



## INFORMATION SUMMARY

- A. Report Date: November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020
- B. Report Title: Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Biological Resources Compliance Analysis for the 9.11-Acre County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement Project, Cities of Calimesa and Yucaipa, California.
- C. APNs#: Riverside County, 411-080-005, -015, 411-100-040, ROWs  
San Bernardino County, 318-212-15, -17, 318-235-15, ROWs
- D. Project Location: USGS 7.5' Series Yucaipa Quadrangle, Riverside & San Bernardino Counties, Township 2 South, Range 2 West, Sections 14 and 15, Extending North, South, East and West of Calimesa Boulevard/West County Road Line Intersection, as shown in Attachment A, *Regional Location Map* and Attachment B, *Study Area Map*.
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USFWS permit #TE780566-14, CDFW permit #02243
- G. Date of Survey: August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- H. Summary: The 9.11-acre study area is bisected by West County Line Road extending north into the City of Yucaipa (6.82 acres) and south into the City of Calimesa (2.29 acres). The study area is characterized as developed, disturbed and ornamental vegetation.
- The City of Calimesa is located within the western Riverside County MSHCP. Although the City of Yucaipa is not located within the MSHCP boundary, existing conditions and impacts have been assessed to ensure compliance with the MSHCP and California Environmental Quality Act guidelines.

The southern region of the study area located within the City of Calimesa is located within the MSHCP Pass Area Plan. The study area is not located within an MSHCP Criteria Area, Cell Group, or linkage area. Therefore, no Habitat Evaluation and Acquisition Negotiation Strategy (HANS) or Joint Project Review (JPR) are required.

The MSHCP has determined that all of the sensitive species potentially occurring onsite have been adequately covered (MSHCP Table 2-2 Species Considered for Conservation Under the MSHCP Since 1999, 2004). However, additional surveys may be required for narrow endemic plants, criteria area species, and specific wildlife species, if suitable habitat is documented onsite and/or if the property is located within a predetermined “Survey Area” (MSHCP 2004).

The study area does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for criteria area or narrow endemic plant species. (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020). No additional surveys are required.

The study area does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for amphibians (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020). No additional surveys are required.

The study area does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for mammals (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020). No additional surveys are required.

The study area does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020). No additional surveys are required.

No MSHCP Section 6.1.2 vernal pool resources, road ruts or seasonal depressions were documented within the study area. No additional surveys for fairy shrimp are required.

No MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riparian habitat (scrub, forest or woodland resources) representing suitable habitat for the least Bell’s vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) or western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) were documented within or adjacent to the study area. No additional surveys are required.

An existing earthen bottom drainage (Calimesa Creek) is located adjacent to the southern study area boundary. This feature is dominated by ornamental trees, primarily tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and represents an MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riverine resource. This MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riverine resource will not be

directly or indirectly impacted as a result of project construction. Impacts to the Section 6.1.2 feature will be analyzed and addressed prior to project construction as part of the Calimesa Creek Storm Drain Project, a separate project being processed by the City. An MSHCP Determination of Biological Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) is not required.

The northern region of the study area located within the City of Yucaipa is characterized completely as multi-use commercial development and does not possess any native or suitable habitat for state and/or federally sensitive species.

The existing earthen bottom drainage (Calimesa Creek) located adjacent to the southern study area boundary located in the City of Calimesa will not be directly or indirectly impacted as a result of project construction. Impacts to the Section 6.1.2 feature will be analyzed and addressed prior to project construction as part of the Calimesa Creek Storm Drain Project, a separate project being processed by the City. A formal jurisdictional delineation, permits and certifications will be not required.

## **SUBJECT**

### **Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Biological Resources Compliance Analysis for the 9.11-Acre County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement Project, Cities of Calimesa and Yucaipa, California.**

This report presents the findings of a biological resources Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) compliance analysis for the 9.11-acre County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement study area bisected by West County Line Road extending north into the City of Yucaipa (6.82 acres) and south into the City of Calimesa (2.29 acres) “Study Area”.

The southern region of the Study Area is located within the City of Calimesa, MSHCP Pass Area Plan and is not located within an MSHCP Criteria Area, Cell Group, or linkage area. Although the City of Yucaipa is not located within the MSHCP boundary, existing conditions and impacts have been assessed to ensure compliance with the MSHCP and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines.

The Study Area is located within United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5’ Series Yucaipa Quadrangle, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, Township 2 South, Range 2 West, Sections 14 and 15. Specifically, the Study Area extends north, south, east, and west of the Calimesa Boulevard and West County Rod Line intersection, as shown in Attachment A, *Regional Location Map* and Attachment B, *Study Area Map*. The Study Area is located within Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN’s) 411-080-005, -015, 411-100-040, right of ways (ROWs), Riverside County, California and 318-212-15, -17, 318-235-15, ROWs, San Bernardino County, California.

This report incorporates the findings of an extensive literature review, compilation of existing documentation and field reconnaissance conducted on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This documentation is consistent with accepted scientific and technical standards, the requirements of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). When appropriate, general biological resources are described in summary form in an effort to provide the reader with adequate background information. However, the report focuses on documenting those resources considered to be significant and/or sensitive as outlined by CEQA and the Western Riverside County MSHCP.

The following report provides a summary of topographic features, soils and habitats observed onsite. Resources were also analyzed to determine which if any are subject to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jurisdiction pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, CDFW jurisdiction pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 6, Section 1600 of the Fish and Wildlife Code, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) 401 certification/Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR’s), and MSHCP jurisdiction pursuant to section 6.1.2 (MSHCP 2004).

Accordingly, this report provides an overview of potential USACE, RWQCB, CDFW, MSHCP riparian/riverine/vernal pool jurisdictional resources and a habitat assessment for species that may require additional focused surveys as outlined by the MSHCP and CEQA.

## **METHODS OF STUDY**

### **APPROACH**

Prior to visiting the Study Area, a review of all available and relevant data on the biological characteristics, sensitive habitats, and species potentially present on or adjacent to the Study Area was conducted. Additionally, aerial photography, and USGS topographic map were examined. After reviewing the available information, Cadre Environmental conducted a physical site assessment.

As required by the MSHCP, and during the initial Study Area assessment process, all Study Area APN's were searched using the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) Geographic Information System (GIS) Data to determine if the property falls within a "Criteria Area" and if additional surveys for narrow endemic/criteria area plant species or wildlife not adequately covered by the MSHCP may be required.

