ALDEN ENVIRONMENTAL, INC
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April 4, 2022

Ms. Tracy Zinn
T&B Planning, Inc.
3200 El Camino Real, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92602

Subject: Santa Ana and Oleander Project-Biological Resources

Dear Ms. Zinn:

This letter report describes the existing biological resources on the Santa Ana and Oleander project site and evaluates the potential impacts to those resources that may occur as a result of project implementation. This report is intended to provide the City of Fontana (City) and applicant with information necessary to assess impacts to biological resources under the California Environmental Quality Act.

PROJECT LOCATION

The approximately 29.8-acre project site is located north of Santa Ana Avenue, west of Citrus Avenue, and east and west of Oleander Avenue in the City (Figures 1 and 2). While a portion of the project site west of Oleander Avenue is designated as Not a Part (NAP) on the conceptual site plan, it is included within the overall, 29.8-acre project site in this report.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project would entail redevelopment of the project site, which would transform the property from its existing residential use to a modern facility with three, multi-story buildings (maximum allowed height of 60 feet) supporting warehouse and office space. The project would also include auto and trailer parking as well as landscaping. Access to the facility would be from driveways on Oleander Avenue, Santa Ana Avenue, and Citrus Avenue.

Proposed development activities are assumed herein to cause physical disturbance to the entire project site despite a portion of the site west of Oleander Avenue being designated as NAP on the conceptual site plan. No other on- or off-site physical impacts have been evaluated in this report as part of the project.

METHODS

Prior to conducting the biological fieldwork, background research was conducted to obtain information on the existing biological conditions on the project site and in its vicinity. Background research included a review of current local, State, and federal regulations, historical and current aerial imagery, U.S. Geological Survey topography, U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service soil survey mapping, the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI).

A query was made of the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) to identify sensitive biological resources reported in the project site vicinity. The CNDDB, which is administered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), provides an inventory of vegetation communities, plant species, and wildlife species that are considered sensitive by State and federal resource agencies, academic institutions, and other conservation groups. Reported occurrences of sensitive species from the project vicinity were used to evaluate the potential of such species to occur on or adjacent to the project site.

Biologist Brian Leatherman conducted a site visit on March 15, 2022 to identify and map existing biological resources on the project site. Most of the residences on the project site are still occupied, but he had enough access to see most of the site. Mr. Leatherman walked areas of the site where direct access was permitted; he recorded plant and animal species observed/detected (Attachments A and B); and he took representative site photographs (Attachment C; Figure 3). There are a lot of ornamental shrubs and trees on the private properties, most of which he did not attempt to identify because ornamental vegetation associated with occupied residences is considered a feature of development.

Vegetation Mapping

Mr. Leatherman mapped vegetation and land cover types by hand on recent aerial imagery with a scale of 1 inch equal to 230 feet.

Sensitive Plant Species

The CNDDB query did not return any records of sensitive plant species on site or within the project vicinity. Based on these results and the long-disturbed and developed condition of the project site (see Results, Physical Description and Land Use below) and his professional opinion, Mr. Leatherman did not consider that a focused plant species survey was warranted and, therefore, one was not conducted. Although not expected, Mr. Leatherman did look for sensitive plant species during the site visit, and the date of the site visit coincided with the typical bloom period for most sensitive annual species (i.e., March through May). And, while he did not have 100 percent access to the project site, its long history of disturbance and development means that the potential for sensitive plant species to occur is low at best.

Sensitive Animal Species

The CNDDB query returned historic records of three sensitive animal species in the vicinity of project site but none on the project site. Based on the long-disturbed and developed condition of the project site (see Results, Physical Description and Land Use below) and his professional opinion, Mr. Leatherman did not consider that focused sensitive animal species surveys were warranted and, therefore, none was conducted.

Wetlands, Riparian/Riverine and Vernal Pool Resources, and Jurisdictional Features

During the site visit, the project site was inspected for Riparian/Riverine and Vernal Pool Resources, as well as any features that have potential to be considered Waters of the U.S. (WUS) or Waters of the State (WS) under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), respectively.

