



June 27, 2022

T&B PLANNING

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SUBJECT: Biological Due Diligence Memorandum for the Proposed Corona Magnolia PA 5 Project Located in the City of Corona, Riverside County, California

Introduction

This report contains the findings of ELMT Consulting's biological due diligence investigation for the proposed Corona Magnolia PA 5 Project (project site or site) located in the City of Corona, Riverside County, California. The biological due diligence investigation was conducted by ELMT biologist Jacob H. Lloyd Davies on June 8, 2022 to document baseline conditions and to determine the potential for special-status plant and wildlife species to occur on the project site that could pose a constraint to implementation of the proposed project.

Project Location

The project site is generally located south of State Route 91, east of Interstate 15, west of Interstate 215, and northwest of Lake Mathews in the City of Corona, Riverside County, California. The site is depicted on the Corona South quadrangle of the United States Geological Survey's (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic map within Section 34 of Township 4 South, Range 3 West. Specifically, the project site is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of EL Camino Avenue and Magnolia Avenue Assessor Parcel Number (APNs) 107-030-022. Refer to Exhibits 1 and 2 in Attachment A.

Methodology

Literature Review

A literature review and records search was conducted for special-status biological resources potentially occurring on or within the vicinity of the project site. Previously recorded occurrences of special-status plant and wildlife species and their proximity to the project site were determined through a query of the California Departments (CDFW's) QuickView Tool in the Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS), California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) Rarefind 5, and the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. The following resources were also reviewed:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Program "My Waters" data layers
- Google Earth Pro historic aerial imagery (1985-2021);

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Soil Survey¹;
- USFWS Critical Habitat designations for Threatened and Endangered Species;
- USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI);
- Stephen’s Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan;
- Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) MSHCP Information Map; and
- 2006 Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions for the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Area.

Habitat Assessment/Field Investigation

Following the literature review, biologist Jacob H. Lloyd Davies inventoried and evaluated the condition of the habitat within the project site on June 8, 2022. Plant communities and land cover types identified on aerial photographs during the literature review were verified by walking meandering transects throughout the project site. In addition, site characteristics such as soil condition, topography, hydrology, anthropogenic disturbances, indicator species, condition of on-site plant communities and land cover types, and presence of potential jurisdictional drainage and/or wetland features were noted.

Existing Site Condition

The project site occurs in an area that primarily supports industrial, commercial, and warehouse developments. The site is bounded to the northeast by a channelized portion of the Temescal Wash with industrial development beyond; to the southeast by Magnolia Avenue with industrial and warehouse developments beyond; and to the west by a railway with El Camino Avenue and commercial developments beyond.

The project site itself consists entirely of existing industrial developments and associated infrastructure and landscaping. Historic and existing land uses have eliminated the natural plant communities that historically occurred and have alternated the composition of the soils on-site. No native plant communities will be impacted from implementation of the proposed project. The project site contains land cover types that would be classified as developed and ornamental landscaping. Refer to Attachment C, *Site Photographs*, for representative photographs of the project site.

Topography and Soils

The project site ranges in elevation from approximately 630 to 650 feet above mean sea level. On-site topography is generally flat with no areas of significant topographic relief and gently slopes from south to north. Based on the NRCS USDA Web Soil Survey, the project site is historically underlain by Cortina gravelly sandy loam (0 to 2 percent slopes) and Cortina sandy loam (0 to 3 percent slopes, dry, MLRA 19). Soils on-site have been mechanically disturbed from historic land uses and existing development. As a result, no undisturbed/native soils occur onsite.

¹ A soil series is defined as a group of soils with similar profiles developed from similar parent materials under comparable climatic and vegetation conditions. These profiles include major horizons with similar thickness, arrangement, and other important characteristics, which may promote favorable conditions for certain biological resources.

Survey Results

Avian species observed during the field investigation include northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and northern rough-winged swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*). No mammalian, fish, or amphibian species were observed during the field investigation. The project site provides limited foraging and cover habitat for wildlife species adapted to a high degree of anthropogenic disturbance.

Nesting Birds

No active nests or birds displaying nesting behavior were observed during the field survey, which was conducted during the breeding season. Although the site is developed, on-site structures and ornamental landscaping have the potential to provide foraging and nesting habitat for year-round and seasonal avian residents, as well as migrating songbirds that could occur in the area that area adapted to disturbed areas and urban environments. Additionally, the site has potential to support ground-nesting birds such as killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*).

Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 prohibit the take, possession, or destruction of birds, their nests or eggs). If construction occurs between February 1st and August 31st, a pre-construction clearance survey for nesting birds should be conducted prior to the start of any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities to ensure that no nesting birds will be disturbed during construction.

Migratory Corridors and Linkages

The project site has not been identified as occurring in a wildlife corridor or linkage. However, the southeastern boundary of the site is located approximately 80 feet northwest of MSHCP Constrained Linkage 4, which focuses on habitat for wetland species, Narrow Endemic Plant Species, and movement for species connecting to Core Areas in Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain and areas upstream along Temescal Wash.

The proposed project will be confined to existing areas that have been heavily disturbed by historic land uses and existing development and is bordered by existing development in all directions. Implementation of the proposed project site is not expected to directly impact, prevent or restrict the use of the Temescal Wash, Temescal Canyon, or MSHCP Constrained Linkage 4 as migratory corridor/linkage.

Jurisdictional Areas

The project site does not support any discernible drainage courses, inundated areas, wetland vegetation, or hydric soils that would be considered jurisdictional by the Corps, Regional Board, or CDFW. It should be noted that a channelized portion of Temescal Wash borders the eastern boundary of the project site. No impacts to Temescal Wash, a jurisdictional feature, are expected to occur. Therefore, regulatory approvals from the Corps, Regional Board, and/or CDFW will not be required for implementation of the project.

Special-Status Biological Resources

The CNDDDB Rarefind 5 and the CNPS Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of

California were queried for reported locations of special-status plant and wildlife species as well as special-status natural plant communities in the Corona South USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle. The Field investigation evaluated the conditions of the habitat(s) within the boundaries of the project site to determine if the existing plant communities, at the time of the survey, have the potential to provide suitable habitat(s) for special-status plant and wildlife species.

The literature search identified seventeen (17) special-status plant species, forty-four (44) special-status wildlife species, and five (5) special-status plant communities as having potential to occur within the Corona South quadrangles. Special-status plant and wildlife species were evaluated for their potential to occur within the project boundaries based on habitat requirements, availability and quality of suitable habitat, and known distributions. Species determined to have the potential to occur within the general vicinity are presented in Attachment B, *Potentially Occurring Special-Status Biological Resources*.

Special-Status Plants

No special-status plant species were observed during the field investigation, which was conducted during the blooming season for all such species. Based on habitat requirements for specific special-status plant species and the availability and quality of habitats needed by each species, it was determined that the project site does not have potential to support any of the special-status plant species known to occur in the vicinity of the site and all are presumed absent.

Special-Status Wildlife

No special-status wildlife species were observed on-site during the habitat assessment. Based on habitat requirements for specific species and the availability and quality of on-site habitats, it was determined that the proposed project site has a moderate potential to support Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), and a low potential to support California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*). The project site only provides limited foraging opportunities for the aforementioned species, no suitable nesting habitat was observed onsite. It was further determined that the project site does not provide suitable habitat for any of the other special-status wildlife species known to occur in the area since the project site has been heavily disturbed from historic and ongoing land uses and development.

Critical Habitat

The project site is not located with federally designated Critical Habitat. The nearest federally designated Critical Habitat occurs approximately 3.3 miles to the northwest for least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) within the Santa Ana River. Therefore, the loss or adverse modification of Critical Habitat will not occur as a result of the proposed project and consultation with the USFWS will not be required for impacts to Critical Habitat.

Western Riverside County MSHCP

The project site is located within the City of Corona within the Temescal Canyon Area Plan of the MSHCP but is not located within any Criteria Cells, conservation areas, or designated survey areas (refer to Exhibit 3, *MSHCP Criteria Area*, in Attachment A).

The City is a permittee under the MSHCP and, while the project is not specifically identified as a Covered

Activity under Section 7.1 of the MSHCP, public and private development that are outside of Criteria Areas and Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) Lands are permitted under the MSHCP, subject to consistency with the MSHCP policies that apply to areas outside of Criteria Areas. As such, to achieve coverage, the project must be consistent with the following policies of the MSHCP:

- The policies for the protection of species associated with Riparian/Riverine areas and vernal pools as set for in Section 6.1.2 of the MSHCP;
- The policies for the protection of narrow endemic plant species as set forth in Section 6.1.3;
- The Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines as set forth in Section 6.1.4; and
- The requirements for conducting additional surveys as set forth in Section 6.3.2

Riparian/Riverine Areas and Vernal Pools (Section 6.1.2 of the MSHCP)

No jurisdictional drainages, riparian/riverine and/or wetland features were observed within the project site during the field investigation. Development of the proposed project will not result in impacts to riparian/riverine habitats and a DBESP will not be required for the loss of riparian/riverine habitat from development of the proposed project.