Data, which contain digital images derived from aerial photography with orthographic projection properties, were used in conjunction with Cadre Environmental's in-house geographic information system (GIS) database as an important base layer to identify vegetation communities, drainage features, and USFWS designated critical habitat boundaries. Vegetation communities were then "ground-truthed" during field observations to obtain characteristic descriptions.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The study was initiated with a review of relevant literature on the biological resources of the Study Area and vicinity. The MSHCP list of covered species potentially occurring onsite was also examined (MSHCP Table 2-2 Species Considered for Conservation Under the MSHCP Since 1999, 2004). In addition, federal register listings, protocols, and species data provided by USFWS were reviewed in conjunction with anticipated federally listed species potentially occurring at the Study Area. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB),<sup>1</sup> a review of the California Native Plant Society sixth inventory (Tibor 2001), and Roberts et al. (2004) were also reviewed for pertinent information regarding the location of known occurrences of sensitive species in the vicinity of the property. In addition, numerous regional floral and faunal field guides were utilized in the identification of species and suitable habitats. Documents consulted regarding potential onsite biological conditions are listed in the references section at the end of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> California Natural Diversity Data Base, Department of Fish and Wildlife. August 2020. Natural Heritage Program: RareFind, Yucaipa Quadrangle.

## **FIELD INVESTIGATION**

The Study Area was surveyed on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The survey included complete coverage of the Study Area, with special attention focused toward sensitive species or those habitats potentially supporting sensitive flora or fauna that would be essential to efficiently implementing the terms and conditions of the Western Riverside County MSHCP including features potentially subject to MSHCP 6.1.2 jurisdiction. Aerial photography of the Study Area and vicinity was utilized to accurately locate and survey the property. General plant communities were preliminarily mapped directly on the aerial photo using visible landmarks in the field, which are depicted in Attachment C, *Biological Resources Map*. Representative photographs of the Study Area's natural resources were taken during the field survey Attachment D and E, *Current Study Area Photographs*.

### **Plant Community/Habitat Classification and Mapping**

Plant communities were preliminarily mapped with the aid of an aerial photograph using the MSHCP uncollapsed vegetation communities classification system when appropriate. When a vegetation community could not be accurately characterized using this information, an updated community classification code was developed to more accurately represent onsite habitat types.

### **General Plant Inventory**

All plants observed during the survey efforts were either identified in the field or collected and later identified using taxonomic keys. Plant taxonomy and nomenclatural changes follow Baldwin et al. (2012) or the Jepson Flora Project (2020). Common names used in this report generally follow Roberts et al. (2004) or Baldwin et al. (2012). Scientific names are included only at the first mention of a species; thereafter, common names alone are used.

### **General Wildlife Inventory**

General wildlife surveys were not conducted during the general biological habitat assessment. However, animals identified during the reconnaissance survey by sight, call, tracks, nests, scat, remains, or other signs were recorded in field notes. All wildlife was identified in the field with the aid of binoculars and taxonomic keys (if applicable). Vertebrate taxonomy followed in this report is according to the Center of North American Herpetology (2020) for amphibians and reptiles, the American Ornithologists' Union (1998 and supplemental) for birds, and Bradley et al. (2014) for mammals. Scientific names are used during the first mention of a species; common names only are used in the remainder of the text (if applicable).

### **Regional Connectivity/Wildlife Movement Corridor Assessment**

The analysis of wildlife movement corridors associated with the Study Area and its immediate vicinity is based on information compiled from literature, analysis of the aerial photograph, and direct observations made in the field during the site visit.

A literature review was conducted that included documents on island biogeography (studies of fragmented and isolated habitat “islands”), reports on wildlife home range sizes and migration patterns, and studies on wildlife dispersal. Wildlife movement studies conducted in southern California were also reviewed. Use of field-verified digital aerial data, in conjunction with the GIS database, allowed proper identification of vegetation communities and drainage features. This information was crucial to assessing the relationship of the property to large open space areas in the immediate vicinity and was also evaluated in terms of connectivity and habitat linkages. Relative to corridor issues, the discussions in this report are intended to focus on wildlife movement associated with the property and the immediate vicinity.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The Study Area is primarily characterized as an urban developed, disturbed, and high traffic intersection. No native vegetation is located within or adjacent to the Study Area, as illustrated in Attachment, *C Biological Resources Map*, Attachments D and E, *Current Study Area Photographs*, and outlined in Table 1, *Study Area Vegetation Community Acreages*.

**Table 1**  
**Study Area Vegetation Community Acreages**

<b>Vegetation Community</b>	<b>Study Area City of Calimesa (ac)</b>	<b>Study Area City of Yucaipa (ac)</b>	<b>Total (ac)</b>
Developed	1.69	6.74	8.43
Disturbed	0.27	--	0.27
Ornamental	0.33	0.08	0.41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.29</b>	<b>6.82</b>	<b>9.11</b>

Source: *Cadre Environmental 2020*.

## **SOILS**

The Soil Survey of Western Riverside Area has classified the Study Area as Ramona sandy loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes, MLRA 19 (RmC), Ramona sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes, eroded (RaB2), Ramona very fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, eroded (ReC2), and San Timoteo loam, 25 to 50 percent slopes, eroded (SmF2) as illustrated in Attachment F, *Soils Association Map*. All soils documented within the Study Area are characterized as being well drained (drainage class).

## **PLANT COMMUNITY/HABITAT CLASSIFICATION**

### **Developed**

The majority of the Study Area (93%) is developed by existing roadways, parking lots, industrial, commercial and multi-use land uses.

## **Disturbed**

A small patch of heavily disturbed land is located in the southwest region of the Study Area. This region is dominated by disturbed/ruderal vegetation with signs of annual clearing activities (weed abatement). Common ruderal non-native species documented within this habitat type include horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*), wild oat (*Avena fatua*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), tumbling pigweed (*Amaranthus albus*), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), common purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*), and common knotweed (*Polygonum arenastrum*).

## **Ornamental**

Several ornamental trees and shrubs are located within the Study Area including but not limited to Peruvian pepper (*Schinus molle*), tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), oleander (*Nerium oleander*) and avocado (*Persea americana*). The drainage located adjacent to the southern Study Area boundary is dominated by tree of heaven with a few isolated Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*) trees and small patches of giant reed (*Arundo donax*).

