APPENDIX C

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Rincon Consultants, Inc.
250 East 1st Street, Suite 1400
Los Angeles, California 90012
213-788-4842

September 6, 2023
Rincon Project No: 21-12086

Jessie Fan, ENV SP
Kimley-Horn
660 South Figueroa Street, Suite 2050
Los Angeles, California 90017
Via email: Jessie.Fan@kimley-horn.com

Subject: Biological Resources Assessment Technical Memorandum for the Southern California Association of Governments Regional Early Action Planning Project 2-B-Palmdale Housing Project, City of Palmdale, Los Angeles County, California

Dear Ms. Fan,

Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) is pleased to submit this Biological Resources Assessment Technical Memorandum Report for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2-B-Palmdale Housing Project (Project). The assessment was completed to document existing site conditions and evaluate potential impacts to special-status biological resources as required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), in support of Kimley-Horn's preparation of an Initial Study (IS) for the project.

Project Description

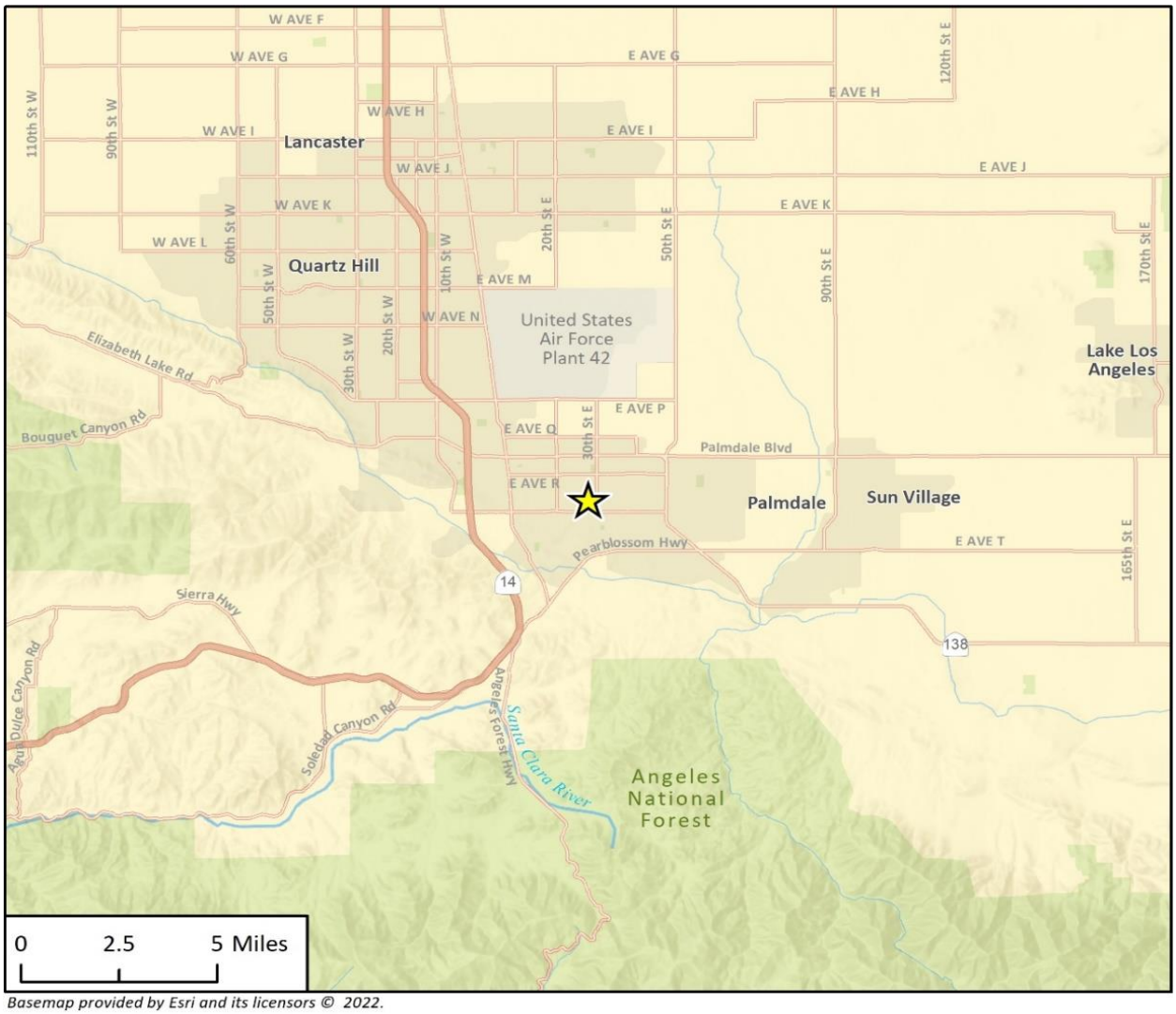
The Project proposes to develop a community of mixed housing types serving a range of income levels. The proposed Project includes 330 dwelling units (du) composed of 152 affordable walkup apartments, 84 market rate apartments, 60 townhomes, and 34 cottages.

Project Location

The proposed Project site is in the city of Palmdale (City), approximately 35 miles north of downtown Los Angeles in the high desert area of northeast Los Angeles County (County). Figure 1 depicts the proposed Project site in a regional context.

The approximately 14.32-acre proposed Project site consists of five parcels, numbered Parcels 1 through 5, that will be consolidated from 45 smaller parcels located between 25th Street East, East Avenue R 8, 29th Street East, and East Avenue R12 in south Palmdale. The Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) for the 45 parcels are shown in Table 1. The proposed Project site encompasses portions of Section 6 of Township 5 North, Range 11 West, Section 1 of Township 5 North, Range 12 West, and Sections 31 and 32 of Township 6 North, Range 11 West on the Palmdale, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.

Figure 1 Regional Location



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2022.

