



**PHASE I PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT:
SEATON AVENUE AND PERRY STREET PROJECT, CITY OF PERRIS,
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

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July 2021

Type of Study: Paleontological resources assessment

Paleontological Resources within Area of Potential Impact: None

Paleontological Sensitivity: Low Potential (L)

USGS 7.5-minute Quadrangle: Steele Peak, Section 02 of Township 4W, Range 4W

City and County: near the City Perris, Unincorporated Riverside County

APN(s): 314-091-005

Survey Area: **Approx.** 8.94 acres

Date of Fieldwork: April 21, 2021

Key Words: Paleontology, CEQA, Phase I Survey, Riverside County, Low Potential (L), Very old alluvial fan deposits, Qvof

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The Dedeaux Seaton Avenue and Perry Street Project (hereafter referred to as Project or Project Area), proposes the construction of two roughly 50,000 square foot square-foot, light-industrial buildings with associated auto and trailer parking on an approximately 9.43-acre parcel (APN 314-091-005), located north of Perry Street, between Beck Street and Seaton Avenue, in an unincorporated area of Riverside County near the City of Perris, Riverside County, California. Material Culture Consulting, Inc. (MCC) was retained by E|P|D Solutions, Inc. (EPD) to conduct a Phase I paleontological resource investigation of the Project Area. This assessment was conducted in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and included a locality search, review of geologic maps and paleontological literature, and a field survey.

No significant paleontological resources were identified directly within the Project Area as a result of the locality search conducted by the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History (LACM). However, localities from sedimentary deposits similar to those that may occur subsurface in the Project Area were identified. A review of geological maps and paleontological literature identified very old alluvial fan deposits within the Project Area. No significant paleontological resources were identified within the Project Area as a result of the field survey. The Riverside County Land Information System (RCLIS) GIS data reveals the entirety of the Project Area lies within an area mapped as Low Potential (L). Low Potential indicates the absence of geologic formations or mappable rock units that have yielded few fossils in the past, based on available literature and museum record. Low sensitivity also includes geological units that have produced resources on a rare occasion under unusual circumstances. Per the Riverside County General Plan, whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has low paleontological sensitivity, no direct mitigation is required unless a fossil is encountered during site development. However, due to the older Quaternary sediments being present at the eastern portion of the site, and the RCLIS indicating High B sediments beginning approximately 50 feet to the east of the Project boundary, MCC recommends a PRIMP be put in place before construction begins on the Project. Based on the above findings and County standards, as well as paleontological best practices, MCC recommends spot check monitoring for this project, as the portion of the Project with underlying igneous rock unit is not suitable for the preservation of fossils, however the older Quaternary unit has potential to produce significant fossil resources below 5 feet in depth.

All notes, photographs, correspondence and other materials related to this Project are located at Material Culture Consulting, Inc., located in Pomona, California.

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INTRODUCTION AND SETTING

The Dedeaux Seaton Avenue and Perry Street Project proposes the construction of two roughly 50,000 square-foot, light-industrial buildings with associated auto and trailer parking on an approximately 9.43-acre parcel (APN 314-091-005), located north of Perry Street, between Beck Street and Seaton Avenue, in an unincorporated area of Riverside County near the City of Perris, Riverside County, California. Material Culture Consulting, Inc. (MCC) was retained by E|P|D Solutions, Inc. (EPD) to conduct a Phase I paleontological resource investigation of the Project Area. This paleontological resource assessment was conducted in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code (13 PRC) 2100, (14 CAC) 15000, Appendix G, Section J, (PRC) 2100-21177, Appendix G, (PRC) 5097.5. This study included a locality records search, an examination of geologic maps and paleontological literature, and field survey to determine whether the proposed project would adversely affect significant paleontological resources. According to these regulations and guidelines, if development of a Project has the potential to result in significant impacts to paleontological resources, a plan must be developed to mitigate those impacts to a level which is less than significant. This assessment documents the potential for encountering paleontological resources during development of this Project and provides recommendations on how to mitigate impacts to those resources. The lead agency for this Project is Riverside County.