## **WILDLIFE POPULATIONS**

General wildlife species documented onsite or within the vicinity during the site visit include red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), common starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*), and house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*).

## **REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY/WILDLIFE MOVEMENT**

### **Overview**

Wildlife corridors link together areas of suitable habitat that are otherwise separated by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. The fragmentation of open space areas by urbanization creates isolated "islands" of wildlife habitat. In the absence of habitat linkages that allow movement to adjoining open space areas, various studies have concluded that some wildlife species, especially the larger and more mobile mammals, will not likely persist over time in fragmented or isolated habitat areas because they prohibit the infusion of new individuals and genetic information (MacArthur and Wilson 1967, Soule 1987, Harris and Gallager 1989, Bennett 1990). Corridors effectively act as links between different populations of a species. A group of smaller populations (termed "demes") linked together via a system of corridors is termed a "metapopulation." The long-term health of each deme within the metapopulation is dependent upon its size and the frequency of interchange of individuals (immigration vs. emigration). The smaller the deme, the more important immigration becomes, because prolonged inbreeding with the same individuals can reduce genetic variability. Immigrant individuals that move into

the deme from adjoining demes mate with individuals and supply that deme with new genes and gene combinations that increases overall genetic diversity. An increase in a population's genetic variability is generally associated with an increase in a population's health.

Corridors mitigate the effects of habitat fragmentation by (1) allowing animals to move between remaining habitats, which allows depleted populations to be replenished and promotes genetic diversity; (2) providing escape routes from fire, predators, and human disturbances, thus reducing the risk that catastrophic events (such as fires or disease) will result in population or local species extinction; and (3) serving as travel routes for individual animals as they move within their home ranges in search of food, water, mates, and other needs (Noss 1983, Fahrig and Merriam 1985, Simberloff and Cox 1987, Harris and Gallagher 1989). Wildlife movement activities usually fall into one of three movement categories: (1) dispersal (e.g., juvenile animals from natal areas, individuals extending range distributions); (2) seasonal migration; and (3) movements related to home range activities (foraging for food or water, defending territories, searching for mates, breeding areas, or cover). A number of terms have been used in various wildlife movement studies, such as "wildlife corridor", "travel route", "habitat linkage", and "wildlife crossing" to refer to areas in which wildlife moves from one area to another. To clarify the meaning of these terms and facilitate the discussion on wildlife movement in this study, these terms are defined as follows:

**Travel Route:** A landscape feature (such as a ridge line, drainage, canyon, or riparian strip) within a larger natural habitat area that is used frequently by animals to facilitate movement and provide access to necessary resources (e.g., water, food, cover, den sites). The travel route is generally preferred because it provides the least amount of topographic resistance in moving from one area to another; it contains adequate food, water, and/or cover while moving between habitat areas; and provides a relatively direct link between target habitat areas.

**Wildlife Corridor:** A piece of habitat, usually linear in nature, that connects two or more habitat patches that would otherwise be fragmented or isolated from one another. Wildlife corridors are usually bounded by urban land areas or other areas unsuitable for wildlife. The corridor generally contains suitable cover, food, and/or water to support species and facilitate movement while in the corridor. Larger, landscape-level corridors (often referred to as "habitat or landscape linkages") can provide both transitory and resident habitat for a variety of species.

**Wildlife Crossing:** A small, narrow area, relatively short in length and generally constricted in nature, that allows wildlife to pass under or through an obstacle or barrier that otherwise hinders or prevents movement. Crossings typically are manmade and include culverts, underpasses, drainage pipes, and tunnels to provide access across or under roads, highways, pipelines, or other physical obstacles. These are often "choke points" along a movement corridor.

## **Wildlife Movement within the Study Area**

The Study Area is primarily developed and characterized as existing roadways, parking lots, industrial, commercial and multi-use land uses and does not represent a wildlife movement corridor. The drainage located adjacent to the southern Study Area boundary terminates near the western boundary where it is primarily directed through subsurface culverts west of Interstate 10. The Study Area is not located within an MSHCP Criteria Cell, Cell Group, or linkage area.

## **SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

### **OVERVIEW OF CLASSIFICATIONS**

The following discussion describes the plant and wildlife species present, or potentially present, within the property boundaries, that have been afforded special recognition by federal, state, or local resource conservation agencies and organizations, principally due to the species' declining or limited population sizes, usually resulting from habitat loss. Also discussed are habitats that are unique, of relatively limited distribution, or of particular value to wildlife. Protected sensitive species are classified by either state or federal resource management agencies, or both, as threatened or endangered under provisions of the state and federal Endangered Species Acts. Vulnerable or "at-risk" species that are proposed for listing as threatened or endangered are categorized administratively as "candidates" by the USFWS. The CDFW uses various terminology and classifications to describe vulnerable species. There are additional sensitive species classifications applicable in California. These are described below.

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species that have special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, or rare. The CDFW, the USFWS, and special groups like the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) maintain watch lists of such resources. For the purpose of this assessment, sources used to determine the sensitive status of biological resources are:

**Plants:** USFWS (2020), CNDDDB (CDFW 2020a), CDFW (2020d, 2020e), CNPS (2020), and Skinner and Pavlik (1994),

**Wildlife:** California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (2008), USFWS (2020), CNDDDB (CDFW 2020a), and CDFW (2020b, 2020c).

