



# Ararat Home Residential Care and Nursing Facility

## Biological Resources Assessment

*prepared for*

**Ararat Homes of Los Angeles**

Derik G. Ghookasian

Chief Operating Officer

15105 Mission Hills Road

Los Angeles, California 91345

Via email: [derikg@ararathome.org](mailto:derikg@ararathome.org)

*prepared by*

**Rincon Consultants, Inc.**

180 North Ashwood Avenue

Ventura, California 93003

**November 2023**

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# Executive Summary

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This Biological Resources Assessment (BRA) documents the biological resources on the Ararat Home Project (hereafter, project) site in the community of Mission Hills in the City of Los Angeles, California. It evaluates potential impacts to biological resources based on current project plans. The proposed project involves the construction of an extension to the existing Ararat Nursing Home located east of the project site. The project's upper and lower campuses would include in-patient care facilities, residential units, parking areas, and associated landscaping. Both of the single-family residences currently on the project site would be demolished to enable project construction. Project activities were evaluated for their potential to impact biological resources within the project site.

No special-status plant species, sensitive natural communities, or wildlife species were observed or otherwise detected and are not expected to occur on the project site. California towhee (*Melospiza crissalis*) was observed onsite; it is not listed as special-status by the USFWS or CDFW but is identified on the Los Angeles County Audubon Society Watch List (Los Angeles County Sensitive Bird Species Working Group 2009). While locally designated, California towhee is a fairly common bird in chaparral and scrub habitats along coastal slopes and foothills in California and occupies shrubby backyards and city parks in urban and residential areas. Mitigation measures requiring nesting bird surveys for construction during nesting season would mitigate potential impacts to migrating birds, and nesting birds and raptors to a less than significant level.

One offsite drainage is located within 50 feet of the project site's eastern border. Another drainage crosses the northern portion of the project site for a distance of approximately 344 feet. Both appear to carry runoff from adjacent properties and help manage stormwater flow. The onsite drainage contains potential wetland indicators, including mature and recruits of Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*) as well as a small, thick stand of cattail (*Typha* sp.), which constitutes riparian vegetation. Construction of the proposed project could potentially directly impact the onsite drainage and indirectly impact the offsite drainage. Mitigation measures require a jurisdictional delineation to determine the jurisdictional status of these drainages. Should they be deemed jurisdictional, additional mitigation measures requiring avoidance, minimization, and compensation would mitigate potential impacts to these jurisdictional resources to a less than significant level.

No trees protected by the City of Los Angeles (City) Protected Tree Ordinance (No. 177404; City of Los Angeles 2006b) are present onsite. While both blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) shrubs are present onsite, an amendment to add them to City's protected trees list has not yet been adopted (City of Los Angeles 2017, 2018). The project is consistent with the City's General Plan (2001) protecting biological resources. Therefore, the project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances.

Implementation of recommended avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will reduce all potential project specific and cumulative direct and indirect impacts to sensitive biological resources to less than significant levels and ensure consistency with local policies and plans.

# 1 Introduction

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This report documents the findings of a Biological Resources Assessment (BRA) conducted by Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) for the Ararat Home Project (hereafter, project). The purpose of this report is to document the existing conditions of the project site, including plant and wildlife species, vegetation communities, jurisdictional waters and wetlands, wildlife movement corridors, and locally protected resources, and to evaluate impacts to these resources from project implementation as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

## 1.1 Project Location

The project is located in the community of Mission Hills in the northern San Fernando Valley, in the City of Los Angeles, California (City; Figure 1). It is situated approximately 0.2-mile southwest of the Interstate 5 (I-5) and approximately 0.2-mile southeast of the Interstate 405 (I-405) intersection, immediately adjacent to Eden Memorial Park to the west and Bishop Alemany High School sports fields to the south across Mission Hills Road. The project site consists of four parcels: APNs 2664-022-018, 2664-022-019, 2664-022-008, and 2664-022-009. Parcel 2664-022-018 is 6.64 acres and contains a single-family residence (2,675 square feet) constructed in 1955. Parcel 2664-022-019 is 1.07 acres and contains a single-family residence (1,847 square feet) constructed in 1963. APN 2664-022-008 is approximately 2.45 acres and does not contain structures. APN 2664-022-009 is approximately 1.19 acres and does not contain structures. The undeveloped portions of the site contain landscaping and undisturbed vegetation. The total project site (including all four parcels) is approximately 11.35 acres.

## 1.2 Project Description

The proposed project would be an addition to the pre-existing Ararat Nursing Home located at 15105 Mission Hills Road, as illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 3. The proposed project would consist of a three-story lower campus with an underground parking garage and a four-story upper campus with both surface parking and an underground level parking garage. The building footprint of the lower campus would be 51,000 SF for the skilled nursing facility and 96,150 SF for the assisted living (third floor) and memory care (first and second floor) facility. The skilled nursing in-patient building would provide 96 beds in 84 double rooms and 12 semi-private rooms, and the assisted living and memory care facility would provide 234 beds in 117 double rooms (39 rooms per floor). The upper campus would consist of a 61-unit apartment building and 40 townhouse units in four buildings. The building footprint of the upper campus would be 90,460 SF. In total, the proposed project would result in 101 new residential units (townhomes and apartments) and 330 new assisted living, memory care, and in-patient beds. The large unoccupied areas of the site would be used as open space and landscaped accordingly. A total of 299 parking spaces for the project will be provided in the underground parking garages and small surface parking lot. Export of approximately 60,000 cubic yards of earth materials will be required.

The project would be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 includes the lower campus long-term care center and skilled nursing facilities located at the south end of the project site. Phase 2 includes the upper campus independent living area located at the north end of the site and cutting into the

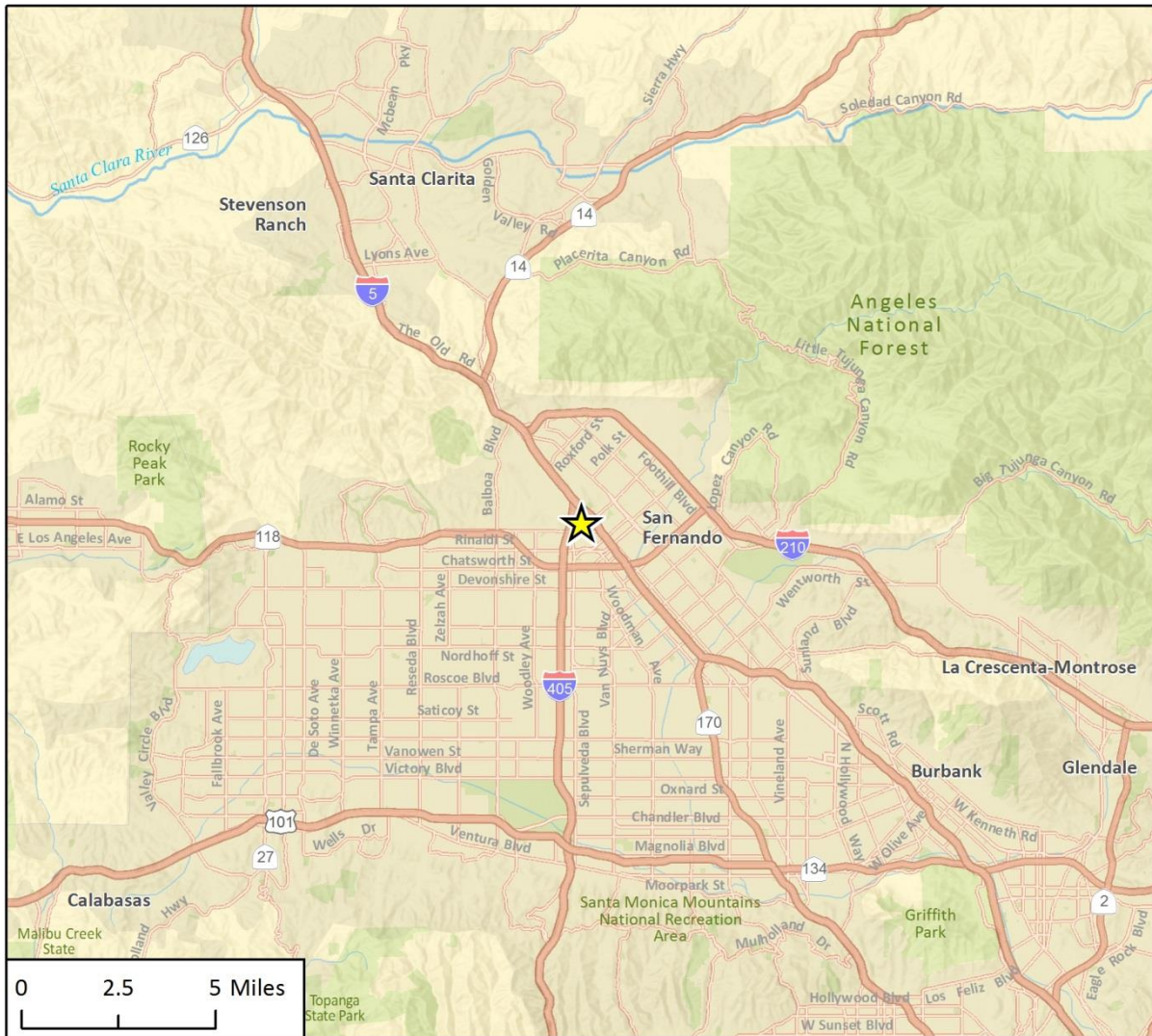
summit of the existing hillside. The entrance drive at the northern portion of the project site would also be widened to 24 to 26 feet per fire code requirements.

Both of the single-family residences currently on the project site would be demolished to allow project construction, and it is assumed that the entire site will be impacted by grading or landscaping.



Ararat Home of Los Angeles  
Ararat Home Residential Care and Nursing Facility

Figure 1 Regional Location Map



Imagery provided by Esri and its licensors © 2018.

