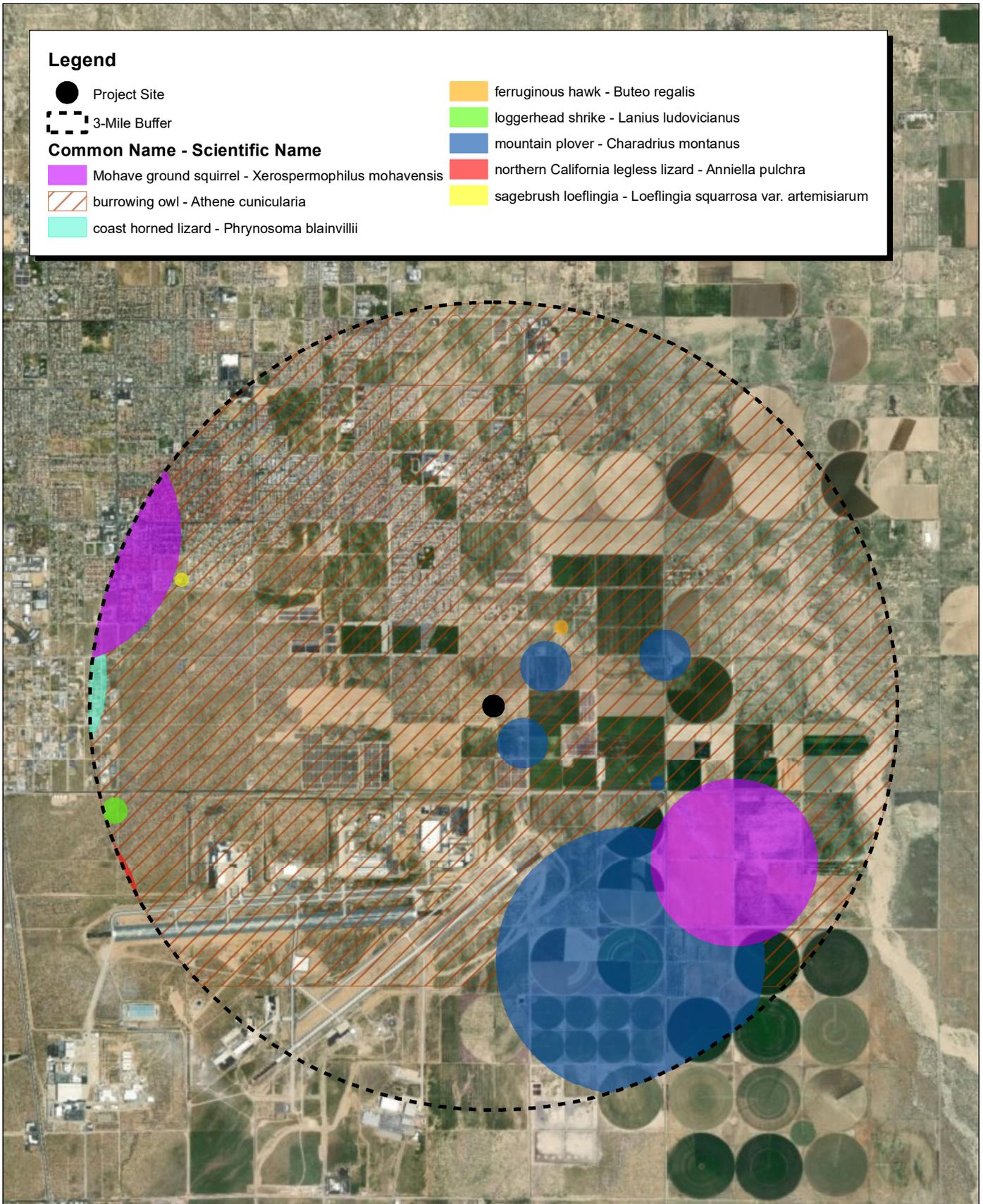
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**Legend**

- Project Site
- 3-Mile Buffer

**Common Name - Scientific Name**

- Mohave ground squirrel - *Xerospermophilus mohavensis*
- burrowing owl - *Athene cucularia*
- coast horned lizard - *Phrynosoma blainvillii*
- ferruginous hawk - *Buteo regalis*
- loggerhead shrike - *Lanius ludovicianus*
- mountain plover - *Charadrius montanus*
- northern California legless lizard - *Anniella pulchra*
- sagebrush loeflingia - *Loeflingia squarrosa* var. *artemisiarum*



Source: ESR I Aerial Imagery. California Department of Fish and Wildlife CNDDDB GIS Data, February 2019.