**Habitats:** CNDDDB (CDFW 2020a, 2020f).

### **Federal Protection and Classifications**

The Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FESA) defines an endangered species as "any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range." Threatened species are defined as "any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of

its range.” Under provisions of Section 9(a)(1)(B) of the FESA, it is unlawful to “take” any listed species. “Take” is defined as follows in Section 3(18) of the FESA: “...harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” Further, the USFWS, through regulation, has interpreted the terms “harm” and “harass” to include certain types of habitat modification as forms of a “take.” These interpretations, however, are generally considered and applied on a case-by-case basis and often vary from species to species. In a case where a property owner seeks permission from a federal agency for an action that could affect a federally listed plant and animal species, the property owner and agency are required to consult with the USFWS. Section 9(a)(2)(b) of the FESA addresses the protections afforded to listed plants. Recently, the USFWS instituted changes in the listing status of former candidate species. Former C1 (candidate) species are now simply referred to as candidate species and represent the only candidates for listing. Former C2 species (for which the USFWS had insufficient evidence to warrant listing at this time) and C3 species (either extinct, no longer a valid taxon, or more abundant than was formerly believed) are no longer considered as candidate species. Therefore, these species are no longer maintained in list form by the USFWS, nor are they formally protected. However, some USFWS field offices have issued memoranda stating that former C2 species are henceforth to be considered Federal Species of Concern. This term is employed in this document, but carries no official protections. All references to federally protected species in this report (whether listed, proposed for listing, or a candidate) include the most current published status or candidate category to which each species has been assigned by the USFWS. For purposes of this assessment, the following acronyms are used for federal status species:

FE	Federal Endangered
FT	Federal Threatened
FPE	Federal Proposed Endangered
FPT	Federal Proposed Threatened
FC	Federal Candidate for Listing

### **State of California Protection and Classifications**

The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) defines an endangered species as “...a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant which is in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion, of its range due to one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, overexploitation, predation, competition, or disease.” The State defines a threatened species as “...a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant that, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future in the absence of the special protection and management efforts required by this chapter. Any animal determined by the commission as rare on or before January 1, 1985 is a threatened species.” Candidate species are defined as “...a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant that the commission has formally noticed as being under review by the department for addition to

either the list of endangered species or the list of threatened species, or a species for which the commission has published a notice of proposed regulation to add the species to either list.” Candidate species may be afforded temporary protection as though they were already listed as threatened or endangered at the discretion of the Fish and Game Commission. Unlike the federal FESA, the CESA does not include listing provisions for invertebrate species.

Article 3, sections 2080 through 2085 of the CESA addresses the taking of threatened or endangered species by stating “no person shall import into this state, export out of this state, or take, possess, purchase, or sell within this state, any species, or any part or product thereof, that the commission determines to be an endangered species or a threatened species, or attempt any of those acts, except as otherwise provided...” Under the CESA, “take” is defined as “...hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.” Exceptions authorized by the state to allow “take” require “...permits or memorandums of understanding...” and can be authorized for “...endangered species, threatened species, or candidate species for scientific, educational, or management purposes.” Sections 1901 and 1913 of the California Fish and Game Code provide that notification is required prior to disturbance.

Additionally, some sensitive mammals and birds are protected by the State as Fully Protected Mammals or Fully Protected Birds, as described in the California Fish and Game Code, sections 4700 and 3511, respectively. California Species of Special Concern (“special” animals and plants) listings include special status species, including all state and federal protected and candidate taxa, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service sensitive species, species considered to be declining or rare by the CNPS or National Audubon Society, and a selection of species that are considered to be under population stress but are not formally proposed for listing. This list is primarily a working document for the CDFW CNDDDB project. Informally listed taxa are not protected per se, but warrant consideration in the preparation of biotic assessments. For some species, the CNDDDB is only concerned with specific portions of the life history, such as roosts, rookeries, or nest sites. For the purposes of this assessment, the following acronyms are used for state status species:

SE	State Endangered
ST	State Threatened
SCE	State Candidate Endangered
SCT	State Candidate Threatened
SFP	State Fully Protected
SP	State Protected
SR	State Rare
CSC	California Species of Special Concern
CWL	California Watch List

Nesting birds, including raptors, are protected under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503, which reads, “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.” In addition, under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5, “it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto”. Passerines and non-passerine land birds are further protected under California Fish and Game Code 3513. As such, CDFW typically recommends surveys for nesting birds that could potentially be directly (e.g., actual removal of trees/vegetation) or indirectly (e.g., noise disturbance) impacted by project-related activities. Disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered “take” by CDFW.

### **California Native Plant Society**

The CNPS is a private plant conservation organization dedicated to the monitoring and protection of sensitive species in the state. This organization has compiled an inventory comprised of the information focusing upon geographic distribution and qualitative characterization of rare, threatened, or endangered vascular plant species of California (Tibor 2001). The list serves as the candidate list for listing as threatened and endangered by the CDFW. The CNPS has developed five categories of rarity (California Rare Plant Rank [CRPR]):

CRPR 1A	Presumed extinct in California
CRPR 1B	Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
CRPR 2A	Plants presumed extirpated in California but common elsewhere
CRPR 2B	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere
CRPR 3	Plants about which we need more information – a review list
CRPR 4	Species of limited distribution in California (i.e., naturally rare in the wild), but whose existence does not appear to be susceptible to threat

As stated by the CNPS:

Threat Rank is an extension added onto the California Rare Plant Rank and designates the level of endangerment by a 1 to 3 ranking with 1 being the most endangered and 3 being the least endangered. A Threat Rank is present for all California Rare Plant Rank 1B, 2, 4, and the majority of California Rare Plant Rank 3. California Rare Plant Rank 4 plants are seldom assigned a Threat Rank of 0.1, as they generally have large enough populations to not have significant threats to their continued existence in California; however, certain conditions exist to make the plant a species of concern and hence be assigned a California Rare Plant Rank. In addition, all California Rare Plant Rank 1A

(presumed extinct in California), and some California Rare Plant Rank 3 (need more information) plants, which lack threat information, do not have a Threat Rank extension (CNPS 2012).

0.1	Seriously threatened in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat)
0.2	Fairly threatened in California (20-80 percent occurrences threatened/moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
0.3	Not very threatened in California (<20 percent of occurrences threatened/low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

### **POTENTIALLY SENSITIVE SPECIES/RESOURCES**

Determinations of MSHCP sensitive species that could potentially occur on the Study Area are based on one or both of the following: (1) a record reported in the CNDDDB or CNPS inventory and; (2) the Study Area is within the known distribution of a species and contains suitable habitat or species documented onsite.

#### **Sensitive Plant Communities**

As stated by CDFG:

*“One purpose of the vegetation classification is to assist in determining the level of rarity and imperilment of vegetation types. Ranking of alliances according to their degree of imperilment (as measured by rarity, trends, and threats) follows NatureServe’s Heritage Methodology, in which all alliances are listed with a G (global) and S (state) rank. For alliances with State ranks of S1-S3, all associations within them are also considered to be highly imperiled” (CDFG 2012)*

No sensitive or native plant communities were documented within or adjacent to the Study Area. A total of 3.20 acres of developed, disturbed and ornamental vegetation will be impacted as a result of project initiation. The project will also result in a total of 5.91 acres of potential temporary impacts (staging area) to developed and disturbed vegetation as outlined in Table 2, *Study Area Vegetation Community Impacts*, and Attachment G, *Study Area Impact Map*.