Project Location

N

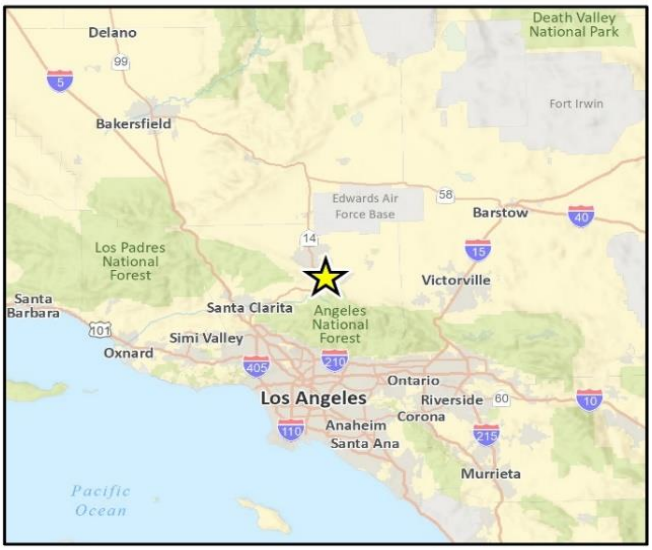


Table 1 Proposed Project Parcels

Project Parcel	Acreage	Current Parcel APN
Parcel 1	2.89	3019-012-902, 3019-012-903, 3019-012-904, 3019-012-905, 3019-012-9026, 3019-012-907, 3019-012-908, 3019-012-909, 3019-012-910, 3019-012-911, 3019-012-912
Parcel 2	3.66	3019-011-917, 3019-011-919, 3019-011-906, 3019-011-908, 3019-011-902, 3019-011-903, 3019-011-909, 3019-011-920, 3019-011-905, 3019-011-918, 3019-011-901, 3019-011-907, 3019-011-900
Parcel 3	3.04	3019-010-906, 3019-010-907, 3019-010-908, 3019-010-909, 3019-010-910, 3019-010-911, 3019-010-903, 3019-010-912, 3019-010-904, 3019-010-905, 3019-010-913
Parcel 4	2.78	3019-009-900
Parcel 5	1.95	3019-011-911, 3019-011-912, 3019-011-915, 3019-011-916, 3019-011-910, 3019-011-904, 3019-011-913, 3019-011-914

Source: LeSar Development Consultants, Master Plan Document, July 10, 2023; Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor, <https://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/m/> (accessed May 24, 2023).

Surrounding land uses include multi-family residential development to the north and east, East Avenue R-12 to the south, and open space to the west. The Project site is also bisected by 27th Street East in its western portion. A fenced in recreational vehicle (RV) or trailer home was observed along the southwest edge of the Project site, off site but within the survey area. The Project site was accessed along 27th Street East. For the purposes of this report, the survey area is defined as the Project site plus a 300-foot buffer as shown on Figure 2.

Methodology

Biological conditions within the survey area (Project site and 300-foot buffer) were evaluated by confirming applicable biological regulations, policies, and standards; reviewing biological literature and querying available databases pertinent to the survey area and vicinity; and conducting a reconnaissance-level biological survey of the survey area. The methods employed are described in detail below. The findings conveyed in this report are based on this methodology.

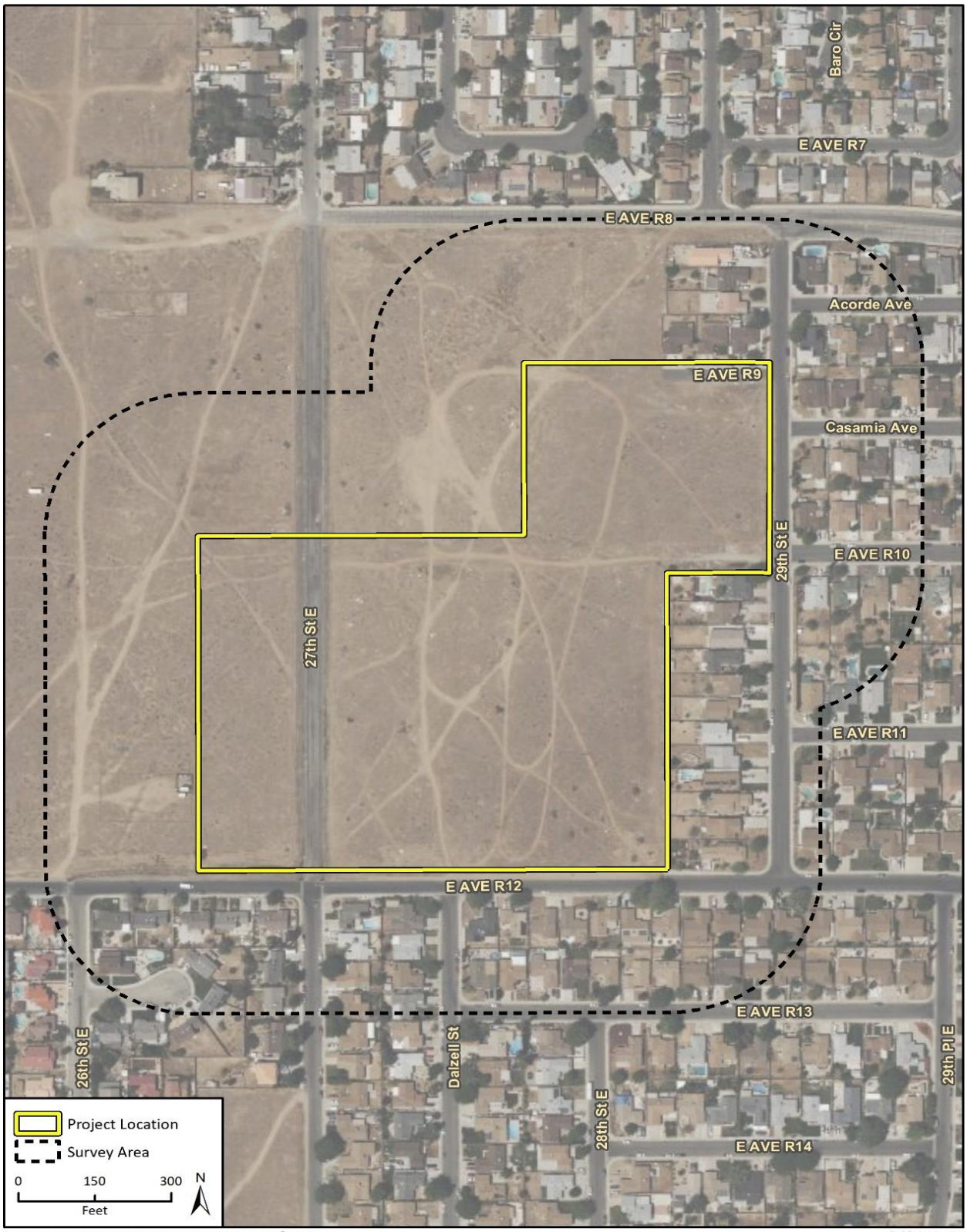
Regulatory Overview

Regulated or special-status 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, and locally protected resources, such as protected trees. For the purpose of this report, potential impacts to biological resources were analyzed based on the following statutes:

Federal

- Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- Federal Clean Water Act (CWA)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)
- The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
- Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA)

Figure 2 Project Location



Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2022.