RESULTS

Physical Description and Land Use

The project site is essentially level with on-site elevations ranging from approximately 1,040 to 1,060 feet above mean sea level. The soil mapped on site is Tujunga loamy sand (0 to 5 percent slopes). Most of the site is currently developed and supports residential properties, but there are also areas characterized as disturbed and others that are periodically disced and mapped as non-native grassland (but could also be considered disturbed based on how recently discing occurred). Historic aerial imagery as far back as 1938 shows the project site in agricultural production and/or a combination of residential uses and agriculture up until at least the late 1960s (Historic Aerials by NETRONLINE; National Environmental Title Research, LLC 2022; https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer).

Vegetation Communities and Land Cover

Two vegetation communities and one land cover type are present on site: non-native grassland, disturbed habitat, and developed, respectively (Figure 3).

Table 1
VEGETATION COMMUNITIES AND LAND COVER TYPES ON THE PROJECT SITE

Vegetation Communities	Acres
Non-native grassland	8.6
Disturbed habitat	4.3
Developed	16.9
TOTAL	**29.8**

Non-native grassland is mapped in two strips on the project site. Some of the plant species noted in this community on site include wild oat (*Avena* sp.), ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*), red brome (*Bromus rubens*), and rigid fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*). These areas appear to be periodically disced.

Disturbed habitat also occurs in two areas on site. Characteristic plant species of this community include Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium album*), and prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*).

Developed is a constructed, land cover type that occupies the remainder of the project site and is characterized by residential properties and associated ornamental shrubs and trees.

Sensitive Plant Species

Plant species observed on site consist primarily of non-native (including ornamental) species. No sensitive plant species were observed on site, and none is anticipated to occur given the long-disturbed and developed condition of the site.

It should be noted that Article III. – Preservation of Heritage, Significant, and Specimen Trees (https://library.municode.com/ca/fontana/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CO_CH28VE_ARTIIIPRHESISPTR_S28-61PU) may be applicable to the project. This article was adopted to establish regulations for the preservation and protection of heritage, significant and/or specimen trees within the City located on both private and public property. Mr. Leatherman was not able to access the entire project site to record all plant species present, and he was not directed to conduct a tree survey. Article III requires a permit to remove heritage, significant, and specimen trees.

Sensitive Animal Species

No sensitive animal species were observed or detected on site during the site visit, and none is anticipated to occur given its long-disturbed and developed condition.

One federal endangered species, Delhi sands flower-loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*), was reported to the CNDDB in the site vicinity. The Delhi sands flower-loving fly, however, occurs in association with Delhi sands soils, which are not present on site.

Another federal endangered species, which is also a candidate for State listing as endangered, was reported to the CNDDB in the site vicinity. This species is the San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*). San Bernardino kangaroo rats are found on the gentle slopes of alluvial fans, on flood plains, along washes, and on adjacent upland areas with soils containing sand, loam, and gravel deposited by rivers and streams. They also occupy areas where sandy soils are wind deposited in alluvial sage scrub, coastal sage scrub, and chaparral vegetation. There is no San Bernardino kangaroo habitat present on site.

While non-native grassland was mapped on site and is a type of potential habitat for the burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; federal Bird of Conservation Concern and State Species of Special Concern), no burrowing owl or sign of the burrowing owl (e.g., pellets, prey remains, whitewash) was observed during the site visit. Additionally, no burrows that could be used by the burrowing owl were observed, particularly those created by the California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), which was also not observed or detected on site. It is Mr. Leatherman's professional opinion that burrowing owls are not likely to occur on site due to the periodic discing and the apparent lack of California ground squirrels and potentially suitable burrows (artificial [e.g., pipes] or natural).

Wetlands, Riparian/Riverine and Vernal Pool Resources, and Jurisdictional Features

The NHD and NWI did not return results for any riparian/riverine, vernal pool, or other wetland resources on site. The NHD/NWI did return a result of a reservoir/freshwater pond located east of Juniper Avenue, north of Aliso Drive, and south of the Fontana Crossings Business Center, which is approximately 0.52-mile northeast of the project site. The NHD/NWI also identified a canal/ditch/riverine feature that runs in an east-west direction north of, and paralleling Interstate 10.

No riparian/riverine, vernal pool, or other wetland resources, or features that have potential to be considered WUS or WS under the jurisdiction of the Corps and/or (CDFW), respectively, were observed on site. The project site is essentially flat and does not support any aquatic features necessary for the development of these resources.