**Table 2  
 Study Area Vegetation Community Impacts**

<b>Vegetation Community</b>	<b>Permanent Impacts including ROW Acquisition (ac)</b>	<b>Potential Temporary Impacts (Staging) (ac)</b>	<b>Total (ac)</b>
Developed	3.07	5.36	8.43
Disturbed	0.08	0.19	0.27
Ornamental	0.05	0.36	0.41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>5.91</b>	<b>9.11</b>

*Source: Cadre Environmental 2020.*

**Sensitive Plant Species**

The MSHCP has determined that all of the sensitive species potentially occurring onsite (City of Calimesa) have been adequately covered (MSHCP Table 2-2 Species Considered for Conservation Under the MSHCP Since 1999, 2004). However, additional surveys may be required for narrow endemic plants and/or criteria area species if suitable habitat is documented onsite and/or if the property is located within a predetermined “Survey Area” (MSHCP 2004).

The Study Area (City of Calimesa) does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for MSHCP criteria area or narrow endemic plant species. (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The northern region of the Study Area which is not located within the western Riverside County MSHCP (City of Yucaipa) is characterized completely as multi-use commercial development and does not possess any native or suitable habitat for state and/or federally sensitive plant species.

**Tree Resources**

The following regulations apply to tree removal within the Cities of Calimesa and Yucaipa.

**City of Calimesa**

- Tree Preservation, Chapter 18.80.020, Oak Tree Protection and Conservation.

No oak trees occur within the Study Area (City of Calimesa). The proposed project will not conflict with the City of Calimesa Tree Preservation Ordinance.

**City of Yucaipa**

- Mountain Forest and Valley Tree Conservation, Chapter 3
- Riparian Plant Conservation, Chapter 4
- Oak Tree Conservation, Chapter 5.

No oak or protected trees occur within the Study Area (City of Yucaipa).

### **Sensitive Wildlife Species**

The Study Area (City of Calimesa) does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for amphibians (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The Study Area (City of Calimesa) does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for mammals (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The Study Area (City of Calimesa) does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The northern region of the Study Area which is not located within the western Riverside County MSHCP (City of Yucaipa) is characterized completely as multi-use commercial development and does not possess any native or suitable habitat for state and/or federally sensitive wildlife species.

### **Nesting Bird Habitat**

The trees documented within and adjacent to the Study Area's permanent and temporary impact areas (ornamental vegetation) represent potential nesting habitat for bird and raptor species. Potential direct/indirect impacts to regulated nesting birds will require compliance with the CDFG Code, Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513.

### **MSHCP Riparian, Riverine, Vernal Pool Resources**

No vernal pool resources, hydric soils, road ruts or seasonal depressions were documented onsite following a review of soils, historic aerial maps and initiation of a site assessment.

No MSHCP Section 6.1.2 native riparian scrub, forest or woodland resources representing suitable habitat for the least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) or western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) were documented within or adjacent to the Study Area.

An existing earthen bottom drainage (Calimesa Creek) is located adjacent to the southern study area boundary. This feature is dominated by ornamental trees, primarily tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and represents an MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riverine resource. This MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riverine resource will not be directly or indirectly impacted as a result of project construction. Impacts to the Section 6.1.2 feature will be analyzed and addressed prior to project construction as part of the Calimesa Creek Storm Drain Project, a separate project being processed by the City.

## **Jurisdictional Resources**

The existing earthen bottom drainage (Calimesa Creek) located adjacent to the southern study area boundary located in the City of Calimesa will not be directly or indirectly impacted as a result of project construction. Impacts to the Section 6.1.2 feature will be analyzed and addressed prior to project construction as part of the Calimesa Creek Storm Drain Project, a separate project being processed by the City. A formal jurisdictional delineation, permits and certifications will be not required for the proposed project.

## **SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE WITH MSHCP POLICIES**

The purpose of this report is to document the existing biological resources, identify general vegetation types, and assess the potential biological and regulatory constraints associated with the proposed development within the Study Area as outlined by the MSHCP. The following sections summarize the Study Area's relationship to MSHCP criteria areas and MSHCP compliance guidelines.

Although the City of Yucaipa (northern region of Study Area) is not located within the MSHCP boundary, existing conditions and impacts have been assessed to ensure compliance with the MSHCP and California Environmental Quality Act guidelines. The northern region of the Study Area which is not located within the western Riverside County MSHCP (City of Yucaipa) is characterized completely as multi-use commercial development and does not possess any native or suitable habitat for state and/or federally sensitive plant or wildlife species.

## **CRITERIA AREAS**

The 9.11-acre Study Area is partially located within the MSHCP Pass Area Plan and is not located within an MSHCP Criteria Area, Cell Group, or linkage area.

No Habitat Evaluation and Acquisition Negotiation Strategy (HANS) or Joint Project Review (JPR) are required.

## **CRITERIA AREA SPECIES SURVEY AREA**

The Study Area does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for MSHCP criteria area plant species; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.3.2.

## **NARROW ENDEMIC PLANT SPECIES SURVEY AREA**

The Study Area does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for MSHCP narrow endemic plant species; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The project will be compliant with MSHCP Section 6.1.3

### **AMPHIBIAN SPECIES SURVEY AREA**

The Study Area does not occur within an Amphibian Species Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.3.2.

### **MAMMAL SPECIES SURVEY AREA**

The Study Area does not occur within a Mammal Species Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.3.2.

### **BURROWING OWL SURVEY AREA**

The Study Area does not occur within a Burrowing Owl Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2020).

The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.3.2.

### **MSHCP RIPARIAN/RIVERINE AREAS AND VERNAL POOLS**

No vernal pool resources, hydric soils, road ruts or seasonal depressions were documented onsite following a review of soils, historic aerial maps and initiation of a site assessment. No additional focused surveys for fairy shrimp are required.

No MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riparian scrub, forest or woodland resources representing suitable habitat for the least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher or western yellow-billed cuckoo were documented within or adjacent to the Study Area. No additional surveys are required.

