BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT
FOR THE
±2.5-ACRE 8168 STEVENSON AVENUE STUDY AREA
SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTION

Project Location

Salix Consulting, Inc. (Salix) has prepared a Biological Resources Assessment for a ±2.5-acre study area located at 8168 Stevenson Avenue in unincorporated Sacramento County, California. The approximate coordinates for the center of the property are 38°27'51.98" North and 121°24'19.80" West. It is situated within Section 14 Township 7N Range 5E of the Florin, California 7.5-minute USGS topographic quadrangle (Figure 1). The study area occurs within the *South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan* (SSHCP or Plan) area, inside of an Urban Development Area (UDA) and outside of any Preserve Planning Units (PPUs).

Project Setting

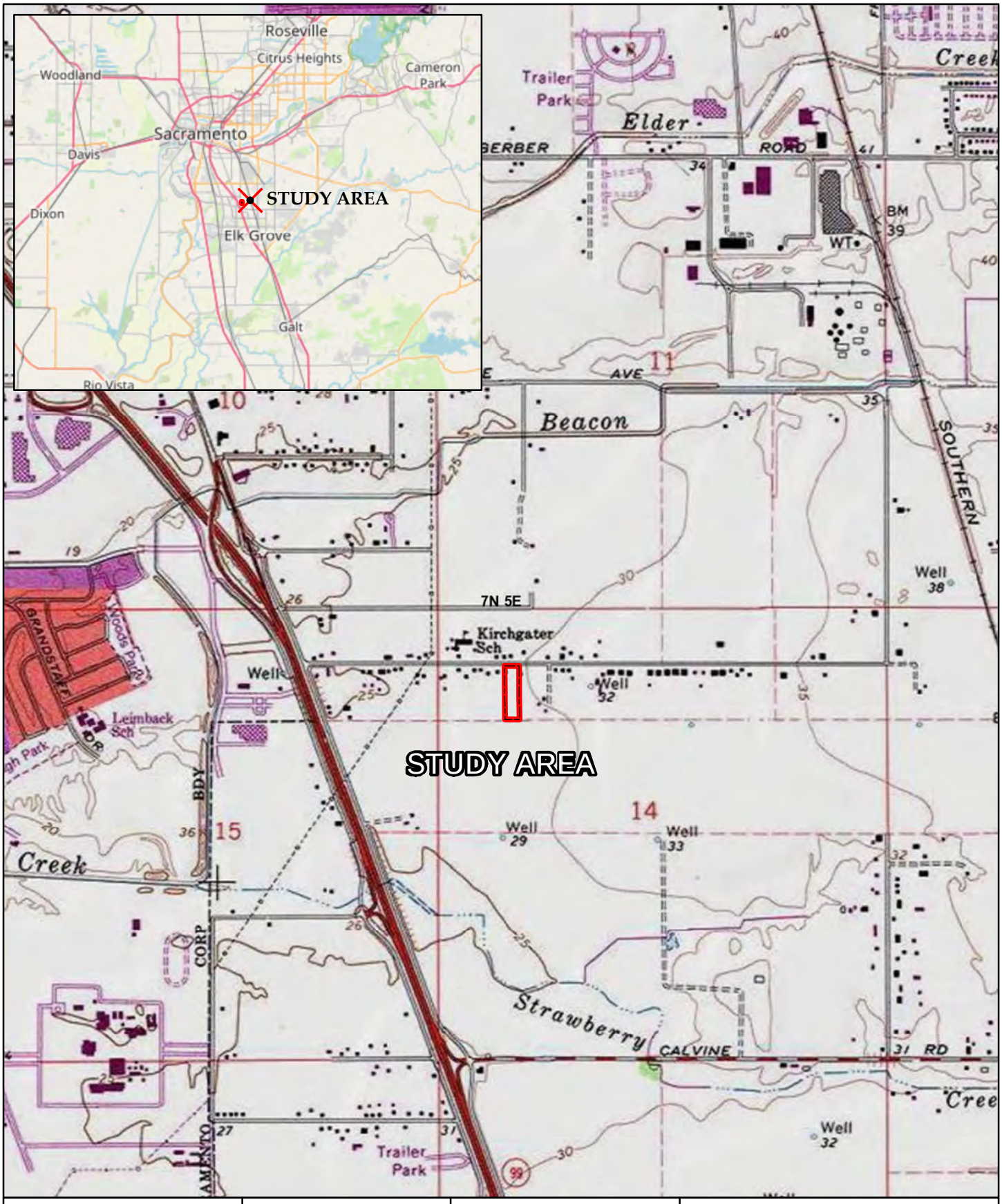
The study area is located in the Central Valley, approximately 2.3 miles southeast of the community of Florin and 3.9 miles north of the City of Elk Grove. The site is a vacant lot surrounded on all sides by residential development. Stevenson Avenue is the northern boundary. The elevation at the approximate center of the study area is 23 feet, and the site is nearly flat (Figure 2). Two adjacent roads stub into the property and were graded during adjacent development in 2006. The parcel has been vacant ever sense. Based on aerial photography over the past several years, the site is regularly maintained through mowing and disking.

Background

The SSHCP allows for a streamlined federal and state permitting process for development projects or activities authorized through the Plan (Covered Activities) while still ensuring the protection of habitat, open space, and agricultural lands.