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Project is located in an unincorporated area near City of Perris, in northwestern Riverside County (Figure 1). The Project consists of one parcel of approximately 9.43 acres (APNs 314-091-005), located at the north of Perry Street between Beck Street and Seaton Avenue, in Unincorporated Riverside County (Figures 2 and 3). The Project Area is situated west of the Perris Reservoir and the Escondido Freeway (Interstate 215). Specifically, the Project Area is bound by single-family residences to the north, warehouses followed by Perry Street to the south, Seaton Avenue to the east, and Beck Street to the west. The proposed Project is located within Section 2, Township 4 South, Range 4 West on the Steele Peak USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle (San Bernardino Base Meridian) (Figure 2). The Project consists of the construction of two light-industrial buildings with associated auto and trailer parking.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

Jennifer Kelly, M.S., a Qualified Riverside County Paleontologist, served as the Principal Investigator for the study. Ms. Kelly conducted the paleontological resource literature and map reviews, oversaw the field study, and prepared this report. Ms. Kelly has a M.Sc. in Geology from California State University, Long Beach. Ms. Kelly has over ten years of experience in environmental and paleontological compliance in California (See Appendix A). Assistant Project Manager Erika McMullin, B.A., provided co-authorship of the report and GIS support. MCC Archaeologist and Cross-trained Paleontologist Judy Bernal, B.A., conducted the pedestrian survey. MCC Archaeologist and Cross-trained Paleontologist Karleen Ronsairo, M.A., provided co-authorship of this report.



Figure 1. EPD Seaton Avenue and Perry Street Project Vicinity (1:500,000)

