RECON

Biological Resource Report for the Majestic La Media South Project San Diego, California

Prepared for

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RECON Number 7105-1
November 29, 2021

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADD	Assistant Deputy Director
BCME	Biological Construction Mitigation/Monitoring Exhibit
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFGC	California Fish and Game Code
City	City of San Diego
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
ESL	Environmentally Sensitive Lands
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MHPA	Multi-Habitat Planning Area
MMC	Mitigation Monitoring Coordination
MSCP	Multiple Species Conservation Program
project	Majestic La Media South Project
SR-905	State Route 905
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey

Summary

The Majestic La Media South Project (project site) is located south of State Route 905, east of La Media Road, and within the Otay Mesa area of the city of San Diego. A total of 32.51 acres were evaluated to determine the current condition of the biological resources on the project site.

Three sensitive vegetation communities, southern willow scrub, freshwater marsh, and disturbed riparian scrub, were identified within the project site. No sensitive plant species were observed and there are no narrow endemic plant species present within the project site. No sensitive wildlife species were observed in the project site. No suitable breeding habitat for western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) occurs on the project site based on a recent habitat assessmentl therefore, this species is not expected to occur on the site.

Of the total 32.51-acre project site, 26.26 acres are proposed for development (on-site development area). Only one vegetation community, disturbed land, would be directly impacted on-site by the project. The southern willow scrub, freshwater marsh, disturbed riparian scrub, and tamarisk scrub, would be avoided by the project and not impacted.

The project site is not with the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) but is adjacent to off-site MHPA lands to the southwest at the southwest corner of the parcel. No direct or indirect impacts to the MHPA would occur.

1.0 Introduction

This report describes the results of the biological resource survey conducted within the project site for the Majestic La Media South Project (project site). The project site is located in the city of San Diego, south of Otay Mesa Road, north of Airway Road, and east of the La Media Road south of State Route 905 (SR-905; Figure 1). The project site is found in Section 35, Township 18 South, Range 1 West, of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic map, Otay Mesa quadrangle (Figure 2; USGS 1996). The project is also shown on the City of San Diego (City) 800-scale map number 138-1773 (Figure 3). Commercial/Industrial development occurs to the south and east of the project parcel, and vacant land occurs to the west and north (Figure 4).

The proposed project is the construction and operation of a campus-oriented industrial project with three warehouse buildings, totaling approximately 409,240 square feet, and associated automobile parking, truck parking, and landscaping. The project would utilize inlets, storm drain facilities, biofiltration basins, and an underground stormwater detention tank for water quality control purposes.

This report provides the necessary biological data and background information required for environmental analysis according to guidelines set forth in the City's Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) Subarea Plan (1997) and the City's Biological Guidelines (City of San Diego 2018).

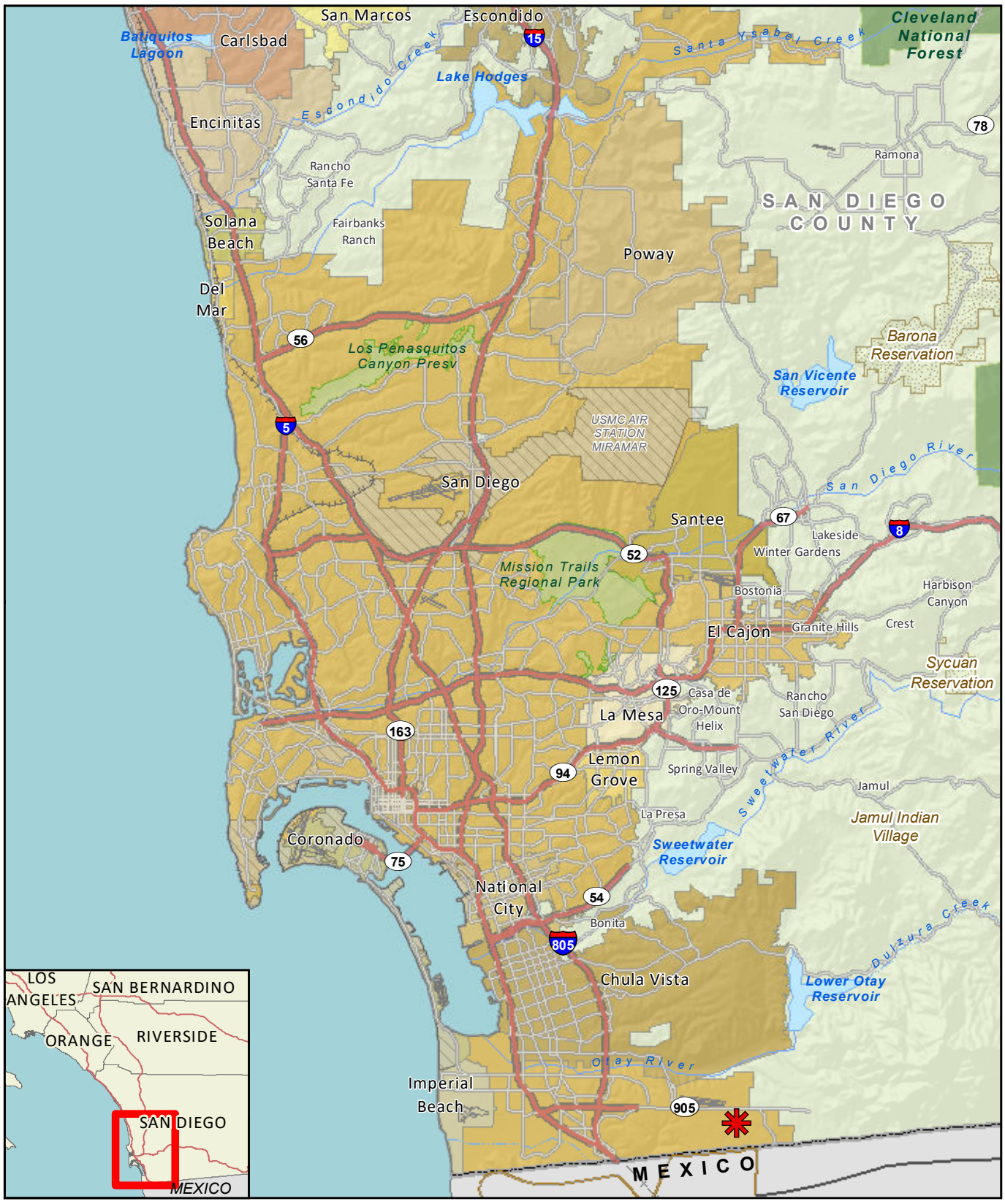

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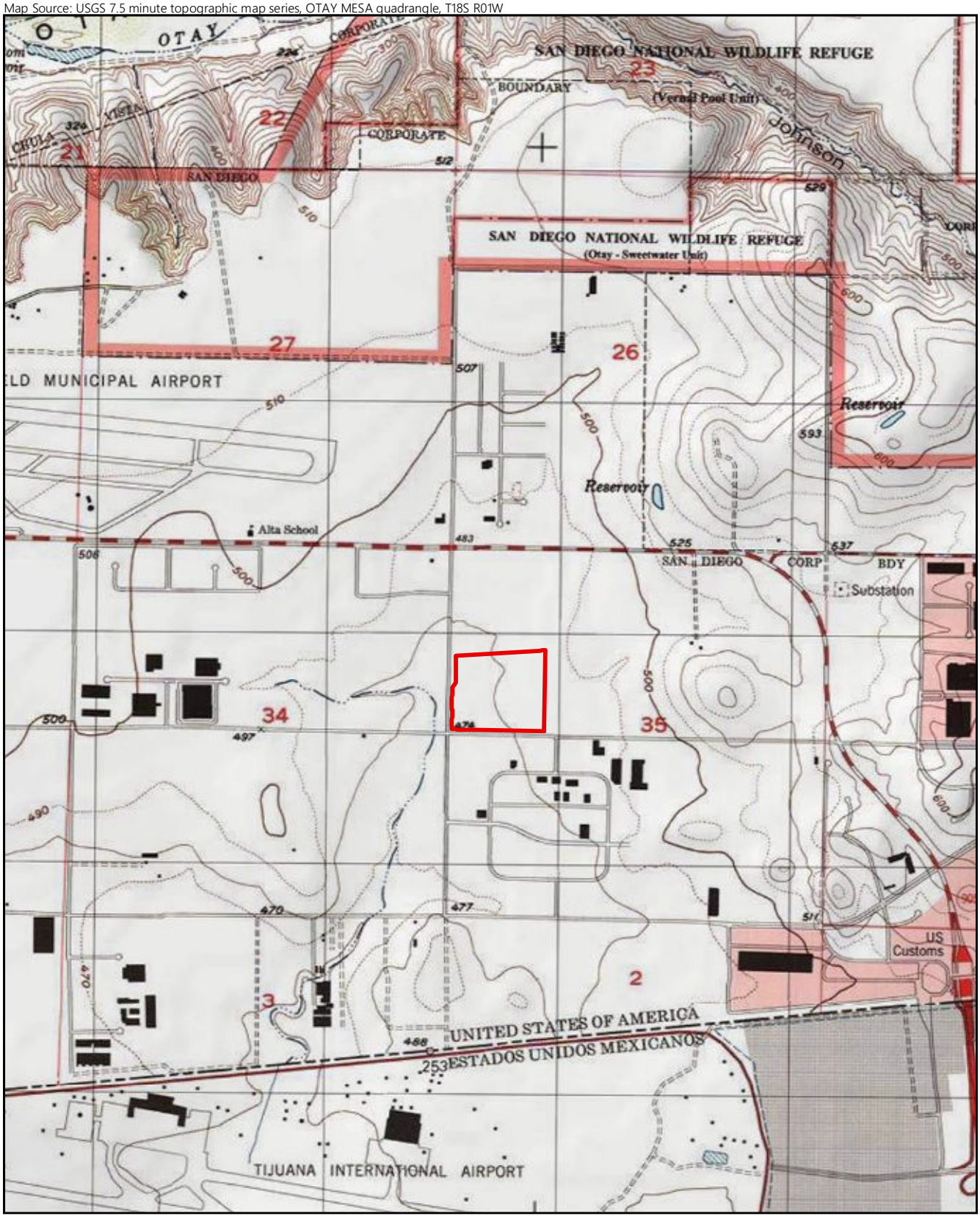
FIGURE 1
Regional Location

Map Source: USGS 7.5 minute topographic map series, OTAY MESA quadrangle, T18S R01W



