

BURROWING OWL FOCUSED SURVEY REPORT

for the
Wilson Avenue II
Redevelopment Project
City of Perris

Project #

Prepared For:

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.
C/O Advantage Environmental Consultants, LLC
145 Vallecitos De Oro, Suite 201
San Marcos, CA 92069

May 5, 2020

Prepared By:



Michael K. Jefferson
Senior Biologist
BLUE Consulting Group



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: Summary.....	3
Section 2: Introduction.....	3
2.1 -Project Location.....	3
2.2 -Project Description.....	3
Section 3: Background.....	4
Section 4: Methodology.....	4
Section 5: Site Conditions.....	4
Section 6: Results and Discussion.....	5
6.1 -Burrowing Owl.....	5
Section 7: Conclusions and Recommendations.....	5
Section 8: Certification.....	6
Section 9: References.....	7

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Regional Location.....	Attached
Figure 2: Property Aerial Map	Attached
Figure 3: Vegetation Map Potential Suitable Burrows.....	Attached

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Site Photographs

Appendix B: Faunal Compendia

SECTION 1: SUMMARY

This report documents the findings of focused survey for the burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugea*) (BUOW) conducted by BLUE for the proposed Wilson Avenue II Project (Project) located at 3175 Wilson Ave, City of Perris, CA 92571-4029. The proposed Project includes the development of an approximate 9.69-acre parcel within the City of Perris, County of Riverside, California.

The Project is located within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Mead Valley Area Plan APN number 300-170-008.

The Project is not located within any MSHCP designated Criteria Areas or Subunits. As such, the Project is not subject to Cell Criteria compliance under the MSHCP. The Project footprint does not fall within any Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) or other MSHCP Conserved Lands but is located approximately 1.9 miles west of the San Jacinto Wildlife Area and Lake Perris; both are PQP lands.

The property falls within the Western Riverside County Multispecies Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) habitat assessment area for BUOW.

The Project Site provides suitable foraging, dispersing and breeding habitat for the BUOW. The focused BUOW survey area included the Project Site plus a 500-foot buffer. No BUOW or BUOW sign was observed inside the Project Site during the focused surveys.

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION

At the request of First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc., BLUE conducted a focused BUOW survey for a 9.69-acre property located in the City of Perris, Riverside County, California. This property is hereinafter referred to as Project Site or Site.

2.1 -PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed Project includes the development of an approximate 9.69-acre parcel within the City of Perris, County of Riverside, California (Figures 1-2). The Project is bound by undeveloped open areas to the south, East Rider Street to the north, Placentia Avenue to the south and Wilson Avenue to the west. The eastern property line is adjacent to the incised flood control channel, which conveys storm flows from north to south.

The Biological Study Area (BSA) includes the Project property, plus a 500-foot buffer. The BSA is located within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Perris Topographic Map. The Project falls within the San Bernardino Meridian, Section 5, Township 4 South, Range 3 West on the Perris, CA 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map (USGS 1979) in the city of Perris, at an approximate elevation of 1,450 feet.

The longitude and latitude coordinates near the center of the survey area are 33.8269 and 117.21196. The Project BSA is composed of disturbed vegetation with generally flat undeveloped terrain that receives frequent weed abatement (i.e., chain flail mowing, disking).

The surrounding land use consists of residential development, disturbed open areas, and public infrastructure (including the adjacent flood control channel).

2.2 -PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A site plan is not available at this time.

SECTION 3: BACKGROUND

The BUOW is a state species of concern and is currently being considered for listing with the state and federal agencies due to their alarming decline in the state of California in the past 30 years. It occurs in short-grass prairies, grasslands, lowland scrub, agricultural lands (particularly rangelands), prairies, coastal dunes, desert floors, and some artificial, open areas as a year-long resident. The BUOW may also use golf courses, cemeteries, road allowances within cities, airports, vacant lots in residential areas, and university campuses, fairgrounds, abandoned buildings; and irrigation ditches.

They require large open expanses of sparsely vegetated areas on gently rolling or level terrain with an abundance of active small mammal burrows. As a critical habitat feature need, they require the use of rodent or other burrows for roosting and nesting cover. One burrow is typically selected for use as the nest; however, satellite burrows are usually found within the immediate vicinity of the nest burrow within the defended territory of the owl.

The nearest recorded location of the BUOW was determined through a query of the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG's) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), a sensitive species and plant community account database. Five BUOW have been historically recorded within a 7-mile radius of the Project Site. The nearest recorded occurrence of BUOW is approximately 0.8 miles east of the Project Site.