State

- CEQA
- California Endangered Species Act (CESA)
- California Fish and Game Code (CFGC)
- Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act
- Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act

Regional and Local

- Los Angeles County Oak Tree Management Guidelines
- City of Palmdale General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)
- City of Palmdale 2045 General Plan Update
- County of Los Angeles General Plan
- West Mojave Coordinated Management Plan
- Palmdale Joshua Tree and Native Desert Vegetation Ordinance
- Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

Literature Review

Prior to conducting the biological field survey, Rincon reviewed conceptual site plans provided by LeSar Development), aerial photographs, and previous historical land use of the Project site. Queries of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (2022a, 2022b) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (2022) were conducted to obtain comprehensive information regarding state and federally listed species, as well as other special-status species considered to have potential to occur within a five (5)-mile radius of the Project site. For CNPS query purposes, a nine-quadrangle search area centered on the Project site was used. Plant species with elevation ranges exceeding or below those of the Project site and with a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 3 and 4 were excluded. The results of database-queries and lists of special-status species were reviewed by Rincon's regional biological professionals for accuracy and completeness. The final list of special-status biological resources (species and sensitive natural communities) was evaluated based on documented occurrences within the nine-quadrangle search area and our regional knowledge of species known to occur in the region. The evaluation results and justification were compiled into a table in Attachment 1 In addition, information regarding regionally occurring special-status biological resources and geology related to the site was reviewed using from the following sources:

- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Critical Habitat Portal (USFWS 2022a)
- Biogeographic Information and Observation System (CDFW 2022b)
- Special Animals List (CDFW 2022c)
- Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List (CDFW 2022d)
- National Hydrography Dataset (United States Geological Survey 2022b)
- USFWS National Wetland Inventory Mapper (USFWS 2022c)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) Web Soil Survey (USDA NRCS 2022)

Field Survey

A field reconnaissance survey was conducted by Rincon biologists Jacob Hargis and Jorge Saavedra-Alvarado on October 4, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. to document the existing site conditions and evaluate the potential for presence of sensitive biological resources, including special-status plant and wildlife species, sensitive plant communities, potential jurisdictional waters, wildlife corridors and nursery sites, and locally protected resources. Weather conditions during the survey included temperatures of 73 to 83 degrees Fahrenheit, southeast winds (one [1] to three [3] miles per hour) with sunny and clear skies. The survey consisted of walking meandering transects throughout the survey area, where accessible. The biologists visually scanned for special-status species (or sign thereof) and habitats suitable for these species. Binoculars (10 x 42) were used to scan those areas otherwise inaccessible by foot, including the 300-foot buffer area.

The habitat requirements for each regionally occurring special-status species were assessed and compared to the type and quality of the habitats observed within the survey area during the site visit. Vegetation communities observed onsite were mapped on a site-specific aerial photograph. All accessible portions of the survey area were covered on foot. Vegetation was generally classified using the systems provided in *A Manual of California Vegetation, Second Edition* (Sawyer et al. 2009) as necessary to reflect the existing site conditions. The survey was conducted to make an initial assessment regarding the presence or absence of terrestrial biological resources, including plants, birds, and other wildlife. The survey was conducted outside of nesting bird season (February 1 through August 31).

Results

This section discusses the results of the site visit, description of site conditions, and an evaluation of the potential for federal and state listed species to occur. Photographs of the survey area are included in Attachment 2. A compendium of plant and wildlife species observed in the survey area is included in Attachment 3.

Existing Conditions

The Project site is vacant and disturbed with signs of historical illegal trash dumping and off-highway vehicle (OHV) tracks throughout the site. The proposed Project site is undeveloped. Single-family residential uses are adjacent to the Project site along the east and can be found across East Avenue R12 to the south. To the north and west of the Project site lie areas of undeveloped land. Elevation onsite ranges from approximately 2,658 to 2,672 feet (810 to 814 meters) above mean sea level.

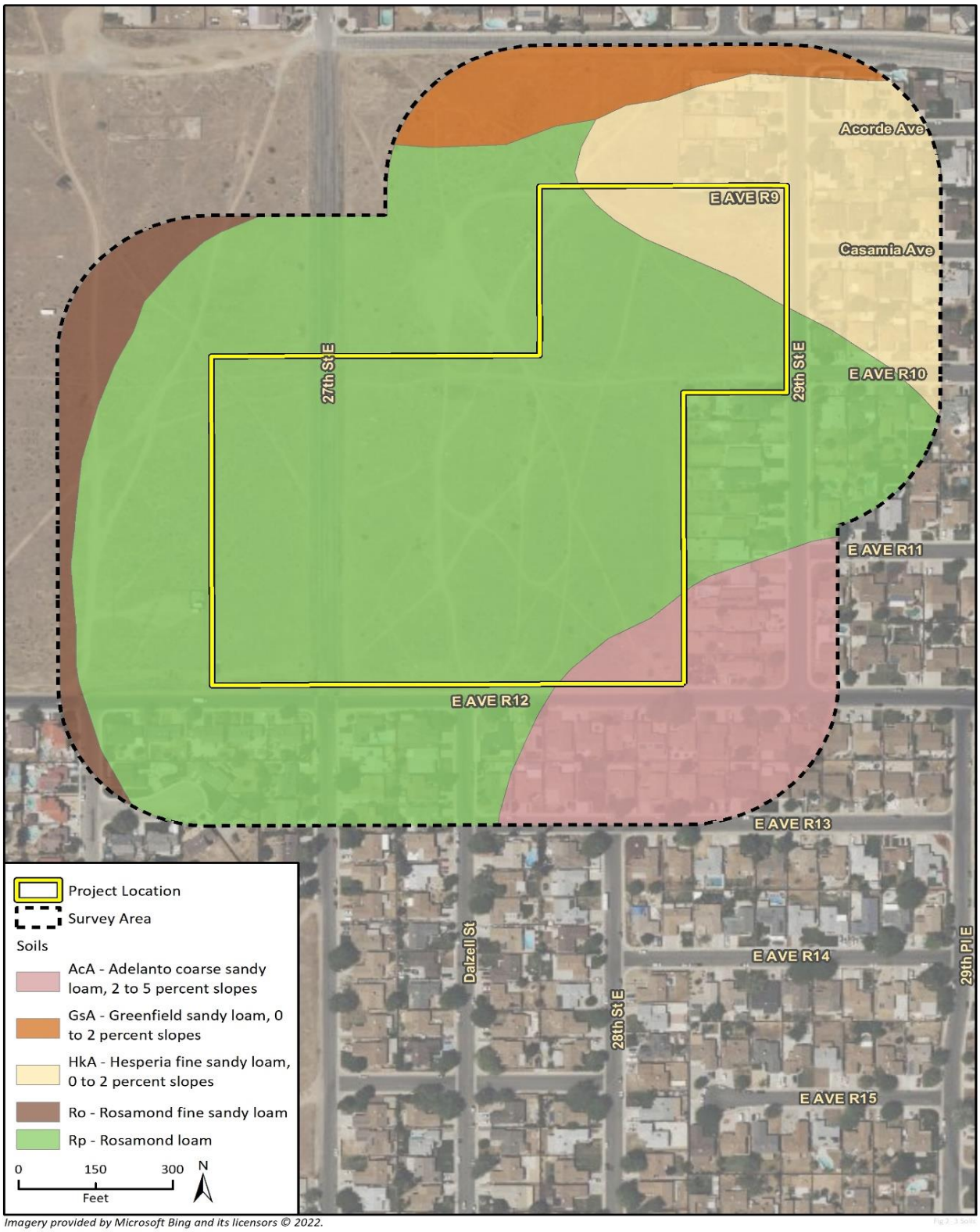
Overall, the Project site is disturbed due to human activity. Vehicle and mechanical tracks are visible indicating relatively recent disturbance. Areas within the site appear to have been graded or manipulated to create roadways for OHV recreation. Piles of refuse including concrete rubble, piping, trash, and old cut vegetation were dispersed throughout the site and along 27th Street East. Historic aerial imagery on Google Earth (2022) shows the Project site to have remained vacant for an extended number of years.