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## SECTION 6: IMPACT ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following discussion addresses potential impacts to special-status biological resources resulting from the proposed project and recommends mitigation measures, where appropriate, to minimize those impacts to a level of “less than significant” under CEQA.

### 6.1 - Special-Status Wildlife Species

The burrowing owl is a California Species of Special Concern. This species typically utilizes ground squirrel burrows and other animals (e.g. badgers, prairie dog, and kangaroo rat). Suitable roosting and breeding habitat (open land characterized by low-growing vegetation, and agricultural land) is present in the proposed project area and the species has been documented within 3 miles of the project site (Exhibit 5). Additionally, the project site shows evidence of ground squirrel burrows; as such, there is potential for burrowing owl to nest on the project site. This species would represent a seasonal constraint to development since burrowing owls would need to be relocated from the property following accepted protocols if found on-site. If the site were to support nesting owls, then areas supporting nesting owls would have to be avoided until the completion of the breeding season (February 1 through August 31). To ensure impacts to burrowing owls are less than significant under CEQA, it is recommended the project applicant implement the following mitigation measures:

#### Burrowing Owl Mitigation Measures

- No more than 30 days prior to the first ground-disturbing activities, the project applicant shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction survey on the project site. The survey shall establish the presence or absence of western burrowing owl and/or habitat features, and evaluate use by owls in accordance with CDFW survey guidelines.
- On the parcel where the activity is proposed, the biologist shall survey the proposed disturbance footprint and a 500-foot radius from the perimeter of the proposed footprint to identify burrows and owls. The survey shall take place near the sunrise or sunset in accordance with CDFW guidelines. All burrows or burrowing owls shall be identified and mapped. During the breeding season (February 1–August 31), surveys shall document whether burrowing owls are nesting on or directly adjacent to disturbance areas. During the non-breeding season (September 1–January 31), surveys shall document whether burrowing owls are using habitat on or directly adjacent to any disturbance area. Survey results will be valid only for the season during which the survey is conducted.
- If burrowing owls are not discovered, further mitigation is not required. If burrowing owls are observed during the pre-construction surveys, the applicant shall perform the following measures to limit the impact on the burrowing owls:
  1. Avoidance shall include establishment of a 160-foot non-disturbance buffer zone. Construction may occur during the breeding season if a qualified biologist monitors the nest and determines that the birds have not begun egg laying and incubation, or that the juveniles from the occupied burrows have fledged. During the non-breeding season (September 1-January 31), the project proponent shall avoid the owls and the burrows

- they are using, if possible. Avoidance shall include the establishment of a 160-foot nondisturbance buffer zone.
2. If it is not possible to avoid occupied burrows, passive relocation shall be implemented. Owls shall be excluded from burrows in the immediate impact zone and within a 160-foot buffer zone by installing one-way doors in burrow entrances. These doors shall be in place for 48 hours prior to excavation. The project area shall be monitored daily for 1 week to confirm that the owl has abandoned the burrow. Whenever possible, burrows should be excavated using hand tools and refilled to prevent re-occupation. Plastic tubing or a similar structure shall be inserted in the tunnels during excavation to maintain an escape route for any owls inside the burrow.

## 6.2 - Nesting Birds

As noted in Section 5.4 above, suitable nesting habitat for raptors including the loggerhead shrike, Swainson's hawk, and ferruginous hawk as well as the mountain plover and other birds protected by the MBTA occurs within and adjacent to the project site. These species have documented occurrences within 3 miles of the project site (Exhibit 5). Most native, breeding birds are protected under Section 3503 of the Fish and Game Code, and raptors specifically are protected under Section 3503.5 of the Fish and Game Code. Additionally, both Section 3513 of the Fish and Game Code and the federal MBTA prohibit the killing, possession, or trading of migratory birds. Section 3800 of the Fish and Game Code prohibits the taking of nongame birds and fully protected species.