An existing earthen bottom drainage (Calimesa Creek) is located adjacent to the southern study area boundary. This feature is dominated by ornamental trees, primarily tree of heaven and represents an MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riverine resource. This MSHCP Section 6.1.2 riverine resource will not be directly or indirectly impacted as a result of project construction. Impacts to the Section 6.1.2 feature will be addressed prior to project construction as a result of the Calimesa Creek Storm Drain Project, a separate project being processed by the City. An MSHCP Determination of Biological Equivalent or Superior Preservation is not required.

The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.1.2.

### **URBAN/WILDLANDS INTERFACE**

The MSHCP Urban/Wildlands Interface guidelines presented in Section 6.1.4 are intended to address indirect effects associated with locating commercial, mixed uses and residential developments in proximity to a MSHCP Conservation Area. The Study Area is not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area.

The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.1.4.

## **FUELS MANAGEMENT**

The fuels management guidelines presented in Section 6.4 of the MSHCP are intended to address brush management activities around new development within or adjacent to MSHCP Conservation Areas. The Study Area is not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area.

The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.4.

## **CONDITION OF APPROVAL**

The following condition of approval will be implemented to ensure the County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement Project remains in compliance with CEQA guidelines.

### **Nesting Bird CDFG Code Compliance**

Potential direct/indirect impacts on nesting bird and raptor species will require compliance with CDFG Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Construction outside the nesting season (between September 16<sup>th</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup> do not require pre-removal nesting bird surveys. If construction is proposed between February 1<sup>st</sup> and September 15<sup>th</sup>, a qualified biologist must conduct a nesting bird survey(s) no more than three (3) days prior to initiation of grading to document the presence or absence of nesting birds within or directly adjacent (100 feet) to the Study Area.

The survey(s) would focus on identifying any bird or raptor nests that would be directly or indirectly affected by construction activities. If active nests are documented, species-specific measures shall be prepared by a qualified biologist and implemented to prevent abandonment of the active nest. At a minimum, grading in the vicinity of a nest shall be deterred until the young birds have fledged. A minimum exclusion buffer of 100 feet shall be maintained during construction, depending on the species and location. The perimeter of the nest setback zone shall be fenced or adequately demarcated with stakes and flagging at 20-foot intervals, and construction personnel and activities restricted from the area. A survey report by a qualified biologist verifying that no active nests are present, or that the young have fledged, shall be submitted to the City of Calimesa for review and approval prior to initiation of grading in the nest-setback zone. The qualified biologist shall serve as a construction monitor during those periods when construction activities occur near active nest areas to ensure that no inadvertent impacts on these nests occur

Any nest permanently vacated for the season would not warrant protection pursuant to the CDFG Codes.

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A – Regional Location Map
- B – Study Area Map
- C – Biological Resources Map
- D – Current Study Area Photographs
- E – Current Study Area Photographs
- F – Soil Associations Map
- G – Study Area Impact Map

## **Certification**

*"I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present the 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"*

Author:  Date: November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Fieldwork Performed by:  Date: November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020.



APNs 411-080-005, -015, 411-100-040, 318-212-15, -17, 318-235-15, and ROW's

**Attachment A - Regional Location Map**

*MSHCP Biological Resources Compliance Analysis  
 County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement Project*

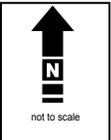
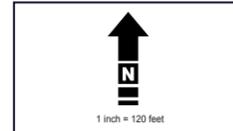