★ Project Location

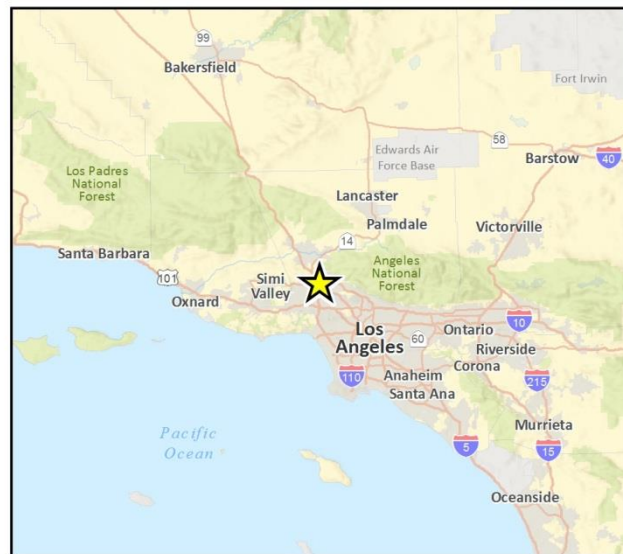
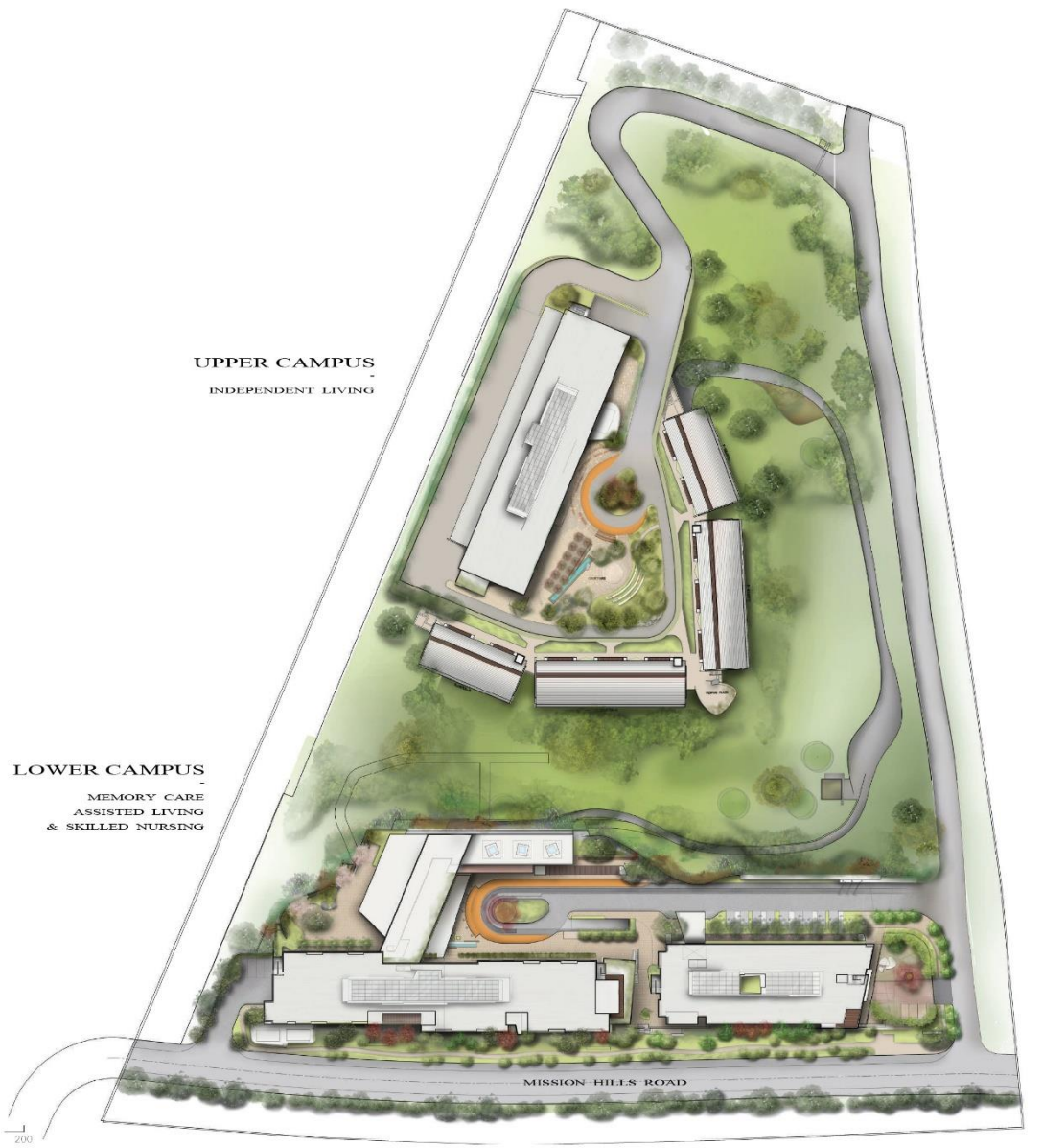


Fig 1 Regional Location

Figure 2 Site Plan



Source: Zakian Woo Architects, 2023

0 75 150 Feet



Ararat Home of Los Angeles  
 Ararat Home Residential Care and Nursing Facility

Figure 3 Grading Plan



ESTIMATED EARTHWORK QUANTITIES	
CUT	35,000 CUBIC YARDS
FILL	35,000 CUBIC YARDS
BASE EXCAVATION	35,000 CUBIC YARDS
FOUNDATION	35,000 CUBIC YARDS
NET ZERO	35,000 CUBIC YARDS

1. THE QUANTITIES LISTED ABOVE ARE TO BE USED FOR APPROXIMATE PLAN DESIGN AND FURTHER REFINED AS NECESSARY.  
 2. ESTIMATED QUANTITIES ARE BASED ON EXISTING GRADES TO EXISTING GRADES AND ALL CONSTRUCTION IS TO BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF THE PROJECT. THE QUANTITIES LISTED ABOVE DO NOT INCLUDE THE QUANTITIES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE FOUNDATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE BUILDING.  
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- LEGEND:**
- PROPERTY LINE
  - EXISTENT LINE
  - LIMIT OF GRADE
  - PROPOSED GRADING WALL
  - OFFICIAL FILL
  - ALLOY/COLUMBIAN
  - OLIVE TYPICAL ALLOY
  - PATINA FORMATION WITH A CHANNEL
  - REGIONAL SOIL, WOODS FORMATION
  - REGIONARY MEDICAL, WOODS FORMATION
- PATTERN LEGEND:**
- OFFICIAL FILL
  - ALLOY/COLUMBIAN
  - OLIVE TYPICAL ALLOY
  - PATINA FORMATION WITH A CHANNEL
  - REGIONAL SOIL, WOODS FORMATION
  - REGIONARY MEDICAL, WOODS FORMATION

Source: KPFF Consulting Engineers

## 2 Methodology

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The BRA for the project consisted of a review of relevant literature and project documents followed by one reconnaissance level field survey. Regulated or sensitive resources studied and analyzed herein include special-status plant and wildlife species, nesting birds and raptors, sensitive plant communities, jurisdictional waters and wetlands, wildlife movement routes, and resources protected under City of Los Angeles laws and policies, such as protected trees.

### 2.1 Regulatory Overview

#### 2.1.1 Environmental Statutes

For the purpose of this report, the analysis of potential impacts to biological resources was guided by the following statutes:

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- California Endangered Species Act (CESA)
- Federal Clean Water Act (CWA)
- California Fish and Game Code (CFGC)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)
- The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
- Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act
- City of Los Angeles General Plan (2001)
- City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide (2006a)
- City of Los Angeles Tree Protection Ordinance (2006b)

#### 2.1.2 Guidelines for Determining CEQA Significance

##### **Initial Study Checklist (State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G)**

The following threshold criteria, as defined by the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Initial Study Checklist and adopted by the City of Los Angeles (City of Los Angeles 2002), were used to evaluate potential environmental effects. Based on these criteria, the proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

- a) Have substantial adverse effects, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Ararat Home Residential Care and Nursing Facility**

- c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan.

### **City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide**

The City of Los Angeles' adopted *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* (City of Los Angeles 2006a) provides environmental screening criteria and significance thresholds specific to biological resources. Per the screening criteria, which focus on potential presence of sensitive resources, the project site is subject to CEQA analysis to determine if its potential impacts to such resources may be significant. The Guide's significance thresholds, provided below, supplement the Initial Study Checklist criteria described above in determining whether potential project impacts may be considered significant under CEQA.

A project would normally have a significant impact on biological resources if it could result in:

- a. The loss of individuals, or the reduction of existing habitat, of a state or federal listed endangered, threatened, rare, protected, or candidate species, or a Species of Special Concern or federally listed critical habitat;
- b. The loss of individuals or the reduction of existing habitat of a locally designated species or a reduction in a locally designated natural habitat or plant community;
- c. Interference with wildlife movement/migration corridors that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species;
- d. The alteration of an existing wetland habitat; or
- e. Interference with habitat such that normal behaviors are disturbed (e.g., from the introduction of noise, light) to a degree that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species.

## **2.2 Literature Review**

Rincon staff reviewed literature for baseline information on biological resources potentially occurring at the project site and in the surrounding area. The literature review included information available in peer reviewed journals and standard reference materials (*e.g.*, Bowers *et al.* 2004; Burt and Grossenheider 1980; Holland 1986; Baldwin *et al.* 2012; Sawyer *et al.* 2009; Stebbins 2003; American Ornithologists Union 2018; United States Army Corps of Engineers 2008).

Rincon also conducted a review of relevant databases of sensitive resource occurrences from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) (CDFW 2018a); the CDFW California Sensitive Natural Communities list (CDFW 2018c); the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) portal (USFWS 2018a), National Wetlands Inventory Wetlands Mapper (USFWS 2018b); the United States

Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service Web Soil Survey (United States Department of Agricultural, Natural Resources Conservation Service 2018); the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2018); and the City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide's Biological Resource Areas, Natural Habitats and Significant Ecological Areas, and Sensitive Species Compendium (City of Los Angeles 2006a).

## 2.3 Field Reconnaissance Survey

Rincon biologists Brenna Vredeveld and Lily Sam conducted a reconnaissance field survey on April 3, 2018, from 8:15am to 10:15am, for parcels 2664-022-018, 2664-022-008, and 2664-022-009<sup>1</sup>. The purpose of the survey was to document existing biological conditions within the project site. Wildlife species were identified by direct observation, vocalization, or by sign (*e.g.*, tracks, scat, burrows). The detection of wildlife species was limited by seasonal and temporal factors. The survey was conducted during the spring (April); therefore, potentially occurring winter migrants may not have been observed. As the survey was performed during the day, identification of nocturnal animals was limited to sign if present onsite. An inventory of plant and animal species observed during the site visit was compiled, and an evaluation of potential jurisdictional aquatic resources was performed. No nighttime surveys focused or protocol-level surveys for special-status species, formal jurisdictional delineation, or arborist tree survey were performed.

The biologists conducted the survey on foot. Where portions of the project site were inaccessible (*e.g.*, thick vegetation, parcel 2664-02-019), the biologists visually inspected those areas with binoculars (10x40). Weather conditions during the survey included an average temperature of 57 degrees Fahrenheit, with winds between 1 and 2 miles per hour toward the end of the survey, and overcast skies clearing up as the survey progressed. Site photographs are included in Appendix B.

### 2.3.1 Vegetation Community Classification

Vegetation communities observed in the project site were mapped on a site-specific aerial image and later digitized into Global Information Systems (GIS) for record. Vegetation mapping and classification followed *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018b) and was based on the classification systems provided in *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Communities of California* (Holland 1986) and *A Manual of California Vegetation, Second Edition* (Sawyer *et al.* 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of the survey, Ararat Home had not yet purchased the project site. The on-foot survey was conducted with the permission of the property owners for parcels 2664-022-18, 2664-022-008, and 2664-022-009, as coordinated through an Ararat Home representative. Parcel 2664-022-19 was surveyed with binoculars. Any modification or work being conducted on the project site at the time of the survey was presumably with the knowledge of the owners.

## 3 Existing Conditions

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The following provides a summary of findings as a result of the literature review and field survey, and a compilation of the resources that occur, or have the potential to occur, in the project site. Site photographs are provided in Appendix B.

### 3.1 Physical Characteristics

#### 3.1.1 Regional Setting

The region surrounding the project site is primarily a developed landscape. Large open areas of native habitat are located at least 4 miles from the community of Mission Hills, in which the project is located: the Verdugo Mountains is approximately 7 miles to the southeast; the Santa Susana Mountains foothills approximately 4.75 miles to the northwest; and the San Gabriel Mountains approximately 4 miles to the northeast and east. Hansen Dam and Van Norman Bypass Reservoirs, including the mountain creeks and drainages that feed them, provide habitat for aquatic species and birds. Outside of these areas, pockets of open space exist in golf courses and maintained public parks. The City of Los Angeles CEQA Thresholds Guide (2006a) identifies the project site and the area to the north of it as containing open space, based on aerial photography from 1992. The purpose of this mapping categorization is to direct project proponents to one of two sets of screening criteria to assist in determining potential for significant impacts and if CEQA analysis may be warranted. There are little, if any, native habitats remaining along the San Fernando Valley floor in this area. Species that have been able to adapt to human-dominated landscapes are able to take greatest advantage of the developed, landscaped, and remaining open areas in the San Fernando region.