Under the SSHCP, Sacramento County and its partners (land use authorities) are issued Incidental Take Permits (ITPs) by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Through these permits, land use authorities may authorize Covered Activities that could result in the incidental take of certain State or Federal listed species (Covered Species).

The SSHCP also includes the Aquatic Resources Program, which streamlines Clean Water Act Section 404 and 401 permitting under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.



Salix consulting, inc.

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0 1,000 2,000

Feet

Source Maps: USGS Topographic Map
Florin Quad 1:24,000
S14 T7N R5E

Figure 1

SITE AND VICINITY MAP

8168 Stevenson Ave

Sacramento County, CA

Salix consulting, inc.

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Feet

Study Area (±2.5 acres)

Imagery: 3-26-18 Sacramento County

Figure 2

AERIAL MAP

8168 Stevenson Ave

Sacramento County, CA

Objectives of Biological Resources Assessment

- Identify and describe the biological communities/land cover types present in the study area (consistent with definitions in the SSHCP);
- Evaluate and identify if any sensitive habitats or special-status plant and animal species covered under the SSHCP occur or could occur on the site;
- Determine if aquatic resources are present, and
- Provide conclusions and recommendations.

METHODS

Literature Review

For this analysis, Salix biologists reviewed the SSHCP, recent and historic aerial photographs, USGS maps, and site maps for the study area. Standard publications on life history, habitat requirements, and distribution of regionally occurring plant and animal species were reviewed as needed for identification and to determine the likelihood of occurrence for special status species. They include published books, field guides, the California Wildlife Habitats Relationships Program, and SSHCP Species Accounts. Information on soils of the study area was obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture – National Resource Conservation Service's online Web Soil Survey (NRCS 2022).

Special-Status Species Review

Through ITPs issued by USFWS and CDFW, the SSHCP provides take authorization for 28 special-status species (Covered Species), 11 of which are currently listed as threatened or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) or the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA). These include eight plant species and 20 animal species. Prior to conducting the field assessment, the California Natural Diversity Database (CDFW 2022) was queried to identify known and recorded occurrences of SSHCP Covered Species in or around the study area. Details of these occurrences were reviewed along with the species accounts listed under Appendix B of the SSHCP to provide information regarding potential habitat for any of the Covered Species.

Field Assessments

A field assessment of the study area was conducted by Salix Principal Biologist Jeff Glazner on January 6, 2022, to characterize existing conditions, to assess the potential for sensitive plant and wildlife resources to occur, and to determine if aquatic resources were present onsite. During the field assessment, biological communities were mapped and assessed for the potential to support any of the 28 special-status species covered by the SSHCP as well as any other special-status species not covered under the Plan. Plants and animals observed were documented, and ground photos were taken.

Plants observed are listed in Appendix A. Wildlife observed is listed within the *Wildlife Occurrence and Use* section below. Plant names are according to the Jepson Herbarium, *Jepson Flora Project* (Jepson eFlora) and updated literature that appears in the eFlora.

Climate

The study area has a Mediterranean climate with mild to cool, wet winters and hot, dry summers. The warm season in the region lasts from May to September, with average daily high temperatures remaining above 79°. The hottest months are July and August, with high temperatures each month averaging 93° and 92°, respectively. The low temperatures for each of these two months averages 58°. The cool season lasts from November to March, with average daily high temperatures remaining below 65°. The coolest months are December and January, each averaging 54° in high temperature and 38° in low temperature. Annual precipitation averages 17.24 inches, nearly all of which occurs as rainfall between October and April. The wettest months are December, January, and February, each averaging more than 3 inches of rainfall (Western Regional Climate Center).

