

Biological Assessment Letter Report
for the
14050 Day Street Redevelopment Project
Moreno Valley

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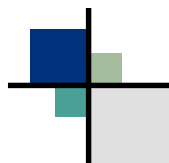


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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report documents the findings of an evaluation of biological resources conducted by BLUE for the proposed Day Street Redevelopment (Project). The proposed Project includes the re-development of the approximately 7.82-acre existing developed parcel, and offsite infrastructure improvements, in Moreno Valley, County of Riverside, California. The redevelopment of the property requires offsite waterline infrastructure improvements within Day Street (frontage) and north to Alessandro Boulevard. The Project is bound on all sides by development, infrastructure (Day Street on the western boundary) and where the area is not paved, disturbed/ruderal habitat.

The Project site is located within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and outside a specific planning area. The Project site is not located within any MSHCP designated Criteria Areas or Subunits. As such, the Project site is not subject to Cell Criteria compliance under the MSHCP. The Project footprint does not fall within any Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) or other MSHCP Conserved Lands.

The Biological Study Area (BSA) includes the Project parcel and offsite improvement area (within the frontage road, Day Street), plus a 100-foot buffer. The BSA is located within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Sunnymead Topographic Map at an approximate elevation of 1,554 feet.

The Project BSA is comprised of existing developed/disturbed area. Onsite, this is comprised of generally paved areas with a linear detention basin running along the frontage and southern property line. A small flat dirt pad supporting bare dirt/disturbed vegetation that receives frequent weed abatement is located in the south east corner and along the Day Street frontage (offsite). The surrounding land use consists of industrial development, undeveloped parcels, and development infrastructure.

The intended use of this document is to disclose and evaluate habitat conditions and determine the potential for occurrence of common and special-status species and their habitats within survey area limits pursuant to the MSHCP. Special-status species refers to any species that has been afforded special protection by federal, state, or local resource agencies (e.g., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS], California Department of Fish and Game [CDFW]) or resource conservation organizations (e.g., California Native Plant Society [CNPS]). The term “special-status species” excludes those avian species solely identified under Section 10 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) for federal protection.

2.0 METHODS

Prior to beginning the field survey, a literature review was completed to determine locations and types of biological resources having the potential to exist within the region. Digital resources utilized include: USFWS Critical Habitat Mapper and File data, the MSHCP Transportation and Land Management Agency Geographic Information Services Database and Riverside County Integrated Plan Conservation Summary Report Generator (County of Riverside).

In addition to utilizing on-line databases and mapping tools, the Perris topographic map was reviewed to determine the locations of any potential special aquatic resource areas (e.g., wetlands or other Waters of the United States or Waters of the State) under regulatory jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), CDFW, and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and Riparian/Riverine habitats prior to beginning field surveys of the BSA.

Additionally, the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) on-

line Web Soil Survey tool (NRCS) and Figure 2-4 of the MSHCP were reviewed to determine the types and percent cover of soils within the BSA.

Lands within the BSA that were potentially suspected of being potential special aquatic resource and Riparian/Riverine habitats were then assessed by visual observation during the field survey. No potential special aquatic resource areas and riparian/riverine habitats were not observed and additional further evaluation is not required.

Michael Jefferson, senior qualified BLUE biologist, conducted a pedestrian-based biological survey to observe, document, and evaluate plant and wildlife resources and determine the potential for occurrence of special-status plant and wildlife species. Approximately 100-foot-wide meandering transects were utilized to provide visual coverage of the BSA.

Vegetation community type descriptions were based on observed dominant vegetation composition and derived from the criteria and definitions of vegetation classification systems (Holland, 1986; Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf, 1995; Sawyer et al., 2009). Plants were identified in the field to the lowest taxonomic level sufficient to determine positive identity and status. Plants of uncertain identity were subsequently identified using taxonomic keys, and scientific and common species names were recorded according to Baldwin (2012).

The presence of a wildlife species was based on direct observation or wildlife sign (e.g., tracks, burrows, nests, scat, or vocalization). Field data compiled for wildlife species included scientific name, common name, and evidence of sign when no direct observations were made. Wildlife of uncertain distinctiveness was documented and subsequently identified from field guides and related literature (Burt and Grossenheider, 1980; Halfpenny, 2000; Sibley, 2000; Elbroch, 2003; and Stebbins, 2003).

The BSA was also assessed for its potential to support special-status species, based on habitat suitability comparisons with reported occupied habitats.

The following definitions were used to determine the need for subsequent surveys and to assess project-related effects to special-status species:

- Absent (A): No habitat occurs within the survey area and no further surveys are necessary
- Habitat Present (HP): Habitat is present within the survey area
- Present (P): The species was observed within the survey area during the survey
- Critical Habitat (CH): The survey area is located within designated critical habitat

3.0 RESULTS

BLUE biologist Mike Jefferson conducted a biological survey for the Project site on January 10, 2022; beginning at 11:00 and ending at 11:30. Weather conditions during the surveys included 20% clear skies, with temperatures ranging from 69° to 71° Fahrenheit, and winds from 1 to 3 miles per hour.

3.1 VEGETATION COMMUNITIES/LAND COVER TYPES

A single vegetation community/land cover types were observed onsite; Developed/Ruderal Table 1; Figure 3). No native plant species were located within the survey area.