SECTION 4: METHODOLOGY

The entire site, as well as a 500-foot buffer around the site, was assessed on foot by BLUE senior biologist Michael Jefferson on four occasions; each from 6:20 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. on April 21, May 1, May 2 and May 3.

Transects were spaced no more than 30 meters to ensure 100 percent coverage. Rodent burrows were thoroughly examined for presence of sign (i.e., pellets, white wash, feathers, or prey remains), and suitable perches were inspected for BUOW pellets.

No BUOW or BUOW sign was observed. Surveys followed protocol as recommended by the Riverside County Environmental Programs Department (2006, 2012) and the California Burrowing Consortium (1993).

SECTION 5: SITE CONDITIONS

The Project Site is located in the City of Perris, Riverside County. The site is approximately 9.69-acres in size. Development (active commercial use) and a single vegetation community/land cover types was observed onsite; Agricultural/Disturbed. Offsite, and within the BSA is and Developed/Disturbed (paved roads, adjacent agricultural fields and the flood control channel (Table 1; Figure 3). No native plant species were located within the survey area. The entire site is suitable for BUOW.

The topography on site is of gently rolling hills with an elevation range of approximately 1,053 to 1,138 feet above mean sea level. Surrounding land uses include undeveloped land and residential development to the north and east, the Temecula Duck Pond and commercial development to the west, and residential development to the south of the Project Site.

A habitat assessment conducted by BLUE in March 2020 determined that the Project Site contains suitable nesting and foraging habitat for BUOW. Numerous ground squirrel burrows were observed onsite.

SECTION 6: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 -BURROWING OWL

Suitable burrows were observed throughout Project Site. See Figure 4 for location of suitable burrow within the Project Site. Suitable offsite breeding, foraging, and dispersing habitat for the BUOW occurs inside the 500-foot buffer, on the northern, southern and eastern (within offsite flood control channel footprint) of the Project Site.

Although various burrows were located within the site and in the buffer area, neither BUOW nor BUOW sign were observed onsite or within a 500-foot buffer (Figure 5).

BUOW was confirmed to be absent from the Project Site and immediate vicinity during the focused surveys.

SECTION 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the proposed Project Site has suitable foraging, breeding, and dispersing habitat for burrowing owls, no BUOW or BUOW sign were found on the Project Site or within a 500-foot buffer around the Project Site. BUOW do not occur within the project area or the immediate vicinity.

Due to the due to the presence of suitable nesting owl habitat and presence of potentially suitable burrows and active ground squirrel activity on the Project Site, a pre-construction burrowing owl survey is recommended if vegetation disturbance occurs March through July

The pre-construction clearance survey should be conducted no more than 30-days prior to ground disturbance activity to determine if any BUOW have migrated onto the site.

The Riverside County Environmental Programs Department has issued protocol and report guidelines for 30-day preconstruction BUOW survey, and these should be followed.

SECTION 8: CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached Figures present data and information required for this biological evaluation, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: May 5, 2020

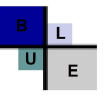
Michael Jefferson

SECTION 9: REFERENCES

- California Burrowing Owl Consortium. April 1993. *Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines*. Accessed on the internet at: http://www.dfg.ca.gov/hcpb/species/stds_gdl/bird_sg/boconsortium.pdf
- Haug, E.A., B.A. Millsap, and M.S. Martell. 1993. *Burrowing Owl (Speotyto cunicularia)*. In: A. Poole and F. Gill, editors. *Birds of North America*, No. 61. Philadelphia: The Academy of Natural Sciences; Washington, DC: The American Ornithologists' Union.
- Martin, D.J. 1973. *Selected aspects of burrowing owl ecology and behavior*. Condor 75:446-456.
- McDonald, D., N.M. Korfanta, and S.J. Lantz. 2004. *The Burrowing Owl: A Technical Conservation Assessment*. Prepared for the USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region, Species Conservation Project. Accessed on the internet March 21, 2006: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/projects/scp/assessments/burrowingowl.pdf>
- Riverside County Environmental Programs Department. August 17, 2006. *Western Riverside* http://www.tlma.co.riverside.ca.us/epd/documents/Burrowing_Owl_30_day_Survey_Requirements.pdf
- Riverside County Environmental Programs Department. March 29, 2006. *Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions for the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Area*. Accessed on the internet at: http://www.tlma.co.riverside.ca.us/epd/documents/Burrowing_Owl_Survey_Instructions.pdf
- Warnock, R.G. and P.C. James. 1997. *Habitat fragmentation and Burrowing Owls (Speotyto cunicularia) in Saskatchewan*. Pages 477-486 in J.R. Duncan, D.H. Johnson, and T.H. Nicholls, editors. *Biology and conservation of owls of the Northern Hemisphere: Second International Symposium*. USDA Forest Service General Technical Report NC-190, North Central Forest Experiment Station, St. Paul, MN.