Nesting Birds

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (sections 3503 and 3513) provide for protection of birds during the avian nesting season. A killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*) appeared to Mr. Leatherman on a nest in the gravel on the property shown in Photo 10 (Attachment C). Other MBTA- and Fish and Game Code-protected species that he observed or detected (e.g., house finch [*Haemorhous mexicanus*] and mourning dove [*Zenaida macroura*]) also have potential to nest on site in the shrubs and trees and on or in the residential structures, for example. Mr. Leatherman also observed a pair of red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) roosting in row of eucalyptus trees along the north end of the project site but did not see a nest. He indicated, however, that one could still be present.

Wildlife Corridors

The Chapter 7 of the Fontana General Plan (Conservation, Open Space, Parks and Trails) does not show any conserved, open space, park, protected area, or trail feature adjacent to or in the vicinity of the project site. The nearest such features is a protected area south of Jurupa Avenue (see the block of undeveloped land shown at the bottom of Figure 2) and, it is separated from the project site by residential development, Jurupa Avenue, and numerous warehouse facilities (Figure 2). Therefore, there are no local or regional corridors connecting wildlife habitat present within or adjacent to the project site.

PROJECT IMPACTS

Vegetation Communities and Land Cover

Under the assumption that the entire project site surveyed would be affected by project development, the project would impact two vegetation communities (non-native grassland and disturbed habitat) and one land cover type (developed), none of which is considered sensitive (Table 2). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur.

Table 2 **IMPACTS TO VEGETATION COMMUNITIES AND LAND COVER ON THE PROJECT SITE**	
Vegetation Communities	**Acre**
Non-native grassland	8.6
Disturbed habitat	4.3
Developed	16.9
TOTAL	**29.8**

Sensitive Plant Species

No sensitive plant species occur on site; therefore, no significant impacts to sensitive plant species would occur. A permit to remove any heritage, significant and/or specimen tree may be required, however, under City Municipal Code, if they are present.

Sensitive Animal Species

The site has little to no potential to support sensitive animal species; therefore, no significant impacts to sensitive animal species would occur.

Wetlands, Riparian/Riverine and Vernal Pool Resources, and Jurisdictional Features

No wetlands, riparian/riverine habitats, or potential WUS or WS occur on site. Therefore, there would be no impacts to these types of features, and the project would not require Corps, CDFW, or Regional Water Quality Control Board permits.

Nesting Birds

If project construction is to occur during the avian nesting season (February 15 – September 1), significant impacts to nesting birds could occur. Therefore, a pre-construction nesting bird survey should be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no impacts to nesting birds occur.

The nesting bird survey should be completed within three days prior to the commencement of any construction activities including vegetation removal or other ground-disturbing activities. If active nests are found, they should be avoided, and appropriate no-impact buffer zones should be established and maintained/monitored until after the young have fledged and are no longer dependent on the nest as determined by a qualified biologist.

Wildlife Corridors

No local or regional wildlife corridors are present within or adjacent to the project site; therefore, the project would not affect wildlife movement.

CONCLUSION

The project would not impact any sensitive vegetation community, sensitive plant species, or wetlands, riparian/riverine or vernal pool resources, and potential WUS or WS on the site since none is present. If any tree protected by City Municipal Code would be removed, however, a permit may be required.

The project would not impact any sensitive animal species since none is expected to occur, nor would it impact wildlife movement. There could, however, be impacts to nesting birds should construction occur during the avian nesting season (February 15 – September 1). Implementation of the pre-construction nesting bird survey and maintaining/monitoring appropriate no-impact nest buffer zones would reduce this potential impact to a less-than-significant level. As such, the project would not result in significant impacts to sensitive biological resources.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this letter report.