0 Feet 2,000

Project Boundary

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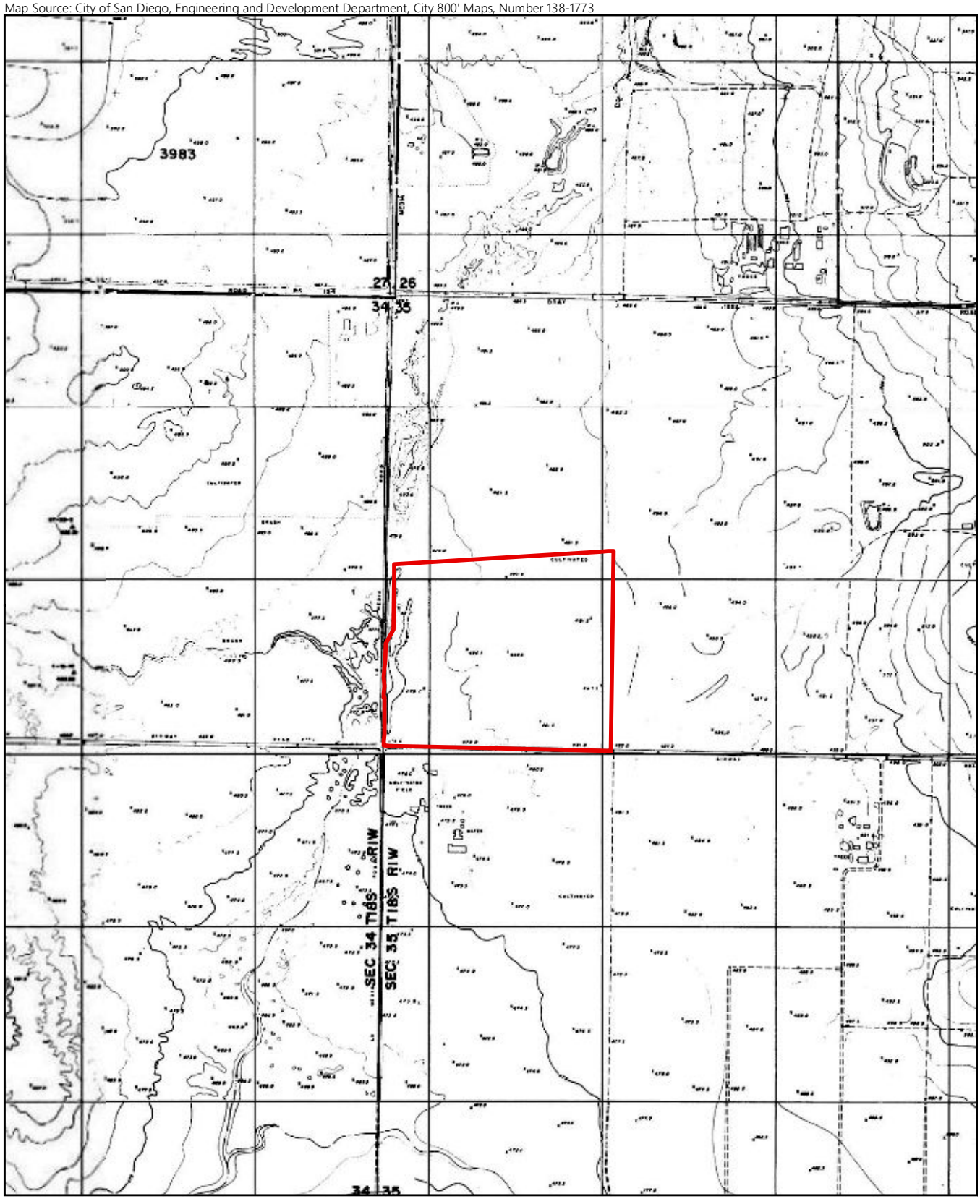
FIGURE 2
Project Location on USGS Map

Map Source: City of San Diego, Engineering and Development Department, City 800' Maps, Number 138-1773



Project Boundary

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FIGURE 3

Project Location on City 800' Map

Image Source: NearMap (flown September 2021)

FIGURE 4
Project Location on Aerial Photograph
in Relation to MHPA

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2.0 Survey Methods

2.1 Biological Resources Survey

RECON Environmental, Inc. (RECON) biologists Gerry Scheid and Jade Woll conducted a general biological survey for the project on April 21, 2021. Vegetation communities were mapped on a 1-inch-equals-200-feet aerial photograph flown in spring of 2021. Vegetation community classifications follow Oberbauer et al. (2008), which are based on Holland's 1986 Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California. Plant species observed on-site were also noted, and plants that could not be identified in the field were identified later in the laboratory using taxonomic keys. The survey also included a directed search for sensitive plants that would have been apparent during the time of the survey. Limitations to the compilation of a comprehensive floral checklist were imposed by seasonal factors, such as blooming period. Animal species observed directly or detected from calls, tracks, scat, nests, or other sign were noted. For reporting convenience, field survey times, dates, and weather conditions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Survey Dates, Times, and Weather Conditions

Date	Surveyors	Survey Type	Beginning Conditions	Ending Conditions
4/21/21	Gerry Scheid, Jade Woll	General Biology	9:50 a.m.; 60°F; wind 3-5 mph; 90% cloud cover	1:30 p.m.; 62°F; wind 3-5 mph; 95% cloud cover

°F = degrees Fahrenheit; mph = mile per hour; % = percent

Floral nomenclature for common plants follows the Jepson Online Herbarium (Jepson Flora Project 2020), for ornamental plants Brenzel (2001), and for sensitive plants California Native Plant Society (CNPS; 2021). Vegetation community classifications follow Oberbauer et al. (2008). Zoological nomenclature for birds is in accordance with the American Ornithological Society Checklist (Chesser et al. 2019) and Unitt (2004); for mammals with Bradley et al. (2014), American Society of Mammalogists (2020) and Tremor et al. (2017); and for reptiles with Crother et al. (2017). Determination of the potential occurrence for listed, sensitive, or noteworthy species is based upon known ranges and habitat preferences for the species (Jennings and Hayes 1994; Unitt 2004; CNPS 2021; Reiser 2001), and species occurrence records from the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; California Department of Fish and Wildlife [CDFW] 2021a).

3.0 Regulatory Framework

3.1 Federal Regulations

The federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) provides the legal framework for the listing and protection of species (and their habitats) that are identified as being endangered or threatened with extinction. Actions that jeopardize endangered or threatened species and the habitats upon which they rely are considered 'take' under the ESA. Section 9(a) of the ESA defines 'take' as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct." The ESA is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) was established to provide protection to the breeding activities of migratory birds throughout the United States. The MBTA protects migratory birds and their breeding activities from take and harassment. Measures to prevent such impacts (e.g., pre-activity surveys, nest avoidance, and construction monitoring) will be included as conditions of approval. Project compliance with the MBTA is anticipated.

3.2 State Regulations

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires an environmental review for projects with potentially adverse impacts on the environment. Adverse environmental impacts are typically mitigated in accordance with state laws and regulations.

The California ESA is similar to the federal ESA in that it provides the legal framework for the listing and protection of species (and their habitats) that are identified as being endangered or threatened with extinction.

Under Section 3503 of the California Fish and Game Code, it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. Section 3503.3 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibits take, possession, or destruction of any birds in the orders Falconiformes (raptors) or Strigiformes (owls), or of their nests and eggs. Measures to prevent such impacts (e.g., pre-activity surveys, nest avoidance, and construction monitoring) will be included as conditions of approval. Project compliance with Sections 3503 and 3503.3 is anticipated.

3.3 Local Regulations

The City's Biology Guidelines (2018) were formulated to aid in the implementation and interpretation of the Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) Regulations, San Diego Land Development Code, Chapter 14, Division 1, Section 143.0101. Section III of the Guidelines (Biological Impact Analysis and Mitigation Procedures) also serves as standards for the determination of impacts and mitigation under CEQA. The ESL defines sensitive biological resources as those lands included within the MHPA as identified in the City's MSCP Subarea Plan (City of San Diego 1997), and other lands outside of the MHPA that contain wetlands; vegetation communities classifiable as Tier I (rare uplands), II (uncommon uplands), IIIA (common uplands) or IIIB (common uplands); habitat for rare, endangered, or threatened species; or narrow endemic species.

Per San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0101, the purpose of the ESL Regulations is to protect, preserve, and where damaged, restore these lands of San Diego and viability of the species supported by those lands. ESL regulations are meant to protect the quality of the resources and natural character of the area to be developed, including, but not limited to, coastal development in the Coastal Overlay Zone. In addition, compliance with the Otay Community Plan Mitigation Framework for potential impacts to biological resources is required. To comply with the Mitigation Framework covered under Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-3 contained in the Otay Mesa Community Plan potential impacts to biological resources were evaluated through review of the project's consistency with the City's ESL Regulations and Biology Guidelines, as well as the MSCP

Subarea Plan. As such, mitigation is required for project impacts that are considered significant under CEQA (City of San Diego 2016), including impacts to sensitive or listed species and sensitive vegetation communities. All impacts to sensitive biological resources should be avoided to the maximum extent feasible and minimized when possible. Mitigation measures typically employed include resource avoidance or dedication/acquisition of habitat.

3.4 Multiple Species Conservation Program Compliance

One of the primary objectives of the MSCP is to identify and maintain a preserve system, the MHPA, which allows for animals and plants to exist at both the local and regional levels. The MSCP has identified large blocks of native habitat having the ability to support a diversity of plant and animal life known as "core biological resource areas." "Linkages" between these core areas provide for wildlife movement. These lands have been determined to provide the necessary habitat quality, quantity, and connectivity to sustain the unique biodiversity of the San Diego region. Input from responsible agencies and other interested participants resulted in creation of the City's MHPA. The MHPA is the area within which the permanent MSCP preserve would be assembled and managed for its biological resources. MHPA lands are considered by the City to be sensitive biological resources.

The project site is not within the MHPA. The nearest MHPA lands occur to the southwest of the project site, approximately 250 feet away to the west and south of the intersection of La Media Road and Airway Road. The adjacent MHPA lands are not located within a designated biological core or linkage. Thus, the project would not affect or disrupt any major habitat linkages between core biological areas. Therefore, the project is in compliance with the MSCP.

4.0 Existing Conditions

The site topography varies with the height of the three dirt stockpiles which are surrounded by flat land. Two soil types are mapped in the project area; Huerhuero loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes and Salinas clay 0 to 2 percent slopes (U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] 1973; Figure 5).

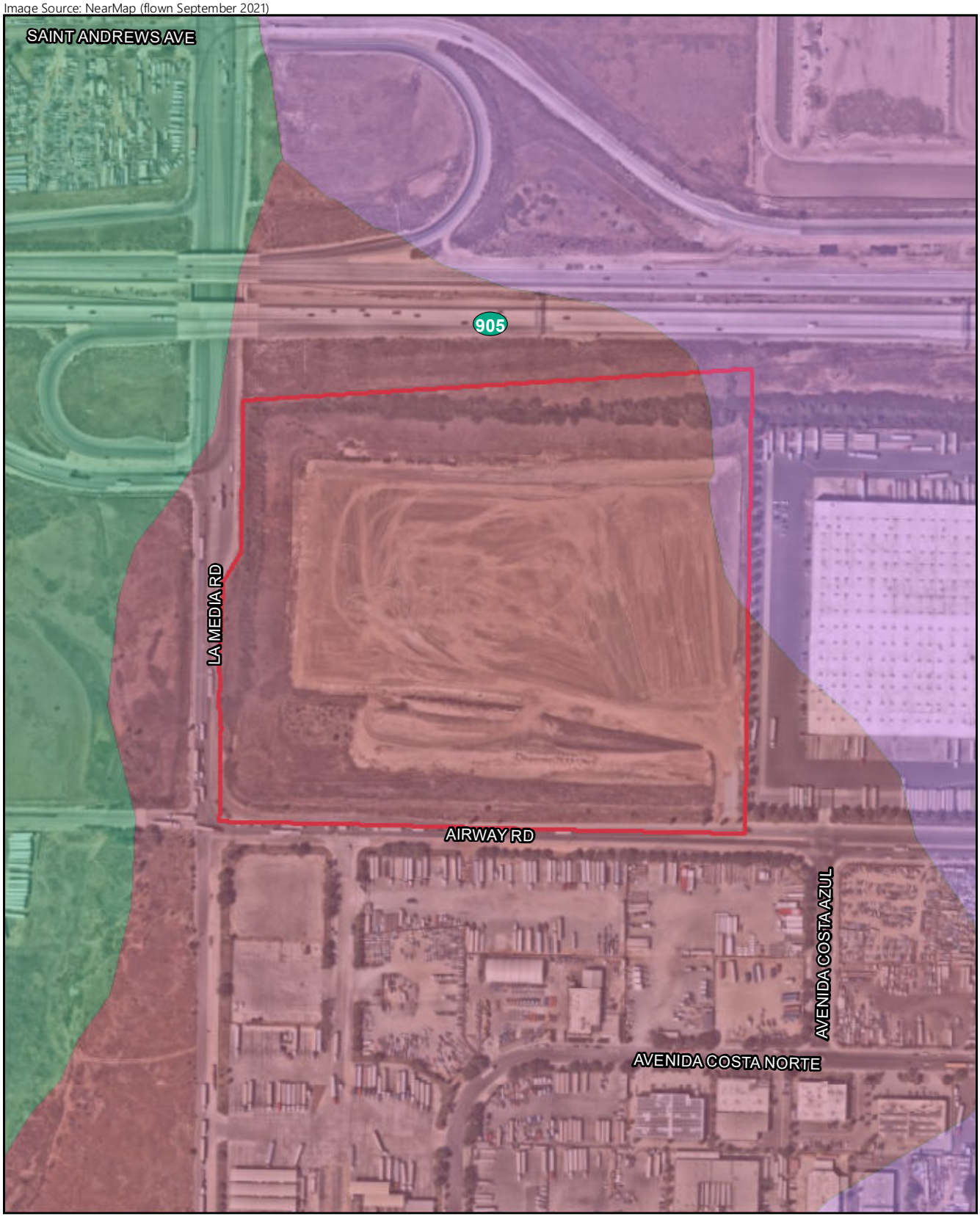
Huerhuero soils are moderately well-drained loams that have a clay subsoil. These soils are used for truck crops, tomatoes, flowers, range, and some housing developments (USDA 1973).