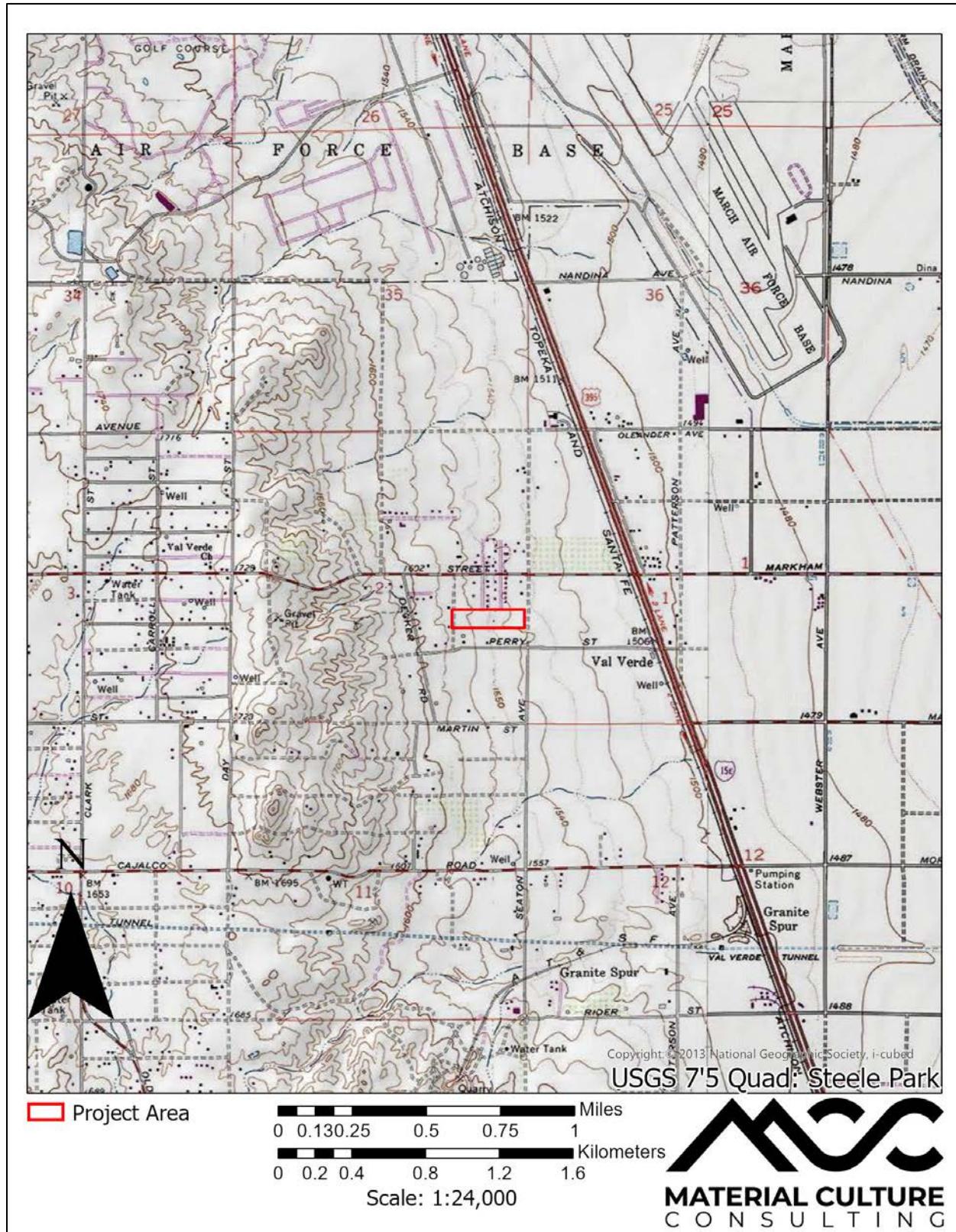


Figure 2. EPD Seaton Avenue and Perry Street Project Location (as depicted on Perris USGS 7.5 minute Quadrangle, 1:24,000)



Figure 3. EPD Seaton Avenue and Perry Street Project Area (as depicted on aerial photograph, 1:2,000)

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project Area is located outside the city limits of Perris in an unincorporated area in northwestern Riverside County, approximately 0.4 miles west of California Interstate 215. Bounded by the Box Springs Mountains to the north, the Badlands to the east, and Lake Perris Recreation Area and associated mountains to the northeast, the Project Area is located within a relatively flat valley floor that is surrounded by hills and mountains. Elevations are approximately 473 meters (m) (1552 feet) above mean sea level (AMSL) throughout the Project Area. The region is located within the Peninsular Ranges, a northwest-southeast oriented complex of blocks separated by similarly trending faults (Norris and Webb 1976). Most geological formations found within this area are part of the Southern California Batholith, a great mass of basement igneous rocks. The climate in the region is characterized as Mediterranean, with hot, dry summers and temperate, wet winters. Vegetation observed within the Project Area include foxtail grasses and wildflowers throughout the majority of the Project Area with large Pepper trees on the exterior fence line boundaries.

GEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

The Project Area is within the Steele Peak quadrangle, which lies within the geomorphic province known as the Peninsular Ranges Province, sitting near the eastern margin of the Perris Block (Kenney 1999). The Perris Block is a structurally stable, internally cohesive mass of crustal rocks bounded on the east by the San Jacinto fault zone, bounded on the west by the Elsinore and Chino fault zones, and on the north by the Cucamonga fault zone (Norris and Webb, 1976; Morton and Matti, 1989), and on the south by a series of sedimentary basins (Morton and Matti 1989). The sediment within the Project area is mapped as very old alluvial fan deposits in the eastern portion and as Val Verde tonalite in the western portion. (Figure 4).

Val Verde tonalite (Kvt) is a Cretaceous-age igneous rock within the Peninsular Ranges Batholith complex, consisting of relatively homogenous, medium- to coarse-grained gray-colored tonalite. It is the principal rock type of the Val Verde pluton. The material contains biotite, hornblende quartz, and plagioclase. Due to its igneous nature, this unit is not suitable for the preservation of paleontological resources and has a low paleontological sensitivity.