#### 3.1.2 Project Site Setting

Historically part of the Mission San Fernando lands, the 11.9-acre project site is located in an area that has been managed for human uses since at least the late 1800s. Agricultural fields and grazing lands predominated through at least 1947; I-5 and I-405 near the project site were constructed approximately 0.25-mile northeast and northwest of the site in the early 1960s. The pattern of disturbance at the project site has included several stages of vegetation clearing, as evidenced by recently cleared areas and a large piece of earth moving equipment observed on the southern portion of the site during the field survey. Existing trees did not become a significant element onsite until the late 1990s or early 2000s and were all either planted or are recent recruits (HistoricAerials.com 2018). The two residences located on the project site are currently surrounded by ornamental trees and shrubs, which extend throughout the property. Native scrub habitat has recolonized small patches and offers some limited habitat for native species. The project site is surrounded by urban and residential development, including a memorial park, retirement community, and sports fields. A small pocket of open and agricultural land is located north of the project site, in the corner created by the intersection of I-5 and I-405. The project site provides suitable habitat for those species with requirements allowing for a matrix of vegetation communities dominated by non-natives in the context of human uses.

### 3.1.3 Watersheds and Wetlands

The project site is located in the Los Angeles River watershed. Hansen Dam Reservoir is located approximately 4.5 miles to the southeast. The Van Norman Bypass Reservoir is situated approximately 1.25 miles northeast of the project site; it was once much larger, covering almost twice the area it currently occupies, extending almost to the current, western edge of Interstate 405 (HistoricAerials.com 2018). Mountain creeks and drainages feed these reservoirs; where they are not channelized, they provide habitat for aquatic species. Wetland areas in this region have been heavily modified (some have been filled in); many remnant water features along the San Fernando Valley floor have been channelized as residential and urban development has expanded. They primarily provide habitat for aquatic species and birds that have adapted to the urban landscape. One unnamed drainage is located within 50 feet of the project site's eastern edge and another crosses the northern portion of the property, as discussed below in Section 4.3

### 3.1.4 Topography and Soils

The project site is located on a small hill with elevations ranging from approximately 1,045 feet (ft.) above mean sea level (amsl) at the southern and northern boundaries to 1,150 ft. amsl at the top of the site's central hill. A moderate, south-facing slope connects the flatter, southern portion of the property with the central hill. The east-facing slope connecting the dirt drive to the summit is steeper. The following soil types occur within the project site, as shown in Figure 4 (USDA 2018).

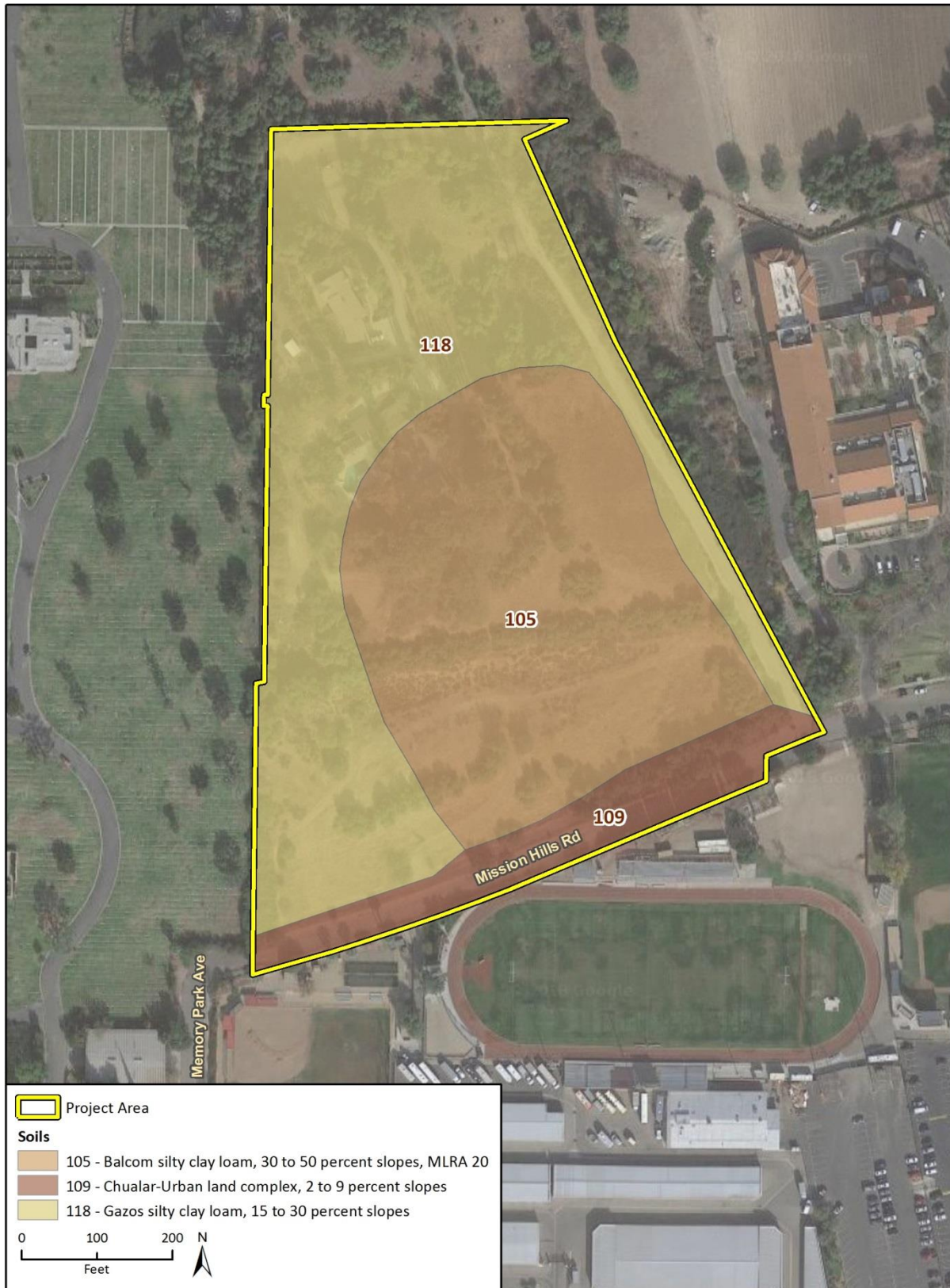
- Balcom silty clay loam, 30 to 50 percent slopes, major land resources area (MLRA) 20
- Chualar-Urban land complex, 2 to 9 percent slopes
- Gazos silty clay loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes

## 3.2 Vegetation

The project site is comprised of disturbed/developed land, landscaped/ornamental vegetation, ruderal vegetation, and California buckwheat scrub (Figure 5). Disturbed/developed land is defined to be areas that have been constructed upon or otherwise physically altered to an extent that native vegetation is no longer supported. Disturbed/developed lands are characterized by permanent or semi-permanent structures, pavement or hardscape, and landscaped areas that often require irrigation. Areas that have been physically disturbed (by previous human activity) and are no longer recognizable as a native or naturalized vegetation association, but continue to retain a soil substrate, may also be considered disturbed/developed lands. On the project site, disturbed/developed land occupies approximately 2.88 acres including the dirt and concrete driveways, the two residences, and recently cleared areas in the southern portion of the site.



Figure 4 Soils Map



Imagery provided by Google and its licensors © 2018;  
Additional data provided by USDA NRCS SSURGO, 2014.

Figure 5 Vegetation Map



Landscaped/ornamental vegetation extends throughout the project site, encompassing approximately 5.68 acres. It consists primarily of Peruvian pepper trees (*Schinus molle*) and eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.), but also includes Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*), cattail (*Typha* sp.), arrow bamboo (*Pseudosasa japonica*), sweet alyssum (*Lobularia maritima*), Italian cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*), jade plant (*Crassula ovata*), aloe (*Aloe maculata*), Chinese juniper (*Juniperus chinensis*), palo verde (*Parkinsonia florida*), Canary Island palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), olive trees (*Olea* sp.), and oleander (*Nerium oleander*). The Peruvian pepper trees dominate in certain areas on the southern portion of the site, with the species assemblage becoming more diverse closer to the residence on the central hill. Cattail, bamboo, and Mexican fan palm occur along a drainage on the northern portion of the site; cattail is considered a wetland indicator species and riparian habitat (discussed in Section 4.2). Bamboo and Mexican fan palm also occur along the eastern edge of the dirt road, adjacent to a larger, offsite drainage that trends north to south.

The habitats containing ruderal vegetation occur in large areas amongst the ornamental vegetation on approximately 3.70 acres on the project site. This community is dominated by black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) and tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*) but also includes tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), and red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*). Some native plants were also interspersed, such as isolated occurrences of Menzies' fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*) and wild hyacinth (*Dichelostemma capitatum*). A few blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) are scattered throughout the ruderal vegetation in the southern portion of the property, but not in enough numbers or density to be considered a distinct vegetation community.

Three isolated patches of California buckwheat scrub, totaling approximately 0.69 acre, occur on a south-facing slope in the southern portion of the project site and on an east-facing slope along the dirt driveway. This vegetation community is dominated by California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) mixed with California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*). Three patches of prickly pear (*Opuntia littoralis*) are present in the southernmost California buckwheat scrub along with isolated occurrences of toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), California dodder (*Cuscuta californica*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), and cliff aster (*Malacothrix saxatilis*); chaparral yucca (*Hesperoyucca whipplei*) was slightly more numerous in this area. Deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*) is present in both the southern California buckwheat scrub patch and the northern patch along the driveway. Field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) was only observed in the northern patch along the driveway. The smallest patch along the southern portion of the driveway is primarily composed of California buckwheat and California sagebrush.

A list of plant species observed during the survey is included in Appendix C.

### 3.3 General Wildlife

The project site and surrounding area provide habitat for wildlife species that commonly occur in residential areas of the region (e.g., raccoon [*Procyon lotor*], striped skunk [*Mephitis mephitis*], and a variety of common avian species). The three patches of California buckwheat scrub are the only native habitat assemblages present. Given the project site's history of disturbance and lack of connectivity with larger expanses of natural habitat, it is unlikely that it would support most special-status species. Wildlife species observed during the survey are included in Appendix C.

## 4 Sensitive Biological Resources

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### 4.1 Special-Status Species

Special-status species are those plants and animals listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as Threatened or Endangered by the USFWS under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA); those considered “Species of Concern” by the USFWS; those listed or candidates for listing as Rare, Threatened, or Endangered by the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and Native Plant Protection Act; animals designated as “Fully Protected” by the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC); animals listed as “Species of Special Concern” (SSC) by the CDFW; CDFW Special Plants, specifically those with California Rare Plant Ranks (CRPR) of 1B, 2, 3, and 4 in the CNPS’s Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPS 2018); and birds identified as sensitive or watch list species by the Los Angeles County Audubon Society (Los Angeles County Sensitive Bird Species Working Group 2009).