The Salinas series soil type occurs in a small area on the eastern portion of the project site. Salinas soils consist of well-drained and moderately well-drained clay loams. These soils are used for citrus, truck crops, tomatoes, flowers, and small pasture lots (USDA 1973).

4.1 Botany

Six vegetation communities occur within the project site: southern willow scrub, freshwater marsh, disturbed riparian scrub, emergent wetland, disturbed land, and tamarisk scrub (Figure 6). The acreages of vegetation communities are listed in Table 2. A total of 36 plant species were identified on the site (Attachment 1). Of these 36 species, 11 are considered native to California and 25 are considered non-native species.

Image Source: NearMap (flown September 2021)



Project Boundary

Soils

Huerhuero Loam, 2 to 9% Slopes

Salinas Clay, 0 to 2% Slopes

Stockpen Gravelly Clay Loam, 2 to 5% Slopes

0 Feet 350

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FIGURE 5
Soils

Image Source: NearMap (flown September 2021)

Project Boundary

Vegetation Community/Land Cover Type

- Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Marsh
- Southern Willow Scrub
- Tamarix Scrub
- Disturbed Riparian Scrub
- Disturbed Land

0 Feet 350

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FIGURE 6
Biological Resources

Table 2 Existing Vegetation Communities within the Project Project Site		
Vegetation Communities (Oberbauer 2008)	City of San Diego Tier	Acreage (On-site)
Uplands		
Disturbed Land	IV	30.38
Disturbed Riparian Scrub	--	0.71
Wetlands		
Southern Willow Scrub	--	0.44
Freshwater Marsh	--	0.72
Emergent Wetland	--	0.13
Tamarisk Scrub	--	0.13
TOTAL		32.51

4.1.1 Disturbed Land

Disturbed land consists of areas that have previously been physically disturbed by legal human activities and are no longer recognizable as a native or naturalized vegetation community; however, a soil substrate is still retained. If vegetation is present, it is nearly exclusively composed of non-native plant species such as ornamentals or ruderal exotic species that take advantage of disturbance. Areas that have been graded, repeatedly cleared for fuel management purposes and/or experienced repeated use that prevents natural revegetation (such as dirt parking lots and dirt roads), recently graded firebreaks, graded construction pads, construction staging areas, and off-road-vehicle trails are all examples of disturbed land (Oberbauer et al. 2008).

Within the project site, disturbed land occurs over most of the parcel. The disturbed area consists of primarily of stockpiles of earthen materials with pockets of non-native vegetation on the slopes and between the piles of dirt (Photographs 1 through 3). The border of the entire parcel beyond the limits of the stockpiles contains disturbed land, dominated by dense stands of black mustard (*Brassica nigra)*, bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), and non-native grasses scattered in the understory (species include slender wild oat [*Avena barbata*], ripgut grass [*Bromus diandrus*}, red brome [*Bromus rubens*], wall barley [*Hordeum murinum*], and rye grass [*Festuca perennis*]). These non-native annual grasses contribute less than 10 percent of the vegetation cover of the disturbed land areas and therefore does not qualify as non-native grassland.

4.1.2 Southern Willow Scrub and Disturbed Riparian Scrub

Southern willow scrub is typically a dense riparian community dominated by broad-leafed, winter-deciduous trees such as willows (*Salix* spp.), and often scattered with Fremont cottonwoods (*Populus fremontii*), and western sycamores (*Platanus racemosa*). This plant community is typically found along major drainages but also occurs in smaller drainages. The density of the willows typically prevents a dense understory of smaller plants from growing. The representative species typically grow in loose, sandy, or fine gravelly alluvium deposited near stream channels during flood flows. This community requires repeated flooding to prevent succession to community dominated by sycamores and cottonwoods (Oberbauer et al. 2008).

PHOTOGRAPH 1
Disturbed Land Near Southeast Corner of Parcel Looking West.
Photo Taken April 21, 2021.

PHOTOGRAPH 2
Disturbed Land Near Southwest Corner of Parcel Looking East.
Photo Taken April 21, 2021

PHOTOGRAPH 3

Disturbed Land Near Northwest Corner of Parcel Looking East.
Photo Taken April 21, 2021

Southern willow scrub habitat grows along the drainage channel to the east of La Media Road. The southern willow scrub habitat is a small, narrow strip on-site and is isolated from any larger, significant stands of riparian habitat. This habitat is dominated by Goodding's black willow (*Salix gooddingii*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), narrow-leaf willow (*Salix exigua*), mule fat (*Baccharis salicifolia* ssp. salicifolia), and saltcedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*). Plant species found in the understory of the willows were primarily broad-leaved cattail (*Typha latifolia*).

Disturbed riparian scrub occurs on the northeastern segment of the ephemeral drainage course on the parcel. The riparian scrub is open and has been invaded by the non-native saltcedar, and acacia (*Acacia* sp.) along the banks of the drainage. Bristly ox-tongue and black mustard also occur on the banks of the drainage.

4.1.3 Freshwater Marsh and Emergent Wetland

Freshwater marsh communities are comprised of perennial emergent monocots typically forming a closed canopy (Oberbauer et al. 2008). This habitat occurs in open bodies of fresh water with little current flow, such as ponds, and to a lesser extent around seeps and springs. Freshwater marshes occur in areas of permanent inundation by freshwater without active stream flow. Freshwater marsh communities, as with all wetland habitats, have been greatly reduced throughout their entire range and continue to decline as a result of urbanization and are considered sensitive by state and federal resource agencies. Emergent wetland is a persistent wetland community dominated by low-growing, perennial wetland species. It often occurs in channels, floodplains, margins of lakes and rivers, and various basins such as pools and ponds (Oberbauer et al. 2008).

Freshwater marsh habitat occurs along segments of the channel bottom of the northern and western portions of the drainage on the parcel (Photograph 4). This habitat is dominated by broad-leaved cattail and three-square bulrush (*Schoenoplectus americanus*).

Emergent wetland habitat occurs adjacent to La Media Road and Airway Rd. at the southwest corner of the site (Photograph 5). This habitat consists of an open man-made ditch that has patches of pale spike-rush (*Eleocharis macrostachya*) and scattered individuals of curly dock (*Rumex crispus*).

4.1.4 Tamarisk Scrub

Tamarisk scrub is dominated by the non-native and highly invasive saltcedar. This weedy plant community is usually a monoculture of tamarisk that has supplanted native wetland plant species. Tamarisk usually invades following disturbance. This plant community typically occurs in sandy or gravelly braided washes or intermittent streams, often in areas where high evaporation creates high salinity in the stream (Oberbauer et al. 2008).

Tamarisk scrub habitat occurs in a small drainage channel coming from SR-905 in the northeastern portion of the parcel. This habitat is dominated by saltcedar and surrounded by acacia.

PHOTOGRAPH 4
Freshwater Marsh Habitat on Channel Bottom in Northern Portion of Parcel
Looking East. Photo Taken April 21, 2021.

PHOTOGRAPH 5
Emergent Wetland Habitat North of Airway Road Looking West.
Photo Taken April 15, 2019.

4.2 Zoology

The wildlife species observed within the project site are typical of species found in urban/disturbed areas in San Diego County. A list of the wildlife species detected on-site is in Attachment 2. Sensitive species observed or potentially occurring on-site are discussed in the Section 6.0, Sensitive Biological Resources.

5.0 Sensitive Biological Resources

5.1 Sensitivity Criteria

For purposes of this report, species will be considered sensitive if they are: (1) covered species or narrow endemic species under the City MSCP or the City's Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan, (2) listed by state or federal agencies as threatened or endangered or are proposed for listing; (3) on California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1B (considered endangered throughout its range), CRPR 2 (considered endangered in California but more common elsewhere) of the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, CRPR 3 (more information about the plant's distribution and rarity needed), and CRPR 4 (plants of limited distribution) of the CNPS Inventory (2021); or (4) considered rare, endangered, or threatened by the CNDDB (CDFW 2021a–2021e), the City's biology guidelines (City of San Diego 2018), or local conservation organizations or specialists. Sensitive vegetation communities are those identified by the CNDDB (CDFW 2021a) or identified by the City (2018).

As stated in the City's Biology Guidelines (City of San Diego 2018), a project site is considered to contain sensitive biological resources if:

- Portions of the site occur within the MHPA as shown in the City's MSCP Subarea Plan. MHPA lands are those that have been included within the City's MSCP Subarea Plan for habitat conservation. These lands have been determined to provide the necessary habitat quality, quantity, and connectivity to sustain the unique biodiversity of the San Diego region. MHPA lands are considered by the City to be a sensitive biological resource. The City's MHPA allows some development within the preserve based on the development area allowance.
- The site supports or could support (e.g., in different seasons/rainfall conditions, etc.) Tier I, II, or IIIA and IIIB vegetation communities (such as grassland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, etc.). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) determination of significant impacts may be based on what was on the site (e.g., if illegal grading or vegetation removal occurred, etc.), as appropriate.
- The site contains or comes within 100 feet of a natural or manufactured drainage (determine whether it is vegetated with wetland vegetation). The site occurs within the 100-year flood plain established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the floodplain/floodway zones.
- The site does not support a vegetation community identified in Tables 2a, 2b or 3 (Tier I, II, IIIA or IIIB) of the Biology Guidelines; however, wildlife species listed as threatened or

endangered or other protected species may use the site (e.g., California least terns [*Sterna antillarum browni*] on dredge spoil, wildlife using agricultural land as a wildlife corridor, etc.).

All wetland areas and non-wetland waters of the U.S. are considered sensitive and potentially are under the jurisdiction of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Streambeds and associated vegetation are under the jurisdiction of the state including CDFW and Regional Water Quality Control Board. In addition, the City defines wetlands as:

1. All areas persistently or periodically containing naturally occurring wetland vegetation communities characteristically dominated by hydrophytic vegetation;
2. Areas that have hydric soils or wetland hydrology and lack naturally occurring wetland vegetation communities because human activities have removed the historic wetland vegetation; and
3. Areas lacking wetland vegetation communities, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology due to non-permitted filling of previously existing wetlands (City of San Diego 2018).

Assessments for the potential occurrence of sensitive species are based upon known ranges, habitat preferences for the species, species occurrence records from the CNDDB, and species occurrence records from other sites in the vicinity of the project site.

5.2 Sensitive Vegetation Communities

Three vegetation communities identified in the project site are considered sensitive or regulated by the City (City of San Diego 2018). Southern willow scrub (riparian scrub), emergent wetland, and freshwater marsh are considered sensitive wetland vegetation communities. While tamarisk scrub is not in itself a sensitive vegetation type, in this case is occurs in the drainage as a form of riparian scrub and is considered part of a wetland.