Very old alluvial fan deposits (Qvof) are early Pleistocene deposits consisting of mostly well-dissected, well-indurated, reddish-brown sand deposits with minor gravel (Morton 2001). These deposits are commonly observed flanking bedrock areas and can contain duripans and locally silcretes (Morton 2001). These sediments are derived as alluvial fan deposits from the elevated terrain located immediately to the south of the Project Area (Morton 2001). The surficial sediments can be relatively coarse-grained and lack significant vertebrate fossils in the uppermost layers but may have pockets of finer-grained Quaternary deposits that do contain significant vertebrate fossils (Morton 2001; Bell 2021). This unit has potential to produce significant paleontological resources below 5 feet in depth, or within localized fine-grained lenses (High B).

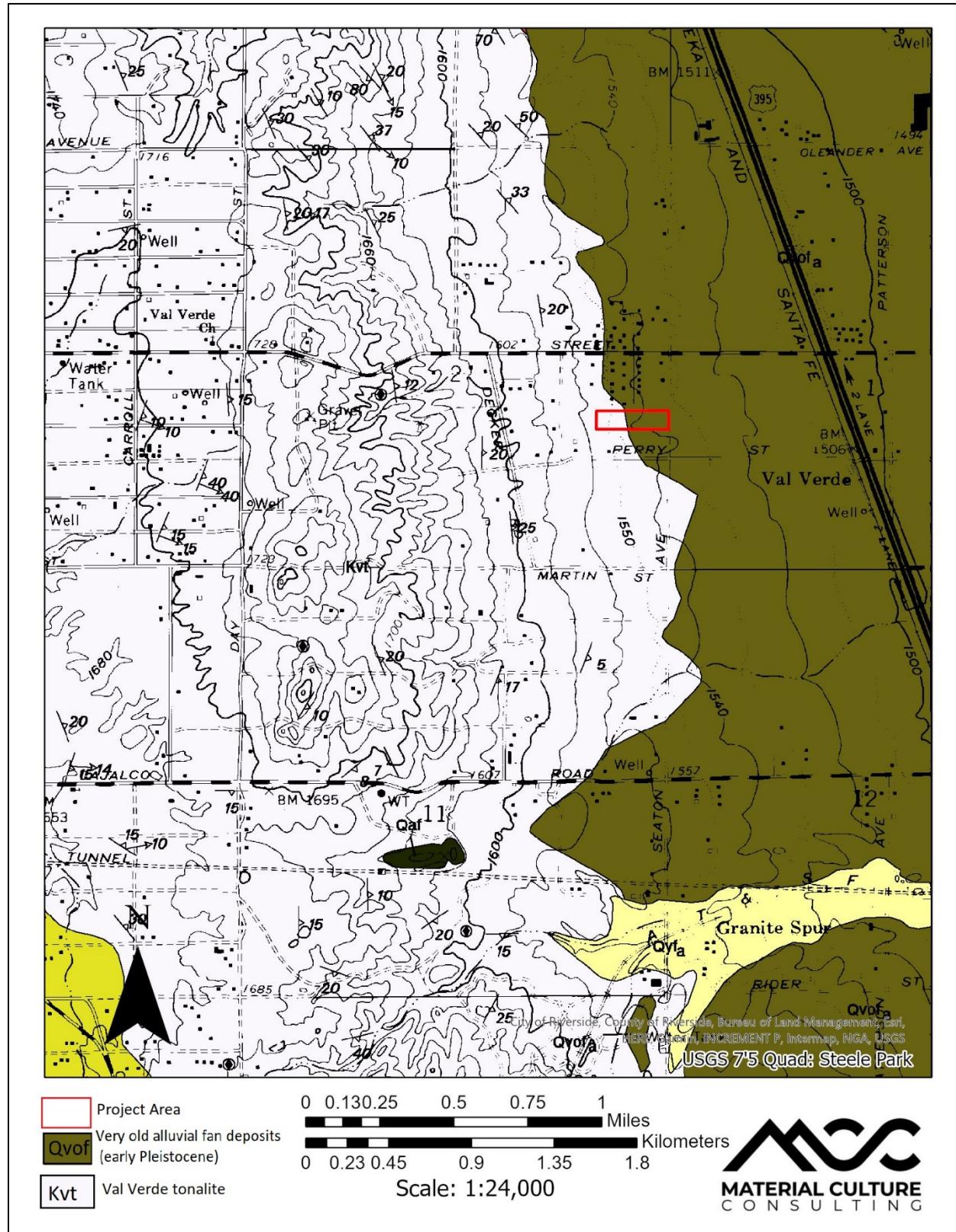


Figure 4. EPD Seaton Avenue and Perry Street Project Geologic Map (from Morton 2001, 1:24,000)