Local, state, and federal agencies regulate special-status species and may require an assessment of their presence or potential presence to be conducted onsite prior to the approval of proposed development on a property. This section discusses sensitive biological resources observed on the project site and evaluates the potential for the project site to support other sensitive biological resources. A list of special-status plant and animal species with potential to occur onsite was developed based on a review of a 5-mile search of the CNDDDB (CDFW 2018a) and a 4-quad search of the CNPS’s online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPS 2018) (Appendix D). These search areas were determined based on the surrounding urban and residential land uses and significant change in habitat types outside of this area (e.g., mountain and desert habitats that are not relevant to the project site). Assessments for the potential occurrence of special-status species are based upon known ranges, habitat preferences for the species, species occurrence records from the CNDDDB, species occurrence records from other sites in the vicinity of the survey area, and previous reports for the project site. The potential for each special-status species to occur in the survey area was evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **No Potential.** Habitat on and adjacent to the site is clearly unsuitable for the species requirements (foraging, breeding, cover, substrate, elevation, hydrology, plant community, site history, disturbance regime).
- **Low Potential.** Few of the habitat components meeting the species requirements are present, and/or the majority of habitat on and adjacent to the site is unsuitable or of very poor quality. The species is not likely to be found on the site.
- **Moderate Potential.** Some of the habitat components meeting the species requirements are present, and/or only some of the habitat on or adjacent to the site is unsuitable. The species has a moderate probability of being found on the site.
- **High Potential.** All of the habitat components meeting the species requirements are present and/or most of the habitat on or adjacent to the site is highly suitable. The species has a high probability of being found on the site.
- **Present.** Species is observed on the site or has been recorded (e.g., CNDDDB, other reports) on the site recently (within the last 5 years).

While common birds are not designated special-status species, under the provisions of the CFGC (Section 3503), it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird. Section 3503.5 of the CFGC extends additional protection to birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey), specifying that the take, possession, or destruction of individual birds in these orders is also prohibited. The loss of a nest due to construction activities would be a violation of CFGC Sections 3503 and 3503.5, among other provisions.

A total of 24 special-status plant species, 5 sensitive natural communities, and 16 special-status wildlife species (4 of which are birds) are documented in the vicinity of the project site. A list of these species and a discussion on their potential to occur on the project site is provided in Appendix D. The potential for special-status species to occur in the project site is discussed below, but in general, the site is unlikely to contain federal or state listed endangered or threatened species or SSC due to its developed and disturbed condition.

Critical habitat is not present on the project site (USFWS 2018a).

#### 4.1.1 Special-Status Plant Species

Special-status plant species typically have very specific habitat requirements that may include, but are not limited to, surrounding vegetation communities, soil type, elevation levels, and topography. During the reconnaissance field survey, no special-status plant species were observed or otherwise detected. While some potentially occurring plant species may not have been blooming at the time of the survey, elements of suitable habitat for special-status plant species were not documented within the project site. It is unlikely that species would be present due to the isolation of the site from surrounding open areas and natural habitat and the site's history of disturbance (historically for cultivation and grazing, presently as residential properties). No special-status plant species have a moderate or high potential to occur in the project site.

Protected trees are discussed in Section 4.5.2 below.

#### 4.1.2 Special-Status Wildlife Species

California towhee (*Melospiza crissalis*) was observed onsite during the field survey on April 3, 2018; it is not listed as special-status by the USFWS or CDFW but is identified on the Los Angeles County Audubon Society Watch List (Los Angeles County Sensitive Bird Species Working Group 2009). While locally designated, California towhee is a fairly common bird in chaparral and scrub habitats along coastal slopes and foothills in California. In urban and residential areas this species occupies shrubby backyards and city parks (Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2018).

During the field survey, a woodrat den and scat were also observed onsite among ornamental trees at the top of a south-facing slope, to the south of the two residences. Woodrats are nocturnal and the species could not be identified. Considering the history of disturbance at the project site and its relative isolation from other open, natural habitats supporting special-status species, there is a low potential it may be a San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), SSC, which occurs in coastal scrub habitats throughout southern California.

The site also provides potential nesting and foraging habitat for avian species in the ornamental trees and landscaped areas, coastal buckwheat scrub, and ruderal vegetation onsite.

No other special-status wildlife species identified by the USFWS or CDFW, or locally designated were observed or otherwise detected on the project site during field survey on April 3, 2018. No other special-status species have a moderate or high potential to occur on the project site.

## 4.2 Sensitive Plant Communities

Based on information obtained from the desktop review, several habitats occur in the region that are afforded protection by a federal, state, or local authority, and may support special-status plants and/or wildlife. For the purpose of this report, sensitive habitats include the following:

- Riparian habitat
- Sensitive vegetation communities identified by the CDFW (2018c) and/or local agencies
- Significant Ecological Areas (SEA) as identified by Los Angeles County and discussed in the City's General Plan (2001)
- Critical Habitat designated by the USFWS or National Marine Fisheries Service under the ESA

The cattail present along the onsite drainage is a wetland indicator species. While less than 0.1 acre in size, it constitutes riparian habitat and is considered sensitive.

Based on the CNDDDB query conducted during the desktop review, the following sensitive vegetation communities are documented within a five-mile radius of the project site: California Walnut Woodland, Riversidian Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub, Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest, Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland, and Valley Oak Woodland. No CDFW or locally-designated sensitive vegetation communities were observed on the project site during the reconnaissance field survey.

The project site is not within a mapped SEA. The closest SEAs are located in the Verdugo Mountains and the Santa Susana Mountains/ Simi Hills at least 5 miles away. No critical habitat is present onsite (USFWS 2018b).

## 4.3 Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

In accordance with Section 1602 of the CFGC, the CDFW has jurisdiction over lakes and streambeds (including adjacent riparian resources). The CDFW regulates wetland areas only to the extent that those wetlands are part of a river, stream, or lake. Of particular interest to CDFW are riparian trees greater than two inches in diameter at breast height (DBH; CDFW 2017a). Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), the USACE has authority to regulate activities that discharge dredge or fill material into wetlands or other "waters of the United States" through issuance of a Section 404 Permit. Finally, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) has jurisdiction over "waters of the state" pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and also has the responsibility for issuing Water Quality Certifications per Section 401 of the federal CWA.

A National Wetlands Inventory-mapped drainage that trends north to south is located offsite, but within 50 feet of the project site's eastern boundary (Figure 5). Its southern portion is identified as freshwater emergent wetland and its northern portion as freshwater forested/shrub wetland (USFWS 2018). During the field survey, the biologists observed that medium-sized boulders have been placed to line this channel at its southern end and that vegetation along its banks had recently been cleared and trimmed along its entire length. Water was not present in the drainage at the time of the survey, and the drainage appears to contribute to managing storm-water runoff from surrounding properties. Vegetation along the fence line between the drainage and the project site consists of a thick stand of arrow bamboo and a few Mexican fan palms at its northern end, and some olive and Peruvian pepper trees at its southern end. The drainage is culverted under Mission Hills Road, where it goes underground and, from review of aerial imagery, does not appear to

resurface. A six-foot tall chain-link fence bounds the drainage on its eastern and western edges and along Mission Hills Road where it goes underground.

A second, unmapped drainage was identified on the project site during the survey; it trends east to west along the northern portion of the site for approximately 344 feet just south of the dirt driveway (Figure 5). This drainage appears to channel runoff from a pipe emptying from an adjacent property. The drainage is lined with gravel in one small swale area near a large, corrugated culvert pipe, but is otherwise a shallow, braided channel network. Water was present in the shallow portion of the channel at the time of the reconnaissance survey. The drainage with indication of water flow is approximately 3 feet wide on average, except where it is culverted in two locations under the dirt driveway. While not detected during the reconnaissance survey, aquatic life may be supported by the water present in the channel, potentially including amphibians and aquatic insects, though likely not fish. It drains toward the east side of the site and likely into the offsite north-south drainage described above. Vegetation present in the east-west drainage onsite includes potential wetland indicators, primarily mature and recruits of Mexican fan palm as well as a small, thick stand of cattail, which occur within 25 feet of the drainage. The total area occupied by the drainage and associated wetland and riparian vegetation is conservatively estimated to be up to 0.5 acre.

## 4.4 Wildlife Movement

Wildlife corridors are generally defined as connections between habitat patches that allow for physical and genetic exchange between otherwise isolated animal populations. Such linkages may serve a local purpose, such as between foraging and denning areas, or they may be regional in nature, allowing movement across the landscape. Some habitat linkages may serve as migration corridors, wherein animals periodically move away from an area and then subsequently return. Examples of barriers or impediments to movement include housing and other urban development, roads, fencing, unsuitable habitat, or open areas with little vegetative cover. Regional and local wildlife movements are expected to be concentrated near topographic features that allow convenient passage, including roads, drainages, and ridgelines.

Land uses surrounding the project site consist primarily of urban and residential development, including community services such as a memorial park/cemetery (to the west), a retirement community and hospital (to the east), high school baseball and football fields (to the south), and small open and agricultural areas that are bounded to the north by the junction of I-5 and I-405. The project is not located in an *Essential Connectivity Area*, as determined by the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project. Essential Connectivity Areas are generally large remaining blocks of intact habitat or natural landscape that need to be maintained, particularly as corridors for wildlife (Spencer *et al.* 2010).

The drainage located just east of the project site would likely not serve as a wildlife movement corridor. It is lined in large rocks at its intersection with Mission Hills Road, where it flows underground, and has little to no vegetation on its eastern side, exposing it to the access road behind the adjacent Ararat Home to the east. The drainage does not appear to extend more than 600 feet north of the project site and does not connect any patches of intact habitat. No visible water was present at the time of the reconnaissance field survey and it is surrounded by chain-link fence on three sides. Vegetation also appears to have been recently cleared from the drainage, with a thick stand of bamboo remaining on its western side.

## 4.5 Resources Protected By Local Policies and Ordinances

Natural resources within the City limits are regulated according to the City's General Plan (City of Los Angeles 2001), which includes the following policies related to biological resources:

- Section 6, Policy 1: Section 6, Policy 1: Continue to require evaluation, avoidance, and minimization of potential significant impacts, as well as mitigation of unavoidable significant impacts on sensitive animal and plant species and their habitats and habitat corridors relative to land development activities.
- Section 12, Policy 1: Continue to identify significant habitat areas, corridors and buffers and to take measures to protect, enhance and/or restore them.

The City's General Plan also includes Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs), as identified and designated by the County of Los Angeles General Plan (2015b), among the habitat types within the City. The project site does not overlap with SEA boundaries as defined in the County of Los Angeles General Plan (2015a, 2015b), as further discussed in the City General Plan (2001).

### 4.5.1 Protected Trees

According to Articles 2 and 7 of Chapter I, Article 6 of Chapter IV, and Section 96.303.5 of the City's Municipal Code and City Ordinance No. 177404 (City of Los Angeles 2006b), any of the following southern California native tree species measuring four inches or more in DBH (cumulative total for multi-trunks) is considered a protected tree species within City limits: valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), California live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), or any other *Quercus* sp. tree indigenous to California, except for scrub oak (*Quercus dumosa*); southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica* var. *californica*); western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*); and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*). Blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*)<sup>2</sup> and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) are proposed to be added to this protected trees list, but such an amendment has not yet been formally adopted by the Los Angeles City Council (City of Los Angeles 2017, 2018).

Trees identified in the project site during the field survey include Peruvian pepper tree, blue elderberry, toyon, Mediterranean cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*), eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.), fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*), juniper (*Juniperus* sp.), palo verde (*Parkinsonia florida*), sweet acacia (*Vachellia farnesiana*), and other various ornamental species.