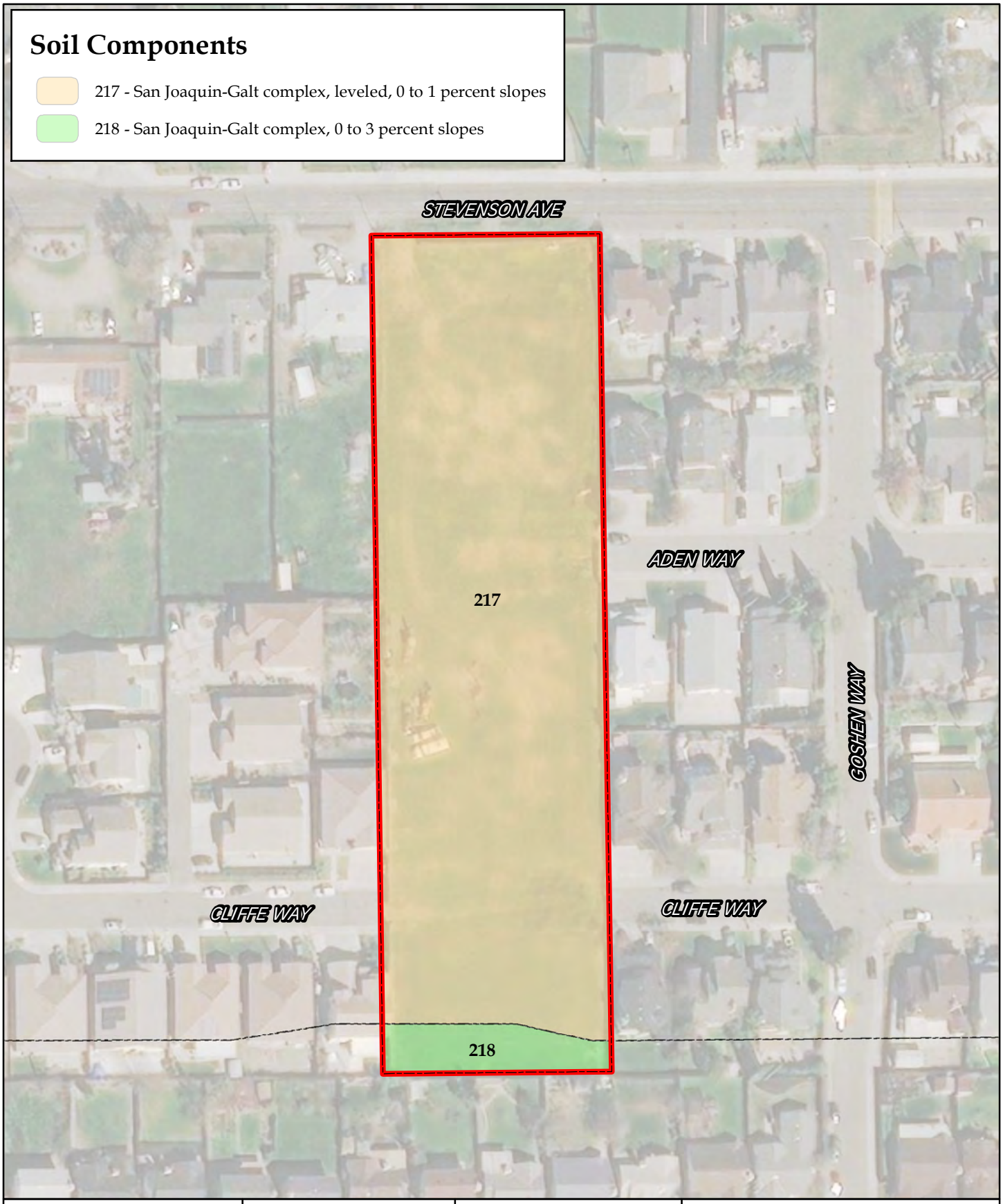
Soils

Two soil units have been mapped within the study area: San Joaquin-Galt complex, leveled, 0 to 1 percent slopes and San Joaquin-Galt complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes (NRCS 2021). The components of the soil units are illustrated in Figure 3 and described below.

San Joaquin-Galt complex, leveled, 0 to 1 percent slopes

The **San Joaquin component** makes up 45 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 0 to 1 percent. This component is on valleys, low terraces. The parent material consists of alluvium derived from granite. Depth to a root restrictive layer, duripan, is 20 to 46 inches. The natural drainage class is moderately well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is very low. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is very low. Shrink-swell potential is moderate. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 1 percent. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 3s. Irrigated land capability classification is 3s. This soil does not meet hydric criteria.

The **Galt component** makes up 40 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 0 to 1 percent. This component is on valleys, small basins on low terraces. The parent material consists of alluvium derived from granite. Depth to a root restrictive layer, duripan, is 38 to 60 inches. The natural drainage class is moderately well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is very low. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is low. Shrink-swell potential is high. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 1 percent. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 3s. Irrigated land capability classification is 3s. This soil meets hydric criteria. There are no saline horizons within 30 inches of the soil surface.



Salix consulting, inc.

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Feet

Study Area (±2.5 acres)

Imagery: 3-26-18 Sacramento County

Figure 3

SOIL COMPONENTS

8168 Stevenson Ave

Sacramento County, CA

San Joaquin-Galt complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes

The **San Joaquin component** makes up 45 percent of the map unit. Slopes are 0 to 3 percent. This component is on valleys, low terraces. The parent material consists of alluvium derived from granite. Depth to a root restrictive layer, duripan, is 28 to 54 inches. The natural drainage class is moderately well drained. Water movement in the most restrictive layer is very low. Available water to a depth of 60 inches (or restricted depth) is low. Shrink-swell potential is moderate. This soil is not flooded. It is not ponded. There is no zone of water saturation within a depth of 72 inches. Organic matter content in the surface horizon is about 1 percent. Nonirrigated land capability classification is 3s. This soil does not meet hydric criteria.

The **Galt component** makes up 40 percent of the map unit and is the same as above.