RESEARCH DESIGN

The paleontological resources assessment was conducted according to CEQA, Public Resources Code (13 PRC) 2100, (14 CAC) 15000, Appendix G, Section J, (PRC) 2100-21177, Appendix G, (PRC) 5097.5. The paleontological resources assessment was conducted to evaluate the potential existence of resources that would require a preparation of a monitoring plan and monitoring activities, in order to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Guidelines set forth by Riverside County were consulted to ensure that all local and state requirements were met.

The Riverside County Land Information System (RCLIS) overlay map defines what a significant impact on paleontological resources would be and requires monitoring of ground disturbing activities within areas designated as having High sensitivity. High sensitivity areas are mapped as either "High A" or "High B." Rock units with a "High Potential" for paleontological resources include sedimentary rock units that have an increased potential for containing significant non-renewable paleontological resources and are rock units within which vertebrate or significant invertebrate fossils have been determined to be present or likely to be present. These units include, but are not limited to, sedimentary formations which contain significant non-renewable paleontological resources anywhere within their geographical extent, and sedimentary rock units temporally or lithologically suitable for the preservation of fossils. High sensitivity includes not only the potential for yielding abundant vertebrate fossils, but also for production of a few significant fossils that may provide new and significant (taxonomic, phylogenetic, ecologic, and/or stratigraphic) data.

The *Riverside County General Plan* also requires that a final report documenting the findings of the monitoring and mitigation work be submitted to the Riverside County Planning Department (Riverside County 2008). *Riverside County General Plan* recommendations are based on the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) Guidelines (SVP 1991, 1996).

The Multipurpose Open Space Element of the *Riverside County General Plan* provides the following requirements for paleontologically sensitive areas within the County:

- OS 19.6 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has high paleontological sensitivity a paleontological resource impact mitigation program (PRIMP) shall be filed with the County Geologist prior to site grading. The PRIMP shall specify the steps to be taken to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources.
- OS 19.7 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has low paleontological sensitivity no direct mitigation is required unless a fossil is encountered during site development. Should a fossil be encountered, the County Geologist shall be notified, and a paleontologist shall be retained by the project proponent. The paleontologist shall document the extent and potential significance of the paleontological resources on the site and establish appropriate mitigation measures for further site development.
- OS 19.8 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has undetermined paleontological sensitivity a report shall be filed with the County Geologist documenting the extent and potential significance of the paleontological resources on site and identifying mitigation measures for the fossil and for impacts to significant paleontological resources prior to approval of that department.
- OS 19.9 Whenever paleontological resources are found, the County Geologist shall direct them to a facility within Riverside County for their curation, including the Western Science center in the City of Hemet.

METHODS

LITERATURE AND MAP REVIEW AND LOCALITY SEARCH

A literature review of geologic maps and a review of relevant geological and paleontological literature was conducted to determine which geologic units are present within the Project Area and whether fossils have been recovered from those geologic units elsewhere in the region. As geologic units may extend over large geographic areas and contain similar lithologies and fossils, the literature review includes areas well beyond the Project Area. The results of this literature review include an overview of the geology of the Project Areas and a discussion of the paleontological sensitivity (or potential) of the geologic units within the Project Area. Riverside County also provides a paleontological resource sensitivity map for the entire county (RCLIS). This map was consulted by MCC staff on June 9, 2021. Additional sources reviewed included the University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) Miocene Mammal Mapping Project (MioMap) and the Paleobiology Database (PBDB), as well as pertinent available literature on the area.