Soils

Soil series within the survey area historically are found throughout the western Mojave Desert which consist of deep, well drained soils located on alluvial fans and floodplains with slopes ranging from 0 to five (5) percent. Soils onsite appear to have retained their historical quality, but there has been human-caused disturbance from OHV activities in recent years. Soils are sandy and loose throughout

the site and compacted around the perimeters and near the access gate to the east. The four (4) soil types in the survey area as mapped by the USDA NRCS are depicted on Figure 3.

Figure 3 Soils Map



Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2022.
Additional data provided by USDA, 2022.

Adelanto Coarse Sandy Loam 0 to 5 Percent Slopes (AcA)

Adelanto series consist of deep, well drained soils formed in granitic parent material found on alluvial fans and plains found in arid climates associated with desert shrubs and annual grasses (USDA NRCS 2022).

Greenfield Sandy Loam, 0 to 2 Percent Slopes (GsA)

Greenfield series consist of deep, well drained soils derived from granitic and mixed rock sources. Greenfield soils are found on alluvial fans and terraces with slopes ranging from 0 to 30 percent. These soils are typically found within the interior valleys of central and southern California (UDSA NRCS 2022). This soil series is located with the 300-foot buffer of the survey area, but outside of the Project site.

Hesperia Fine Sandy Loam, 0 to 2 Percent Slopes (hKa)

The Hesperia series consist of very deep, well drained soils derived from primarily granite and closely related rocks, found on alluvial fans, valley plains, and stream terraces. Hesperia series are associated with the Adelanto soil series. These soils are associated with creosote bush scrub in the high desert and are found in agricultural production within the desert range (USDA NRCS 2022).

Rosamond Fine Sandy Loam (Ro); Rosamond Loam (Rp)

The Rosamond series consist of deep, well drained soils formed in material weathered materials derived granitic alluvium, found within the lower margin of the alluvial fans and basins of playas with slopes ranging from 0 to two (2) percent. Rosamond soil series are historically found in the Lancaster region (USDA NRCS 2022). Rosamond fine sandy loam is located with the 300-foot buffer of the survey area, but outside of the Project site. The Rosamond loam series is the dominant soil series found within the Project site.

Vegetation and Land Cover

The site is generally open and disturbed, with overall low shrub cover distributed throughout the site. Intermittent concentrations of shrubs dominated by Nevada ephedra (*Ephedra nevadensis*), along with broom snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*), rubber rabbit bush (*Ericameria nauseosa*), Anderson thornbush (*Lycium andersonii*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus)* were observed. Annual and perennial non-native grasses and herbs such as bromes *(Bromus* sp.*)* and mustards *(Brassica* sp.*)* are dispersed throughout the site. A small number of creosote bush shrubs *(Larrea tridentata*) were observed within the southeast portion of the site, and one (1) large shrub along the southwest corner. A fenced in RV (Recreational Vehicle) or mobile trailer was observed along the southeastern border of the site.

Approximately five (5) manmade depressional features were observed within the Project site, determined to have been caused by artificial impoundments of overland sheet flow resulting from heavy OHV and recreational use throughout the site. Potential ponding areas were observed with vegetation associated with intermittent presence of water. An urban stormwater runoff ditch was observed at the intersection of 27th Steet East and East Avenue R12 with evidence of sheet flow stormwater draining onto the site from the south and southwest. Species observed occurring along this feature included salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*), prostrate pigweed (*Amaranthus blitoides*), barnyard grass (*Echinochloa crus-galli*), puncture vine (*Tribulus terrestris*), common purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*), bromes, mustards and Russian thistle.

Overall, the Project site has been designated as disturbed desert scrub. Attachment 2, *Site Photographs,* and Figure 4 depict vegetation communities/landcover types.