Hydrology

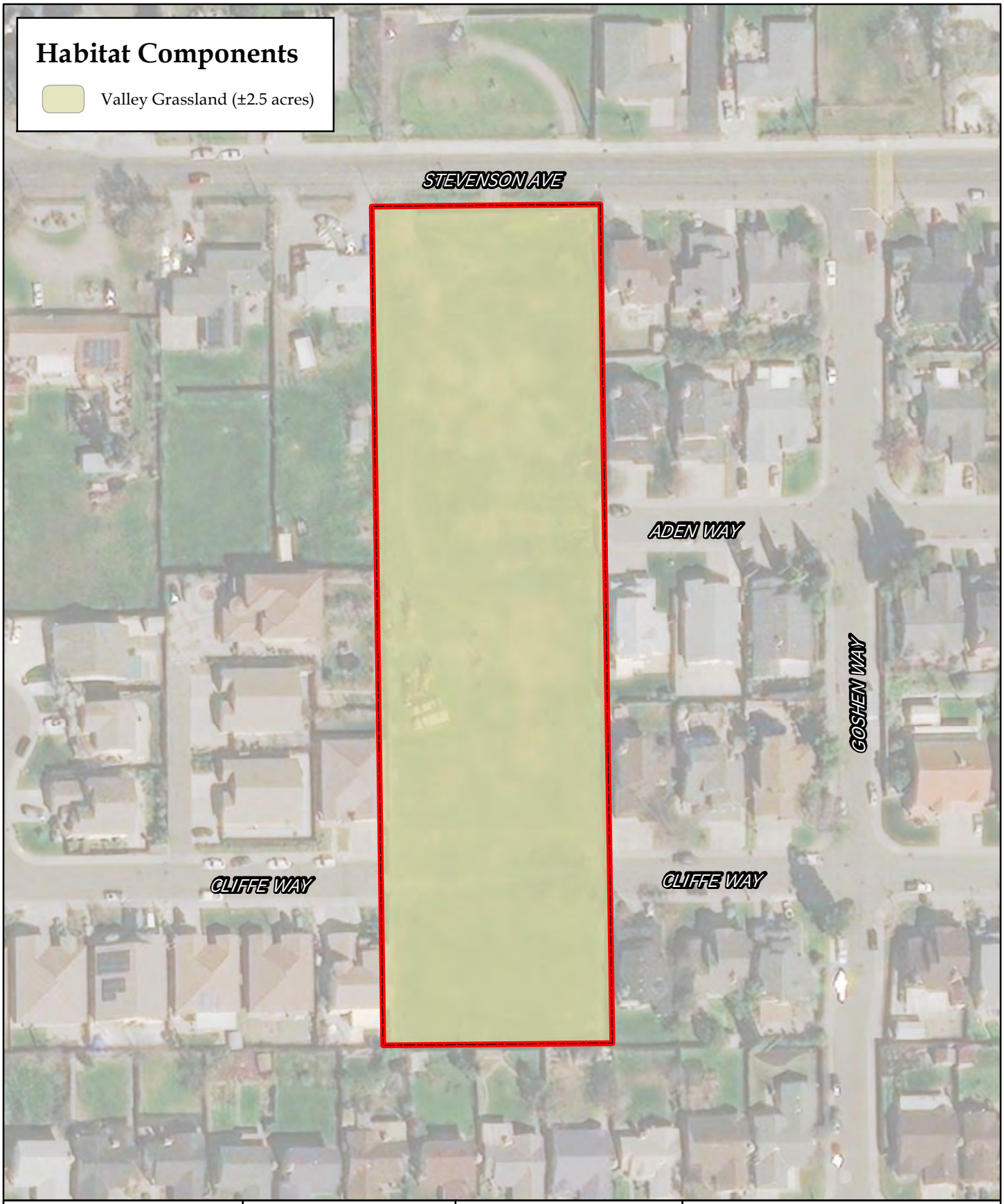
The site occurs in the Lower Morrison Creek HUC12 (180201630404) watershed which is part of the greater Lower Sacramento HUC8 (18020163). The site is essentially flat, and surface water moves through a series of urban drainage systems. Water onsite eventually flows to either Beacon Creek less than a mile north or to Strawberry Creek less than 1 mile south. These two creeks converge into Beacon Creek about two miles southwest. Beacon Creek flows 3 miles westerly before entering Morrison Creek. Morrison Creek flows southwest for approximately 4 miles before entering the Sacramento River.

Land Cover Types and Biological Communities

All of the study area is mapped in the SSHCP as valley grassland land cover type (Figure 4). Representative ground photos of the property are presented in Figures 5a-5c.

Table 1.
Landcover Types Present within the
8168 Stevenson Avenue Study Area

Classification	Approximate Acreage
Valley Grassland	2.5
Total	**2.5**



Salix consulting, inc.

N

0 50 100

Feet

Study Area (±2.5 acres)

Imagery: 3-26-18 Sacramento County

Figure 4

HABITAT MAP

8168 Stevenson Ave

Sacramento County, CA

Valley Annual Grassland

The SSHCP characterizes Valley Grassland in the Plan Area as:

> "…annual herbaceous plant community now characterized mostly by naturalized annual grasses. Generally, its composition in the Plan Area varies with geographic, and land use factors, such as rainfall, temperature, elevation, slope, aspect, grazing, and other herbivory (e.g., livestock, wildlife, rodent, songbird, and insect use), and fire frequency and duration. In the Plan Area, Valley Grassland is dominated by naturalized herbaceous annual forbs."

The valley grassland in the study area is characterized by Italian ryegrass (*Festuca perennis*), wild oats (*Avena fatua*), and soft chess (*Bromus hordeaceus*). Common herbaceous forbs include the white stemmed filaree (*Erodium moschatum*), rose clover (*Trifolium hirtum*), and charlock mustard (*Sinapsis arvensis*).

Aquatic Resources

The study area was walked and observed carefully for the presences of aquatic resources. The study area is essentially flat with a high amount of past and ongoing disturbance. In 2006, when adjacent lands were being developed, two roads were graded from the east and west. One is a cul-de-sac and the other a thru-road. The development of the roads and subject parcel was not completed, and the result was two areas that temporarily hold water during rainy periods. These depressions were examined during the January site visit, after a substantial period of rain, and contained water. The depressions were shallow and did not support any visible aquatic vegetation. It was concluded that these two locations are not aquatic resources based on the lack of evidence and expected short-term duration of ponding and saturation (Figure 5c).