No oak, California black walnut, western sycamore, or California bay are present on the project site. While both toyon and blue elderberry are present onsite, they are not currently protected by the City of Los Angeles Tree Protection Ordinance.

## 4.6 Habitat Conservation Plans

The project is not subject to an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

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<sup>2</sup> The proposed amendment to the City's Tree Protection Ordinance identifies this species as Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), which is a misapplied synonym for blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) (Jepson Flora Project 2018). Blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) is used in this document.



## 5 Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures

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The criteria used to evaluate potential project-related impacts to biological resources are presented in Section 2.1.2. This section discusses the possible adverse impacts to biological resources that may occur from implementation of the project and recommends appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures that would reduce those impacts to less than significant levels. The proposed project site plan and grading plan are depicted in Figure 2 and Figure 3, above.

### 5.1 Special-Status Species

CEQA Appendix G Checklist:

The proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

- a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide:

A project would normally have a significant impact on biological resources if it could result in:

- a. The loss of individuals, or the reduction of existing habitat, of a state or federal listed endangered, threatened, rare, protected, or candidate species, or a Species of Special Concern or federally listed critical habitat;
- b. The loss of individuals or the reduction of existing habitat of a locally designated species or a reduction in a locally designated natural habitat or plant community.
- e. Interference with habitat such that normal behaviors are disturbed (e.g., from the introduction of noise, light) to a degree that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species.

#### 5.1.1 Special-Status Plant Species

As discussed in Section 4.1.1, no special-status plant species has a moderate or high potential to occur onsite (Appendix D) and none were observed during the reconnaissance field survey conducted on April 3, 2018. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts to special-status plants and no mitigation is required.

#### 5.1.2 Special-Status Wildlife Species

Locally-designated California towhee (Los Angeles County Sensitive Bird Species Working Group 2009), and migratory or other common nesting birds protected by the CFGC and MBTA may nest onsite. Construction of the project has the potential to directly (by destroying a nest) or indirectly (construction noise, dust, and other human disturbances that may cause a nest to fail) impact California towhee and nesting birds protected under the CFGC and MBTA. The loss of a nest due to construction activities would be a violation of the MBTA and CFGC 3503. As a result, these impacts

would be potentially significant, but can be reduced to a less than significant level through the pre-activity nest surveys and avoidance buffers required by Mitigation Measure (MM) BIO-1.

Construction of the project would alter California towhee nesting and foraging habitat onsite with updated landscaping impacting the 0.69 acres of California buckwheat scrub. The towhee is a fairly common bird in native scrub habitats and has also adapted to urban and residential areas, occupying shrubby backyards and city parks (Cornell Lab of Ornithology 2018). Onsite, it is likely using all vegetation types (scrub, ruderal, and landscaped) for nesting and foraging. Construction of the project would marginally reduce the towhee's nesting and foraging habitat given the availability of suitable habitats adjacent to the project site (patches of coastal sage scrub and a landscaped residential area to the north, and Eden Memorial Park to the east) and the project's proposal to include large, landscaped areas. Therefore, impacts to California towhee nesting and foraging habitat would be less than significant.

### **Mitigation Measure**

**MM BIO-1: Nesting Bird Survey.** To avoid disturbance of nesting and special status birds including raptorial species protected by the MBTA and Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 of the CFGC, activities related to the project, including, but not limited to, vegetation removal, ground disturbance, and construction and demolition shall occur outside of the bird breeding season (generally February 1 through August 31, but variable based on seasonal and annual climatic conditions). If construction must begin within the breeding season, then a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted no more than 3 days prior to initiation of ground disturbance and vegetation removal. The nesting bird pre-construction survey shall be conducted within the disturbance footprint and a 100-foot buffer with inaccessible areas (i.e., private lands) surveyed using binoculars. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist familiar with the identification of avian species known to occur in Los Angeles County. Should land clearing activities pause for more than one week during the bird breeding season, another nesting bird survey shall be conducted prior to reinitiation of such activities.

If active nests are found, an avoidance buffer (which is dependent upon the species, the proposed work activity, and existing disturbances associated with land uses outside of the site) shall be determined and demarcated by the biologist with bright orange construction fencing, flagging, construction lathe, or other means to mark the boundary. If an active nest of a special-status bird species is found, the City shall be consulted. All construction personnel shall be notified as to the existence of the buffer zone and to avoid entering the buffer zone during the nesting season. The biologist shall monitor the active nest(s) during initial land clearing activities and/or construction activities to determine whether the recommended avoidance buffer(s) is adequate to the point that nesting activities are not stressed or jeopardized. No ground disturbing activities shall occur within this buffer until the avian biologist has confirmed that breeding/nesting is completed and the young have fledged the nest. Encroachment into the buffer shall occur only at the discretion of the qualified biologist.

The methods and results of the nesting bird survey(s), any nesting bird avoidance efforts as a result of those surveys, and the success of the avoidance buffers shall be documented in a letter report (Nesting Bird Survey and Active Nest Monitoring

Report) and shall be submitted to the City no later than three weeks following the completion of the survey(s) and/or active nest monitoring activities.

## 5.2 Sensitive Plant Communities

CEQA Appendix G Checklist:

The proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

- b) Have a substantial adverse impact on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service.

L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide:

A project would normally have a significant impact on biological resources if it could result in:

- b. The loss of individuals or the reduction of existing habitat of a locally designated species or a reduction in a locally designated natural habitat or plant community.

Riparian habitat is adjacent to the onsite drainage: a thick stand of cattail less than 0.1-acre in size. No other sensitive plant communities were observed on the project site during the reconnaissance survey, the project is not located in any SEAs, and no critical habitat is present onsite. Project construction, the proposed widening of the existing dirt driveway, and project landscaping, will all likely directly impact the entirety of this riparian habitat, conservatively estimated at 0.1 acre. A formal jurisdictional delineation is recommended (as discussed in Section 5.3), which would determine the exact size and extent of this sensitive habitat and resulting impacts. Implementation of avoidance and minimization measures and/or habitat compensation and developing a Compensatory Mitigation Plan, as required by MM BIO-2a through MM BIO-2d (refer to Section 5.3), would reduce potential impacts to this sensitive plant community to a less-than-significant level.

## 5.3 Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

CEQA Appendix G Checklist:

The proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

- c) Adversely impact federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) either individually or in combination with the known or probable impacts of other activities through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide:

A project would normally have a significant impact on biological resources if it could result in:

- d. The alteration of an existing wetland habitat.

Both the onsite and offsite drainages and associated wetland and riparian vegetation discussed above are potentially subject to USACE, LARWQCB, and CDFW jurisdiction. The onsite drainage contains vegetation that may be indicative of wetland habitat and likely connects to the offsite drainage. It is unknown whether the offsite drainage connects to downstream Relatively Permanent Waters (RPW) or Traditionally Navigable Waters (TNW). Grading and landscaping associated with project construction and proposed widening of the dirt driveway will likely directly impact, and

potentially eliminate, the entirety of the onsite drainage, conservatively estimated to be up to 0.5 acre. It is unknown at this point how the existing flow may be redirected. Project construction and operational activities could indirectly impact the offsite drainage through run-off from the construction site and completed project. A formal jurisdictional delineation is recommended to determine and describe the exact size and extent, jurisdictional status, and wetland characteristics of these features. If avoidance of jurisdictional waters or wetlands is not feasible, impacts to jurisdictional areas would be considered significant but mitigable. Conducting a formal jurisdictional delineation, implementing avoidance and minimization measures and/or habitat compensation and developing a Compensatory Mitigation Plan, as required by MM BIO-2a through MM BIO-2d, would reduce potential direct and indirect impacts to these features to a less-than-significant level.

**MM BIO-2a: Jurisdictional Delineation.** Prior to issuance of any grading or building permit, a formal jurisdictional delineation will be conducted to determine the jurisdictional status of the two drainages identified in the vicinity of the proposed project. The project proponent shall submit a jurisdictional delineation report to the City.

**MM BIO-2b: Avoidance and minimization:** Potential jurisdictional features described in the jurisdictional delineation to be performed shall be avoided if feasible. Prior to issuance of any grading or building permit, the project proponent shall submit to the City a report detailing how all identified drainages are avoided. A copy of this report shall also be provided to the LARWQCB, CDFW, and/or USACE, as applicable. The following Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be implemented:

- i.) Any material/spoils generated from project activities shall be located away from jurisdictional areas or special-status habitat and protected from storm water run-off using temporary perimeter sediment barrier such as berms, silt fences, fiber rolls, covers, sand/gravel bags, and straw bale barriers, as appropriate.
- ii.) Materials shall be stored on impervious surfaces or plastic ground covers to prevent any spills or leakage from contaminating the ground and generally at least 50 feet from the top of bank.
- iii.) Any spillage of material will be stopped if it can be done safely. The contaminated area will be cleaned and any contaminated materials properly disposed. For all spills, the project foreman or designated environmental representative will be notified.

**MM BIO-2c: Compensatory Mitigation.** If it is determined that the drainages cannot be avoided, the project applicant shall be subject to provision (i) as identified below.

- i) If avoidance is not feasible, prior to ground disturbance activities that could impact these features, the project applicant shall consult with the agencies (LARWQCB, CDFW, and/or USACE) anticipated to assert jurisdiction over the drainages, as evaluated in the jurisdictional delineation report to be developed per MM BIO-2a. Based on such consultation, if permits are required for the project, appropriate permits shall be obtained prior to disturbance of jurisdictional resources. In addition, compensatory mitigation for impacts to jurisdictional features shall be identified prior to disturbance of the features. A 1:1 mitigation ratio shall be used, unless a higher ratio is required by LARWQCB, CDFW, and/or USACE. Mitigation may take the form of permittee-responsible onsite or offsite mitigation or purchasing credits from an approved mitigation bank. The applicant shall comply with the compensatory mitigation required and

proof of compliance, along with copies of permits obtained from LARWQCB, CDFW, and/or USACE, shall be provided to the City.

**MM BIO-2d:** A Compensatory Mitigation Plan shall be prepared that outlines the compensatory mitigation in coordination with the LARWQCB, CDFW, and/or USACE. If onsite mitigation is proposed, the Compensatory Mitigation Plan shall identify those portions of the site, such as relocated drainage routes, that contain suitable characteristics (e.g., hydrology) for restoration. Determination of mitigation adequacy shall be based on comparison of the restored habitat with similar, undisturbed habitat in the site vicinity (such as upstream or downstream of the site). The Compensatory Mitigation Plan shall include remedial measures in the event that performance criteria are not met.

If mitigation is implemented off-site, off-site land shall be preserved through a deed restriction or conservation easement and the Compensatory Mitigation Plan shall identify an approach for funding assurance for the long-term management of the conserved land.

## 5.4 Wildlife Movement

CEQA Appendix G Checklist:

The proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

- d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites.

L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide:

A project would normally have a significant impact on biological resources if it could result in:

- c. Interference with wildlife movement/migration corridors that may diminish the chances for long-term survival of a sensitive species.