A locality search was conducted to establish the status and extent of previously recorded paleontological resources within and adjacent to the Project Area. On March 19, 2021, the results of a locality search were provided by the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History (LACM) of Los Angeles, California (Appendix B). This search identified any vertebrate localities in the LACM records that exist near the Project Area in the same or similar deposits.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES SURVEY METHODS

On April 21, 2021, MCC Archaeologist and Cross-trained Paleontologist Judy Bernal, B.A., conducted a pedestrian survey of the 9.43-acre parcel (APN# 314-091-005) of the Project Area. The survey stage is important in a Project's environmental assessment phase to verify the exact location of each identified paleontological resource (if any), the condition or integrity of the resource, and provides invaluable information on the type of sediment present within the Project Area, which informs the assessment of paleontological sensitivity. During the course of the pedestrian survey, special attention was paid to any graded areas and to rodent burrows that offered a better view of the underlying sediment. The purpose of a pedestrian survey is to note the sediments in the Project Area, relocate any known paleontological localities, and identify any unrecorded paleontological resources exposed on the surface. In this way, impacts to existing, unrecorded paleontological material may be mitigated prior to the beginning of ground-disturbing activities and portions of the Project Area that are more likely to contain paleontological resources may be identified.

RESULTS

LACM LOCALITY SEARCH AND LITERATURE REVIEW RESEARCH

The record search results from the LACM (Bell 2021, Appendix B) did not identify any previously recorded fossils within the Project Area; however, there are known localities nearby from the same sedimentary deposits mapped within the Project Area (see Table 1). The closest vertebrate fossil locality from similar deposits is LACM VP 6059, from an unknown formation, located near Lake Elsinore, located approximately 13 miles southwest of the Project Area. This locality produced a fossil specimen of camel (Camelidae) at an unknown depth (Bell 2020).

The Paleobiology Database (PBDB) and the Miocene Mammal Mapping Project (MioMap) yielded no results within the region.

Reviewed literature for the area indicates that fossils remains of a mastodon were found surficially in a drainage area within the City of Perris in the late 1990's, however precise location information was not provided.

Table 1. LACM Paleontological Resources Record Search Results of Localities Outside of Project Area

Locality Number	Location	Formation	Taxa	Depth
LACM VP 7811	W of Orchard Park, Chino Valley	Unknown formation (eolian, tan silt; Pleistocene)	Whip snake (<i>Masticophis</i>)	9-11 feet bgs
LACM VP 1207	Hill on east side of sewage disposal plant; 1 mile N-NW of Corona	Unknown formation (Pleistocene)	Bovidae	Unknown
LACM IP 6059	Overflow area just east-southeast of Lake Elsinore	Unknown formation (Pleistocene)	Camel family (Camelidae)	Unknown
LACM VP 437	West side of Castile Canyon, north of Soboba Indian Reservation	Unknown formation	Invertebrates – insect (<i>Sobobapteron kirkbaye</i>), brachiopod (<i>Terebratalia hemphili</i>)	Unknown
LACM VP 7261	Skinner Reservoir, Auld Valley	Unnamed (Pleistocene; arenaceous silt)	Elephant family (Proboscidea); ungulate (Ungulata)	Unknown

Key: VP: vertebrate paleontology; IP: invertebrate paleontology; bgs: below ground surface

The RCLIS GIS database designates the Project Area as Low Potential (L) (Figure 5). Low Potential (L) indicates a low potential for yielding an abundant vertebrate fossil fauna or new significant fossils (RCLIS 2021). However, immediately adjacent to the project, to the east approximately 50 feet across Seaton Avenue, the RCLIS has the sediments mapped as High B, indicating the potential for paleontological resources to be found during earthmoving activities at or beyond 5 feet in depth. Therefore, MCC recommends that the eastern portion of the Project Area, mapped as older Quaternary sediments, be considered to be High B sensitivity for the purposes of this Project.