5.3 Sensitive Plants

No sensitive or narrow endemic plant species were observed or are expected to occur in the project site due to the level of disturbance on-site. This parcel of land has been historically disturbed over the past decades due to agriculture and other activities that cleared the land periodically of vegetation. Currently, the site has been used to stockpile excess soil and is highly disturbed. Sensitive plant species known to occur in the project vicinity (within one mile of the project site) that are state or federally listed as threatened or endangered, considered a City narrow endemic, or that have potential to occur based on species range are addressed in Attachment 3.

5.4 Sensitive Wildlife Species

No sensitive wildlife species were detected during the survey; however, in the past there was a potential for the project site to support burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). As a result, a protocol survey for this species was conducted by RECON in 2018 prior to the placement of the stockpiles and the results were negative for burrowing owl presence (RECON 2018).

Burrowing owls have been recorded on lands southwest of the intersection of La Media Road and Airway Road to the southwest of the project site according to information reported in 2016 to the San Diego Biological Information and Observation System (SanBios). No occurrences were reported for the project site in SanBios. A search of the CNDDB revealed that no occurrences of burrowing owl have been previously recorded on the project site. Burrowing owl occurrences reported in the CNDDB have been recorded to the north of the project site north of SR-905 in 2016. Some of these occurrences have been extirpated while those on the airport property and the Lone Star preserve to the north of Otay Mesa Road are assumed extant.

A burrowing owl habitat assessment was conducted on November 15, 2021 to assess the potential for habitat on the project site to be suitable for occupation by the burrowing owl (Attachment 4). No burrowing owl individuals, sign of burrowing owl, sign of prey species, nor any suitable burrows that could potentially support burrowing owls were located on the project site during the assessment, The tall, dense non-native vegetation around the perimeter of the stockpiles is not suitable to support burrowing owl. The riparian areas along the man-made drainage channel are also too tall and dense to be considered suitable burrowing owl habitat. The stockpiles themselves are devoid of vegetation and lack burrows, thus these areas are not considered suitable habitat for the species. Therefore, the assessment concluded that there is a low likelihood for burrowing owl to breed on or occupy the project site.

Although there is 0.44 acre of southern willow scrub on-site, it is not expected that least Bell's vireo would occur within the project site, and none were detected during the non-protocol site surveys. The small amount of southern willow scrub on-site is a narrow strip and is isolated from any larger, significant stands of riparian habitat. The habitat also occurs adjacent to SR-905 and La Media Road, which are heavily used by truck traffic and have relatively high ambient noise levels that are not conducive for least Bell's vireo breeding activities. Other sensitive wildlife species known to occur in the project vicinity (within one mile of the project site) that are federally listed threatened or endangered or that have potential to occur based on species range are addressed in Attachment 5.

5.5 Wetland Waters

Wetlands are areas that support hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology. Wetland waters of the U.S. under the jurisdiction of the USACE require all there of these parameters to be present under normal circumstances for an area to be considered a wetland. The Regional Water Quality Control Board, in general, defines wetland waters of the state the same as the USACE but may include riparian areas not considered wetland waters of the U.S. The CDFW requires that only hydrophytic vegetation be present for an area to be considered a state wetland. The City considers wetlands as any area determined to be a wetland water of the U.S., wetland water of the state, or state wetland.

One unnamed ephemeral drainage flows along the northern and western edges of the southern parcel within the project site. The drainage supports patches of southern willow scrub, freshwater marsh, emergent wetland, and tamarisk scrub. These habitat types are considered wetlands under federal, state, and City guidelines. Table 3 summarizes the estimated acreage of wetland waters present within the project site.

Table 3 Wetlands within the Project Site (acres)			
Type	USACE/RWQCB	CDFW	City of San Diego
Southern Willow Scrub	0.44	0.44	0.44
Freshwater Marsh	0.72	0.72	0.72
Emergent Wetland	0.13	0.13	0.13
Tamarisk Scrub	0.13	0.13	0.13
Total Wetland	**1.42**	**1.42**	**1.42**
USACE = U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; RWQCB = Regional Water Quality Control Board; CDFW = California Department of Fish and Wildlife			

5.6 Wetland Buffer

Buffers are required adjacent to wetland areas to help minimize indirect effects of nearby development and to help preserve the habitat functions and values of the wetland. The proposed project would provide a buffer ranging from 25 to 80 feet along the north and western boundary of the development. The buffer area would be re-vegetated with native plant species to replace the existing non-native plant species and enhance the buffer habitat.

5.7 Wildlife Movement Corridor

Wildlife movement corridors are defined as areas that connect suitable wildlife habitat areas in a region otherwise fragmented by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. Natural features such as canyon drainages, ridgelines, or areas with vegetation cover provide corridors for wildlife travel. Wildlife movement corridors are important, because they provide access to mates, food, and water; allow the dispersal of individuals away from high population density areas; and facilitate the exchange of genetic traits between populations (Beier and Loe 1992). Wildlife movement corridors are considered sensitive by resource and conservation agencies.

Although it is reasonable to assume that wildlife may move locally through this project area, the parcel is isolated by barriers (e.g., commercial development, roads, SR-905) that prevent the site from being part of a larger wildlife movement corridor. While there may be some wildlife movement within the property, the site does not provide a major movement corridor for wildlife species. The project site is not identified in the City's MSCP within a biological core area or part of a wildlife corridor linkage.

6.0 Project Impacts

Project impacts were analyzed according to the City's Biology Guidelines (City of San Diego 2018) and Significance Determination Thresholds (City of San Diego 2016). Significance thresholds include the following:

1. The site has been identified as part of the MHPA by the City's MSCP Subarea Plan or Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan.
2. The site supports or could support (e.g., in different seasons/rainfall conditions) Tier I, II, or IIIA & B vegetation communities (such as grassland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, etc.). The

CEQA determination of significant impacts may be based on what was on the site (e.g., if illegal grading or vegetation removal occurred), as appropriate.

3. The site contains, or comes within 100 feet of a natural or manufactured drainage (determine whether it is vegetated with wetland vegetation). The site occurs within the 100-year flood plain established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the Flood Plain/Flood Way zones.
4. The site does not support a vegetation community identified in Tables 2a, 2b or 3 (Tier I, II, IIIA or IIIB) of the Biology Guidelines; however, wildlife species listed as threatened or endangered or other protected species may use the site (e.g., California least terns on dredge spoil, wildlife using agricultural land as a wildlife corridor).

Construction of the project would result in direct impacts to biological resources. Potential indirect impacts can be avoided. A summary of these direct and indirect impacts and a significance determination for each is provided below.

6.1 Direct Impacts

6.1.1 Vegetation Community Impacts

The project as proposed would have direct impacts to 26.26 acres of disturbed land (Figure 7). Impacts to disturbed land, a Tier IV vegetation community, are not considered significant. No impacts to wetland habitats, including southern willow scrub, freshwater marsh, emergent wetland, or tamarisk scrub, would result from project construction (Table 4).

Table 4
Impacts to Sensitive Biological Resources

Vegetation Communities/ Land Cover Types (Tier)	Existing (acres)	Impact (acres)
Disturbed Land (IV)	30.38	26.26
Southern Willow Scrub	0.44	--
Freshwater Marsh	0.72	--
Emergent Wetland	0.13	--
Tamarisk Scrub	0.13	--
Disturbed Riparian Scrub	0.71	--
TOTAL	**32.51**	**26.26**

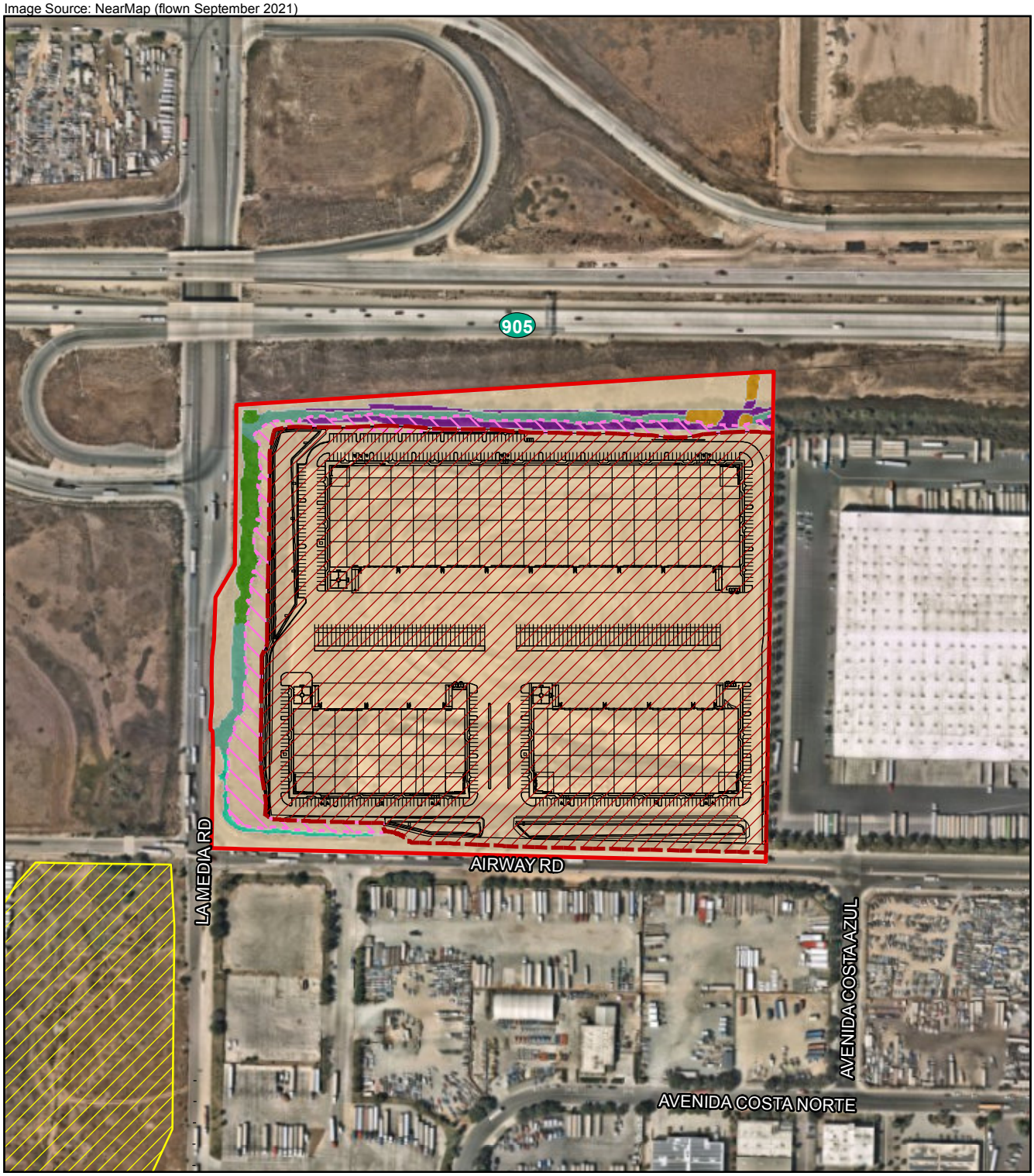
6.1.2 Impacts to Sensitive Plants

No sensitive plant species would be impacted by the project.

6.1.3 Impacts to Sensitive Wildlife

No sensitive wildlife species would be directly impacted by the project. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated.

Image Source: NearMap (flown September 2021)



0 Feet 350

Project Boundary
Site Plan
Limit of Disturbance
Wetland Buffer
City of San Diego MHPA

Vegetation Community/Land Cover Type

Emergent Wetland
Freshwater Marsh
Southern Willow Scrub
Tamarix Scrub
Disturbed Riparian Scrub
Disturbed Land

RECON

M:\JOBS4\7105\bio\gis\South Parcel 2021\fig7_south2021.mxd 11/29/2021 gas

FIGURE 7
Impacts to Biological Resources

6.1.4 Multi-Habitat Planning Area

No direct impacts to the MHPA would occur as the project site is not located within its boundary. The nearest MHPA lands occur to the southwest of the project site, west and south of the intersection of La Media Road and Airway Road.