General Wildlife

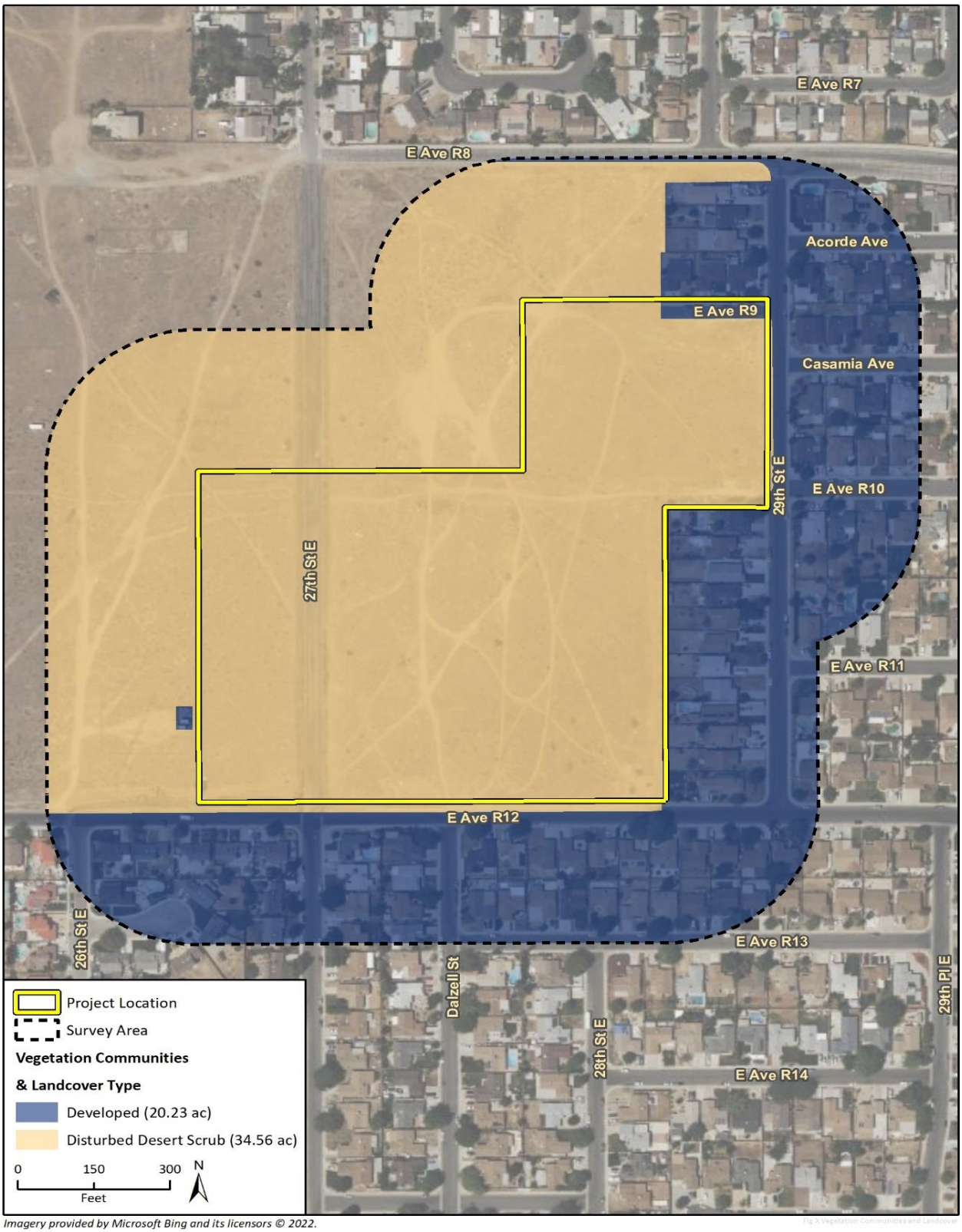
The survey area is characterized as disturbed and open, with limited shrub cover, providing moderate to limited habitat for common avian, reptile, and mammalian wildlife species. Numerous small mammal burrows and colonies associated with active California ground squirrels (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*) were observed throughout the survey area, which provide habitat for a range of wildlife species (i.e. snakes, lizards, ground birds, rodents) that utilize burrows for shelter.Mammalian activity, primarily California ground squirrels, was high during the site visit, providing a potential prey base for predators such as raptors and coyotes. No evidence of large mammal activity was observed. Stray domestic dogs and cats were observed within the vicinity of the Project site. Avian activity was low during the site visit although some birds protected under the CFGC § 3503 and the MBTA may nest in open habitats and vegetation on the site (discussed further below). Rincon biologists observed common avian species on site during the survey including house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), Say's phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), and red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). Refer to Attachment 3 for the full list of wildlife species observed.

Sensitive Biological Resources Impact Analysis

This section discusses and evaluates the potential for the study area to support special-status species and sensitive biological resources occurring in the region. Assessments for the potential occurrence of special-status species are based upon known ranges, habitat preferences for the species, species occurrence records from the CNDDB and other sources, species occurrence records from other sites in the vicinity of the survey area, previous reports for the Project site, and the results of surveys of 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), and species would have been identifiable on the site if present (e.g., oak trees (*Quercus* spp.).
- **Low Potential.** Few of the habitat components (foraging, breeding, cover, substrate, elevation, hydrology, plant community, site history, disturbance regime) 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 (foraging, breeding, cover, substrate, elevation, hydrology, plant community, site history, disturbance regime) 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 the habitat components (foraging, breeding, cover, substrate, elevation, hydrology, plant community, site history, disturbance regime) 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., CNDDB, other reports) on the site recently (within the last five [5] years).

Figure 4 Vegetation Communities and Landcover



Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2022.

Special-Status Species

Special-status species are those plants and wildlife listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as Threatened or Endangered by the USFWS under the federal 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 CESA, wildlife designated as "Fully Protected" by the CFGC, wildlife listed as "Species of Special Concern" (SSC) by the CDFW, or wildlife listed as "Watch List"(WL) by the CDFW; and CDFW Special Plants, specifically those with CRPR of 1B and 2, in the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California.

Furthermore, biological resources are ranked globally (G) and statewide (S) 1 through 5 (more critical to less critical with those ranked as G or S 1 through 3 being considered as sensitive).

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. A list of special-status plant and wildlife species with potential to occur onsite was developed based on a review of a five (5)-mile search of the CNDDB (CDFW 2022b) and a nine (9)-quadrangle search of the CNPS' Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPS 2022) and can be found in Attachment 1.

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, 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 CDFW or USFWS.*

Special-status Plant Species

The CNDDB/CNPS query results include 20 special-status plant species within five (5) miles (for CNDDB) and within a nine (9)-quadrangle search area (for CNPS) of the survey area. Special-status plant species typically have specialized habitat requirements, including plant community types, soils, and elevational ranges. Of the 20 species, none are expected to occur onsite based on the site's location and clear lack of suitable habitat (e.g., mountains, desert, water sources, elevational ranges). No special-status plant species were observed during the site reconnaissance survey, nor do any special-status plant species have any potential to occur onsite given the high disturbance, lack of suitable habitat, and elevation requirements that are not met by the survey area. As such, impacts to special-status plant species are not expected to occur as a result of project implementation.

Special-status Wildlife Species

The CNDDB query results include 16 special-status wildlife species within five (5) miles of the survey area. Of these 16, only one species has a high potential to occur. The potential for special-status wildlife species to occur on the site was assessed based on known distribution, habitat requirements, and existing site conditions. Of the 16 special-status wildlife species, seven (7) were determined to have a low potential to occur on site; foraging prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*; CDFW WL), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*; CDFW WL), Loggerhead shrike (Lanius ludovicianus; SSC) Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*; *CDFW ST*), Le Conte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*; *CDFW SSC*), San Joaquin pocket mouse (*Perognathus inornatus*; *G2G3, S2S3, BLM S*) and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*; *CDFW ST*). The Project site contains moderately suitable habitat with suitable burrows made by California ground squirrels, which could provide habitat for burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) and San Joaquin pocket mouse, according to the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) range maps (CDFW 2022b). The site lacks suitable habitat for sensitive invertebrate species

such as fairy shrimp due to the high disturbance associated with manmade depressions from historically heavy OHV and recreational usage identified in the reconnaissance survey. These depressions would not sustainably support sensitive fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) or any other sensitive species associated with wetlands or vernal pools. No recent historical records of fairy shrimp have occurred within a five (5)-mile radius of the Project site (CNDDB 2022a).

Mammals

The Project site is approximately one mile west of the predicted occupied Mohave ground squirrel habitat range (CBI, Databasin, 2013). However, it is surrounded, and thus isolated, on all sides by residential development. Additionally, the site contains active California ground squirrel colonies and is disturbed by trash dumping and OHV use. Mojave ground squirrels are unlikely to successfully compete with California ground squirrels. Documentation of previous CNDDB records indicate historical observations, which included university and history museum specimen collections of this species in 1920, 1931, 1932, 1934, and 1944 within the regional vicinity <5 miles north and east of the City of Palmdale.