A review of recent and historic aerial photographs (1985-2021) of the project site did not provide visual evidence of an astatic or vernal pool conditions within the project site. No ponding was observed, further supporting the fact that the drainage patterns currently occurring on the project site do not follow hydrologic regimes needed for vernal pools. From this review of historic aerial photographs and observations during the field investigations, it can be concluded that there is no indication of vernal pools or suitable fairy shrimp habitat occurring within the proposed project site. Therefore, the project is consistent with Section 6.1.2 of the MSHCP.

Narrow Endemic Plant Species (Section 6.1.3 of the MSHCP)

The proposed project site is not located within the designated survey area for Narrow Endemic Plant Species.

Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines (Section 6.1.4 of the MSHCP)

The proposed project site is not located within or immediately adjacent to any Criteria Cells, corridors, or linkages. Therefore, the Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines to not apply to this project.

Additional Survey Needs and Procedures (Section 6.3.2 of the MSHCP)

The proposed project site is not located within any designated survey areas.

Stephen's Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan

Separate from the consistency review against the policies of the MSHCP, Riverside County established a boundary in 1996 for protecting the Stephens' kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys stephensi*), a federally endangered and state threatened species. The project site is not located within the Mitigation Fee Area of the SKR HCP. Therefore, the applicant will not be required to pay the SKR HCP Mitigation Fee.

Conclusion

The project site has been developed and routinely disturbed by human activity for several decades. Based on the proposed project footprint and existing site conditions discussed in this report, none of the special-status plant or wildlife species known to occur in the general vicinity of the project site are expected to be directly or indirectly impacted from implementation of the project. Therefore, it was determined that implementation of the project will have “no effect” on federally or State listed species known to occur in the general vicinity of the project site, or sensitive plant communities. Additionally, the project will not impact any jurisdictional drainage features, sensitive habitats, designated Critical Habitats, or regional wildlife movement corridors/linkages.

Please do not hesitate to contact Tom McGill at (951) 285-6014 or tmcgill@elmtconsulting.com or Travis McGill at (909) 816-1646 or travismcgill@elmtconsulting.com should you have any questions regarding this proposal.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. McGill, Ph.D.
Managing Director