Wildlife Occurrence and Use

Due to the study area's small size, location in a densely populated urban area, and the presence of frequent human activity, habitat for wildlife is limited to species adapted to urban settings. Woody vegetation is limited to the fencelines. Species observed include house sparrow, mourning dove, American crow, European starling, scrub jay, and house finch. Mammals that may utilize the site include striped skunk, opossum, and field mice.

Looking east along Stevenson Avenue and frontage of property.
Photo date 1-6-22

Looking south from northeast corner of property.
Photo date 1-6-22

Salix consulting, inc.

Figure 5a

SITE PHOTOS
8168 Stevenson Ave
Sacramento County, CA

Looking north from southwest corner of site.
Photo date 1-6-22

Looking east along southern fenceline from southwest corner.
Photo date 1-6-22

Salix consulting, inc.

Figure 5b

SITE PHOTOS
8168 Stevenson Ave
Sacramento County, CA

Opening in western fenceline at Cliffe Way. Temporary standing water in graded area.
Photo date 1-6-22

Looking southwest toward western fenceline. Temporary standing water in formerly graded cul-de-sac.
Photo date 1-6-22

Salix consulting, inc.

Figure 5c

SITE PHOTOS
8168 Stevenson Ave
Sacramento County, CA

Special-Status Species

Eight (8) special-status plant species and twenty (20) special-status animal species are identified as "Covered Species" under the SSHCP. The CNDDB was queried and reviewed as described above. Details of these reported occurrences were reviewed along with the SSHCP species accounts, and this information, along with the best professional judgment of Salix biologists were all used to assess habitat within the study area during the field survey and determine the potential for any of the Covered Species to occur. Figure 6a shows the reported occurrences of SSHCP-covered plant species within a five-mile radius of the study area, and Figure 6b shows the same for reported occurrences of SSHCP-covered animal species.

Plants

Eight (8) special-status plant species are covered under the SSHCP and are listed below. Four of these species were identified as occurring within a five-mile radius of the study area (Figure 6a) and are marked with an asterisk (*) in the list below.

- Ahart's Dwarf Rush (*Juncus leiospermus* var. *ahartii*)
- Boggs Lake Hedge-Hyssop (*Gratiola heterosepala*)*
- Dwarf Downingia (*Downingia pusilla*)*
- Legenere (*Legenere limosa*)*
- Pincushion Navarretia (*Navarretia myersii*)
- Sacramento Orcutt Grass (*Orcuttia viscida*)
- Slender Orcutt Grass (*Orcuttia tenuis*)
- Sanford's Arrowhead *(Sagittaria sanfordi*)*

All eight (8) of these SSHCP covered plant species were determined to have no potential for occurring onsite due to the absence of suitable wetland habitat (such as vernal pools, swales, seasonal wetlands, rivers, streams, ponds, or marshes). The temporary ponding observed during early January is not habitat for any of the covered species.