No CNDDB recent or historical records for San Joaquin pocket mouse, have been documented within five 5) miles of the Project site. San Joaquin pocket mouse has a low potential to occur on site due to the highly disturbed habitat, low relative abundance of known species populations in the vicinity of the project, with known populations found several miles north in the Antelope Valley (isolated from the project site).

Raptors

Foraging prairie falcon, Swainson's hawk, and Cooper's hawk have a low potential to occur on site. The survey area is disturbed with sparse vegetation, and thus the quality of the site for foraging is considered to be low; however, prey availability with lizards, insects, and ground squirrels were observed. The site does not provide suitable nesting habitat for these avian species due to a lack of the required nesting structures. Nonetheless, foraging by these species could occasionally occur onsite, within the 300-foot buffer, or on adjacent properties. Ornamental trees in adjacent residential areas are marginally suitable for nesting hawks. Cliffs, bluffs, or other elevated structures that could be utilized by prairie falcons for nesting are absent from the site and vicinity.

One raptor species has a high potential to occur onsite based on habitat suitability and known occurrence in the vicinity:

Burrowing Owl (CDFW SSC)

The Project site contains suitable desert habitat with suitable burrows made by California ground squirrels with low levels of prey population observed (lizards, insects). Although the Project site is disturbed from trash dumping and OHV use, burrowing owl has a high potential to occur on site based on burrow availability and open space of similar habitat characteristics to the parcel west of the Project site. CNDDB records indicate a pair of owls were recorded occupying a burrow site approximately two (2) miles from the Project site in March 2006 and approximately four (4) miles from the Project site in January 2006, of which were passively evicted and banded with a color band (CNDDB, 2022a).

Nesting Birds

The site lacks suitable shrub or tree cover for nesting birds other than those that are ground-dwelling. A small cluster of creosote shrubs occurs in the southeastern corner of the site, along with the aforementioned dispersed low shrub cover throughout the survey area. Ornamental trees on adjacent

properties to the east within the 300-foot buffer could provide suitable nesting habitat for common avian species that were observed during the reconnaissance survey.

Bird nests and eggs are protected under the CFGC Section 3503 and the MBTA. Common species such as mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), swallows (*Hirundinidae* sp.) and house finches have a potential to nest on the ground, in ornamental vegetation, palm trees, or man-made structures. Direct impacts (e.g., injury or mortality) to nesting birds or indirect impacts (e.g., noise, dust) that disrupt nesting behavior and reproductive success would be significant. Implementation of recommended pre-construction nesting bird and burrowing owl clearance surveys (discussed below in *Recommended Actions*) would reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less-than-significant level.

No listed or sensitive species were detected during the reconnaissance survey, but pre-construction nesting bird surveys (see BIO-1 below), and preconstruction burrowing owl surveys (BIO-3) would detect them should they move onsite and are recommended for compliance with MBTA and CFGC.

With the implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1-3 in the *Recommended Actions* section below, impacts to potentially occurring sensitive species would be less than significant.

Sensitive Plant Communities

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS.

The entire survey area is comprised of open, disturbed desert scrub, dominated by Nevada ephedra, with rabbit brush, broom snake weed with scattered creosote shrubs and ruderal forbs. Weedy non-native annual and perennial species such as bromes, Russian thistle, and other grasses filling intermittently within the low shrub cover and bare ground. The site shows signs of frequent human activity, including recreational OHV use and trash/debris, and has resulted in very limited native plant species present. No sensitive plant communities are present within the survey area. Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural communities.

Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

The reconnaissance survey identified (5) man-made depression features within the Project site and two (2) within the survey area outside of the Project site. These features were determined to have been caused by artificial impoundments of overland sheet flow resulting from heavy OHV use throughout the site. Potential ponding areas were observed with vegetation associated with intermittent presence of water. Desktop analysis using the NWI mapping database shows no waters, wetlands, or historical wetland data within the survey area. Sheet flow stormwater run-off was also observed in the southwestern portion of the Project site at the cross section of East Avenue R-12 and 27th Street East. Previous evidence of flow was observed entering the parcel and flowing west along East Avenue R 12. No riparian vegetation, water channels, or ponding water was observed during the reconnaissance

survey. Indirect impacts from potential stormwater runoff, dust, or spills of hazardous materials during or after construction, would be less than significant as a result of the project's required compliance with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevent Plan and best management practices. As a result, impacts would be less than significant.

Wildlife Movement

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

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 wildlife nursery sites.

The Project site is located between East Avenue R-8 to the north, East Avenue R12 to the south, east of 25th Street East, and west of 29th Street East and is bisected by 27th Street East. It is surrounded by residential development to the east, East Avenue R12 to the south, and open space to the north, northwest, and west. The site is not within any mapped or known California Essential Habitat Connectivity area (CDFW 2022b). The site is located adjacent to active roads, development and open space. Given the isolated nature of the site from extended, intact, undisturbed natural habitat areas and/or vegetated corridors, it provides limited opportunities for wildlife movement and habitat connectivity. However, it is still possible that the open space adjacent to the survey area may provide some habitat connectivity for locally resident species to disperse and/or move through the area, although surrounding development is a barrier to connectivity with larger tracts of native habitat in the region. For these reasons, impacts to wildlife movement would be considered less than significant.

Local Policies and Ordinances

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

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

The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Management Guidelines are intended to address the treatment of oak woodlands in areas where zoning and/or general plan density restrictions will allow the effective use of clustering. These guidelines require a qualified biologist to identify, assess, and evaluate potential impacts to any oak woodland vegetation prior to proposed development. The field reconnaissance survey results indicate this site does not support an oak woodland community. No oak trees were observed. Therefore, development of this site would not conflict with this guideline, and no impact is expected.

The Palmdale Municipal Code Chapter 14.04 *Joshua Tree and Native Desert Vegetation Preservation* is intended to protect and preserve desert vegetation, which specifically includes Western Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*) in a manner that is consistent with the City's General Plan and CEQA. The field reconnaissance survey results indicate this site does not support Joshua trees or remnants of Joshua trees. Therefore, the development of this site would not conflict with this guideline, and no impact is expected. The proposed project would be compliant with the City of Palmdale General Plan and Municipal codes.