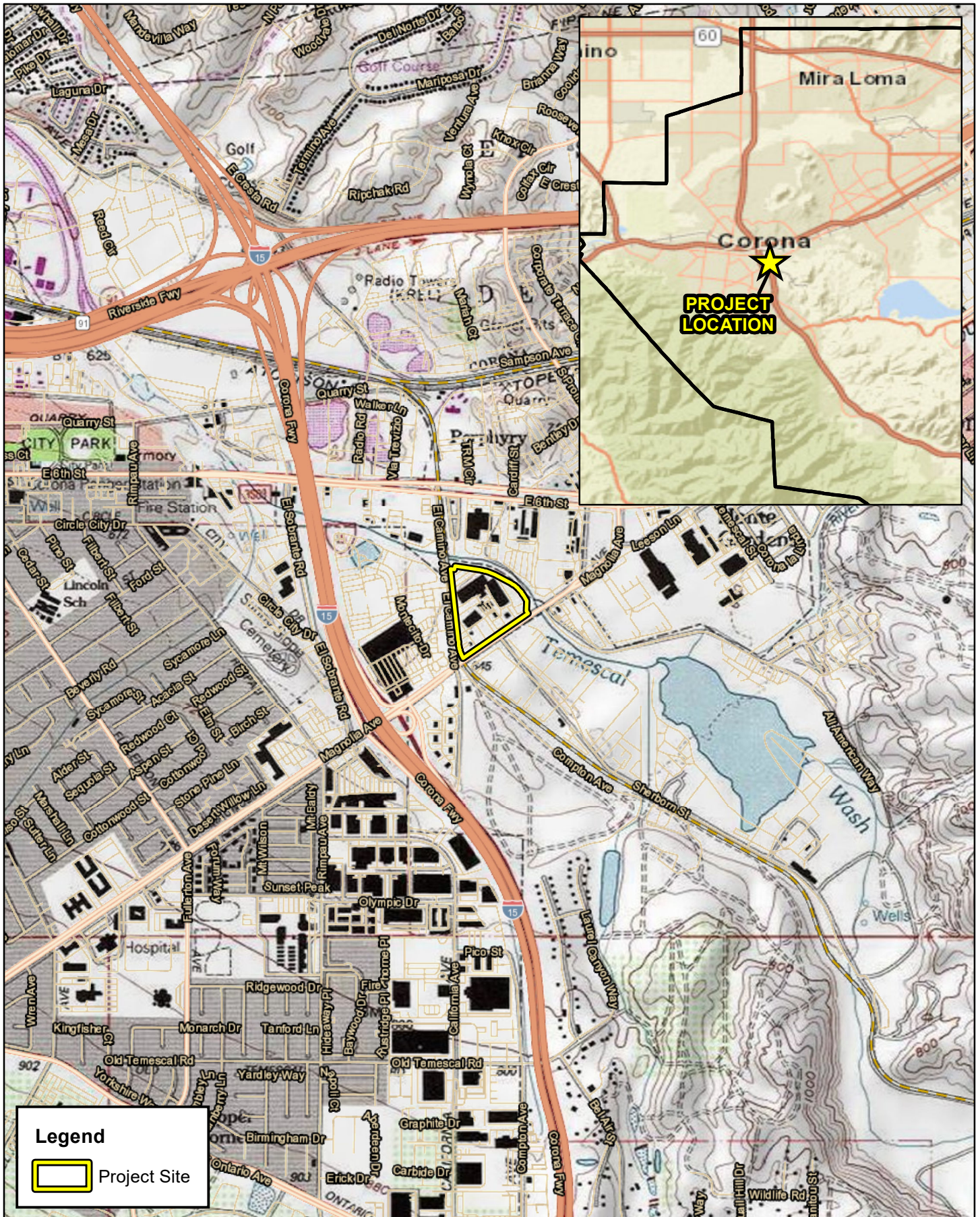
Travis J. McGill
Director

Attachments:

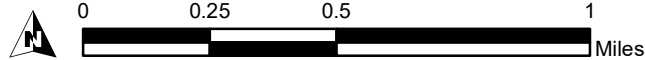
- A. *Project Exhibits*
- B. *Potentially Occurring Special-Status Biological Resources*
- C. *Site Photographs*