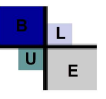
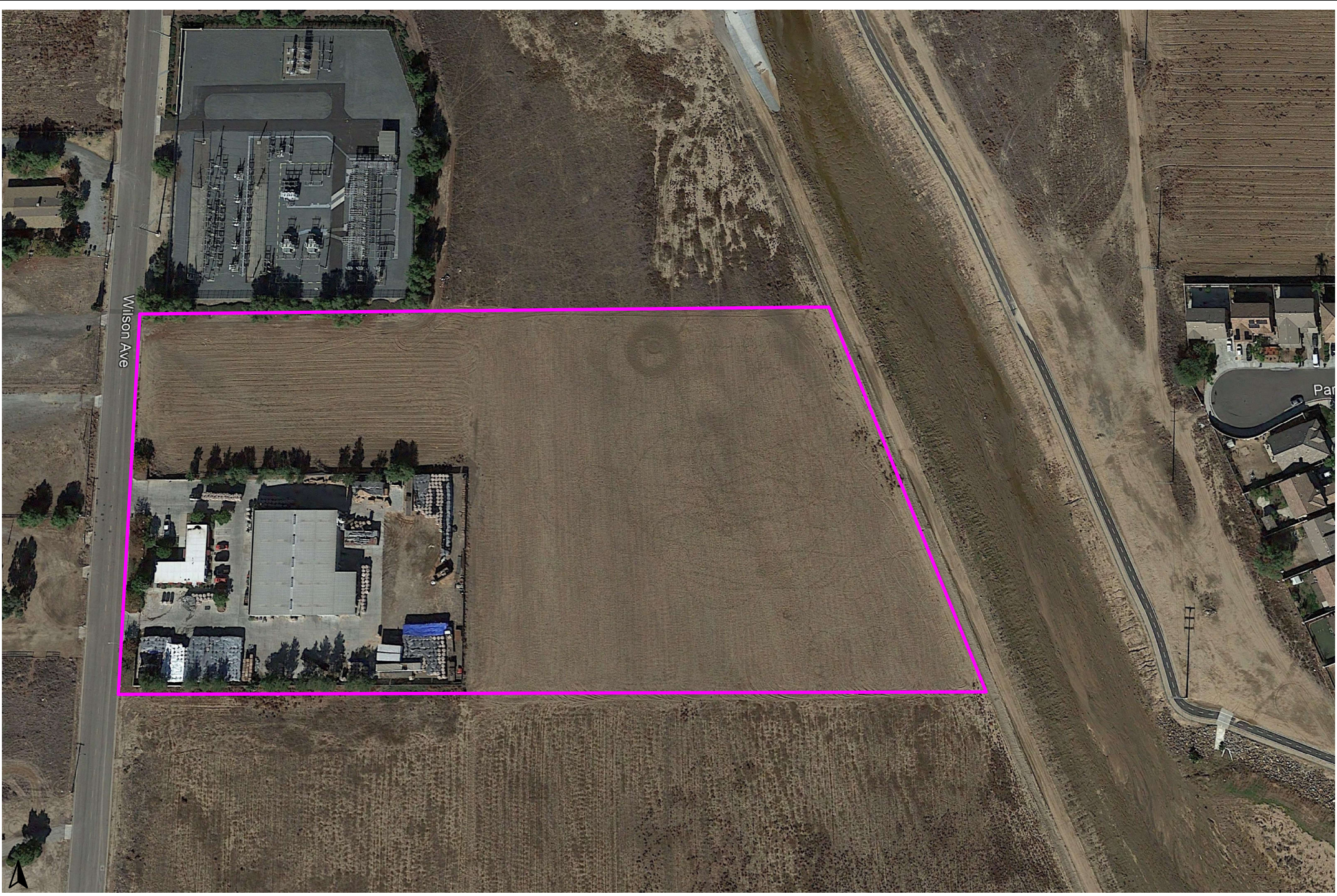