6.2 Indirect Impacts

The project site is completely constrained by roads and residential development, and no sensitive plant or wildlife species occur within or immediately adjacent to the project site. Therefore, no indirect impacts to sensitive species will result due to the proposed project.

Wetland buffers are incorporated into the project design to avoid indirect effects to the wetland areas to remain. In order to ensure that the wetland buffer provides protection of the functions and values of the wetlands, the following measures are required to reduce possible indirect edge effects to below a level of significance: (1) barrier plantings will be installed along the outer edge of the buffer to restrict access to the adjacent wetlands; (2) a peeler log fence or other approved fence option shall be installed at the outer edge of the buffer and signage posted that informs people of the sensitive nature of the adjacent wetland habitat; and (3) only native plants will be used in the re-vegetation of the wetland buffer as shown on the project landscape plans.

The project impact area is approximately 250 feet away from the edge of the nearest MHPA land. No indirect impacts to MHPA lands from the proposed project are anticipated to occur due to this separation distance and the existing uses of the two roadways (i.e., major truck traffic corridor and associated traffic noise).

6.3 Cumulative Impacts

The project would not impact any sensitive biological resources. Therefore, there would be no cumulative impacts to biological resources.

7.0 Mitigation

The project would not result in any significant impacts to sensitive biological resources; thus, no mitigation is required. Conformance with general biological resource protection measures would ensure avoidance of impacts.

The following City standard biological resource protection measures would be included in the environmental document:

Biological Resource Protection During Construction

I. Prior to Construction

A. Biologist Verification - The owner/permittee shall provide a letter to the City's Mitigation Monitoring Coordination (MMC) section stating that a Project Biologist (Qualified Biologist) as defined in the City's Biological Guidelines (2018), has been retained to implement the

project's biological monitoring program. The letter shall include the names and contact information of all persons involved in the biological monitoring of the project.

B. Preconstruction Meeting - The Qualified Biologist shall attend the preconstruction meeting, discuss the project's biological monitoring program, and arrange to perform any follow up mitigation measures and reporting including site-specific monitoring, restoration or revegetation, and additional fauna/flora surveys/salvage.

C. Biological Documents - The Qualified Biologist shall submit all required documentation to MMC verifying that any special mitigation reports including but not limited to, maps, plans, surveys, survey timelines, or buffers are completed or scheduled per City Biology Guidelines, MSCP, ESL Ordinance, project permit conditions; CEQA; endangered species acts; and/or other local, state, or federal requirements.

D. BCME - The Qualified Biologist shall present a Biological Construction Mitigation/Monitoring Exhibit (BCME) which includes the biological documents in C above. In addition, include: restoration/revegetation plans, plant salvage/relocation requirements (e.g., coastal cactus wren plant salvage, burrowing owl exclusions, etc.), avian or other wildlife surveys/survey schedules (including general avian nesting and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service protocol), timing of surveys, wetland buffers, avian construction avoidance areas/noise buffers/ barriers, other impact avoidance areas, and any subsequent requirements determined by the Qualified Biologist and the City Assistant Deputy Director (ADD)/MMC. The BCME shall include a site plan, written and graphic depiction of the project's biological mitigation/monitoring program, and a schedule. The BCME shall be approved by MMC and referenced in the construction documents.

E. Avian Protection Requirements – Compliance with federal and state regulations would ensure that the avian protection requirements are met (see Section 3.0 Regulatory Framework).

F. Resource Delineation - Prior to construction activities, the Qualified Biologist shall supervise the placement of orange construction fencing or equivalent along the limits of disturbance adjacent to sensitive biological habitats and verify compliance with any other project conditions as shown on the BCME. This phase shall include flagging plant specimens and delimiting buffers to protect sensitive biological resources (e.g., habitats/flora & fauna species, including nesting birds) during construction. Appropriate steps/care should be taken to minimize attraction of nest predators to the site.

G. Education - Prior to commencement of construction activities, the Qualified Biologist shall meet with the owner/permittee or designee and the construction crew and conduct an on-site educational session regarding the need to avoid impacts outside of the approved construction area and to protect sensitive flora and fauna (e.g., explain the avian and wetland buffers, flag system for removal of invasive species or retention of sensitive plants, and clarify acceptable access routes/methods and staging areas).

II. During Construction

A. Monitoring - All construction (including access/staging areas) shall be restricted to areas previously identified, proposed for development/staging, or previously disturbed as shown on "Exhibit A" and/or the BCME. The Qualified Biologist shall monitor construction activities

as needed to ensure that construction activities do not encroach into biologically sensitive areas, or cause other similar damage, and that the work plan has been amended to accommodate any sensitive species located during the pre-construction surveys. In addition, the Qualified Biologist shall document field activity via the Consultant Site Visit Record. The Consultant Site Visit Record shall be e-mailed to MMC on the 1st day of monitoring, the 1st week of each month, the last day of monitoring, and immediately in the case of any undocumented condition or discovery.

B. Subsequent Resource Identification - The Qualified Biologist shall note/act to prevent any new disturbances to habitat, flora, and/or fauna onsite (e.g., flag plant specimens for avoidance during access). If active nests or other previously unknown sensitive resources are detected, all project activities that directly impact the resource shall be delayed until species specific local, state, or federal regulations have been determined and applied by the Qualified Biologist.

III. Post Construction Measures

A. In the event that impacts exceed previously allowed amounts, additional impacts shall be mitigated in accordance with City Biology Guidelines, ESL and MSCP, CEQA, and other applicable local, state and federal law. The Qualified Biologist shall submit a final BCME/report to the satisfaction of the City ADD/MMC within 30 days of construction completion.

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ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1

Plant Species Observed

Attachment 1 Plant Species Observed			
Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Origin
ANGIOSPERMS: MONOCOTS			
ARECACEAE	PALM FAMILY		
Phoenix dactylifera	date palm		I
Washingtonia robusta	Mexican fan palm		I
CYPERACEAE	SEDGE FAMILY		
Eleocharis macrostachya	pale spike-rush		N
Schoenoplectus [=*Scirpus*] *americanus*	Olney's three-square bulrush		N
POACEAE (GRAMINEAE)	GRASS FAMILY		
Avena barbata	slender wild oat		I
Bromus diandrus	ripgut grass		I
Bromus rubens [=*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*]	red brome		I
Elymus [=*Leymus*] *triticoides*	beardless wild-rye		N
Festuca perennis [=*Lolium multiflorum* and *Lolium perenne*]	rye grass		I
Hordeum murinum	wall barley		I
Phalaris canariensis	canary grass		I
Poa annua	annual blue grass		I
TYPHACEAE	CATTAIL FAMILY		
Typha latifolia	broad-leaved cattail		N
ANGIOSPERMS: DICOTS			
AIZOACEAE	FIG-MARIGOLD FAMILY		
Mesembryanthemum crystallinum	crystalline iceplant		I
Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum	slender-leaved iceplant		I
APIACEAE (UMBELLIFERAE)	CARROT FAMILY		
Foeniculum vulgare	fennel		I
ASTERACEAE	SUNFLOWER FAMILY		
Baccharis salicifolia ssp. *salicifolia*	mule fat, seep-willow		N
Baccharis sarothroides	broom baccharis		N
Cirsium vulgare	bull thistle		I
Dittrichia graveolens	stinkwort		I

Attachment 1 Plant Species Observed			
Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat	Origin
Encelia californica	California encelia		N
Glebionis coronaria [=*Chrysanthemum coronarium*]	garland, crown daisy		I
Helminthotheca [=*Picris*] *echioides*	bristly ox-tongue		I
Lactuca serriola	prickly lettuce		I
BORAGINACEAE	**BORAGE FAMILY**		
Amsinckia sp.	fiddleneck		N
BRASSICACEAE (CRUCIFERAE)	**MUSTARD FAMILY**		
Brassica nigra	black mustard		I
CONVOLVULACEAE	**MORNING-GLORY FAMILY**		
Convolvulus arvensis	bindweed, orchard morning-glory		I
FABACEAE (LEGUMINOSAE)	**LEGUME FAMILY**		
Acacia redolens	vanilla-scented wattle		I
GERANIACEAE	**GERANIUM FAMILY**		
Erodium cicutarium	redstem filaree		I
MYRSINACEAE	**MYRSINE FAMILY**		
Lysimachia [=*Anagallis*] *arvensis*	scarlet pimpernel		I
POLYGONACEAE	**BUCKWHEAT FAMILY**		
Rumex crispus	curly dock		I
SALICACEAE	**WILLOW FAMILY**		
Salix exigua	narrow-leaf willow		N
Salix gooddingii	Goodding's black willow		N
Salix lasiolepis	arroyo willow		N
SOLANACEAE	**NIGHTSHADE FAMILY**		
Nicotiana glauca	tree tobacco		I
TAMARICACEAE	**TAMARISK FAMILY**		
Tamarix ramosissima	saltcedar		I

Attachment 1
Plant Species Observed

Notes: Scientific and common names were primarily derived from Jepson eFlora (Jepson Flora Project 2020). In instances where common names were not provided in this resource, common names were obtained from Rebman and Simpson (2014). Additional common names were obtained from the USDA maintained database (USDA 2021) or the Sunset Western Garden Book (Brenzel 2001) for ornamental/horticultural plants.

HABITATS

DL = Disturbed Land
SWS = Southern Willlow Scrub
RW = Riparian woodland
FM = Freshwater Marsh
TS = Tamarisk Scrub
CD = Coastal dunes
CF = Coniferous forest
CSS = Coastal sage scrub
FM = Freshwater marsh
FW = Foothill woodland
H = Horticultural
MC = Southern mixed chaparral
MF = Mule fat scrub
MSS = Maritime succulent scrub
NG = Native grasslands
NNG = Non-native grassland
O = Open places, waste places, roadsides, burns, etc.
OW = Oak woodland
SM = Saltwater marsh
SMC = Southern maritime chaparral
VP = Vernal pools

ORIGIN

N = Native to locality
I = Introduced species from outside locality
(I) = Introduced species to the ecoregion in which the survey occurred; however, native to other ecoregions within San Diego County.