Attachment A

Project Exhibits



CORONA MAGNOLIA PA 5 PROJECT
 BIOLOGICAL DUE DILIGENCE
Regional Vicinity

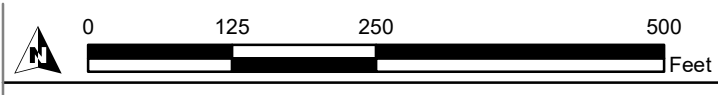


Source: USA Topographic Map, Riverside County



Legend

Project Site

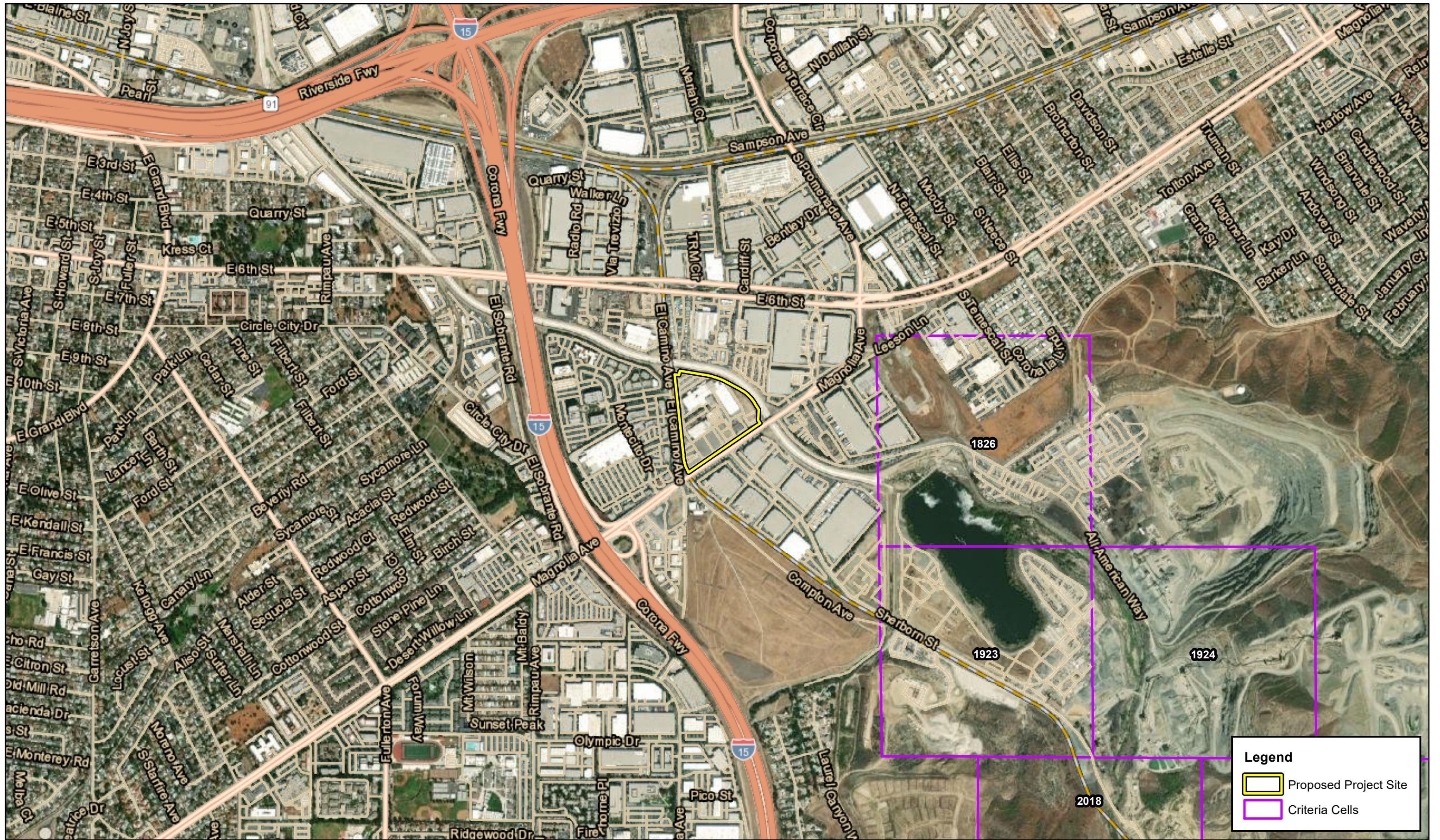


Source: ESRI Aerial Imagery, Riverside County

CORONA MAGNOLIA PA 5 PROJECT
 BIOLOGICAL DUE DILIGENCE

Project Site

Exhibit 2



Legend

- Proposed Project Site
- Criteria Cells



Source: ESRI Aerial Imagery, Riverside County

CORONA MAGNOLIA PA 5 PROJECT
 BIOLOGICAL DUE DILIGENCE
MSHCP Criteria Area

Attachment B

Potentially Occurring Special-Status Biological Resources

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW Listing	CNPS Rare Plant Rank	Potential to Occur
Special-Status Wildlife Species						
<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Cooper's hawk	None	None	WL	-	Moderate
<i>Aimophila ruficeps canescens</i>	southern California rufous-crowned sparrow	None	None	WL	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Anaxyrus californicus</i>	arroyo toad	END	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Ardea alba</i>	great egret	None	None	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Artemisiospiza belli belli</i>	Bell's sage sparrow	None	None	WL	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Aspidoscelis hyperythra</i>	orange-throated whiptail	None	None	WL	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri</i>	coastal whiptail	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	burrowing owl	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Bombus crotchii</i>	Crotch bumble bee	None	None	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Buteo regalis</i>	ferruginous hawk	None	None	WL	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Calypte costae</i>	Costa's hummingbird	None	None	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Chaetodipus fallax fallax</i>	northwestern San Diego pocket mouse	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Circus hudsonius</i>	northern harrier	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	western yellow-billed cuckoo	THR	END	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Coturnicops noveboracensis</i>	yellow rail	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Crotalus ruber</i>	red-diamond rattlesnake	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Diadophis punctatus modestus</i>	San Bernardino ringneck snake	None	None	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Diadophis punctatus similis</i>	San Diego ringneck snake	None	None	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Dipodomys stephensi</i>	Stephens' kangaroo rat	THR	THR	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Elanus leucurus</i>	white-tailed kite	None	None	FP	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Empidonax traillii</i>	willow flycatcher	None	END	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	southwestern willow flycatcher	END	END	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	western pond turtle	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Eremophila alpestris actia</i>	California horned lark	None	None	WL	-	Low
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>	western mastiff bat	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Gopherus agassizii</i>	desert tortoise	THR	THR	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Icteria virens</i>	yellow-breasted chat	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	loggerhead shrike	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Lasiurus xanthinus</i>	western yellow bat	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Lynx rufus pallescens</i>	pallid bobcat	None	None	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Nannopterum auritum</i>	double-crested cormorant	None	None	WL	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i>	San Diego desert woodrat	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	black-crowned night heron	None	None	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Nyctinomops femorosaccus</i>	pocketed free-tailed bat	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus pop. 10</i>	steelhead - southern California DPS	END	CE	-	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	coast horned lizard	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>	coastal California gnatcatcher	THR	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Salvadora hexalepis virgulata</i>	coast patch-nosed snake	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Setophaga petechia</i>	yellow warbler	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Spea hammondi</i>	western spadefoot	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent

<i>Taricha torosa</i>	Coast Range newt	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American badger	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Thamnophis hammondi</i>	two-striped gartersnake	None	None	SSC	-	Presumed Absent
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	least Bell's vireo	END	END	-	-	Presumed Absent

Special-Status Plant Species

<i>Abronia villosa</i> var. <i>aurita</i>	chaparral sand-verbena	None	None	-	1B.1	Presumed Absent
<i>Calochortus catalinae</i>	Catalina mariposa-lily	None	None	-	4.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Calochortus plummerae</i>	Plummer's mariposa-lily	None	None	-	4.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Calochortus weedii</i> var. <i>intermedius</i>	intermediate mariposa-lily	None	None	-	1B.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Chorizanthe leptotheca</i>	Peninsular spineflower	None	None	-	4.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Deinandra paniculata</i>	paniculate tarplant	None	None	-	4.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Dudleya multicaulis</i>	many-stemmed dudleya	None	None	-	1B.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Erythranthe diffusa</i>	Palomar monkeyflower	None	None	-	4.3	Presumed Absent
<i>Juglans californica</i>	southern California black walnut	None	None	-	4.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Lepechinia cardiophylla</i>	heart-leaved pitcher sage	None	None	-	1B.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Lepidium virginicum</i> var. <i>robinsonii</i>	Robinson's pepper-grass	None	None	-	4.3	Presumed Absent
<i>Lilium humboldtii</i> ssp. <i>ocellatum</i>	ocellated humboldt lily	None	None	-	4.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Monardella hypoleuca</i> ssp. <i>intermedia</i>	intermediate monardella	None	None	-	1B.3	Presumed Absent
<i>Nolina cismontana</i>	chaparral nolina	None	None	-	1B.2	Presumed Absent
<i>Phacelia keckii</i>	Santiago Peak phacelia	None	None	-	1B.3	Presumed Absent
<i>Polygala cornuta</i> var. <i>fishiae</i>	Fish's milkwort	None	None	-	4.3	Presumed Absent
<i>Romneya coulteri</i>	Coulter's matilija poppy	None	None	-	4.2	Presumed Absent

Special-Status Plant Communities

Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest	None	None	-	-	Absent
Southern Interior Cypress Forest	Southern Interior Cypress Forest	None	None	-	-	Absent
Southern Riparian Forest	Southern Riparian Forest	None	None	-	-	Absent
Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland	Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland	None	None	-	-	Absent
Southern Willow Scrub	Southern Willow Scrub	None	None	-	-	Absent

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Fed) - Federal

END- Federal Endangered
THR- Federal Threatened

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CA) - California

END- California Endangered
THR- California Threatened
Candidate- Candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act
FP- California Fully Protected
SSC- Species of Special Concern
WL- Watch List

California Native Plant Society (CNPS)

California Rare Plant Rank

1B Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere
2B Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, But More Common Elsewhere
3 Plants About Which More

CNPS Threat Ranks

0.1- Seriously threatened in California
0.2- Moderately threatened in California
0.3- Not very threatened in California

Attachment C

Site Photographs



Photograph 1: From the northwest corner of the project site looking south along the western boundary.



Photograph 2: From the northwest corner of the project site looking east along the northern boundary.



Photograph 3: From the southeast corner of the project site looking northwest along the eastern boundary.



Photograph 4: From the southeast corner of the project site looking northwest.



Photograph 5: From the southeast corner of the project site looking southwest along the southern boundary.



Photograph 6: From the southwest corner of the project site looking northeast along the southern boundary.



Photograph 7: From the southwest corner of the project site looking north along the western boundary.



Photograph 8: From the middle of the western boundary of the project site looking east.