As discussed in Section 4.4, the proposed project is not located within any known regional wildlife movement corridors (e.g., Essential Connective Area or Natural Landscape Block identified in Spencer *et al.* 2010). The project site is located within a quarter-mile of two major interstate highways (I-5 and I-405) and the immediate surrounding area consists primarily of developed residential and some urban landscapes. Given the developed nature of the surroundings, the site would not function as a wildlife corridor/linkage or as a wildlife nursery site. The drainage located just east of the project site would also not serve as a wildlife movement corridor as it is lined in large rocks with little to no vegetation and lacks connection to larger expanses of habitat. Therefore, development of the site would not obstruct or affect a wildlife corridor or nursery site and impacts would be less than significant.

## 5.5 Local Policies and Ordinances

The proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

CEQA Appendix G Checklist:

- e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance

The proposed project would not conflict with policies of the City's General Plan (2001) protecting biological resources. The proposed project would not conflict with Section 6, Policy 1 as sensitive species have low likelihood to occur and MM BIO-1 would be implemented to reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less than significant level. The proposed project would also not conflict with Section 12, Policy 1 as no significant habitat areas, corridors or buffers are present onsite.

Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with these policies and no mitigation is required.

### 5.5.1 Protected Trees

As discussed in Section 4.5.1, the field survey did not identify any trees on the project site that are protected by the City of Los Angeles Tree Protection Ordinance (No. 177404; City of Los Angeles 2006b). While both blue elderberry and toyon are present onsite, the amendment to add them to the City's protected trees list has not been formally adopted by the Los Angeles City Council (City of Los Angeles 2017, 2018). Therefore, the project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. No impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

## 5.6 Habitat Conservation Plans

The proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

CEQA Appendix G Checklist:

- f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

The project site is not located in an area subject to an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, no impact would occur.

## 6 Limitations, Assumptions, and Use Reliance

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This Biological Resources Assessment has been performed in accordance with professionally accepted biological investigation practices conducted at this time and in this geographic area. The biological investigation is limited by the scope of work performed. Biological surveys for the presence or absence of certain taxa have been conducted as part of this assessment but were not performed during a particular blooming period, nesting period, or particular portion of the season when positive identification would be expected if present, and therefore, cannot be considered definitive. The biological surveys are limited also by the environmental conditions present at the time of the surveys. In addition, general biological (or protocol) surveys do not guarantee that the organisms are not present and will not be discovered in the future within the site. In particular, mobile wildlife species could occupy the site on a transient basis or re-establish populations in the future. Our field studies were based on current industry practices, which change over time and may not be applicable in the future. No other guarantees or warranties, expressed or implied, are provided. The findings and opinions conveyed in this report are based on findings derived from site reconnaissance, jurisdictional areas, review of CNDDDB RareFind5, and specified historical and literature sources. Standard data sources relied upon during the completion of this report, such as the CNDDDB, may vary with regard to accuracy and completeness. In particular, the CNDDDB is compiled from research and observations reported to CDFW that may or may not have been the result of comprehensive or site-specific field surveys. Although Rincon believes the data sources are reasonably reliable, Rincon cannot and does not guarantee the authenticity or reliability of the data sources it has used. Additionally, pursuant to our contract, the data sources reviewed included only those that are practically reviewable without the need for extraordinary research and analysis.

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# Appendix A

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Regulatory Guidance

# Regulatory Guidance

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Special-status habitats are vegetation types, associations, or sub-associations that support concentrations of special-status plant or wildlife species, are of relatively limited distribution, or are of particular value to wildlife.

Listed species are those taxa that are formally listed as endangered or threatened by the federal government (e.g. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS]), pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) or as endangered, threatened, or rare (for plants only) by the State of California (i.e. California Fish and Game Commission), pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act or the California Native Plant Protection Act. Some species are considered rare (but not formally listed) by resource agencies, organizations with biological interests/expertise (e.g., Audubon Society, CNPS, The Wildlife Society), and the scientific community.

The following is a brief summary of the regulatory context under which biological resources are managed at the federal, state, and local levels. A number of federal and state statutes provide a regulatory structure that guides the protection of biological resources. Agencies with the responsibility for protection of biological resources within the project site include:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (wetlands and other waters of the United States);
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (waters of the State);
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (federally listed species and migratory birds);
- California Department Fish and Wildlife (riparian areas and other waters of the State, state-listed species);
- City of Los Angeles Protected Tree Ordinance

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has authority to regulate activities that could discharge fill of material or otherwise adversely modify wetlands or other “waters of the United States.” Perennial and intermittent creeks are considered waters of the United States if they are hydrologically connected to other jurisdictional waters. The USACE also implements the federal policy embodied in Executive Order 11990, which is intended to result in no net loss of wetland value or acres. In achieving the goals of the Clean Water Act, the USACE seeks to avoid adverse impacts and offset unavoidable adverse impacts on existing aquatic resources. Any fill or adverse modification of wetlands that are hydrologically connected to jurisdictional waters would require a permit from the USACE prior to the start of work. Typically, when a project involves impacts to waters of the United States, the goal of no net loss of wetland acres or values is met through compensatory mitigation involving creation or enhancement of similar habitats.

## Regional Water Quality Control Board

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) have jurisdiction over “waters of the State,” pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, which are defined as any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the State. The SWRCB has issued general Waste Discharge

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Requirements (WDRs) regarding discharges to “isolated” waters of the State (Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ, Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dredged or Fill Discharges to Waters Deemed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to be Outside of Federal Jurisdiction). The Los Angeles RWQCB enforces actions under this general order for isolated waters not subject to federal jurisdiction and is also responsible for the issuance of water quality certifications pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act for waters subject to federal jurisdiction.

**United States Fish and Wildlife Service**

The USFWS implements the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 United States Code [USC] Section 703-711) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC Section 668). The USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) share responsibility for implementing the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) (16 USC § 153 et seq.). The USFWS generally implements the FESA for terrestrial and freshwater species, while the NMFS implements the FESA for marine and anadromous species. Projects that would result in “take” of any federally listed threatened or endangered species are required to obtain permits from the USFWS or NMFS through either Section 7 (interagency consultation with a federal nexus) or Section 10 (Habitat Conservation Plan) of FESA, depending on the involvement by the federal government in permitting and/or funding of the project. The permitting process is used to determine if a project would jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species and what measures would be required to avoid jeopardizing the species. “Take” under federal definition means to harass, harm (which includes habitat modification), pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Proposed or candidate species do not have the full protection of FESA; however, the USFWS and NMFS advise project applicants that they could be elevated to listed status at any time.

**California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

The CDFW derives its authority from the Fish and Game Code of California. The CESA (Fish and Game Code Section 2050 *et. seq.*) prohibits take of state listed threatened or endangered species. Take of fully protected species is prohibited under Fish and Game Code Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515. Section 86 of the Fish and Game Code defines “take” as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, capture, or kill.” This definition does not include indirect harm by way of habitat modification.

California Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3511 describe unlawful take, possession, or destruction of birds, nests, and eggs. Fully protected birds (Section 3511) may not be taken or possessed except under specific permit. Section 3503.5 of the Code protects all birds-of-prey and their eggs and nests against take, possession, or destruction.

Species of Special Concern (SSC) is a category used by the CDFW for those species which are considered to be indicators of regional habitat changes or are considered to be potential future protected species. Species of Special Concern do not have any special legal status except that which may be afforded by the Fish and Game Code as noted above. The SSC category is intended by the CDFW for use as a management tool to include these species into special consideration when decisions are made concerning the development of natural lands.

The CDFW also has authority to administer the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) (Fish and Game Code Section 1900 *et seq.*). The NPPA requires the CDFW to establish criteria for determining if a species, subspecies, or variety of native plant is endangered or rare. Under Section 1913(c) of the

NPPA, the owner of land where a rare or endangered native plant is growing is required to notify the department at least 10 days in advance of changing the land use to allow for salvage of plant(s).

Perennial and intermittent streams and associated riparian vegetation, when present, also fall under the jurisdiction of the CDFW. Section 1600 et seq. of the Fish and Game Code (Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreements) gives the CDFW regulatory authority over work within the stream zone (which could extend to the 100-year flood plain) consisting of, but not limited to, the diversion or obstruction of the natural flow or changes in the channel, bed, or bank of any river, stream or lake.

### City of Los Angeles

According to Articles 2 and 7 of Chapter I, Article 6 of Chapter IV, and Section 96.303.5 of the City's Municipal Code and City Ordinance No. 177404 (City of Los Angeles 2006b), any of the following Southern California native tree species measuring four inches or more in DBH (cumulative total for multi-trunks) is considered a protected tree species within City limits: valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), California live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), or any other *Quercus* sp. tree indigenous to California, except for scrub oak (*Quercus dumosa*); southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica* var. *californica*); western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*); and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*). Blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*)<sup>3</sup> and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) are under consideration to be added to this protected trees list, but such an amendment has not yet been adopted (City of Los Angeles 2017, 2018).

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<sup>3</sup> The proposed amendment to the City's Tree Protection Ordinance identifies this species as Mexican elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*), which is a misapplied synonym for blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) (Jepson Flora Project 2018). Blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*) is used in this document.



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# Appendix B

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Site Photographs



**Photograph 1.** View looking north at ruderal vegetation in the southern portion of the site



**Photograph 2.** View looking north at large cleared area in southern portion of the site. At the time of the survey, Ararat Home had not purchased the project site; therefore, the earthwork depicted in this photo was presumably conducted by the property owners at that time.

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**Photograph 3.** View looking east across the southern portion of the site with ruderal vegetation, California buckwheat scrub on the slope, and a cleared area with heavy earth-moving equipment present. At the time of the survey, Ararat Home had not purchased the project site; therefore, the earthwork depicted in this photo was presumably conducted by the property owners at that time.



**Photograph 4.** View looking northeast from the southern portion of the site at ruderal vegetation in the foreground, California buckwheat scrub on the slope, and Peruvian pepper and eucalyptus

trees in the background. One toyon shrub (left, with red berries) and one blue elderberry shrub (right, with yellow flowers) are present in the mid-ground.



**Photograph 5.** View looking northeast at the mapped drainage located just off the project site to the east. Ararat Home of Los Angeles is in the background.



**Photograph 6.** View looking southeast at where the mapped drainage located just off the project site flows underground under Mission Hills Road.



**Photograph 7.** View looking south from the top of the hill at ruderal vegetation a cleared area and Peruvian pepper trees.



**Photograph 8.** View looking west along a two-track road just south of the residence onsite.



**Photograph 9.** View looking east from the top of the hill with a cleared area and Peruvian pepper trees in the mid-ground.



**Photograph 10.** View looking northwest from southeastern corner of the project site across the dirt drive up toward the hill. Ruderal vegetation in the foreground, ornamental vegetation in the background.





**Photograph 11.** View looking southwest from the dirt drive toward California buckwheat scrub on a slope on the northeastern side of the project site. Peruvian pepper trees and Italian cypress in the background.



**Photograph 12.** View looking west at the drainage that crosses the northern portion of the project site where it is culverted under the dirt drive. Taken from the northeastern corner of the project site.



**Photograph 13.** View looking southeast from the northwestern corner of the project site at drainage that crosses the northern portion of the project site, including a culvert (lower right corner) and gravel.



**Photograph 14.** The beginning of the drainage that crosses the northern portion of the project site. This location is off the project site, located at the northwestern corner of the dirt drive leading up to the two residences. The pipe appears to carry water into the drainage from off-property.