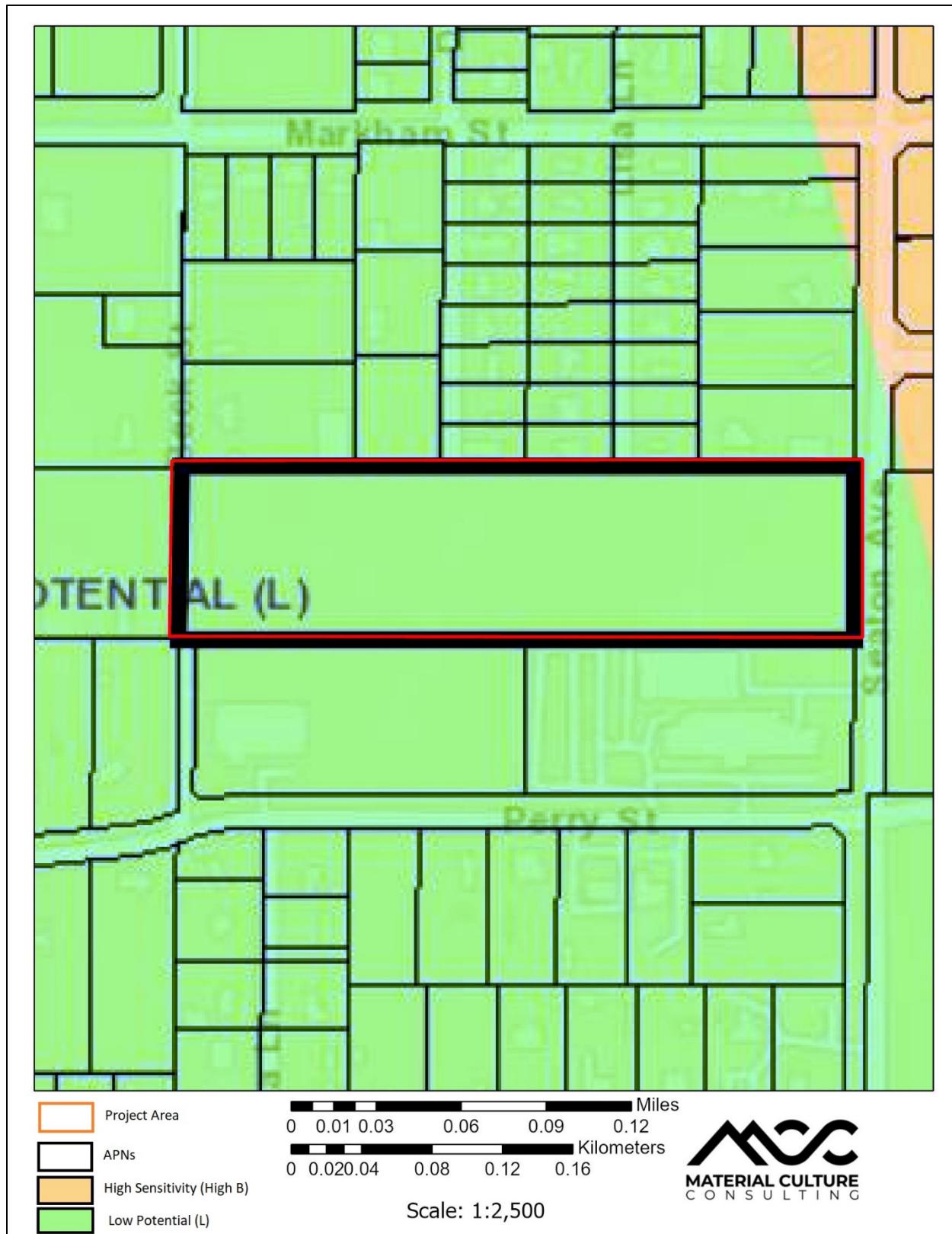


Figure 5. Paleontological Sensitivity (from RCLIS, green indicates Low Potential [L] Note that the orange High B potential is mapped less than 50 feet to the east of the Project Area)