Most raptors nest in mature, large coniferous or deciduous trees and use twigs and branches as nesting material while smaller raptors may nest in cavities in anthropogenic structures and trees. Additionally, ground-nesting species such as the mountain plover commonly nest in former agricultural fields with burrow features. The nesting period for these species generally occurs between February 15 and August 31.

Potential impacts could occur to resident and migratory species during project construction, which would render the project site temporarily unsuitable for birds due to the noise, vibrations, and increased activity levels associated with various construction activities. These activities could potentially subject birds to risk of death or injury, and they are likely to avoid using the area until such construction activities have dissipated or ceased. Relocation, in turn, could cause hunger or stress among individual birds by displacing them into adjacent territories belonging to other individuals.

Construction activities that occur during the nesting season may disturb nesting sites for birds protected by the MBTA and the Fish and Game Code. No action is necessary if no active nests are found, or if construction will occur during the non-breeding season (generally September 1 through February 14).

Although the site provides mostly foraging opportunities for most of the birds identified above, several shrubs and trees adjacent to the project site or in the vicinity that could provide nesting habitat for birds protected by the MBTA. Removal of vegetation could also directly destroy nests,

eggs, and immature birds that are protected by the MBTA. Adverse impacts to raptors, nesting birds, and their associated habitats are a potentially significant impacts. Implementation of the following avoidance and minimization measures would reduce impacts to raptors and other nesting birds to a less than significant level.

#### **Nesting Bird Mitigation Measures**

- Prior to any ground-disturbing activities, the applicant shall have a qualified biologist conduct a pre-construction spring/summer active season reconnaissance survey for nesting/roosting special-status mobile bird and bat species, and other nesting birds within 300 feet (500 feet for raptors) of the construction limits of each project element to determine and map the location and extent of special status species occurrence(s) that could be affected by the project.
- The applicant shall avoid direct impacts on any nesting birds located within the limits of construction. This could be accomplished by establishing the construction right of way and removal of plant material outside of the typical breeding season (February 1 through August 31).
- If construction and vegetation removal is proposed for the bird nesting period February 1 through August 31, then preconstruction surveys for nesting bird species shall begin 30 days prior to construction disturbance with subsequent weekly surveys, the last one being no more than three days prior to work initiation. The surveys shall include habitat within 300 feet (500 feet for raptors) of the construction limits. Active nest sites located during the pre-construction surveys shall be avoided and a non-disturbance buffer zone established dependent on the species and in consultation with the USFWS and CDFW. This buffer zone shall be delineated in the field with flagging, stakes or construction fencing. Nest sites shall be avoided with approved non-disturbance buffer zones until the adults and young are no longer reliant on the nest site for survival as determined by a qualified biologist. For species with high site fidelity, such as Swainson's hawk, if direct take of nests outside of the breeding seasons is required, the implementing agency shall contact CDFW to determine appropriate mitigation measures.

### **6.3 - Mohave Ground Squirrel**

The Mohave ground squirrel is a State threatened species. The Mohave ground squirrel prefers open desert scrub, Joshua tree woodland, and alkali scrub habitats. This species prefers sandy to gravelly soils, uses burrows at the base of shrubs for cover and nesting opportunities. Marginal nesting habitat for the Mohave ground squirrel occurs on-site and in areas surrounding the project site. Furthermore, there have been numerous documented occurrences within 3 miles of the project site (Exhibit 5). Potential impacts to the Mohave ground squirrel during project construction would be considered significant and mitigation would be required. The following mitigation measures are recommended to ensure impacts to the Mohave ground squirrel are less than significant:

#### **Mohave Ground Squirrel Mitigation Measures**

- Prior to the first ground-disturbing activities, the applicant should retain a qualified biologist to conduct a focused habitat assessment to determine the potential for the Mohave ground squirrel to occur within the project site. If it is determined that potential habitat is present in

or within 300-feet of the project site, the applicant shall perform the following measures to limit the impact on the Mohave ground squirrel:

1. Implement necessary actions to avoid potential direct or indirect impacts to the Mohave ground squirrel
2. Coordinate with a qualified biologist with the necessary permits to set up a trapping program in accordance with trapping protocol set forth by the CDFW to determine the presence or absence of the Mohave ground squirrel. If it is assumed or determined that the Mohave ground squirrel is present, a CDFW incidental take permit shall be obtained by implementing agencies pursuant to Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code and provide compensation determined by CDFW.