# Appendix C

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Floral and Faunal Compendium



## Plant and Animal Species Observed in the Project Site on April 3, 2018

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Native or Introduced
<b>Plants</b>			
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>	deerweed	--	Native
<i>Aloe maculata</i>	aloe	--	Introduced
<i>Amsinckia menziesii</i>	Menzies' fiddleneck	--	Native
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	California sagebrush	--	Native
<i>Brassica nigra</i>	mustard	Cal-IPC Moderate	Introduced
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>	tocalote	Cal-IPC Moderate	Introduced
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	field bindweed	--	Introduced
<i>Crassula ovata</i>	jade plant	--	Introduced
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>	Italian cypress	--	Introduced
<i>Cuscuta californica</i>	California dodder	--	Native
<i>Dichelostemma capitatum</i>	wild hyacinth	--	Native
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	California buckwheat	--	Native
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	red-stemmed filaree	Cal-IPC Limited	Introduced
<i>Eucalyptus</i> sp.	eucalyptus	Some species are invasive	Introduced
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	sunflower	--	Native
<i>Hesperoyucca whipplei</i>	chaparral yucca	--	
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	toyon	--	Native
<i>Juniperus chinensis</i>	Chinese juniper	--	Some species Introduced and Native
<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	sweet alyssum	Cal-IPC Limited	Introduced
<i>Malacothrix saxatilis</i>	cliff aster	--	Native
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	oleander	--	Introduced
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	tree tobacco	Cal-IPC Moderate	Introduced
<i>Olea</i> sp.	olive	--	Introduced
<i>Opuntia littoralis</i>	prickly pear cactus	--	Native
<i>Parkinsonia florida</i>	palo verde	--	Native
<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>	Canary Island palm	Cal-IPC Limited	Introduced
<i>Salsola tragus</i>	Russian thistle	Cal-IPC Limited	Introduced
<i>Salvia apiana</i>	white sage	--	Native
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> ssp. <i>caerulea</i>	blue elderberry	--	Native
<i>Schinus molle</i>	Peruvian pepper tree	Cal-IPC Limited	Introduced
<i>Typha</i> sp.	cattail	--	Most species native, one Introduced
<i>Pseudosasa japonica</i>	arrow bamboo	--	Introduced
<i>Vachellia farnesiana</i>	sweet acacia	--	Introduced
<i>Washingtonia filifera</i>	Mexican fan palm	--	Native

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Native or Introduced
<b>Wildlife</b>			
<i>Calypte anna</i>	Anna's hummingbird	--	Native
<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	House finch	--	Native
<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>	Hooded oriole	--	Native
<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	Song sparrow	--	Native
<i>Melospiza crissalis</i>	California towhee	LA County Audubon Watch List	Native
<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	Northern mockingbird	--	Native
<i>Neotoma sp.</i>	Woodrat	--	Native
<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	Ruddy duck*	--	Native
<i>Psaltiriparus minimus</i>	Bushtit	--	Native
<i>Spinus psaltria</i>	Lesser goldfinch	--	Native
<i>Sylvilagus sp.</i>	Cottontail rabbit	--	Native
<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	Bewick's wren	--	Native
<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	House wren	--	Native
<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Mourning dove	--	Native
<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	White-crowned sparrow	--	Native

\*A dead individual was observed in the southern portion of the property. This species is not expected to use the site given the lack of aquatic habitat.

Source: Rincon Consultants biological resources reconnaissance field survey on April 3, 2018; Calflora 2018; California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) 2018, which rates introduced species according to their level of invasiveness; CDFW 2018a; Los Angeles County Sensitive Bird Species Working Group 2009.

# Appendix D

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Special-Status Species Potential to Occur Tables





## Special-Status Plant Species Potential to Occur on the Project Site

<i>Scientific Name</i> Common Name	Status Fed/State ESA G-Rank/S-Rank CRPR	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur	Habitat Suitability/ Observations
<i>Astragalus brauntonii</i> Braunton's milk-vetch	Endangered/ None G2/S2 1B.1	Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Recent burns or disturbed areas; usually on sandstone with carbonate layers. Soil specialist; requires shallow soils to defeat pocket gophers and open areas, preferably on hilltops, saddles or bowls between hills. 3-640 m. perennial herb. Blooms Jan-Aug	Not expected	Project site is located outside of species' elevation range. Suitable soils not present onsite.
<i>Berberis nevini</i> Nevin's barberry	Endangered/ Endangered G1/S1 1B.1	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, riparian scrub. On steep, N-facing slopes or in low grade sandy washes. 290-1575 m. perennial evergreen shrub. Blooms (Feb)Mar-Jun	Not expected	While coastal scrub is present, the project lacks steep N-facing slopes or low grade sandy washes. This perennial evergreen shrub was not observed onsite during the survey.
<i>Calochortus catalinae</i> Catalina mariposa-lily	None/None G3G4/S3S4 4.2	Valley and foothill grassland, chaparral, coastal scrub, cismontane woodland. In heavy soils, open slopes, openings in brush. 15-700 m. perennial bulbiferous herb. Blooms (Feb)Mar-Jun	Not expected	Project site is located outside of species' elevation range.
<i>Calochortus clavatus</i> var. <i>gracilis</i> slender mariposa-lily	None/None G4T2T3/S2S3 1B.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Shaded foothill canyons; often on grassy slopes within other habitat. 210-1815 m. perennial bulbiferous herb. Blooms Mar-Jun(Nov)	Low	While coastal scrub is present onsite, shaded foothill canyons are lacking and grassy slopes are dominated by non-native species.
<i>Calochortus plummerae</i> Plummer's mariposa-lily	None/None G4/S4 4.2	Coastal scrub, chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest. Occurs on rocky and sandy sites, usually of granitic or alluvial material. Can be very common after fire. 60-2500 m. perennial bulbiferous herb. Blooms May-Jul	Not expected	While coastal scrub is present, the project site lacks rocky and sandy sites with suitable granitic or alluvial material.
<i>Calystegia peirsonii</i> Peirson's morning-glory	None/None G4/S4 4.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub, chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, valley and foothill grassland. Often in disturbed areas or along roadsides or in grassy, open areas. 30-1500 m. perennial rhizomatous herb. Blooms Apr-Jun	Low	The project site contains coastal scrub and is disturbed. However, this species is endemic to LA County near the junction of the San Gabriel Mountains and the Mojave Desert in the vicinity of Antelope Valley, approximately 30 miles to the northwest on the other side of the San Gabriel Mountains.
<i>Canbya candida</i> white pygmy-poppy	None/None G3G4/S3S4 4.2	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland. Gravelly, sandy, granitic places. 600-1460 m. annual herb. Blooms Mar-Jun	Not expected.	Lack of suitable woodland or scrub habitat on the project site. Gravelly, sandy, granitic places are also absent.

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<i>Scientific Name</i> Common Name	Status Fed/State ESA G-Rank/S-Rank CRPR	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur	Habitat Suitability/ Observations
<i>Centromadia parryi</i> ssp. <i>australis</i> southern tarplant	None/None G3T2/S2 1B.1	Marshes and swamps (margins), valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools. Often in disturbed sites near the coast at marsh edges; also in alkaline soils sometimes with saltgrass. Sometimes on vernal pool margins. 0-975 m. annual herb. Blooms May-Nov	Not expected	The project site lacks vernal pool or other mesic habitats and is not on the coast. Project site is also outside the species' elevation range.
<i>Cercocarpus betuloides</i> var. <i>blancheae</i> island mountain-mahogany	None/None G5T4/S4 4.3	Chaparral, closed-cone coniferous forest. 30-600 m. perennial evergreen shrub. Blooms Feb-May	Not expected	The project site is located outside of the species' elevation range. Coastal sage is present onsite, but lacks a significant assemblage of chaparral species.
<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>fernandina</i> San Fernando Valley spineflower	Proposed Threatened/ Endangered G2T1/S1 1B.1	Coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Sandy soils. 15-1015 m. annual herb. Blooms Apr-Jul	Not expected	Coastal scrub is present, however the project site lacks sandy soils. The closest CNDDDB records to the project site are historical (1920, 1922) and identified as possibly extirpated.
<i>Deinandra minthornii</i> Santa Susana tarplant	None/Rare G2/S2 1B.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub. On sandstone outcrops and crevices, in shrubland. 280-705 m. perennial deciduous shrub. Blooms Jul-Nov	Not expected	The project site is located outside of the species' elevation range. Coastal scrub is present; however, the site lacks sandstone outcrops and crevices.
<i>Dodecahema leptoceras</i> slender-horned spineflower	Endangered/ Endangered G1/S1 1B.1	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub (alluvial fan sage scrub). Flood deposited terraces and washes; associates include Encelia, Dalea, Lepidospartum, etc. Sandy soils. 200-765 m. annual herb. Blooms Apr-Jun	Not expected	The project site lacks alluvial fan sage scrub and flood deposited terraces with sandy soils. The project site is also outside of the species' elevation range. The closest CNDDDB record to the project site is identified as extirpated.
<i>Harpagonella palmeri</i> Palmer's grapplinghook	None/None G4/S3 4.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Clay soils; open grassy areas within shrubland. 20-955 m. annual herb. Blooms Mar-May	Low	The project site is just outside the species' elevation range; however, clay soils and coastal scrub are present.
<i>Hordeum intercedens</i> vernal barley	None/None G3G4/S3S4 3.2	Valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools, coastal dunes, coastal scrub. Vernal pools, dry, saline streambeds, alkaline flats. 5-1000 m. annual herb. Blooms Mar-Jun	Not expected	While coastal scrub is present, the project site lacks vernal pools and dry, saline streambeds and alkaline flats.
<i>Horkelia cuneata</i> var. <i>puberula</i> mesa Horkelia	None/None G4T1/S1 1B.1	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub. Sandy or gravelly sites. 15-1645 m. perennial herb. Blooms Feb-Jul(Sep)	Not expected	While coastal scrub is present, the project site lacks sandy or gravelly sites. The closest CNDDDB record to the project site is historical (1929) and identified as possibly extirpated.
<i>Juglans californica</i> southern California black walnut	None/None G3/S3 4.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub, cismontane woodland. Slopes, canyons, alluvial habitats. 50-900 m. perennial deciduous tree. Blooms Mar-Aug	Absent	This species was not observed onsite during the reconnaissance field survey.
<i>Lasthenia glabrata</i> ssp. <i>coulteri</i> Coulter's goldfields	None/None G4T2/S2 1B.1	Coastal salt marshes, playas, vernal pools. Usually found on alkaline soils in playas, sinks, and grasslands. 1-1375 m. annual herb. Blooms Feb-Jun	Not expected	The project site lacks coastal salt marshes, playas, and vernal pools.