Table 1: On-Site Vegetation

Community Type	Acres (onsite)
Developed/Ruderal	7.82
Total	7.82

Communities/Land Cover Types Observed Onsite

3.1. DEVELOPED/RUDERAL

Onsite, the developed/ruderal area is the only habitat mapped onsite. This area consists of paved roadways, industrial use/development, a small square dirt storage area located in the SE corner of the property and a linear soft bottom detention basin that runs around the frontage and southern property line. All areas are maintained and no native vegetation is present within this land cover type.

Offsite, within the Day Street improvement footprint, the area is generally paved (developed). Those areas that are not paved are utilized as sidewalks, adjacent to the west side of Day Street, and are comprised of maintained dirt with areas of gravel.

3.2 PLANT AND WILDLIFE SPECIES

Plant and wildlife species observed within the BSA were typical of developed and disturbed habitats. All plant and wildlife species observed within the BSA are listed in Table 2 and Table 3, respectively.

Table 2: Plant Species Observed within the Survey Area

Species	Common Name
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i> *	red-stem erodium
<i>Lactuca serriola</i> *	prickly lettuce
<i>Salsola tragus</i> *	Russian thistle
* non-native species	

Table 3: Wildlife Species Observed within the Survey Area

Scientific Name	Common Name
Birds	
Corvidae	Jays and Crows
<i>Corvus corax</i>	common raven

3.2.1 SPECIAL-STATUS PLANTS

Eleven special-status plant species have been reported to occur within the Perris quadrangle (Appendix B; CDFW, CNPS, County of Riverside). Three species are designated with federal and/or state listing status: San Jacinto Valley crowscale (*Atriplex coronata* var. *notatior*), thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), and spreading navarretia (*Navarretia fossalis*).

Due to the developed nature of the property and BSA, all eleven special-status plant species were determined to have an “Absent” potential for occurrence within the survey area and no further survey is necessary to determine presence or absence of those species.

3.2.2 SPECIAL-STATUS WILDLIFE

Fifteen special-status wildlife species have been reported to occur within the Perris quadrangle (Appendix C) (CDFW 2015, County of Riverside 2003). Three species, Stephens’ kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys stephensi*), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) and least Bell’s vireo (*Vireo belli pusillus*) are listed as federally and/or state threatened or endangered.

Due to the highly disturbed nature of the property and BSA, all fifteen special-status wildlife species were determined to have an “Absent” potential for occurrence within the survey area and no further survey is necessary to determine presence or absence of these species.

3.2.3 WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (MSHCP)

The Project site is located outside of any MSHCP designated Criteria Cells or Cell Groups (County of Riverside). The Project is not subject to Cell Criteria compliance under the MSHCP. The Project site does not include any MSHCP Conserved Lands or PQP lands. Public and private development projects that are carried out outside of the Criteria Areas and Public/Quasi-Public Lands (e.g., such as this Project) are permitted under the MSHCP subject to compliance with MSHCP policies that apply outside Criteria Areas.

A burrowing owl assessment is not required for this area and due to the developed nature of the site, no formal assessment was completed. No burrowing owls or burrowing owl sign were observed/located during the completed survey. No suitable habitat for burrowing owl was present within the survey area and no direct observations or burrowing owl sign (feathers, pellets, fecal material, prey remains, etc.) were made. No potentially suitable burrows were present on site due to extensive disturbances associated with active use and maintenance activities, which can reduce the site’s suitability to support small mammal colonies (e.g. ground squirrel) which may provide potentially suitable burrows for burrowing owl. No ground squirrels (an important indicator species) were observed on site.

3.2.4 RIPARIAN/RIVERINE

Section 6.1.2 of the MSHCP defines Riparian/Riverine areas as “lands which contain Habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, or emergent mosses and lichens, which occur close to or which depend upon soil moisture from a nearby fresh water source; or areas with fresh water flow during all or a portion of the year.” Riparian/Riverine areas as defined by the MSHCP are not present within the survey area and will not be impacted by the Project.

The observed manufactured and maintained linear detention basin does not qualify as a riparian/riverine and/or jurisdictional feature. No riparian/riverine and/or jurisdictional features were observed within the survey area.

3.2.5 VERNAL POOL AND FAIRY SHRIMP

Vernal pools, vernal swales, alkali scalds or flats, or other seasonal wet habitats were not identified within the BSA during field surveys conducted in January by a qualified biologist.

The BSA lacks suitable habitat for fairy shrimp species or other vernal pool species, including plants.

3.3 AQUATIC RESOURCES

The observed onsite manufactured and maintained linear detention basin does not qualify as an aquatic resource and/or jurisdictional feature. The BSA does not contain any special aquatic resource area such as wetlands or areas under the regulatory jurisdiction of the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

No sensitive riparian/riverine, upland vegetation and/or special aquatic resource areas were discovered within the BSA and none are expected to be impacted by the potential Project, on and offsite.

The literature review and field assessment data confirm that no special-status species currently utilize the BSA. The BSA lacks suitable habitat that would typically support special-status species or receive state or federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections. Consequently, there is no reasonable presumption of adverse impact to any special status species or their habitats as a result of Project implementation.

No Narrow Endemic Plant Species/Criteria Area plant species were observed on site during the habitat assessment. Given the site's exposure to recurring surface disturbances associated with vegetation management, these species are not expected to occur on site. The BSA supports no riparian/riverine/vernal pool habitats or species associated with these habitat types were observed on site.

The area is outside the burrowing owl assessment area and no burrowing owl individuals or suitable burrows were observed. No additional surveys (e.g., pre-construction surveys) are required.

5.0 REFERENCES

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