Mohave ground squirrel survey guidelines set forth by the CDFW are as follows (CDFW 2010):

1. Studies that include trapping for the Mohave ground squirrel shall be authorized by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Letter Permit issued by the Wildlife Branch of the Department, or by other permit as determined by the Department, and shall be undertaken only by a qualified biologist. A qualified biologist is a biologist who has demonstrated pertinent field experience in capturing and handling ground squirrels or other small mammals in desert/arid communities and who has been permitted by the Department to work without supervision. Each biologist setting traps, opening traps containing captured animals, or handling captured animals must be named in the MOU or Letter Permit as an authorized person, whether qualified or not to work without supervision.
2. Visual surveys to determine Mohave ground squirrel activity and habitat quality shall be undertaken during the period of 15 March through 15 April. All potential habitat on a project site shall be visually surveyed during daylight hours by a biologist who can readily identify the Mohave ground squirrel and the white-tailed antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus leucurus*).
3. If visual surveys do not reveal presence of the Mohave ground squirrel on the project site, standard small-mammal trapping grids shall be established in potential Mohave ground squirrel habitat. The number of grids will depend on the amount of potential habitat on the project site, as determined by the guidelines presented in measures 4 and 5 below.
4. For linear projects (for example, highways, pipelines, or electric transmission lines), each sampling grid shall consist of 100 Sherman live-traps (or equivalent; the minimum length of any trap is 12 inches) arranged in a rectangular pattern, 4 traps wide by 25 traps long, with traps spaced 35 meters apart along each of the four trap lines. At a minimum, one sampling grid of this type shall be established in each linear mile, or fraction thereof, of potential Mohave ground squirrel habitat along the project corridor.
5. For all other types of projects, one sampling grid consisting of 100 Sherman live-traps (or equivalent; the minimum length of any trap is 12 inches) shall be established for each 80 acres, or fraction thereof, of potential Mohave ground squirrel habitat on the project site. The traps shall be arranged in a 10 x 10 grid, with 35-meter spacing between traps.

6. Each sampling grid shall be trapped for a minimum five consecutive days, unless a Mohave ground squirrel is captured before the end of the five-day term on the grid or on another grid on the project site. If no Mohave ground squirrel is captured on a sampling grid on the project site in the first five-consecutive-day term, each sampling grid shall be sampled for a SECOND five-consecutive-day term. Trapping may be stopped before the end of the second term if a Mohave ground squirrel is captured on any sampling grid on the project site. If no Mohave ground squirrel is captured during the second five-consecutive-day term, each sampling grid shall be sampled for a THIRD five-consecutive-day term. The FIRST trapping term shall begin and be completed in the period of 15 March through 30 April. If a SECOND term is required, it shall begin at least two weeks after the end of the first term, but shall begin no earlier than 01 May, and shall be completed by 31 May. If a THIRD term is required, it shall begin at least two weeks after the end of the second term, but shall begin no earlier than 15 June, and shall be completed by 15 July. All trapping shall be conducted during appropriate weather conditions, avoiding periods of high wind, precipitation, and low temperatures (<50°F or 10°C).
7. For projects requiring two or more sampling grids, capture of a Mohave ground squirrel on any grid will establish presence of the species on the project site. Trapping may be stopped on all grids on the project site at that time. For linear projects, very large project sites, project sites characterized by fragmented or highly-heterogeneous habitats, or in other special circumstances, continued projects, very large project sites, project sites characterized by fragmented or highly-heterogeneous habitats, or in other special circumstances, continued trapping may be necessary.
8. A maximum 100 traps shall be operated by each qualified biologist. Each trap shall be covered with a cardboard A-frame or equivalent non-metal shelter to provide shade. Trap and shelter orientation shall be on a north-south axis. All traps shall be opened within one hour of sunrise and may be closed beginning one hour before sunset. Traps shall be checked at least once every four hours to minimize heat stress to captured animals. When traps are open, temperature shall be measured at a location within the sampling grid, in the shade, and one foot (approx. 0.3 meters) above the ground at least once every hour. Traps shall be closed when the ambient air temperature at one foot above the ground in the shade exceeds 90oF (32oC). Trapping shall resume on the same day after the ambient temperature at one foot (approx. 0.3 meters) above the ground in the shade falls to 90°F (32°C) and shall continue until one hour before sunset. Suggested baits are mixed grains, rolled oats, or birdseed, with a small amount of peanut butter.
9. A qualified biologist shall complete the Survey and Trapping Form, which is found on the last page of these guidelines. This biologist, or the lead agency for the project, shall submit the completed form to the appropriate Department office (see page 4) with the biological report on the project site.
10. The Department may allow variation on these guidelines, with the advance written approval of the appropriate regional habitat conservation planning office (see page 4). Such variations could include biologically-appropriate modification of the trapping dates or changes in grid configuration that would enhance the probability of detecting Mohave ground squirrels. Any