<i>Scientific Name</i> <b>Common Name</b>	<b>Status</b> <b>Fed/State ESA</b> <b>G-Rank/S-Rank</b> <b>CRPR</b>	<b>Habitat Requirements</b>	<b>Potential to Occur</b>	<b>Habitat Suitability/ Observations</b>
<i>Lepidium virginicum</i> var. <i>robinsonii</i> Robinson's pepper-grass	None/None G5T3/S3 4.3	Chaparral, coastal scrub. Dry soils, shrubland. 4-1435 m. annual herb. Blooms Jan-Jul	Not expected	The project site contains two small and isolated patches of coastal scrub; however, dry soils are not present as the clay soils onsite are considered moist.
<i>Lilium humboldtii</i> ssp. <i>ocellatum</i> ocellated Humboldt lily	None/None G4T4?/S4? 4.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, riparian forest. Yellow-pine forest or openings, oak canyons. 30-1800 m. perennial bulbiferous herb. Blooms Mar-Jul(Aug)	Low	While two small and isolated patches of coastal scrub are present onsite, the field survey was conducted during this species' blooming period and it was not observed.
<i>Malacothamnus davidsonii</i> Davidson's bush-mallow	None/None G2/S2 1B.2	Coastal scrub, riparian woodland, chaparral, cismontane woodland. Sandy washes. 150-1525 m. perennial deciduous shrub. Blooms Jun-Jan	Not expected	While two small and isolated patches of coastal scrub are present, the project site lacks sandy washes.
<i>Monardella hypoleuca</i> ssp. <i>hypoleuca</i> white-veined monardella	None/None G4T3/S3 1B.3	Chaparral, cismontane woodland. Dry slopes. 50-1280 m. perennial herb. Blooms (Apr)May-Aug(Sep-Dec)	Not expected	The project site lacks suitable areas of chaparral. Soils are moist clay and not dry. This species is only known from areas outside of the project site including the Santa Monica, Santa Ynez, and Sierra Madre Mountains.
<i>Orcuttia californica</i> California Orcutt grass	Endangered/ Endangered G1/S1 1B.1	Vernal pools. 10-660 m. annual herb. Blooms Apr-Aug	Not expected	The project site lacks suitable vernal pool habitat.
<i>Phacelia hubbyi</i> Hubby's phacelia	None/None G4/S4 4.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Gravelly, rocky areas and talus slopes. 0-1000 m. annual herb. Blooms Apr-Jul	Not expected	While two, small and isolated patches of coastal scrub are present, the project site lacks gravelly, rocky areas and talus slopes.
<i>Symphotrichum greatae</i> Greata's aster	None/None G2/S2 1B.3	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, broadleafed upland forest, lower montane coniferous forest, riparian woodland. Mesic canyons. 335-2015 m. perennial rhizomatous herb. Blooms Jun-Oct	Not expected.	The project site lacks suitable chaparral habitat and mesic canyons. The closest CNDDDB record is historical (1918), located in the San Gabriel Mountains (Pacoima reservoir) and identified as possibly extirpated.

Regional Vicinity refers to within a 5-mile radius of the project site and 4-quad search at the location of the site: .San Fernando, Van Nuys, Oat Mountain, Canoga Park.

FE = Federally Endangered      FT = Federally Threatened  
 SE = State Endangered          ST = State Threatened      SR = State Rare  
 G-Rank/S-Rank = Global Rank and State Rank as per NatureServe and CDFW's CNDDDB RareFind5

**CRPR (CNPS California Rare Plant Rank)**

- 1A=Presumed Extinct in California
- 1B=Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere
- 2A=Plants presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere
- 2B=Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
- 3=Need more information (a Review List)
- 4=Plants of Limited Distribution (a Watch List)

**CRPR Threat Code Extension**

- .1=Seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat)
- .2=Fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened)
- .3=Not very endangered in California (<20% of occurrences threatened)

**Special-Status Animal Species Potential to Occur on the Project Site**

Scientific Name Common Name	Status Fed/State ESA G-Rank/S-Rank CDFW	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur	Habitat Suitability/ Observations
<b>Invertebrates</b>				
<i>Bombus crotchii</i> Crotch bumble bee	None/None G3G4/S1S2	Coastal California east to the Sierra-Cascade crest and south into Mexico. Food plant genera include Antirrhinum, Phacelia, Clarkia, Dendromecon, Eschscholzia, and Eriogonum.	Low	Buckwheat ( <i>Eragriogonum</i> sp.) is present onsite in two small, isolated patches of coastal sage scrub.
<i>Danaus plexippus</i> pop. 1 monarch - California overwintering population	None/None G4T2T3/S2S3	Winter roost sites extend along the coast from northern Mendocino to Baja California, Mexico. Roosts located in wind-protected tree groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress), with nectar and water sources nearby.	Not expected	While eucalyptus trees are present on the project site, the closest overwintering population is located 3.2 miles to the northeast in the foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains across Interstate 405. It is unlikely that monarchs would use the site's eucalyptus as an overwintering ground.
<b>Fish</b>				
<i>Catostomus santaanae</i> Santa Ana sucker	Threatened/None G1/S1	Endemic to Los Angeles Basin south coastal streams. Habitat generalists, but prefer sand-rubble-boulder bottoms, cool, clear water, and algae.	Not expected	The project site does not have any suitable aquatic streams.
<i>Gila orcuttii</i> arroyo chub	None/None G2/S2 SSC	Native to streams from Malibu Creek to San Luis Rey River basin. Introduced into streams in Santa Clara, Ventura, Santa Ynez, Mojave & San Diego river basins. Slow water stream sections with mud or sand bottoms. Feeds heavily on aquatic vegetation and associated invertebrates.	Not expected	The project site does not have any suitable perennial streams.
<i>Rhinichthys osculus</i> ssp. 3 Santa Ana speckled dace	None/None G5T1/S1 SSC	Headwaters of the Santa Ana and San Gabriel rivers. May be extirpated from the Los Angeles River system. Requires permanent flowing streams with summer water temps of 17-20 C. Usually inhabits shallow cobble and gravel riffles.	Not expected.	The project site does not have any suitable perennial streams.
<b>Amphibians</b>				
<i>Rana muscosa</i> southern mountain yellow-legged frog	Endangered/ Endangered G1/S1 WL	Federal listing refers to populations in the San Gabriel, San Jacinto and San Bernardino mountains (southern DPS). Northern DPS was determined to warrant listing as endangered, Apr 2014, effective Jun 30, 2014. Always encountered within a few feet of water. Tadpoles may require 2 - 4 yrs. to complete their aquatic development.	Not expected	The project site does not contain suitable aquatic habitat. The closest CNDDDB record is historical (1918) located five miles northeast of the project site at Pacoima reservoir, and is identified as extirpated.

Scientific Name Common Name	Status Fed/State ESA G-Rank/S-Rank CDFW	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur	Habitat Suitability/ Observations
<i>Spea hammondi</i> western spadefoot	None/None G3/S3 SSC	Occurs primarily in grassland habitats, but can be found in valley-foothill hardwood woodlands. Vernal pools are essential for breeding and egg-laying.	Not expected	The project site does not contain suitable vernal pools and its disturbed habitats are isolated from the closest CNDDB occurrence (located approximately 4.3 miles to the northeast in the foothills of the Santa Susana Mountains).
<b>Reptiles</b>				
<i>Aspidoscelis tigris</i> <i>stejnegeri</i> coastal whiptail	None/None G5T5/S3 SSC	Found in deserts and semi-arid areas with sparse vegetation and open areas. Also found in woodland & riparian areas. Ground may be firm soil, sandy, or rocky.	Low	The project site contains open areas. However, Thomson <i>et al.</i> (2016) notes that this species prefers gravelly substrates in coastal sage, which the site lacks. The species requires large blocks of habitat and is rarely encountered where development and roads have fragmented it (Thomson <i>et al.</i> 2006), such as on the project site.
<i>Phrynosoma</i> <i>blainvillii</i> coast horned lizard	None/None G3G4/S3S4 SSC	Frequents a wide variety of habitats, most common in lowlands along sandy washes with scattered low bushes. Open areas for sunning, bushes for cover, patches of loose soil for burial, and abundant supply of ants and other insects.	Low	Two small, isolated patches of coastal scrub are present along with open areas, though the project site lacks sandy washes. The project site is isolated from larger open space areas where this species might occur.
<b>Birds</b>				
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i> Swainson's hawk	None/Threatened G5/S3	Breeds in grasslands with scattered trees, juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, savannahs, & agricultural or ranch lands with groves or lines of trees. Requires adjacent suitable foraging areas such as grasslands, or alfalfa or grain fields supporting rodent populations.	Low	While eucalyptus trees are present onsite, which could serve for nesting, the project site is surrounded by urban and suburban development as well as Interstates that offer poor foraging habitat. The only CNDDB record within 5 miles is historical (1990) and identified as possibly extirpated.
<i>Coccyzus</i> <i>americanus</i> <i>occidentalis</i> western yellow-billed cuckoo	Threatened/ Endangered G5T2T3/S1	Riparian forest nester, along the broad, lower flood-bottoms of larger river systems. Nests in riparian jungles of willow, often mixed with cottonwoods, with lower story of blackberry, nettles, or wild grape.	Not expected	The project site lacks suitable riparian habitat.
<i>Polioptila</i> <i>californica</i> <i>californica</i> coastal California gnatcatcher	Threatened/None G4G5T2Q/S2 SSC	Obligate, permanent resident of coastal sage scrub below 2500 ft in Southern California. Low, coastal sage scrub in arid washes, on mesas and slopes. Not all areas classified as coastal sage scrub are occupied.	Low	The project site contains two small, isolated patches of coastal sage scrub habitat. However, it is isolated from other such habitats by urban and suburban development as well as interstate freeways, reducing the likelihood that the habitat would become occupied by dispersing individuals. Furthermore, no gnatcatcher were observed during the reconnaissance survey.

Ararat Home of Los Angeles  
**Ararat Home Residential Care and Nursing Facility**

Scientific Name Common Name	Status Fed/State ESA G-Rank/S-Rank CDFW	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur	Habitat Suitability/ Observations
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> least Bell's vireo	Endangered/ Endangered G5T2/S2	Summer resident of Southern California in low riparian in vicinity of water or in dry river bottoms; below 2000 ft. Nests placed along margins of bushes or on twigs projecting into pathways, usually willow, Baccharis, mesquite.	Not expected	The project site lacks suitable riparian habitat.
<b>Mammals</b>				
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> Townsend's big-eared bat	None/None G3G4/S2 SSC	Throughout California in a wide variety of habitats. Most common in mesic sites. Roosts in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Roosting sites limiting. Extremely sensitive to human disturbance.	Not expected to roost	The project site contains a very small drainage with surface water and both contains and is surrounded by suburban and urban uses, which would disturb this species. The only CNDDDB record within 5 miles is historical (1940) approximately 4 miles to the east in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains.
<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i> hoary bat	None/None G5/S4	Prefers open habitats or habitat mosaics, with access to trees for cover and open areas or habitat edges for feeding. Roosts in dense foliage of medium to large trees. Feeds primarily on moths. Requires water.	Low	The project site could potentially provide roosting habitat in the tall trees.
<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i> San Diego desert woodrat	None/None G5T3T4/S3S4 SSC	Coastal scrub of Southern California from San Diego County to San Luis Obispo County. Moderate to dense canopies preferred. They are particularly abundant in rock outcrops, rocky cliffs, and slopes.	Low	A woodrat den was observed on the project site within a narrow strip of ornamental trees. While the species could not be determined from the den, it is likely it is the dusky-footed woodrat. It is unlikely to be the San Diego desert woodrat given the history of disturbance on the site, its isolation from other open, natural habitats, and the lack of rocky areas and boulders. This species is often associated with large stands of Opuntia, but such stands onsite are small and confined to the south-facing slope. One CNDDDB record (1992) is documented in the Santa Susana Mountains, 4.8 miles from the project site at Newhall Pass (intersection of I-5 and State Route 14)

Regional Vicinity refers to within a 5- mile radius of project site

FT = Federally Threatened      SE = State Endangered

FC = Federal Candidate Species      ST = State Threatened

FE = Federally Endangered      SR = State Rare

FS = Federally Sensitive      SS = State Sensitive

G-Rank/S-Rank = Global Rank and State Rank as per NatureServe and CDFW's CNDDDB RareFind5

SSC = CDFW Species of Special Concern

FP = Fully Protected