Adopted or Approved Plans

Pursuant to Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

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

The project is located within the boundaries of the West Mojave Coordinated Management Plan (WMP) (BLM 2005) administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in cooperation with the local jurisdiction, City of Palmdale. The project site is located outside of Conservation Areas identified in the WMP. Goals and policies included in the City of Palmdale's 2045 General Plan Update (City of Palmdale 2023) are intended to protect sensitive habitats (Goal CON-1 Protect Significant Ecological Areas) and comply with the requirements of the WMP for protection of state and federally listed species (Policy CON-1.3 West Mojave Plan). The WMP and related City policies identified in the 2045 General Plan Update, focus on protection of protection of desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel. The proposed project site does not provide habitat for either of these species, would not be considered a Significant Ecological Area based on its disturbed nature, and accordingly would not conflict with the WMP or relevant policies in the City's General Plan.

Given that the project is located outside of a WMP Conservation Area and does not contain Significant Ecological Areas, the project would not conflict with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Recommended Actions

BIO-1 Preconstruction Nesting Bird Surveys

The following mitigation measure, and compliance with MBTA and CFGC requirements, would be required to reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less-than-significant level.

To avoid disturbance of nesting and special-status birds, including raptor species protected by the MBTA and 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 (February 1 through August 31). If construction must begin within the breeding season, then a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted no more than three (3) days prior to initiation of ground disturbance and vegetation-removal activities. The nesting bird pre-construction survey shall be conducted within the Project site, plus a 300-foot buffer (500-foot for raptors), on foot, and within inaccessible areas (i.e., private lands) afar using binoculars to the extent practical. The survey shall be conducted by a biologist familiar with the identification of avian species known to occur in southern California desert communities.

If 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 suitable other means to clearly mark the boundary. All construction personnel shall be notified as to the existence of the buffer zone and to avoid entering the buffer zone during the nesting period. No ground-disturbing or other work 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.

BIO-2 Environmental Workers Education Training Program

Prior to the start of project activity (including vegetation clearing and grading) that occurs within the project footprint, a qualified biologist will present a Wildlife Environmental Workers Awareness Program (WEAP) for all construction personnel. The project biologist or their designee will attend one (1) preconstruction meeting to administer the WEAP. Topics to discuss include sensitive species that may be encountered in the project area, photographs to aid in identification of sensitive species, the laws and codes that regulate these species, and the protection measures that must be followed to avoid and minimize impacts. If new construction personnel are added to the project, the contractor shall ensure that the new personnel receive the mandatory training before starting work. The subsequent training of personnel may include a video of the initial training and/or the use of written materials rather than in-person training by a qualified biologist.

BIO-3 Burrowing Owl Preconstruction Clearance Survey

Evidence of burrowing mammals and suitable burrows for burrowing owls were observed within the survey area during the reconnaissance survey. Burrowing owls were not observed at that time but are considered to have a high potential to occur on site.

A qualified wildlife biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey of proposed impact areas to confirm presence/absence of burrowing owl individuals no more than 14 days prior to construction. The survey methodology shall be consistent with the methods outlined in the CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012). If no active breeding or wintering owls are identified, no further mitigation is required.

If burrowing owl is detected on-site, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented in accordance with the CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012):

- The project proponent shall hire a qualified wildlife biologist that should be on-site during initial ground-disturbing activities in potential burrowing owl habitat identified throughout the habitat assessment.
- No ground-disturbing activities shall be permitted within a buffer no less than 200 meters (656 feet) from an active burrow during the breeding season, depending on the level of disturbance, unless the qualified biologist determines a reduced buffer would not adversely affect the burrowing owl(s).
- Occupied burrows shall not be disturbed during the nesting season (February 1 to August 31)
- During the nonbreeding (winter) season (September 1 to January 31), ground-disturbing work can proceed near active burrows as long as the work occurs no closer than 50 meters (165 feet) from the burrow, depending on whether the level of disturbance is low, and if the active burrow is not directly affected by the project activity. A smaller/larger buffer may be established by the qualified biologist following monitoring and assessments of the project's effects on the burrowing owls. If active winter burrows are found that would be directly affected by ground disturbing activities, owls can be excluded from winter burrows according to recommendations made in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012). Additionally, if burrowing owls are found on-site, a qualified biologist shall prepare and submit a passive relocation program in accordance with Appendix E (i.e., Example Components for Burrowing Owl Artificial Burrow and Exclusion Plans) of the CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012) for CDFW review and approval prior to the commencement of disturbance activities on-site.

- Burrowing owls shall not be excluded from burrows until a Burrowing Owl Exclusion Plan is developed based on the recommendations made in Appendix E (i.e., Example Components for Burrowing Owl Artificial Burrow and Exclusion Plans) of the CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012). The Burrowing Owl Exclusion Plan shall be submitted to CDFW for review and approval prior to the commencement of disturbance activities on-site.
- Prior to passive relocation, the project proponent shall be responsible for identifying compensatory mitigation at a ratio of 1:1 for lost breeding and/or wintering habitat. Mitigation shall be implemented on- or off-site including permanent conservation and management of burrowing owl habitat through the recordation of a conservation easement, funding of a non-wasting endowment, and implementation of a Mitigation Land Management Plan based on the CDFW Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (2012) and CDFW guidance. Mitigation lands shall be identified through coordination with CDFW and on, adjacent, or proximate to the impact site where possible and where habitat is suitable to support burrowing owl. If required, compensatory mitigation shall be completed prior to completion of project construction.
- When a qualified biologist determines that burrowing owls are no longer occupying the Project site and passive relocation is complete, construction activities may begin. A final letter shall be prepared by the qualified biologist documenting the results of the passive relocation. The letter shall be submitted to CDFW.

Conclusion

Based on the field reconnaissance survey, database and literature searches, and overall assessment, the proposed Project site development is not likely to significantly impact sensitive biological resources if the mitigation measures recommended above are incorporated. No sensitive wildlife or plant species were found during the site survey; however, the site contains potential suitable habitat for burrowing owl. This species, including foraging raptors, could occasionally occur onsite, within the 300-foot buffer, or on adjacent properties. Rincon recommends incorporating the BIO-1 mitigation measure and ensure compliance with MBTA and CFGC requirements, which would detect these species should they move onsite. Rincon recommends incorporating the following mitigation measures (BIO-2, BIO-3) to ensure biological compliance and avoid, minimize, and mitigate any potential adverse impacts to sensitive species that may occur on site. Overall, due to the historical uses, and resulting disturbed habitat, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on sensitive natural communities.

Limitations, Assumptions, and Use Reliance

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. Reconnaissance biological surveys for certain taxa may 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 CNDDB RareFind5, and specified historical and literature sources. Standard data sources relied upon during the completion of this report, such as the CNDDB, may vary with regard to

accuracy and completeness. In particular, the CNDDB 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this important project. Please contact the undersigned if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Jacob Hargis
Associate Biologist

Angie Harbin
Director of Natural Resources

Attachments

Attachment 1 CNDDB/CNPS Query Results and Special-Status Species Occurrence Potentials
Attachment 2 Site Photographs
Attachment 3 Floral and Faunal Compendium

References

Baldwin, B.G., D.H. Goldman, D.J. Keil, R. Patterson, T.J. Rosatti, and D.H. Wilken, editors. 2012. *The Jepson Manual: Vascular Plants of California, Second Edition*. University of California Press, Berkeley, California

Best, T.L. 1995. Spermophilus mohavensis. Mammalian Species 509:1-7.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2012. *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* State of California Natural Resource Agency. 34 pp.