variation which concerns trapping or marking methods must be incorporated into the MOU or permit that authorizes the work.

11. If a survey conducted according to these guidelines results in no capture or observation of the Mohave ground squirrel on a project site, this is not necessarily evidence that the Mohave ground squirrel does not exist on the site or that the site is not actual or potential habitat of the species. However, in the circumstance of such a negative result, the Department will stipulate that the project site harbor no Mohave ground squirrels. This stipulation will expire one year from the ending date of the last trapping on the project site conducted according to these guidelines.

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**Appendix A:  
Database Searches**

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**Selected Elements by Scientific Name**  
**California Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**California Natural Diversity Database**



**Query Criteria:** QuadIS (Lancaster East (3411861))

<b>Species</b>	<b>Element Code</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Global Rank</b>	<b>State Rank</b>	<b>Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP</b>
<i>Anniella pulchra</i> northern California legless lizard	ARACC01020	None	None	G3	S3	SSC
<i>Astragalus preussii</i> var. <i>laxiflorus</i> Lancaster milk-vetch	PDFAB0F721	None	None	G4T2	S1	1B.1
<i>Athene cunicularia</i> burrowing owl	ABNSB10010	None	None	G4	S3	SSC
<i>Buteo regalis</i> ferruginous hawk	ABNKC19120	None	None	G4	S3S4	WL
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i> Swainson's hawk	ABNKC19070	None	Threatened	G5	S3	
<i>Calochortus striatus</i> alkali mariposa-lily	PMLIL0D190	None	None	G3?	S2S3	1B.2
<i>Canbya candida</i> white pygmy-poppy	PDPAP05020	None	None	G3G4	S3S4	4.2
<i>Charadrius montanus</i> mountain plover	ABNNB03100	None	None	G3	S2S3	SSC
<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>parryi</i> Parry's spineflower	PDPGN040J2	None	None	G3T2	S2	1B.1
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i> loggerhead shrike	ABPBR01030	None	None	G4	S4	SSC
<i>Loeflingia squarrosa</i> var. <i>artemisiarum</i> sagebrush loeflingia	PDCAR0E011	None	None	G5T3	S2	2B.2
<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i> coast horned lizard	ARACF12100	None	None	G3G4	S3S4	SSC
<i>Xerospermophilus mohavensis</i> Mohave ground squirrel	AMAFB05150	None	Threatened	G2G3	S2S3	

**Record Count: 13**



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Search

Map Unit Legend

Antelope Valley Area, California (CA675)

Antelope Valley Area, California (CA675)

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
CaA	Cajon loamy sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	11.6	14.0%
HgA	Hesperia loamy fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	16.7	20.1%
Ro	Rosamond fine sandy loam	17.5	21.1%
Rp	Rosamond loam	37.2	44.8%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>82.9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Soil Map

Scale 1:7,920 ± 1 %



Warning: Soil Map may not be valid at this scale.

