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November 25, 2020

Royal Investors Group, LLC
Attn: Ms. Kris Pinero
15821 Ventura Blvd, Suite 460
Encino, CA 91436

Dear Ms. Pinero

Re: Update to the 2004 Biological Resource Assessment of TTM 60949, Lancaster, California

Development has been proposed for TTM 60949, Lancaster, California. The approximately 30 acre (12 ha) study area was located east of 30th Street East and north of Avenue J. The purpose of this update was to determine whether or not the original 2004 report of the area was still valid in its assessment and recommendations (Hagan 2004).

The original report noted the area was characteristic of a highly disturbed habitat. Highly disturbed fields were noted as being adjacent to all four sides of the site. Residential housing was approximately 1/4 mile (426 m) to the west and northwest. The original report indicated the site was dominated by Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*). No desert tortoises, Mohave ground squirrels, or burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) were present within the study area. No California ground squirrel (*Citellus beecheyi*) burrows were observed within the study site in 2004. A burrowing owl survey was recommended 30 days prior to ground disturbing activities due to potential cover sites for burrowing owls. No suitable habitat for sensitive plant species was observed during the original survey. The project was not expected to result in a significant adverse impact to biological resources.

A field survey was conducted to update the previous survey and assess changes to the biological resources that were reported in the 2004 report. This survey was conducted on 27 October 2020. Random transects were walked to obtain a representative sample of the study area. Photographs of the study area were taken (Figures 1 and 2).

The area is still representative of a highly disturbed field. It is now dominated by Russian thistle, red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), invasive grasses (*Bromus* spp.), and tumble mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*). California ground squirrels are now present within the study site which may provide potential cover sites in the future for burrowing owls. No sign of burrowing owls were observed within the study site. Open concrete irrigation structures leading to below ground concrete water pipeline structures are now exposed near the southern boundary of the study site (Figure 2). These structures line up with the large aboveground concrete water structure. These openings provide an opportunity for burrowing owls to access the old waterlines and use them as cover sites.



View from southwest portion of the study site looking northeast.



View from the southeast portion of the study site looking northwest.

Figure 1. Representative photographs of the study site.



Exposed concrete irrigation structures leading to below ground lines.



New trench dug across study site oriented north south.

Figure 2. Representative photographs of new sightings within the study site.

A storm drain structure has been constructed to the south, and outside of the study site, along Avenue J. Fire hoses were observed within this structure and one curled up at the base of the fence. A trench has been cut through the eastern third of the study site from this storm drain structure. There is no water in this trench, it has no sign of water flowing through it, and no hydrophytic plants. It is not currently a wash or drainage (Figure 2).

This study site does not provide good foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsonii*). Swainson's hawk appear to be tied to active agricultural fields, parks, large retention/detention basins within the Antelope Valley. This is based on an assessment of the pattern of sightings over time of Swainson's hawk documented within eBird.org.

There were minor changes within the study site, however the 2004 biological report protection measures are adequate to cover this study site. The 2004 biological report covers the study site satisfactorily and is considered to be valid.

Literature Cited

Hagan, M. 2004. Biological resource assessment of tentative tract number 60949, Lancaster, California. Mark Hagan, 44715 17th Street East, Lancaster, California, 93535. 9pp.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Hagan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Hagan
Wildlife Biologist