

ATTACHMENT 4
Burrowing Owl Survey Report

July 16, 2019

Barry Ephraim
Bullock Ranch
San Luis Obispo, CA

SUBJECT: Burrowing Owl Survey Report for the Bullock Ranch Project, City of San Luis Obispo, CA (APN(S): 004-705-009 & 053-061-053)

Dear Mr. Ephraim:

Sage Institute, Inc. (SII) is pleased to provide this burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) survey report for the Bullock Ranch Project site in the City of San Luis Obispo, California (APN(S): 004-705-009 & 053-061-053). We have prepared this report at your request to determine if any burrowing owls use the site for winter or breeding purposes. The burrowing owl is a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) species of special concern. The surveys followed the CDFW protocol consistent with the 1993 California Burrowing Owl Consortium Guidelines, and the CDFG(W) 2012 staff report on burrowing owl mitigation.

METHODS

SII Principal Biologist Jason Kirschenstein and SII Principal Ecologist David Wolff conducted walking surveys over the entire two-parcel Bullock Ranch project site on six occasions from January 31, 2019 to June 12, 2019 to capture both potential winter and breeding use of the site. The walking field surveys were conducted at various times of the day and provided 100 percent visual coverage of the project site including locating and inspecting any ground squirrel burrows for burrowing owl use or activity. Specific survey dates and survey personnel included:

- January 31, 2019, Jason Kirschenstein
- February 1, 2019, Jason Kirschenstein
- February 20, 2019, Jason Kirschenstein
- February 22, 2019, Jason Kirschenstein & David Wolff
- March 29, 2019, David Wolff
- June 12, 2019, Jason Kirschenstein

RESULTS

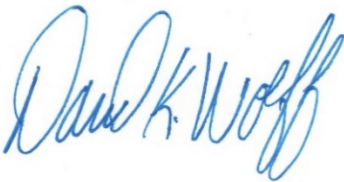
The burrowing owl is generally only known as a winter visitor in coastal areas of San Luis Obispo County, with breeding occurrences in the more arid areas of north county and the Carrizo Plain. As such, it would not be expected to occur during the breeding season. The SII surveys covered both the winter and breeding times for potential occurrence on the site.

The site supports a non-native annual grassland cover with only a few ground squirrel burrows at the eastern portion of the site. The parcels are mostly flat with a slight overall east to west grade generally lacking in areas of higher ground (mounds or berms) that are typically preferred by the burrowing owl. There is one rock outcrop near the center of the northern parcel.

The SII walking surveys afforded near 100 percent visual coverage of the entire project site during times of variable winter to spring plant growth. The few ground squirrel burrows were readily identifiable for inspection of burrowing owl activity or use. No winter or breeding burrowing owls were observed using the site during any of the SII field surveys. In addition, there was no evidence of burrowing owl use around any of the ground squirrel burrows. Given the minimal ground squirrel activity, mostly level site, and surrounding development, burrowing owls would not be expected on the site in the future.

Thank you very much for using SII for your environmental consulting services. Please contact me directly if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



David K. Wolff, Principal Ecologist

ATTACHMENTS: Figure 1 – Representative Photographs



Photo 1: View east along northern parcel property line at mostly level non-native annual grassland habitat. Shop and storage yard is on the south parcel. **2/22/2019**



Photo 2: View south along west property boundary along Bullock Lane. Shop and storage yard is on the south parcel. **2/22/2019**



Photo 3: View east at south parcel shop and storage developed uses. **2/22/2019**



Photo 4: View of eastern area of the project site parcels. Orange fenceline on parcel boundary in background is from adjacent active construction site. **2/22/2019**



Photo 5: View south along eastern property boundary. 2/22/2019



Photo 6: View west along center of the two Bullock Ranch parcels.. 2/22/2019



Photo 7: View west at dawn from eastern property line of northern parcel. 6/12/2019



Photo 8: View west at dawn from eastern property line of southern parcel. 6/12/2019