ATTACHMENT 2

Wildlife Species Observed

Attachment 2 Wildlife Species Observed				
Scientific Name	Common Name	Occupied Habitat	On-site Abundance/ Seasonality (Birds Only)	Evidence of Occurrence
AMPHIBIANS (Nomenclature from Crother et al. 2017)				
HYLIDAE	**TREE FROGS**			
Pseudacris cadaverina	California treefrog	FWM		O
BIRDS (Nomenclature from Chesser et al. 2019 and CDFW 2021e)				
COLUMBIDAE	**PIGEONS & DOVES**			
Zenaida macroura	mourning dove	SWS	F/ Y	O, V
TYRANNIDAE	**TYRANT FLYCATCHERS**			
Sayornis saya	Say's phoebe	DRS	F/ W	O
CORVIDAE	**CROWS, JAYS, & MAGPIES**			
Corvus brachyrhynchos	American crow	F	F/ Y	O
PASSERELLIDAE	**NEW WORLD PASSERINES**			
Melospiza melodia	song sparrow	SWS	F/ Y	O, V
ICTERIDAE	**BLACKBIRDS & NEW WORLD ORIOLES**			
Agelaius phoeniceus	red-winged blackbird	FM, SWS	C/ Y	O, V
HIRUNDINIDAE	**SWALLOWS**			
Petrochelidon pyrrhonota tachina	cliff swallow	F	C/ S	O, V
FRINGILLIDAE	**FINCHES**			
Haemorhous [=*Carpodacus*] *mexicanus frontalis*	house finch	DL	F/ Y	O, V
MAMMALS (Nomenclature from Bradley et al. 2014; American Society of Mammologists 2020; CDFW 2021e)				
CANIDAE	**CANIDS**			
Canis latrans	coyote	FWM		S

Attachment 2
Wildlife Species Observed

HABITATS

DL = Disturbed Land
F = Flying overhead
DRS = Disturbed Riparian scrub
FM = Freshwater marsh
SWS = Southern Willow Scrub

ABUNDANCE (based on Garrett and Dunn 1981)

C = Common to abundant; almost always encountered in proper habitat, usually in moderate to large numbers
F = Fairly common; usually encountered in proper habitat, generally not in large numbers

SEASONALITY (birds only)

M = Migrant; uses site for brief periods of time, primarily during spring and fall months
S = Spring/summer resident; probable breeder on-site or in vicinity
W = Winter visitor; does not breed locally
Y = Year-round resident; probable breeder on-site or in vicinity

EVIDENCE OF OCCURRENCE

B = Burrow
C = Carcass/remains
D = Den site
O = Observed
S = Scat
T = Track
V = Vocalization

ATTACHMENT 3

Sensitive Plant Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur

Attachment 3 Sensitive Plant Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur							
Scientific Name Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status			Habitat/Preference/ Requirements/Blooming Period	Detected On-Site Yes/No	Potential to Occur On-Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Basis for Determination of Occurrence Potential
	State/ Federal Status	CNPS Rank	City of San Diego				
ANGIOSPERMS: DICOTS							
CHENOPODIACEAE GOOSEFOOT FAMILY							
Aphanisma blitoides aphanisma	–/–	1B.2	NE, MSCP	Annual herb; coastal bluff scrub, coastal sage scrub; sandy soils; blooms February–June; elevation less than 1,000 feet.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of suitable habitat.
APIACEAE CARROT FAMILY							
Eryngium aristulatum var. *parishii* San Diego button-celery	CE/FE	1B.1	VPS, MSCP	Biennial/perennial herb; vernal pools, mesic areas of coastal sage scrub and grasslands, blooms April–June; elevation less than 2,000 feet. Known from San Diego and Riverside counties. Additional populations occur in Baja California, Mexico.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of vernal pools.
ASTERACEAE SUNFLOWER FAMILY							
Ambrosia pumila San Diego ambrosia	–/FE	1B.1	NE, MSCP	Perennial herb (rhizomatous); chaparral, coastal sage scrub, valley and foothill grasslands, creek beds, vernal pools, often in disturbed areas; blooms April-October; elevation less than 1,400 feet. Many occurrences extirpated in San Diego County.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of suitable habitat and history of site disturbance.
Baccharis vanessae Encinitas baccharis [=Encinitas coyote brush]	CE/FT	1B.1	NE, MSCP	Perennial deciduous shrub; chaparral; maritime; sandstone; blooms August–November; elevation less than 2,500 feet. San Diego County endemic. Known from fewer than 20 occurrences. Extirpated from Encinitas area.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of suitable habitat.

Attachment 3 Sensitive Plant Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur							
Scientific Name Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status			Habitat/Preference/ Requirements/Blooming Period	Detected On-Site Yes/No	Potential to Occur On-Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Basis for Determination of Occurrence Potential
	State/ Federal Status	CNPS Rank	City of San Diego				
Deinandra [=*Hemizonia*] *conjugens* Otay tarplant	CE/FT	1B.1	NE, MSCP	Annual herb; clayey soils of coastal scrub openings, valley and foothill grassland; blooms April–June, elevation less than 1,000 feet.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
CACTACEAE **CACTUS FAMILY**							
Cylindropuntia californica var. *californica* [=*Opuntia parryi* var. *serpentina*] snake cholla	–/–	1B.1	NE, MSCP	Perennial stem succulent; chaparral, coastal sage scrub; blooms April–May; elevation 100–500 feet.	No	L	Species would have been observed if present. Low potential for occurrence due to lack of suitable habitat.
Ferocactus viridescens San Diego barrel cactus	–/–	2B.1	MSCP	Perennial stem succulent; chaparral, coastal sage scrub, valley and foothill grasslands, vernal pools; blooms May–June; elevation less than 1,500 feet.	No	L	Species would have been observed if present. Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
CRASSULACEAE **STONECROP FAMILY**							
Dudleya brevifolia [=*D. blochmaniae* ssp. *brevifolia*] short-leaved dudleya [short-leaved live-forever]	CE/–	1B.1	NE, MSCP	Perennial herb; southern maritime chaparral, coastal sage scrub on Torrey sandstone; blooms in April– May; elevation less than 1,000 feet. San Diego County endemic. Known from fewer than five occurrences in the Del Mar and La Jolla areas.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of suitable habitat.
Dudleya variegata variegated dudleya	–/–	1B.2	NE, MSCP	Perennial herb; openings in chaparral, coastal sage scrub, grasslands, vernal pools; blooms April–June; elevation less than 1,900 feet.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.

Attachment 3 Sensitive Plant Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur							
Scientific Name Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status			Habitat/Preference/ Requirements/Blooming Period	Detected On-Site Yes/No	Potential to Occur On-Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Basis for Determination of Occurrence Potential
	State/ Federal Status	CNPS Rank	City of San Diego				
FABACEAE **LEGUME FAMILY**							
Astragalus tener var. *titi* coastal dunes milkvetch	CE/FE	1B.1	NE, MSCP	Annual herb; coastal bluff scrub, coastal dunes, sandy soils, mesic coastal prairie; blooms March–May; elevation less than 200 feet. California endemic. Known from fewer than 10 occurrences in San Diego (presumed extirpated), Los Angeles (presumed extirpated), and Monterey counties.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of suitable habitat.
LAMIACEAE **MINT FAMILY**							
Acanthomintha ilicifolia San Diego thornmint	CE/FT	1B.1	NE, MSCP	Annual herb; chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and grasslands; friable or broken clay soils; blooms April–June; elevation less than 3,200 feet.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
Pogogyne abramsii San Diego mesa mint	CE/FE	1B.1	VPS, MSCP	Annual herb; vernal pools; blooms March–July; elevation 300–700 feet. San Diego County endemic.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of vernal pools.
Pogogyne nudiuscula Otay mesa mint	CE/FE	1B.1	VPS, MSCP	Annual herb; vernal pools; blooms May–July; elevation 300–820 feet. In California, known from approximately 10 occurrences in Otay Mesa in San Diego County. Additional populations occur in Baja California, Mexico.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of vernal pools.
POLEMONIACEAE **PHLOX FAMILY**							
Navarretia fossalis spreading navarretia [=prostrate navarretia]	–/FT	1B.1	VPS, MSCP	Annual herb; vernal pools, marshes and swamps, chenopod scrub; blooms April–June; elevation 100–4,300 feet.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of vernal pools.

Attachment 3 Sensitive Plant Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur							
Scientific Name Common Name	Sensitivity Code & Status			Habitat/Preference/ Requirements/Blooming Period	Detected On-Site Yes/No	Potential to Occur On-Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Basis for Determination of Occurrence Potential
	State/ Federal Status	CNPS Rank	City of San Diego				
ANGIOSPERMS: MONOCOTS							
AGAVACEAE AGAVE FAMILY							
Agave shawii var. *shawii* Shaw's agave	–/–	2B.1	NE, MSCP	Perennial leaf succulent; coastal bluff scrub, coastal sage scrub, maritime succulent scrub; blooms September–May; elevation less than 400 feet.	No	L	Species would have been observed if present. Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
POACEAE GRASS FAMILY							
Orcuttia californica California Orcutt grass	CE/FE	1B.1	VPS, MSCP	Annual herb; vernal pools; blooms April–August; elevation 50–2,200 feet.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of vernal pools.
THEMIDACEAE BRODIAEA FAMILY							
Brodiaea filifolia thread-leaved brodiaea [=thread-leaf brodiaea]	CE/FT	1B.1	NE, MSCP	Perennial herb (bulbiferous); cismontane woodland, coastal sage scrub, playas, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools; often clay soils; blooms March–June; elevation less than 2,850 feet. California endemic. Known from San Diego, Riverside, Orange, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino counties.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due to lack of suitable habitat.

Attachment 3 Sensitive Plant Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur	
FEDERAL CANDIDATES AND LISTED PLANTS FE = Federally listed endangered FT = Federally listed threatened	**STATE LISTED PLANTS** CE = State listed endangered
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY (CNPS): CALIFORNIA RARE PLANT RANKS (CRPR) 1B = Species rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. These species are eligible for state listing. 2B = Species rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere. These species are eligible for state listing. .1 = Species seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened; high degree and immediacy of threat). .2 = Species fairly threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened; moderate degree and immediacy of threat).	
CITY OF SAN DIEGO NE = Narrow endemic VPS = Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan vernal pool species MSCP = Multiple Species Conservation Program covered species	

ATTACHMENT 4

Western Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment

RECON

An Employee-Owned Company

November 24, 2021

Mr. Tom Simmons
Majestic Realty Company
13191 Crossroads Parkway North, 6th Floor
City of Industry, CA 91746

Reference: Majestic La Media South Project; Western Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment (RECON Number 7105.1)

Dear Mr. Simmons:

This letter summarizes the results of the habitat assessment conducted for the western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) within the Majestic La Media South project site (project site). The 32.5-acre project site is located in the city of San Diego, south of Otay Mesa Road, north of Airway Road, and east of the La Media Road south of State Route 905 (SR-905; Figure 1). The project site is found in Section 35, Township 18 South, Range 1 West, of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic map, Otay Mesa quadrangle (Figure 2; USGS 1996). Commercial/Industrial development occurs to the south and east of the project parcel, and vacant land occurs to the west and north (Figure 3).

RECON Environmental, Inc. (RECON) biologists conducted western burrowing owl habitat assessment over the entire project site in accordance with the guidelines developed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW; 2012). The assessment was conducted to determine the suitability of the habitat to support western burrowing owl within the project site and to assess potential suitable habitat within a 150-meter buffer area. No western burrowing owls were detected within the project site during the habitat assessment. A discussion of the results of the habitat assessment is provided below.

1.0 Land Use History

A review of past aerial photographs dating back to 1994 was conducted to characterize the land use history of the site and surrounding area. In 1994, the project site and surrounding area were un-developed and mostly under some sort of agricultural use. It appears that agricultural use of these areas was abandoned by 1996 and the lands were left to go fallow. The project site and surrounding area remained largely un-developed until 2002. Vegetation management of the area is visible and likely consisted of period mowing of the vegetation during this time frame.

In 2002, developed areas appeared to the south of Airway Road and to the west of La Media Road. The industrial building to the east of the project site along with the construction of the man-made drainage occurred during 2003. By 2010, SR-905 was constructed to the north of the site. Periodic vegetation management continued to occur on the project site, but not on lands to the west or southwest of the area.

In 2018, a stockpile permit was obtained and fill dirt was brought into the site for later use. These stockpiles grew for the next three years. Currently the large stockpile on the northern portion of the site has been contoured flat on top with steep side slopes. The remaining stockpiles are rougher in contour, higher, and with steeper side slopes. Areas around the perimeter of the stockpiles are overgrown with predominately non-native vegetation, with the exception of, portions of the drainage channel that support native riparian species.

In 2021, the developed areas to the south and east of the site consist of industrial warehouses and trucking facilities. Areas to the north of SR-905 are either under development or soon to be developed. Land to the west of La Media

Road and to the southwest of Airway Road are largely un-developed with a portion of the area to the southwest of Airway Road being located within the City of San Diego's Multi-Habitat Planning Area. Roads that are adjacent to the project site include La Media Road, Airway Road, and SR-905.