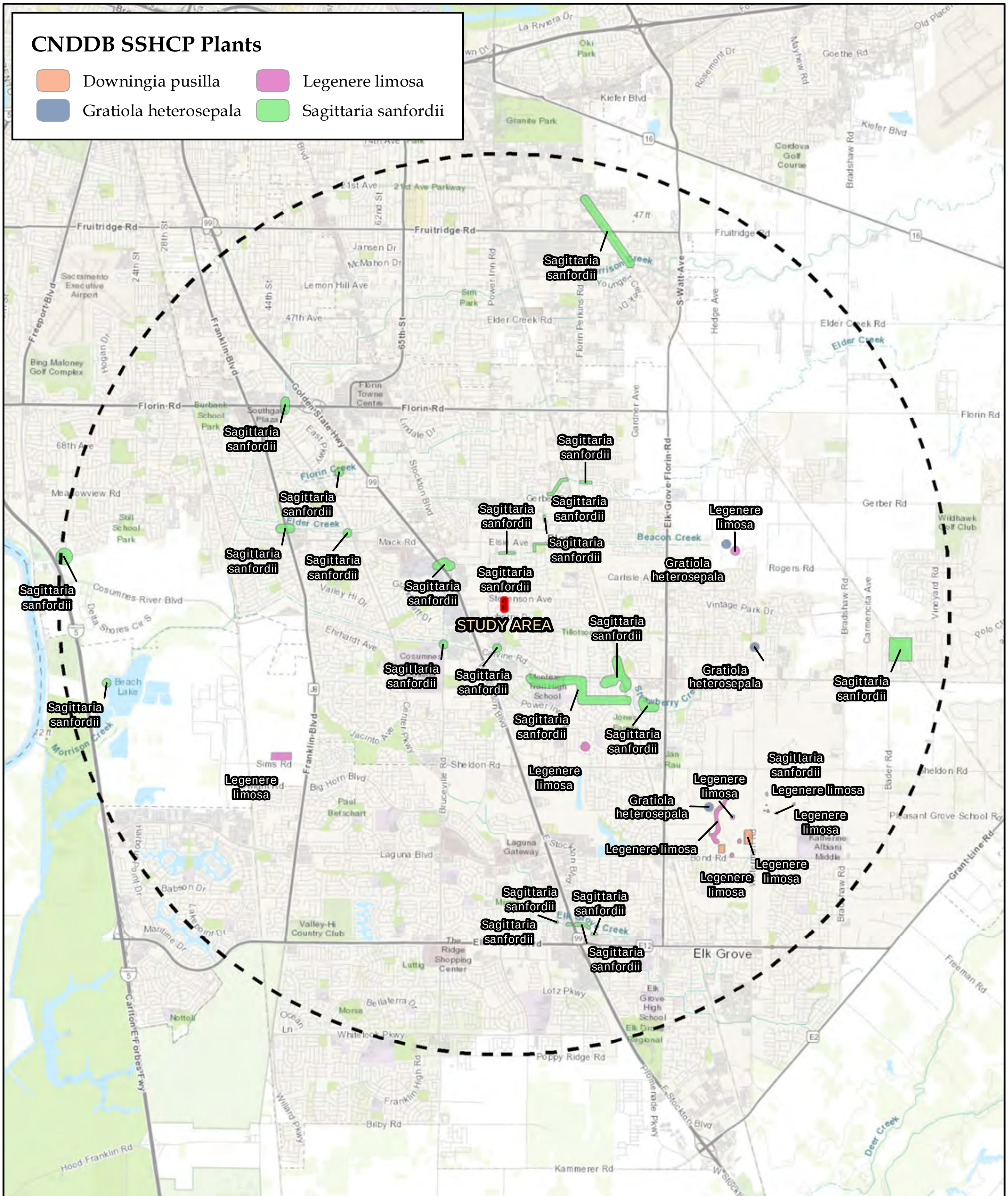


Figure 6a

CNDDB SSHCP PLANTS

8168 Stevenson Ave

City of Sacramento, CA

Animals

Of the 20 special-status animal species covered under the SSHCP, 13 were identified as occurring within a five-mile radius of the study area (Figure 6b) and are marked with an asterisk (*) in the discussions below.

None of the nine (9) invertebrate, reptile, or amphibian species covered under the SSHCP were determined to have any potential to occur onsite because the site lacks suitable aquatic habitat (such as vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, streams, marshes, sloughs, ponds). These include:

- California Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*)
- Giant Gartersnake (*Thamnophis gigas*)*
- Mid-Valley Fairy Shrimp (*Branchinecta mesovallensis*)*
- Ricksecker's Water Scavenger Beetle (*Hydrochara rickseckeri*)
- Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)*
- Vernal Pool Tadpole Shrimp (*Lepidurus packardi*)*
- Western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*)*
- Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*)*

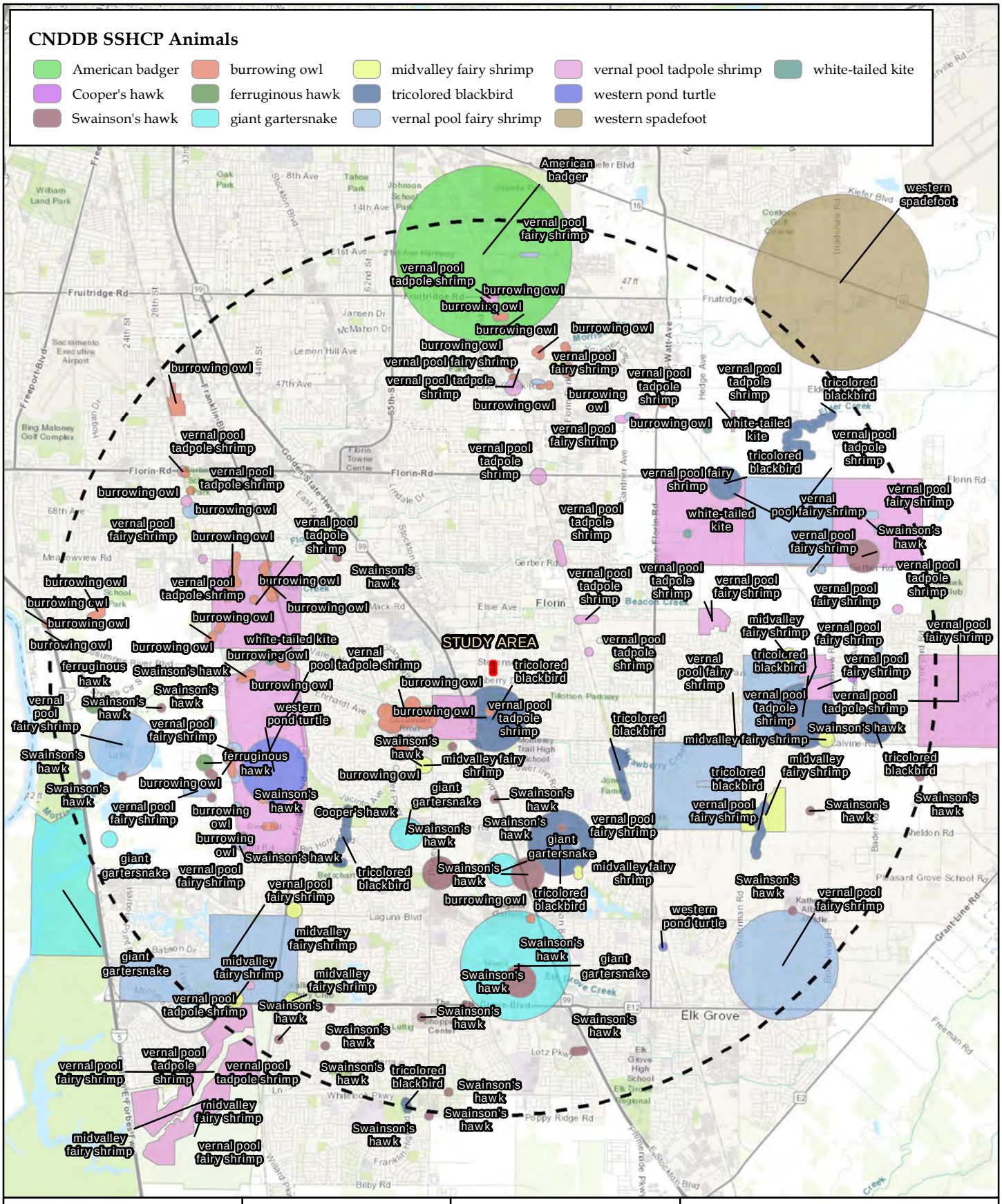
In addition, Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*) has no potential to occur because the site lacks any occurrences of its host plant, the elderberry shrub.