Sincerely,

Greg Mason
Senior Biologist

Attachments:
A – Plant Species Observed
B – Animal Species Observed or Detected
C – Representative Photographs

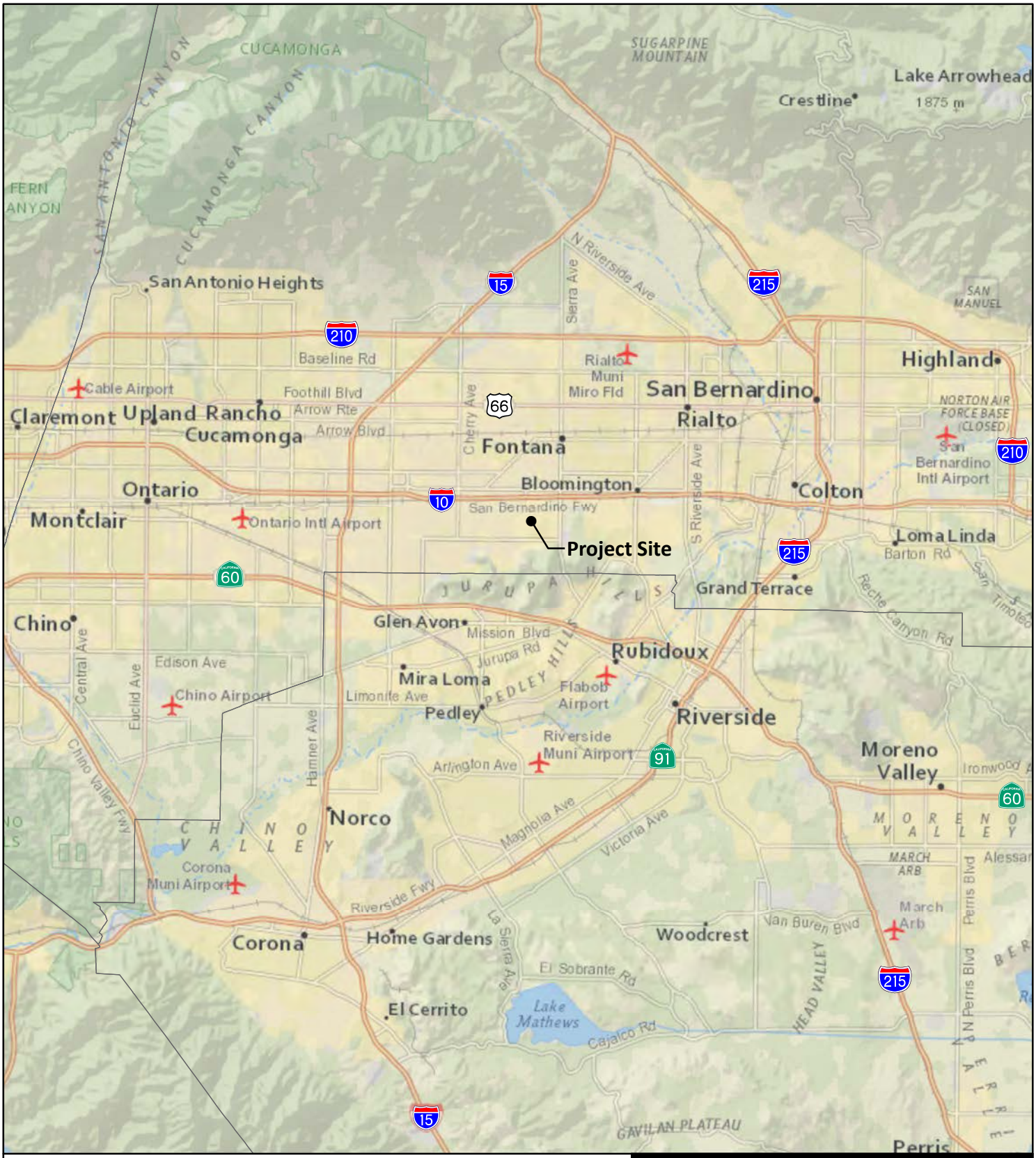

Figure 1

Regional Location

SANTA ANA AND OLEANDER
FONTANA, CA

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Figure 2

Project Location

SANTA ANA AND OLEANDER
FONTANA, CA

N
W E
S

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

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Project Boundary

Photo Location

Vegetation

Non-native Grassland

Disturbed Habitat

Developed

N

W E

S

0 115 230

Feet

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Figure 3

Biological Resources

SANTA ANA AND OLEANDER
FONTANA, CA

ATTACHMENT A
PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED

FAMILY	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Anacardiaceae	*Schinus molle*[1]	Peruvian pepper tree
Arecaceae	*Phoenix* sp.[1]	palm
	Washingtonia sp.[1]	fan palm
Asteraceae	*Ambrosia acanthicarpa*	bur-sage
	Heterotheca grandiflora	telegraph weed
	Lactuca serriola[1]	prickly lettuce
	Oncosiphon piluliferum[1]	stinknet
	Verbesina encelioides sp. *exauriculata*[1]	earless crown beard
Bignoniaceae	*Tecoma capensis*[1]	Cape honeysuckle
Boraginaceae	*Amsinckia menziesii*	rigid fiddleneck
Brassicaceae	*Brassica tournefortii*[1]	Sahara mustard
Chenopodiaceae	*Chenopodium album*[1]	lamb's quarters
	Salsola tragus[1]	Russian thistle
Cupressaceae	*Juniperus* sp.[1]	ornamental juniper
Fabaceae	*Bauhinia* sp.[1]	butterfly tree
Geraniaceae	*Erodium cicutarium*[1]	red-stemmed filaree
Malvaceae	*Ceiba speciosa*[1]	floss silk tree
	Malva parviflora[1]	cheeseweed
Moraceae	*Ficus* sp.[1]	edible fig
Musaceae	*Musa* sp.[1]	banana tree
Mytaceae	*Eucalyptus* sp.[1]	gum
Nyctaginaceae	*Bougainvillea* sp.[1]	bougainvillea
Oleaceae	*Fraxinus* sp.[1]	ornamental ash