2.0 Habitat Assessment Survey Methods

Prior to conducting field investigations, historical data sources, including the California Natural Diversity Database, San Diego Biological Information and Observation System, and previous survey results nearby were reviewed for available information of known western burrowing owl observations in the vicinity of the project site. A RECON biologist conducted the habitat assessment on November 15, 2021. The biologist assessed vegetation communities and characteristics for potential to support burrowing owls. Vegetation community classifications in this report follow Oberbauer et.al. (2008), which is based on Holland (1986).

3.0 Existing Habitat Conditions

3.1 Site Topography and Soils

The site topography varies with the height of the three dirt stockpiles which are surrounded by flat land. Two soil types are mapped in the survey area; Huerhuero loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes and Salinas clay 0 to 2 percent slopes (U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] 1973). A man-made drainage feature is located along the northern and western perimeter of the site. This drainage conveys primarily storm water runoff from the local area after rainfall events.

3.2 Existing Vegetation

Project Site

Six vegetation communities occur within the survey area: southern willow scrub, freshwater marsh, disturbed riparian scrub, emergent wetland, disturbed land, and tamarisk scrub (Figure 4). The disturbed land would be the most likely to provide suitable habitat for western burrowing owl and is described in more detail below. The other habitat types are not considered suitable as they are densely vegetated with tall trees, shrubs, or herbaceous vegetation that lack the habitat characteristics preferred by the western burrowing owl.

Within the project site, disturbed land occurs over most of the area. The disturbed land consists primarily of stockpiles of imported earthen materials with sparse pockets of non-native vegetation on the slopes and between the piles of dirt (Photographs 1 through 4). The border of the entire parcel beyond the limits of the stockpiles and outside of the man-made drainage course contain disturbed land that is dominated by dense stands of black mustard (*Brassica nigra)*, bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*) with few species in the understory (Photographs 5 through 8). Where the disturbed land supports vegetation the height of the vegetation is usually over six feet the entire year and is relatively dense with little to no openings.

Adjacent Lands

The un-developed land to the west and southwest of the project site consists of grassy fields, which may have historically been used for agriculture. Habitat types observed include vernal pool, freshwater marsh, open water, Diegan coastal sage scrub, disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub, mule fat scrub, southern willow scrub, non-native grassland, disturbed land, and urban/developed. Of these habitat types, the areas of Diegan coastal sage scrub, disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub, non-native grassland, and disturbed land are the most likely to provide suitable habitat for western burrowing owl.

4.0 Habitat Assessment Results

Information on western burrowing owl obtained from review of existing data bases and other sources indicate that the species has occurred in the past and may still occur on lands adjacent to the site. San Diego Biological Information and Observation System records indicate two previous observations, approximately 200 feet and 460 feet west of La Media Road from 2006. These two locations appear to have been subject to development around 2008 and are assumed extirpated. California Natural Diversity Database records were found for areas to the north of SR-905 dated 2016. One of these observations is now extirpated while the other two observations near the airport and to the north are extant. Five occupied burrows were observed to the southwest of the intersection of La Media Road and Airway Road in 2016. It is assumed that these locations are extant.

No western burrowing owl observations have been historically or recently documented on the project site. The existing stockpiles on the project site are barren of vegetation and are comprised of compacted soils or soils that are very rocky containing large amounts of cobble. No burrows of any kind were observed on the stockpiles and no observations of small mammal activity was observed. The stockpile areas of the site are not suitable habitat for use by western burrow owl.

The disturbed habitat surrounding the perimeter of the stockpiles is comprised of dense stands of non-native perennial plants that are six to eight feet tall and support very little to no annual plants in the understory. Disturbed areas along the southern border of the site are adjacent to Airway Road, which is heavily used by commercial trucks. The height and density of the vegetation and/or proximity to heavy human activity do not constitute suitable habitat for use by western burrowing owls.

The wetland and disturbed riparian habitats that occur along the man-made drainage course is comprised of dense vegetation made up of trees (willow [*Salix* spp.], saltcedar [*Tamarix ramosissima*]), shrubs (mule fat [*Baccharis salicifolia* ssp. *salicifolia*], acacia [*Acacia* sp.]), and herbaceous species (e.g., cattail [*Typha* sp.]). The height of the vegetation can vary between four and ten feet tall. In these habitat areas the height and density of the vegetation do not constitute suitable habitat for western burrowing owl.

5.0 Conclusion

The project site does not contain habitat considered suitable for breeding of western burrowing owl. The lack of suitable burrows, observations of prey species, and habitat conditions (i.e., barren soil stockpiles, dense and tall disturbed vegetation) do not provide the habitat characteristics preferred by the species. Un-developed lands to the west of La Media Road and especially to the southwest of the intersection of La Media Road and Airway Road have in the recent past supported, and may still support, western burrowing owl breeding and foraging habitat. However, the likelihood of western burrowing owl from these off-site areas to utilize portions of the project site for breeding habitat is considered low based on the existing conditions on the project site.

If you have any questions regarding this habitat assessment, please contact me at 619-308-9333 ext. 171 or at gscheid@reconenvironmental.com.

Sincerely,

Gerry Scheid

Gerry Scheid
Senior Biologist

References Cited

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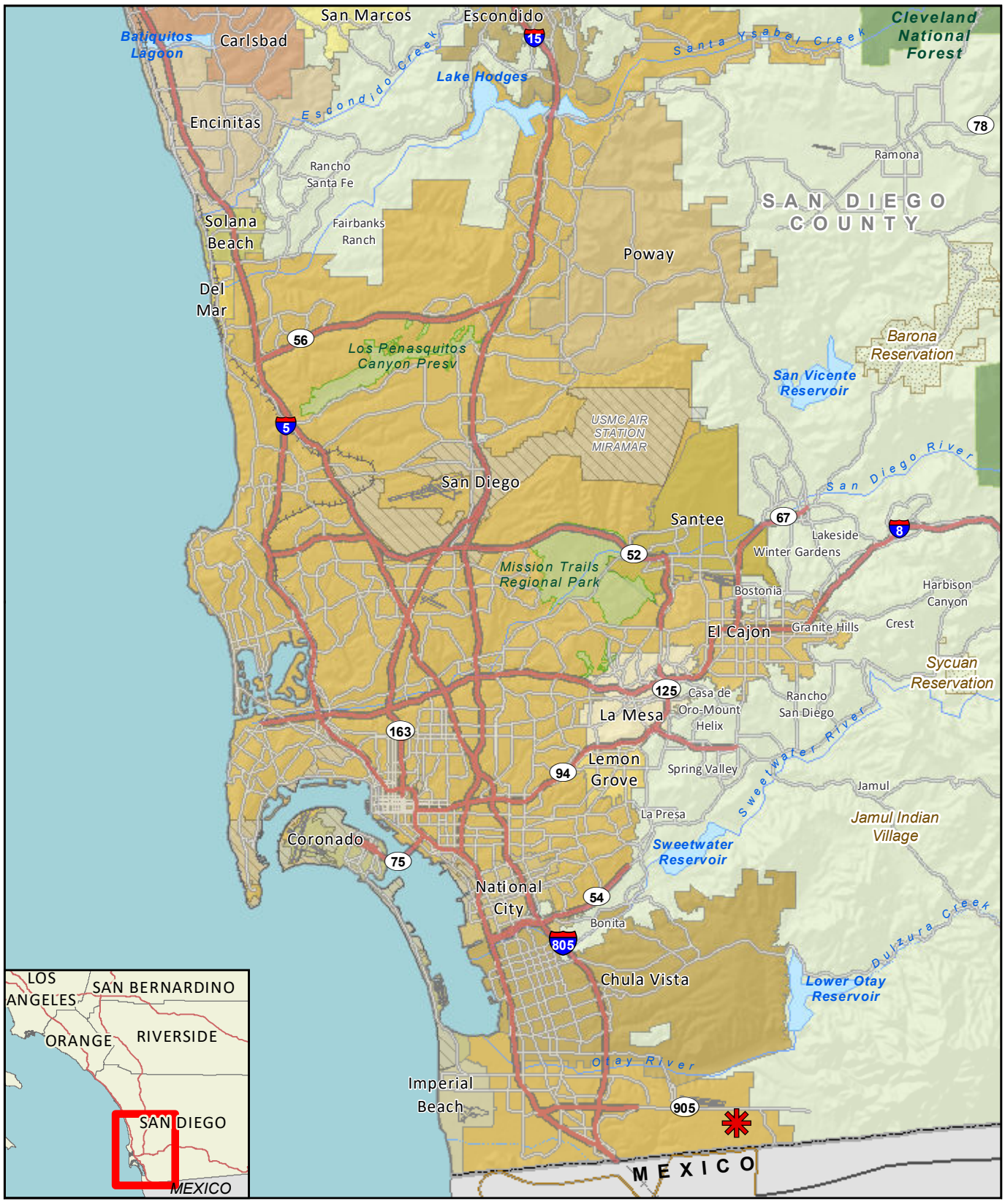

RECON

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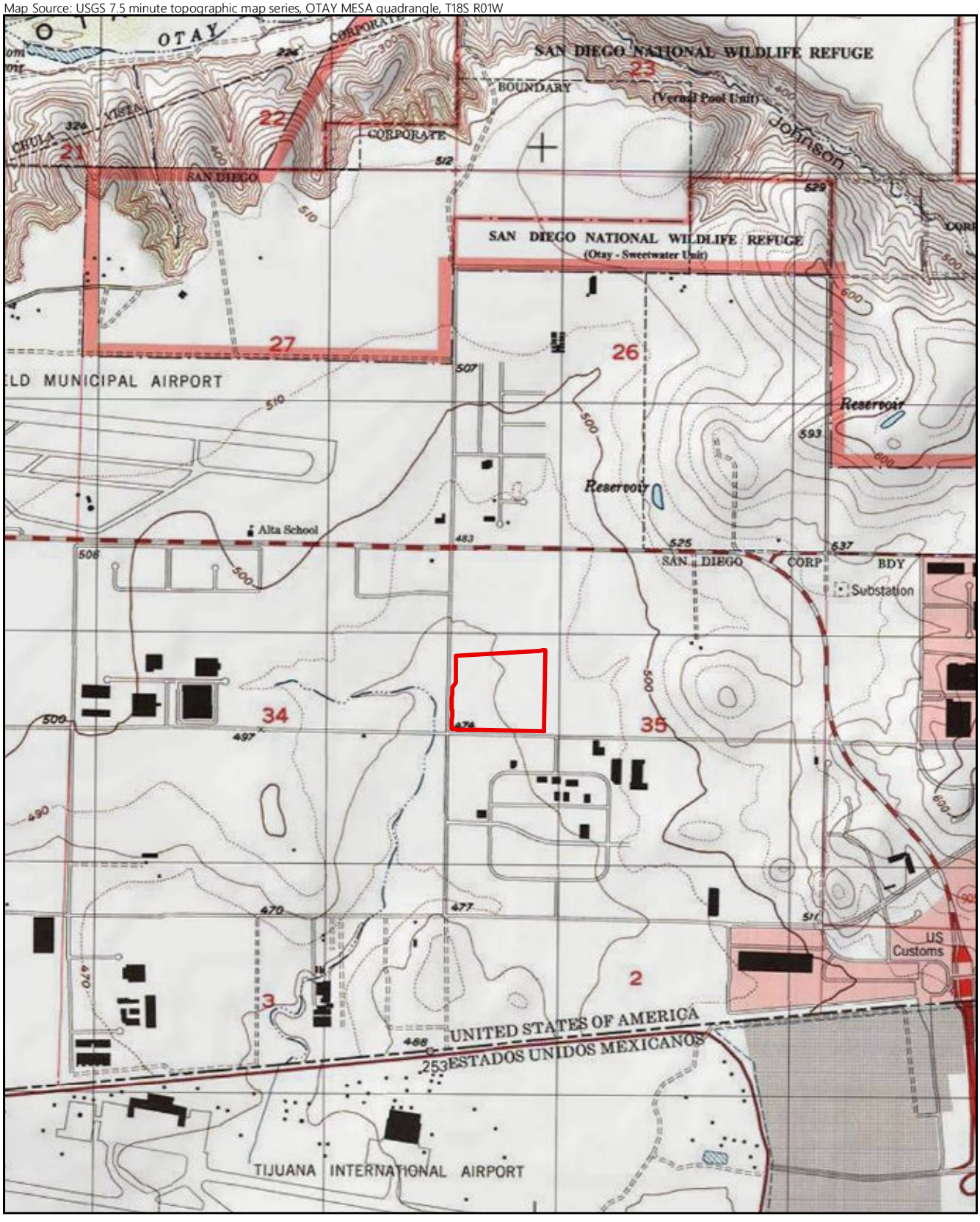
FIGURE 1
Regional Location