**Appendix B:  
Sensitive Species Tables**

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## **B.1 - Special-Status Plant Species Table**

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**Table 1: Special-status Plant Species Potentially Occurring within the Project**

Scientific Name Common Name	Status			Habitat Description <sup>4</sup>	Potential to Occur and Rationale	Included in Impact Analysis
	USFWS <sup>1</sup>	CDFW <sup>2</sup>	CNPS <sup>3</sup>			
<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>parryi</i> Parry's spineflower	—	—	1B.1	Coastal scrub, chaparral, cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland. Dry slopes and flats; sometimes at interface of 2 vegetation types, such as chaparral and oak woodland. Dry, sandy soils. 90–1220 m.	<b>Unlikely to Occur:</b> Lack of suitable habitat and high level of disturbance at site preclude presence. Lack of coastal scrub and chaparral habitat on-site.	No
<i>Astragalus preussii</i> var. <i>laxiflorus</i> Lancaster milk-vetch	—	—	1B.1	Chenopod scrub, Desert wash, alkaline clay flats or gravelly or sandy washes along draws in gullied badlands. 700–735 m in California.	<b>Unlikely to Occur:</b> No suitable habitat is present within the Project. Lack of alkaline clay flats and sandy washes on-site preclude presence.	No
<i>Calochortus striatus</i> alkali mariposa-lily	—	—	1B.2	Chaparral, wetland, chenopod scrub, Mojavean desert scrub, meadows and seeps, ephemeral washes. 70–1600 m.	<b>Unlikely to Occur:</b> No suitable habitat is present within the Project. Lack of suitable wetland, meadow, and seep habitat on-site. Lack of ephemeral washes.	No
<i>Canbya candida</i> white pygmy-poppy	—	—	4.2	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland. Gravelly, sandy, granitic places. 600–1460 m.	<b>Unlikely to Occur:</b> High disturbance on-site precludes presence.	No
<i>Loeflingia squarrosa</i> var. <i>artemisiarum</i> sagebrush loeflingia	—	—	2B.2	Great Basin scrub, Sonoran desert scrub, desert dunes. Sandy flats and dunes, sandy areas around clay slicks, with <i>Sarcobatus</i> , <i>Atriplex</i> , <i>Tetradymia</i> , etc. 700–1615 m.	<b>Unlikely to Occur:</b> High disturbance on-site precludes presence.	No

**Code Designations**

<sup>1</sup> Federal Status: 2018 USFWS Listing	<sup>2</sup> State Status: 2018 CDFW Listing
<p><b>ESU</b> = Evolutionary Significant Unit is a distinctive population.  <b>FE</b> = Listed as endangered under the FESA.  <b>FT</b> = Listed as threatened under the FESA.  <b>FC</b> = Candidate for listing (threatened or endangered) under FESA.  <b>FD</b> = Delisted in accordance with the FESA.  <b>FPD</b> = Federally Proposed to be Delisted.  <b>MBTA</b> = protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act                      — = Not federally listed</p>	<p><b>SE</b> = Listed as endangered under the CESA.  <b>ST</b> = Listed as threatened under the CESA.  <b>SSC</b> = Species of Special Concern as identified by the CDFW.  <b>FP</b> = Listed as fully protected under the Fish and Game Code.  <b>CFG</b> = Fish and Game Code C =protected by Fish and Game Code 3503.5  <b>CR</b> = Rare in California.                      — = Not state listed</p>

<sup>3</sup> **Habitat description:** Habitat description adapted from CNDDDB (CDFW 2018a).

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## **B.2 - Special-Status Wildlife Species Table**

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**Table 2: Special-status Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring within the Project**