	Olea europaea[1]	common olive
Rutaceae	*Citrus x sinensis*[1]	orange tree
	Citrus limon[1]	lemon tree
Pinaceae	*Pinus* sp.[1]	ornamental pine
Poaceae	Avena sp.[1]	wild oat
	Bromus diandrus[1]	ripgut grass
	Bromus rubens[1]	red brome
	Cynodon dactylon[1]	Bermuda grass
	Hordeum murinum var. *leporinum*[1]	hare barley
	Pennisetum setaceum[1]	crimson fountain grass
Solanaceae	*Datura wrightii*	pale-flowered thorn-apple

[1]Non-native species

ATTACHMENT B
ANIMAL SPECIES OBSERVED OR DETECTED

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Reptiles	
Phrynosomatidae	
Uta stansburiana	side-blotched lizard
Sceloporus occidentalis	western fence lizard
Birds	
Aegithalidae	
Psaltriparus minimus	bushtit
Charadriidae	
Charadrius vociferus	killdeer
Columbidae	
Streptopelia decaocto	Eurasian collared dove
Zenaida macroura	mourning dove
Corvidae	
Corvus brachyrhynchos	American crow
Corvus corax	common raven
Fringillidae	
Haemorhous mexicanus	house finch
Mimidae	
Mimus polyglottos	northern mockingbird
Passeridae	
Zonotrichia leucophrys	white-crowned sparrow
Passeriformes	
Tyrannus vociferans	Cassin's Kingbird
Parulidae	
Setophaga coronata	yellow-rumped warbler
Sturnidae	
Sturnus vulgaris	European starling
Trochilidae	
Calypte anna	Anna's hummingbird
Tyrannidae	
Sayornis nigricans	black phoebe
Mammals	
Felidae	
Felis catus	feral cat
Geomyidae	
Thomomys bottae	valley pocket gopher

Representative Photographs

Photo Point 1. 3/15/22

Photo Point 2. 3/15/22

Photo Point 3. 3/15/22

Photo Point 4. 3/15/22

Photo Point 5. 3/15/22

Photo Point 6. 3/15/22

Photo Point 7. 3/15/22

Photo Point 8. 3/15/22

Photo Point 9. 3/15/22

Photo Point 10. 3/15/22

Photo Point 11. 3/15/22


Photo Point 12. 3/15/22

Photo Point 13. 3/15/22

Photo Point 14. 3/15/22

Photo Point 15. 3/15/22

Photo Point 16. 3/15/22

Photo Point 17. 3/15/22

Photo Point 18. 3/15/22

Photo Point 19. 3/15/22

Photo Point 20. 3/15/22