PALEONTOLOGICAL PEDESTRIAN SURVEY RESULTS

On April 21, 2021, an intensive pedestrian survey was conducted of the Project Area, which consists of a 9.43-acre parcel (APN 314-091-005) (Figures 7-14). During the survey, conditions were good but ground visibility was very poor (less than 5%) due to overgrown vegetation. Portions of the Project Area have been highly disturbed due to overgrown vegetation and subject to heavy residential dumping. Observed vegetation included tall foxtail grasses and wildflowers throughout most of the Project Area. Observed sediment consisted of light brown, coarse-grained silt and sand with pebble-sized inclusions of granitic rock. Granitic (diorite) boulders were present in the southwest corner of the Project Area. These boulders have been heavily deteriorated by erosion and human activity. The Project Area was relatively flat, and no soil profiles or deep cuts were exposed. Disturbances include modern refuse and bioturbation (animal burrows) observed throughout the Project Area.



Figure 6. Overview of Project Area from northeast corner, view west



Figure 7. Overview of Project Area from northwest corner, view south



Figure 8. Overview of Project Area from southwest corner, view north/northwest



Figure 9. Overview of Project Area from southeast corner, view west



Figure 10. Representative photo of soils, plan view



Figure 11. Representative photo of soils, plan view



Figure 12. Overview of southwest/northeast dirt road cutting through Project Area, view southwest



Figure 13. Overview of fence line debris in northern portion of Project Area, view north

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

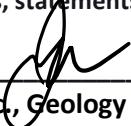
MCC conducted a Phase I paleontological resource assessment of the Project Area that included a literature review, reviews of pertinent geological maps, a fossil locality record search, and an intensive pedestrian survey covering the Project Area. No significant paleontological resources were identified within the Project Area as a result of the locality search. The geologic map review determined the soil in the project area is very old Quaternary-aged alluvial fan deposits (Qvof). The surficial sediments are relatively coarse and generally lack significant vertebrate fossils in the uppermost layers but may have pockets of finer-grained Quaternary deposits that could contain significant vertebrate fossils. The intensive pedestrian survey did not identify any significant paleontological resources within the Project Area. The uppermost layers of soil within the Project Area consist of very old alluvial fan deposits that have Low Potential (L) to yield significant fossil vertebrates based on the RCLIS. However, it is possible to encounter subsurface Pleistocene-aged sediments that are suitable for the preservation of significant vertebrate fossils during excavations for this Project. Therefore, it is the recommendation of MCC that this Project be considered to have High B sensitivity (i.e. having the potential to produce significant paleontological resources below 5 feet in depth) in areas mapped as Quaternary older deposits.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION

Based on the results of the Phase I paleontological resource assessment, the proposed Project Area is considered to have low to moderate sensitivity for the potential to impact paleontological resources during subsurface ground disturbing construction activities within undisturbed sedimentary deposits. MCC recommends preparation of a Paleontological Resource Impact Management Plan (PRIMP) prior to construction excavation, in order to mitigate any potential impact to non-renewable fossil resources to a less-than-significant level. It is recommended that a professional paleontologist be hired to oversee monitoring and the preparation of a PRMP. At a minimum, the PRMP should include the following items:

- A trained and Riverside County paleontological monitor should perform spot checking of any excavations in undisturbed native sediments below 5 feet in depth to determine what type of sediment is present, and if the sediment is appropriate for the potential preservation of fossil remains. The monitor will have the ability to redirect construction activities to ensure avoidance of adverse impacts to paleontological resources.
- The Project paleontologist may re-evaluate the necessity for paleontological monitoring after examination of the affected sediments during excavation, with approval from County and Client representatives.
- Any potentially significant fossils observed shall be collected and recorded in conjunction with best management practices and SVP professional standards.
- Any fossils recovered during mitigation should be deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution for the benefit of current and future generations.
- A report documenting the results of the monitoring, including any salvage activities and the significance of any fossils, will be prepared and submitted to the appropriate County personnel.

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

Date: July 6, 2021 Signature: 

Name: Jennifer Kelly, MSc., Geology
Riverside County Qualified Paleontologist

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