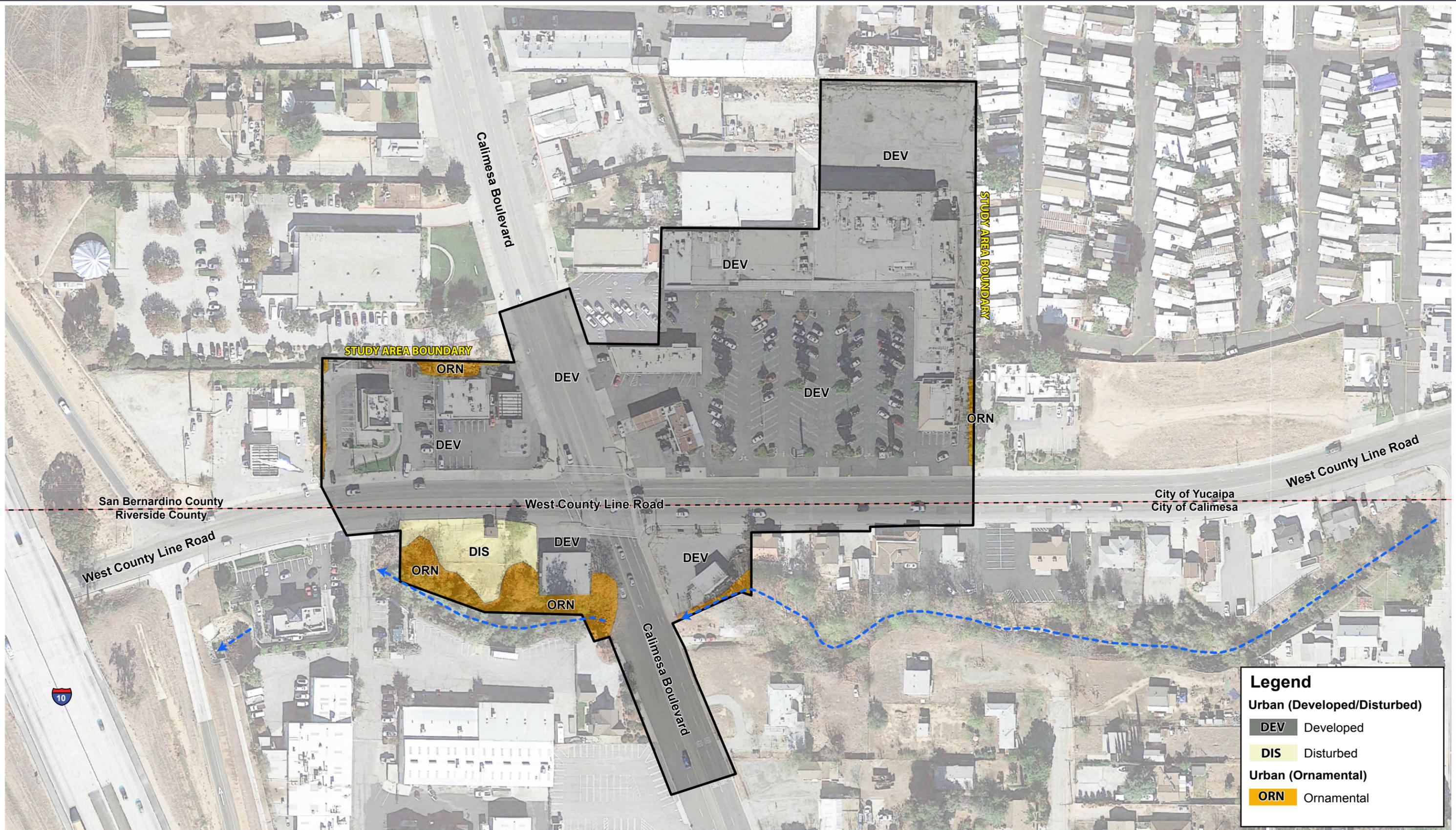


 Photo Point & Direction

APNs 411-080-005, -015, 411-100-03-040, 318-212-15, -17, 318-235-15, and ROW's

**Attachment B - Study Area Map**  
 MSHCP Biological Resources Compliance Analysis  
 County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement Project





**Legend**

**Urban (Developed/Disturbed)**

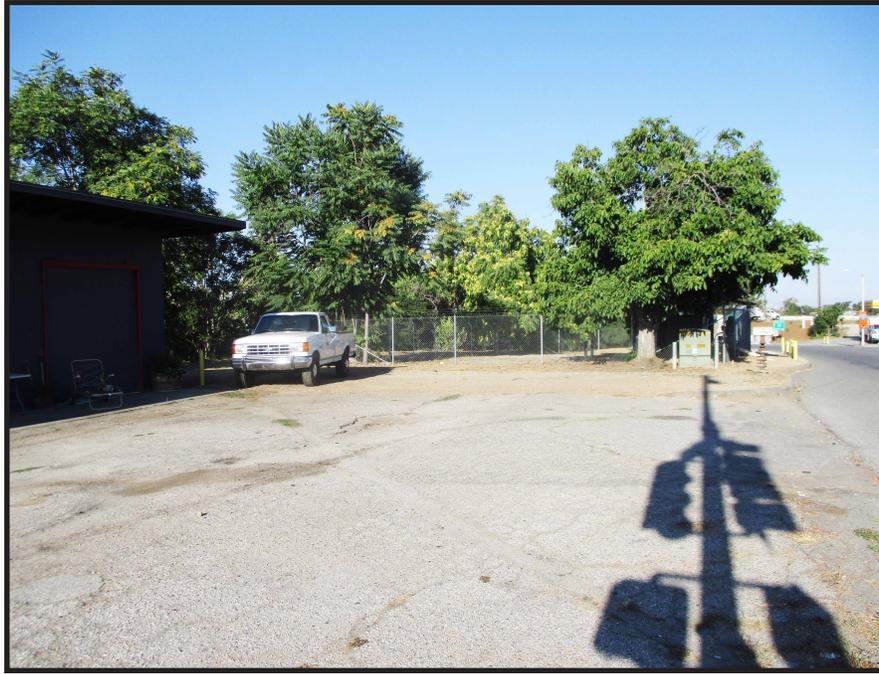
- DEV Developed
- DIS Disturbed

**Urban (Ornamental)**

- ORN Ornamental

--- Drainage

APNs 411-080-005, -015, 411-100-040, 318-212-15, -17, 318-235-15, and ROW's



PHOTOGRAPH 1 - Westward view of Study Area from south side of Calimesa Boulevard/West County Line Road intersection.



PHOTOGRAPH 2 - Eastward view of Study Area from south side of Calimesa Boulevard/West County Line Road intersection.

*Refer to Attachment B for Photographic Key*

**Attachment D - Current Study Area Photographs**

*MSHCP Biological Resources Compliance Analysis*

*County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement Project*





PHOTOGRAPH 3 - Northward view of Study Area from center of Calimesa Boulevard/West County Line Road intersection.



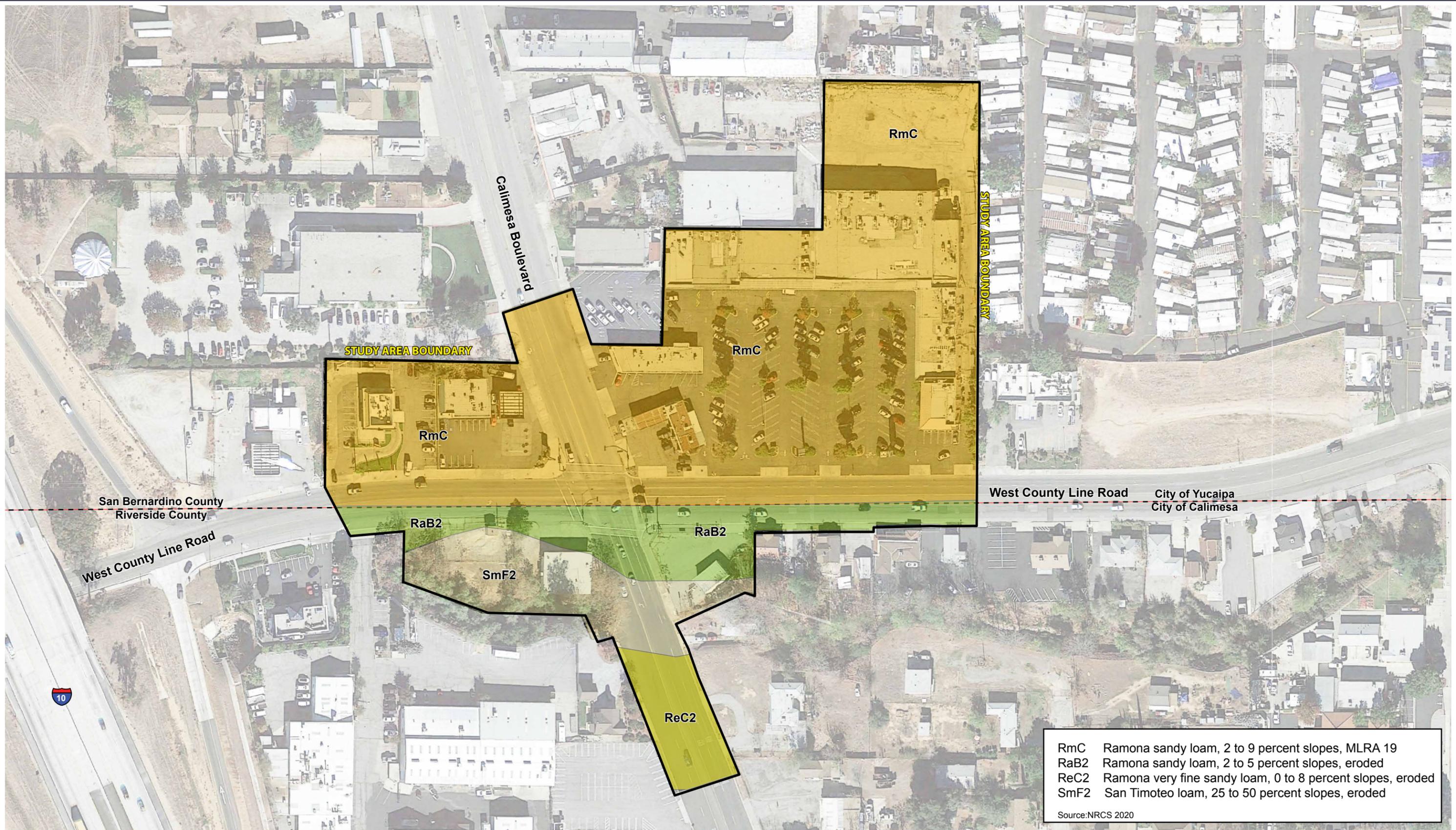
PHOTOGRAPH 4 - Westward view of Study Area from north side of Calimesa Boulevard/West County Line Road intersection.