215



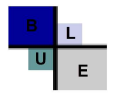
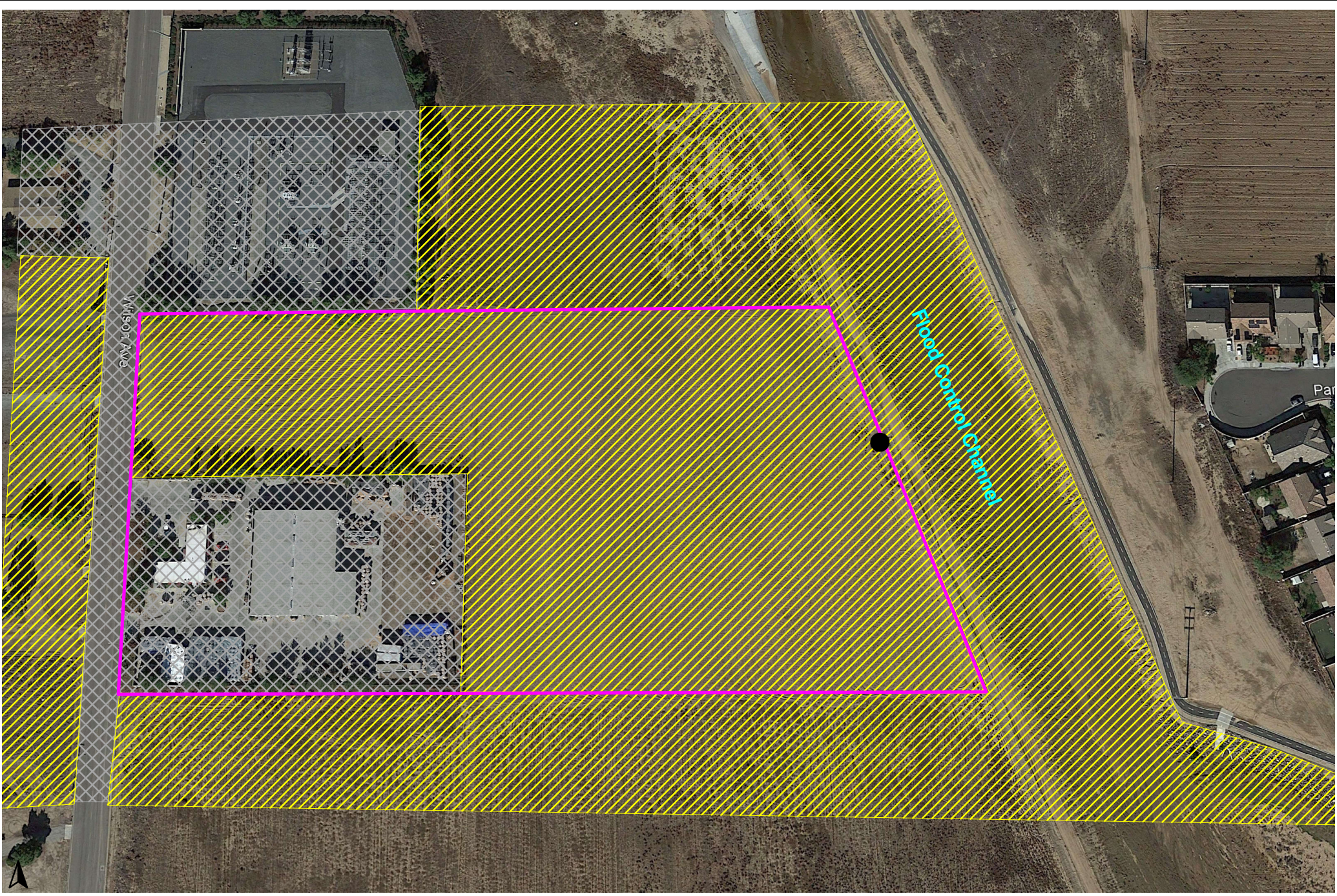
Property

FIGURE 1
Regional Location





 Property

FIGURE 2
Property Aerial



 Property

 Ruderal/Agricultural
 Developed


 Observed Potential Owl Burrow

FIGURE 3
Vegetation and
Species Map

Appendix A: Site Photographs



Photograph 1 Looking West from Eastern PL limit - Agriculture field



Photograph 2 Looking south along Eastern PL limit - Agriculture field

**Appendix B
Faunal Compendia**

Birds

Accipitridae

Buteo lineatus

Columbidae

Zenaida macroura

Corvidae

Corvus brachyrhynchos

Fringillidae

Pipilo crissalis

Sturnidae

Mimus polyglottos

Tyrannidae

Sayornis nigricans

Hawks

red-shouldered hawk

Pigeons and Doves

mourning dove

Jays and Crows

American crow

Finches, Orioles, and Sparrows

California towhee

Mimics

Northern Mockingbird

Tyrant Flycatchers

black phoebe

Mammals

Sciuridae *Spermophilus beecheyi*

Squirrels California ground squirrel