Map Source: USGS 7.5 minute topographic map series, OTAY MESA quadrangle, T18S R01W



0 Feet 2,000

Project Boundary

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FIGURE 2
Project Location on USGS Map

Image Source: NearMap (flown September 2021)

FIGURE 3

Project Location and Habitat Assessment Area

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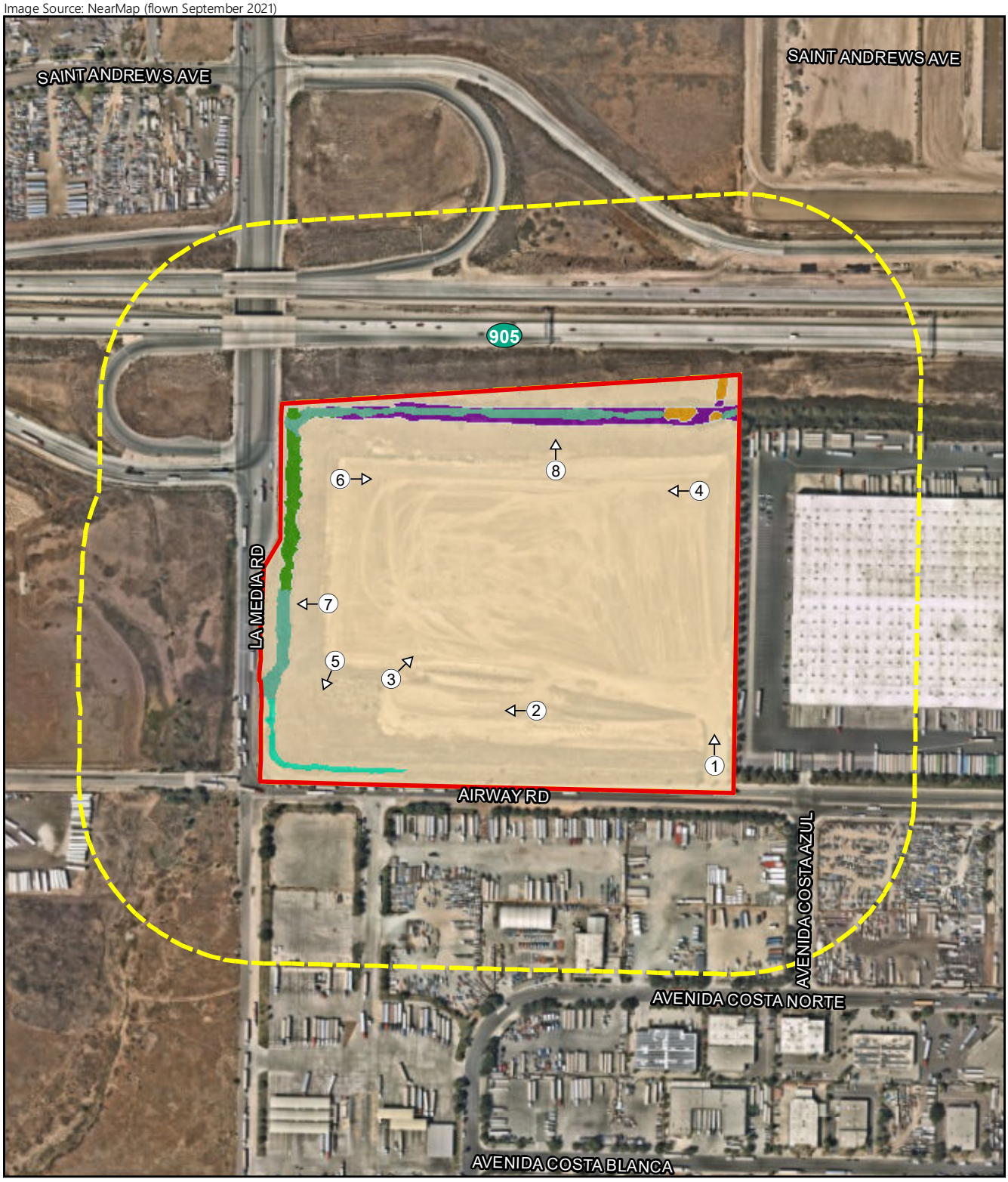
Image Source: NearMap (flown September 2021)



0 Feet 400

Photo Point

Project Boundary

Habitat Assessment Buffer (500 ft.)

Vegetation Community/Land Cover Type

- Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Marsh
- Southern Willow Scrub
- Tamarix Scrub
- Disturbed Riparian Scrub
- Disturbed Land

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FIGURE 4
Existing Vegetation

PHOTOGRAPH 1
View of Disturbed Area Looking North Along Eastern Boundary of the Project Site (Photo Date November 15, 2021)

PHOTOGRAPH 2
View of Southern Stockpile Looking West
(Photo Date November 15, 2021)

PHOTOGRAPH 3
View Across Northern Stockpile Looking Northeast
(Photo Date November 15, 2021)

PHOTOGRAPH 4
View of Northern Stockpile and Slope Looking West
(Photo Date November 15, 2021)

PHOTOGRAPH 5
View of Dense Non-native Vegetation on Disturbed Land on Western Portion of the Site Looking Southwest (Photo Date November 15, 2021)

PHOTOGRAPH 6
View of Dense Non-native Vegetation on Disturbed Land Along Perimeter of North Stockpile Looking East (Photo Date November 15, 2021)

PHOTOGRAPH 7
View of Dense Non-native Vegetation on Western Portion of Site
Looking West (Photo Date November 15, 2021)

PHOTOGRAPH 8
View of Dense Non-native Vegetation on Northern Portion of Site
Looking North (Photo Date November 15, 2021)

ATTACHMENT 5

Sensitive Wildlife Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur

Attachment 5 Sensitive Wildlife Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur					
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Listing Status	Habitat Preference/ Requirements	Detected On-Site?	Potential to Occur On-Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Basis for Determination of Occurrence Potential
REPTILES (Nomenclature from Crother et al. 2017)					
SCINCIDAE **SKINKS**					
Coronado skink *Plestiodon* [=*Eumeces*] *skiltonianus interparietalis*	CSC	Grasslands, open woodlands and forest, broken chaparral. Rocky habitats near streams.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due lack of good quality habitat and history of site disturbance.
COLUBRIDAE **COLUBRID SNAKES**					
Coast patch-nosed snake *Salvadora hexalepis virgultea*	CSC	Grasslands, chaparral, sagebrush, desert scrub. Found in sandy and rocky areas.	No	L	Low potential for occurrence due lack of good quality habitat and history of site disturbance.
BIRDS (Nomenclature from Chesser et al. 2019 and CDFW 2021d)					
ACCIPITRIDAE **HAWKS, KITES, & EAGLES**					
Ferruginous hawk (wintering) *Buteo regalis*	WL, MSCP	Require large foraging areas. Grasslands, agricultural fields. Uncommon winter resident.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
Northern harrier (nesting) *Circus hudsonius*	CSC, MSCP	Coastal lowland, marshes, grassland, agricultural fields. Migrant and winter resident, rare summer resident.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
STRIGIDAE **TYPICAL OWLS**					
Burrowing owl (burrow sites) *Athene cunicularia*	CSC, MSCP	Grassland, agricultural land, coastal dunes. Require rodent burrows. Declining resident.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.

Attachment 5 Sensitive Wildlife Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur					
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Listing Status	Habitat Preference/ Requirements	Detected On-Site?	Potential to Occur On-Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Basis for Determination of Occurrence Potential
ALAUDIDAE LARKS					
California horned lark *Eremophila alpestris actia*	WL	Sandy shores, mesas, disturbed areas, grasslands, agricultural lands, sparse creosote bush scrub.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence in the survey area.
TURDIDAE THRUSHES					
Western bluebird *Sialia mexicana*	MSCP	Open woodlands, farmlands, orchards.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence in the survey area.
PARULIDAE WOOD WARBLERS					
Yellow warbler (nesting) *Setophaga* [=*Dendroica*] *petechia*	CSC	Breeding restricted to riparian woodland. Spring and fall migrant, localized summer resident, rare winter visitor.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
Yellow-breasted chat (nesting) *Icteria virens*	CSC	Dense riparian woodland. Localized summer resident. Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
PASSERELLIDAE NEW WORLD PASSERINES					
Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow *Aimophila ruficeps canescens*	WL, MSCP	Coastal sage scrub, chaparral, grassland. Resident.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence due to history of site disturbance.
Grasshopper sparrow (nesting) *Ammodramus savannarum*	CSC	Tall grass areas. Localized summer resident, rare in winter.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence in the survey area due to history of site disturbance.

Attachment 5 Sensitive Wildlife Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur					
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Listing Status	Habitat Preference/ Requirements	Detected On-Site?	Potential to Occur On-Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Basis for Determination of Occurrence Potential
VIREONIDAE VIREOS					
Least Bell's vireo (nesting) *Vireo bellii pusillus*	FE, CE, MSCP	Willow riparian woodlands. Summer resident.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence in the survey area due to history of site disturbance and poor habitat conditions.
MAMMALS (Nomenclature from Bradley et al. 2014; American Society of Mammalogists 2020)					
LEPORIDAE RABBITS & HARES					
San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit *Lepus californicus bennettii*	CSC	Open areas of scrub, grasslands, agricultural fields.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence in the survey area due to history of site disturbance.
HETEROMYIDAE POCKET MICE & KANGAROO RATS MURIDAE					
Northwestern San Diego pocket mouse *Chaetodipus fallax fallax*	CSC	San Diego County west of mountains in sparse, disturbed coastal sage scrub or grasslands with sandy soils.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential to occur due to lack of sandy soils.
MUSTELIDAE WEASELS, OTTERS, & BADGERS					
American badger *Taxidea taxus*	CSC, MSCP	Grasslands, Sonoran desert scrub. Southern mule deer	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence in the survey area due to history of disturbance.

Attachment 5 Sensitive Wildlife Species Observed or with the Potential to Occur					
Common Name/ Scientific Name	Listing Status	Habitat Preference/ Requirements	Detected On-Site?	Potential to Occur On-Site (Observed or L/M/H/U)	Basis for Determination of Occurrence Potential
CERVIDAE **DEER**					
Southern mule deer *Odocoileus hemionus fuliginata*	MSCP	Many habitats.	No	L	Not observed. Low potential for occurrence in the survey area due to proximity to heavily used roads and development.

STATUS CODES

Listed/Proposed

FE = Listed as endangered by the federal government

CE = Listed as endangered by the state of California

Other

CSC = California Department of Fish and Wildlife species of special concern

WL = California Department of Fish and Wildlife watch list species

MSCP = City and County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program covered species

* = Taxa listed with an asterisk fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Taxa considered endangered or rare under Section 15380(d) of CEQA guidelines
- Taxa that are biologically rare, very restricted in distribution, or declining throughout their range
- Population(s) in California that may be peripheral to the major portion of a taxon's range but which are threatened with extirpation within California
- Taxa closely associated with a habitat that is declining in California at an alarming rate (e.g., wetlands, riparian, old growth forests, desert aquatic systems, native grasslands)