*Refer to Attachment B for Photographic Key*

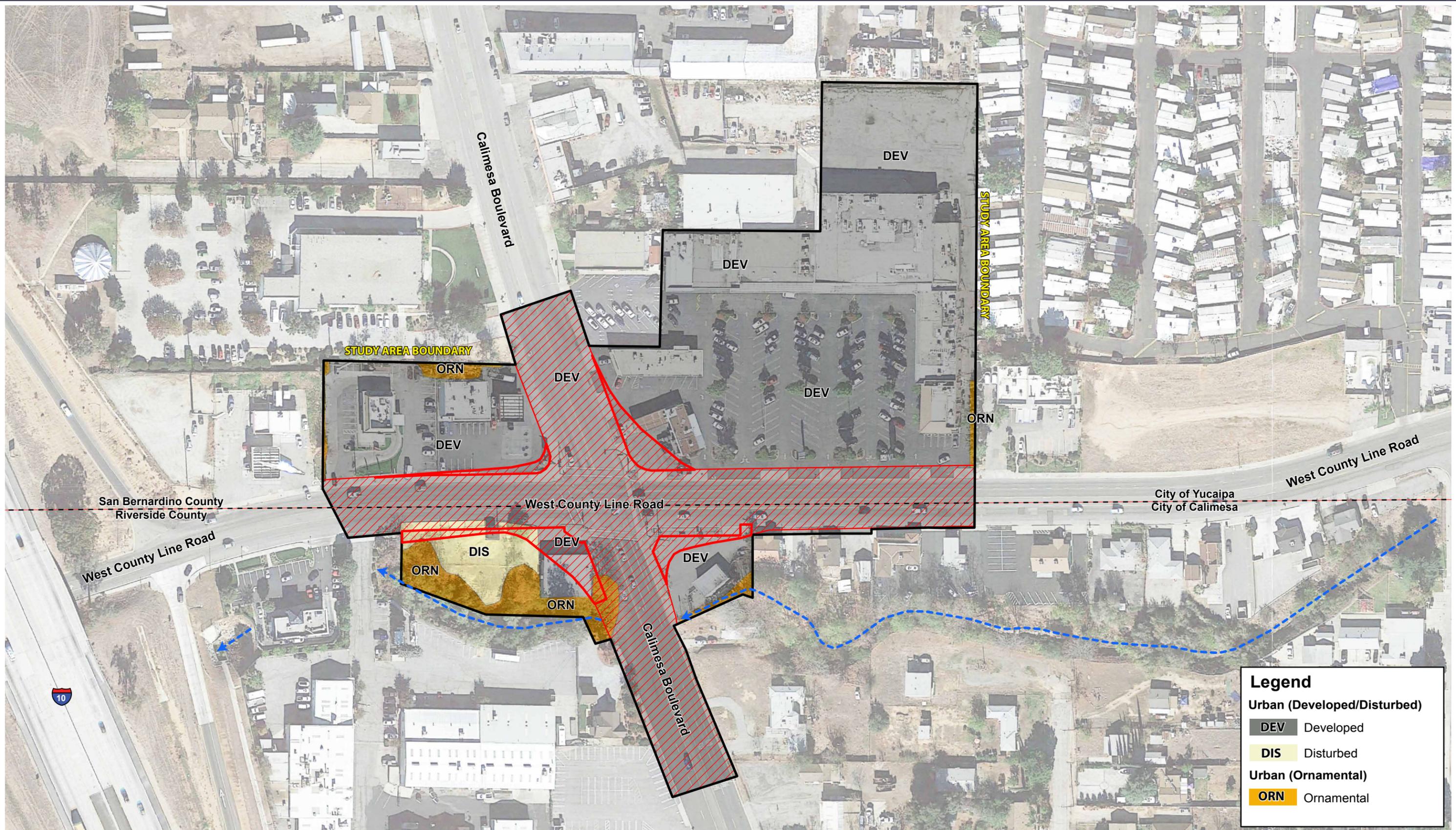
**Attachment E - Current Study Area Photographs**

*MSHCP Biological Resources Compliance Analysis*

*County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement Project*



APNs 411-080-005, -015, 411-100-040, 318-212-15, -17, 318-235-15, and ROW's



- - - Drainage    
   Permanent Impact Area    
   New ROW Acquisition

APNs 411-080-005, -015, 411-100-040, 318-212-15, -17, 318-235-15, and ROW's

**Attachment G - Study Area Impact Map**  
 MSHCP Biological Resources Compliance Analysis  
 County Line Road/Calimesa Boulevard Roadway Improvement Project