All nine (9) of the nine bird species covered under the SSHCP were determined to have no potential to occur within the study area due to the site's lack of woody vegetation or other suitable nesting and roosting habitat (such as marshes, riparian areas, dense bulrush/cattails/brambles, rock outcrops, cavities underneath rubble or other tunnel-like structures), as well as its location in a disturbed urban area. These include:

- White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*)*
- Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)
- Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)*
- Greater Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*)
- Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)
- Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*)*

There is no potential for the western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)* to occur in the study area due to the small, enclosed parcel, its proximity to urban activity, and the presence of domestic pets from the surrounding residential developments.

Additionally, the site contains no suitable nesting habitat (taller trees associated with riparian areas or lone trees near agricultural fields or pastures) for the Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)*, and the ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*)* is a winter visitor that does not regularly nest in California. Although the study area may provide marginal


CNDDB SSHCP Animals
American badger
burrowing owl
midvalley fairy shrimp
vernal pool tadpole shrimp
white-tailed kite
Cooper's hawk
ferruginous hawk
tricolored blackbird
western pond turtle
Swainson's hawk
giant gartersnake
vernal pool fairy shrimp
western spadefoot
STUDY AREA
Florin
Elk Grove
Florin-Rd
Fruitridge-Rd
Laguna Blvd
Elk Grove Blvd
Grant Line Rd
Freeport Blvd
Stockton Blvd
Franklin Blvd
Sacramento Executive Airport
Bing Maloney Golf Complex
William Land Park
Oak Park
Tahoe Park
Johnson School Park
Cordova Golf Course
Florin Towne Centre
Beacon Creek
Elk Grove Creek
Laguna Creek
Morrison Creek
Pleasant Grove School Rd
Elk Grove High School
Lotz Pkwy
Poppy Ridge Rd
Bilby Rd
Sheldon Rd
Calvine Rd
Gerber Rd
Elsie Ave
Meadowview Rd
Lemon Hill Ave
Jansen Dr
McMahon Dr
Tillotson Parkway
Kiefer Blvd
Florin Rd
Freeman Rd
E Stockton Blvd
Pinnacle Pkwy
Whitelock Pkwy
Luttig
Babson Dr
Betchart
Vacaville Dr
Mack Rd
Golden State Hwy
Hedge Ave
Gardner Ave
Watt Ave
Bruceshaw Rd
Waterman Rd
Eberhardt Ave
Cir S
Cir N
Lindale Dr
Hogan Dr
Jones Farm
Mesa Verde Elementary
Mesa Verde High
Pleasant Grove Middle
Elk Grove Regional
Shopping Center
Sacramento
Yolo
Solano
Placer
Sutter
Yuba
Nevada
Amador
Calaveras
San Joaquin
Contra Costa
Alameda
Santa Clara
San Mateo
Santa Cruz
San Benito
Monterey
San Luis Obispo
Kern
Tulare
Kings
Fresno
Madera
Mariposa
Merced
Stanislaus
Tuolumne
Alpine
Mono
Inyo
Modoc
Lassen
Plumas
Sierra
Siskiyou
Trinity
Shasta
Tehama
Glenn
Colusa
Lake
Napa
Sonoma
Marin
Mendocino
Humboldt
Del Norte
N
0
5,000
10,000
Feet
5-Mile Radius
Salix consulting, inc.
Figure 6b
CNDDB SSHCP ANIMALS
8168 Stevenson Ave
City of Sacramento, CA

foraging habitat for these two species, because it occurs in a small and highly disturbed urban area, neither species would utilize the site.

The American badger (*Taxidea taxus*)* has no potential to occur within the study area due to the lack of suitable habitat (such large, undisturbed areas containing friable soils and uncultivated ground) and because the small site occurs in an urbanized area.

The western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) was determined to have no potential to occur because the site lacks suitable roosting sites such as large shrubs or mature trees in edge habitats.

In summary, all eight (8) special-status plant species and the 20 special-status animal species covered under the SSHCP, including four (4) plant species and thirteen (13) animal species that are known from within a five-mile radius (Figures 6a and 6b), require habitats that do not occur within the study area, were determined to have no potential for occurring onsite, and were eliminated from further consideration.