Scientific Name Common Name	Status		Habitat Description <sup>3</sup>	Potential to Occur and Rationale	Included in Impact Analysis
	USFWS <sup>1</sup>	CDFW <sup>2</sup>			
<b>Reptiles</b>					
<i>Anniella pulchra</i> Northern California legless lizard	—	SSC	Sandy or loose loamy soils under sparse vegetation. Soil moisture is essential. They prefer soils with a high moisture content.	<b>Unlikely to Occur:</b> Lack of suitable habitat and extremely high level of disturbance at site preclude presence. Lack of soils with high moisture content on-site.	No
<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i> coast horned lizard	—	SSC	Frequents a wide variety of habitats, most common in lowlands along sandy washes with scattered low bushes. Requires open areas for sunning, bushes for cover, patches of loose soil for burial, and abundant supply of ants and other insects.	<b>Unlikely to Occur:</b> Lack of suitable habitat and high level of disturbance at site preclude presence. Lack of sandy washes and cover on-site.	No
<b>Birds</b>					
<i>Athene cunicularia</i> burrowing owl	—	SSC	Found in open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts, and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. A subterranean nester, dependent upon burrowing mammals, most notably the California ground squirrel.	<b>Low Potential to Occur:</b> Suitable nesting habitat is present within the project site. Indicators of habitat or burrowing owl were found on-site during the field survey.	Yes
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i> Swainson's hawk	MBTA	ST	Breeds in grasslands with scattered trees, juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, savannahs, and agricultural or ranch lands with groves or lines of trees. Requires adjacent suitable foraging areas such as grasslands, or alfalfa or grain fields supporting rodent populations.	<b>Low Potential to Occur:</b> Marginal nesting and foraging habitat present within the project vicinity. However, there have been no recorded occurrences within 3 miles of the project site.	Yes
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i> loggerhead shrike	—	SSC	Broken woodlands, savannah, pinyon-juniper, Joshua tree, and riparian woodlands, desert oases, scrub & washes. Prefers open country for hunting, with perches for scanning, and fairly dense shrubs and brush for nesting.	<b>Low to Occur:</b> Marginal nesting and foraging habitat present within the project vicinity. Power lines and trees located adjacent to the project site.	Yes
<i>Buteo regalis</i> ferruginous hawk	—	WL	Open grasslands, Great Basin scrub, Great basin grassland, sagebrush flats, desert scrub, valley and low foothill grassland and fringes of pinyon and juniper habitats. Eats mostly lagomorphs, ground squirrels, and mice. Population trends may follow lagomorph population cycles.	<b>Low Potential to Occur:</b> Marginal nesting and foraging habitat present within the project vicinity. Power lines and trees located adjacent to the project site.	Yes

Scientific Name Common Name	Status		Habitat Description <sup>3</sup>	Potential to Occur and Rationale	Included in Impact Analysis
	USFWS <sup>1</sup>	CDFW <sup>2</sup>			
<i>Charadrius montanus</i> mountain plover	—	SSC	Short grasslands, freshly plowed fields, newly sprouting grain fields, and sometimes sod farms. Short vegetation, bare ground, and flat topography. Prefers grazed areas and areas with burrowing rodents.	<b>Low Potential to Occur:</b> Marginal nesting and foraging habitat is present within the project site. Numerous recorded occurrences within 3 miles of project site.	Yes
<b>Mammals</b>					
<i>Xerospermophilus mohavensis</i> Mohave ground squirrel	—	ST	Open desert scrub, alkali scrub and Joshua tree woodland. Also feeds in annual grasslands. Restricted to Mojave Desert. Prefers sandy to gravelly soils, avoids rocky areas. Uses burrows at base of shrubs for cover. Nests are in burrows.	<b>Low potential to Occur:</b> Marginal nesting habitat found on-site including ground squirrel burrows, shrubs, and sandy soils. Numerous recorded occurrences within 3 miles of project site.	Yes
<b>Code Designations</b>					
<b><sup>1</sup> Federal Status: 2018 USFWS Listing</b>			<b><sup>2</sup> State Status: 2018 CDFW Listing</b>		
<b>ESU</b> = Evolutionary Significant Unit is a distinctive population. <b>FE</b> = Listed as endangered under the FESA. <b>FT</b> = Listed as threatened under the FESA. <b>FC</b> = Candidate for listing (threatened or endangered) under FESA. <b>FD</b> = Delisted in accordance with the FESA. <b>FPD</b> = Federally Proposed to be Delisted. <b>MBTA</b> = protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act <b>—</b> = Not federally listed			<b>SE</b> = Listed as endangered under the CESA. <b>ST</b> = Listed as threatened under the CESA. <b>SSC</b> = Species of Special Concern as identified by the CDFW. <b>FP</b> = Listed as fully protected under Fish and Game Code. <b>CFG</b> = Fish and Game Code =protected by Fish and Game Code 3503.5 <b>CR</b> = Rare in California. <b>—</b> = Not state listed		
<sup>3</sup> <b>Habitat description:</b> Habitat description adapted from CNDDDB (CDFW 2018a).					