Because the study area occurs in a disturbed, busy urban area, and the site is regularly mowed, it also does not provide suitable habitat for other special-status plant and animals species not included in the list of species covered under the SSHCP.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Aquatic Resources

The study area does not contain any areas or features that may qualify as aquatic resources. Therefore, Clean Water Act permits (Section 404 from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Section 401 Water Quality Certification from Regional Water Quality Control Board) would not be required and do not need to be obtained through the SSHCP Aquatic Resources Program (ARP).

Streams, Pond, and Riparian Habitat

No streams or riparian areas are present within the study area. Thus, there will be no impacts to the bed, bank, or channel of streams or ponds, and no Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) would be required.

SSHCP Covered Plants

Eight (8) special-status plant species covered under the SSHCP were determined to have no potential to occur within the study area due to the lack of suitable habitats (such as vernal pools or other wetlands) or due to the lack of soil types known to support those species. No special status plant species were detected during the field survey. No further studies are recommended.

SSHCP Covered Wildlife

The site was assessed for its potential to provide habitat for twenty (20) special-status animal species covered under the SSHCP. None were identified as having potential to occur in the study area. At the time of the survey, there was no evidence

suggesting the presence of burrowing owls (burrows, whitewash, bones, etc.), and no other appropriate habitat (trees or woodland) was present that could support other covered birds or raptors. No wetlands were present that would support covered aquatic species. Thus, none of the 20 special-status covered animal species have potential to inhabit the study area. The study area is too small to provide foraging habitat for ferruginous hawk and Swainson's hawk, nor does it provide nesting habitat for the Swainson's hawk.

Nesting Raptors and Migratory Birds

The property does not contain suitable habitat for any bird nesting and thus, species regulated under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) will not be affected. No further action, including pre-construction bird nesting surveys, is recommended.

General Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 of the SSHCP describe general Avoidance and Minimization Measures (AMMs) that should be implemented to avoid or minimize the effects of Covered Activities on SSHCP land cover types and Covered Species. This section of the Plan defines construction best management practices, measures to avoid and minimize impacts to watershed hydrology, and measures to avoid or minimize effects of Covered Activities on specific SSHCP Species. Approval of any Covered Activity requiring ITP coverage under the SSHCP is dependent on demonstration that the required AMMs have been properly incorporated into the project. These sections of the SSHCP should be reviewed to identify and implement any relevant AMMs.

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Appendix A.
Plant Species Observed Within the 8168 Stevenson Avenue Study Area

Appendix A

8168 Stevenson Avenue - Plants Observed - January 2022

Angiosperms - Dicots

Asteraceae (Compositae) - Sunflower Family

**Carduus pycnocephalus*	Italian thistle
**Centaurea solstitialis*	Yellow starthistle
**Cichorium intybus*	Chicory
**Lactuca serriola*	Prickly lettuce
**Senecio vulgaris*	Common groundsel
**Sonchus asper subsp. asper*	Prickly sow-thistle

Brassicaceae (Cruciferae) - Mustard Family

**Brassica rapa*	Field mustard
**Capsella bursa-pastoris*	Shepherd's purse
Lepidium nitidum	Shining peppergrass
**Raphanus sativus*	Wild radish
**Sinapis arvensis*	Wild mustard

Caryophyllaceae - Pink Family

**Cerastium glomeratum*	Sticky mouse-ear chickweed
**Stellaria media*	Common chickweed

Convolvulaceae - Morning-Glory Family

**Convolvulus arvensis*	Bindweed

Fabaceae (Leguminosae) - Legume Family

**Trifolium hirtum*	Rose clover
**Vicia villosa*	Winter vetch

Geraniaceae - Geranium Family

**Erodium botrys*	Broad-leaf filaree
**Erodium cicutarium*	Red-stem filaree
**Erodium moschatum*	White-stem filaree
**Geranium dissectum*	Cut-leaf geranium

Lamiaceae (Labiatae) - Mint Family

**Lamium amplexicaule*	Deadnettle

Lythraceae - Loosestrife Family

**Lythrum hyssopifolia*	Hyssop loosestrife

Malvaceae - Mallow Family

**Malva parviflora*	Cheeseweed

Oleaceae - Olive Family

**Ligustrum japonicum*	Japanese privet

Ranunculaceae - Buttercup Family

**Ranunculus muricatus*	Spiny-fruit buttercup

Rosaceae - Rose Family

**Rubus armeniacus*	Himalayan blackberry

* Indicates a non-native species

Salicaceae - Willow Family

**Populus alba*	White poplar
Populus fremontii	Fremont cottonwood

Angiosperms -Monocots

Juncaceae - Rush Family

Juncus bufonius	Toad rush

Poaceae (Gramineae) - Grass Family

**Avena fatua*	Wild oat
**Bromus diandrus*	Ripgut grass
**Bromus hordeaceus*	Soft chess
**Cynodon dactylon*	Bermudagrass
**Festuca myuros*	Rattail sixweeks grass
**Festuca perennis*	Italian ryegrass
**Hordeum marinum subsp. gussoneanum*	Mediterranean barley
**Hordeum murinum*	Wall barley
**Poa annua*	Annual bluegrass

* Indicates a non-native species