_____. 2022a. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), Rarefind 5 (online). Commercial Version. Accessed September 2022.

_____. 2022b. Biogeographic Information and Observation System. http://bios.dfg.ca.gov. Accessed September 2022.

_____. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Biogegraphic Data Branch, 2021. California Wildlife Habitat Relationship System, Version 10.1.20. Sacramento, CA. Accessed September 2022.

California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2022. "Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants. Online Edition, v8-02." www.rareplants.cnps.org. Accessed September 2022.

City of Palmdale. 1993. General Plan. Accessed September 2022.

City of Palmdale. 2023. General Plan Update - Palmdale 2045. Amended March 15. https://www.cityofpalmdaleca.gov/279/General-Plan

City of Palmdale and Rincon Consultants. City of Palmdale Updated General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. 2022.

Conservation Biology Institute. 2013. Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) species distribution models by the working group in databasin.org https://databasin.org/maps/a266192c77e54579bf35d01c64225f88/active/. Accessed July 2023.

Google Earth Pro. 2022. U.S. Department of State Geographer. https://www.google.com/earth/

Los Angeles County Planning Department. 1988. Oak Tree Ordinance https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/acwm/216015_LosAngelesCounty.pdf. Accessed September 2022.

MGSWG (Desert Managers Mohave Ground Squirrel Work Group). 2011. Draft Mohave Ground Squirrel Conservation Strategy. file:///C:/Users/jhargis/Downloads/Mantor_2015_Draft%204%20MGS%20Cons%20Strategy.pdf. Accessed July 2023

NatureServe. 2010. Ecosystem Classification. http://www.natureserve.org/. urve

Sawyer, J. O., T. Keeler-Wolf, and J.M. Evens. 2009. *A Manual of California Vegetation, Second Edition.* California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, California.

United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS). 2021. "Web Soil Survey." https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx. Accessed September 2022.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2022a. "Critical Habitat Portal." http://criticalhabitat.fws.gov. Accessed September 2022.

_____. 2022b. Information for Planning and Consultation. http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/. Accessed September 2022.

_____. 2022c. National Wetland Inventory. http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html. Accessed September 2022.

United States Bureau of Reclamation. 2005. Final Environmental Impact Report and Statement (FEIS) West Mojave Plan. A Habitat Conservation Plan and California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment Vol I. Accessed July 2023. https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-I53-PURL-LPS125985/pdf/GOVPUB-I53-PURL-LPS125985.pdf

Attachment 1

CNDDB/CNPS Query Results and Special-Status Species Occurrence Potentials

CNDDB/CNPS Query Results and Special-Status Species Occurrence Potentials

Scientific Name Common Name	Status	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur in Project Area	Habitat Suitability/Observations
Plants and Lichens				
Arctostaphylos glandulosa ssp *gabrielensis* San Gabriel manzanita	None/None G5T3/S3 1B.2	Perennial evergreen shrub. Chaparral. Rocky outcrops; can be dominant shrub where it occurs. Elevations: 1,9 4,920 ft. (595-1500 m.) Blooms Mar.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in chapparal and rock outcroppings, which are not present on site.
Astragalus hornii var. *hornii* Horn's milk-vetch	None/None GUT1/S1 1B.1	Annual herb. Meadows and seeps, playas. Alkaline, lak margins. Elevations: 19 2,790 ft. (60-850 m.) Blooms May-Oct.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs along lake margins, meadows, seeps, and playas which are nc present on site.
Astragalus preussii var. *laxiflorus* Lancaster milk-vetch	None/None G4T2/S1 1B.1	Perennial herb. Chenopod scrub. Alkaline clay flats or gravelly or sandy washes and along draws in gullied badlands in California. Elevations: 2,29 5,295 ft. (700 m) Blooms Mar-May.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in alkaline flats, saltbush scrub, or chenopod scrub which are present on site.
Calochortus palmeri var. *palmeri* Palmer's mariposa-lily	None/None G3T2/S2 1B.2	Perennial bulbiferous herb. Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps. Mesic. Elevatio 2,330-7,840 ft. (710-2,390 m.) Blooms Apr-Jul.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in chaparral, lower montane coniferous forests, meadows, an seeps, which are not present on site.
Calochortus striatus alkali mariposa-lily	None/None G3?/S2S3 1B.2	Perennial bulbiferous herb. Chaparral, chenopod scrub meadows and seeps, Mojavean desert scrub. Alkaline, mesic. Elevations: 23 5,235 ft. (70-1,595 m.) Blooms Apr-Jun.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in chaparral, chenopc scrub, meadows, seeps, and Mojavean desert scrub which are not present on site
Castilleja gleasoni Mt. Gleason paintbrush	None/SCR G2/S2 1B.2	Perennial herb (hemiparasitic). Chaparral, lower montai coniferous forest, pinyon and juniper woodland. Granitic. Elevations: 3,805 7,120 ft. (1,160-2,170 m.) Blooms May Jun (Sep).	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland, which are not present on site.
Chorizanthe parryi var. *parryi* Parry's spineflower	None/None G3T2/S2 1B.1	Annual herb. Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Openings, Rocky (sometimes), sandy (sometimes). Elevations: 4,005 ft. (275-1,220 m.) Blooms Apr-Jun.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and valley grasslands which do not occur on site.
Claytonia peirsonii ssp *peirsonii* Peirson's spring beauty	None/None G2G3T2/S2 1B.2	Perennial herb. Subalpine coniferous forest, upper montane coniferous forest. Granitic, metamorphic, scre talus. Elevations: 4,95 9,005 ft. (1,510-2,745 m.) Blooms (Mar) May-Jun.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	Thisspecies occurs in forests and chappar at higher elevations than are found on site
Eriastrum rosamondense Rosamond eriastrum	None/None G1?/S1? 1B.1	Annual herb. Chenopod scrub, vernal pools. Alkali pool beds separated by very low hummocks with open chenopod scrub. Often sandy soil. Elevations: 2,3 2,955 ft. (700-1,175 m.) Blooms Apr-May (Jun-Jul).	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in chenopod scrub, vernal pools. And alkali pool needs which are not present on site.

Scientific Name Common Name	Status	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur in Project Area	Habitat Suitability/Observations
Lilium parryi lemon lily	None/None G3/S3 1B.2	Perennial bulbiferous herb. Lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, riparian forest, upper montane coniferous forest. Wet, mountainous terrain; generally, in forested areas; on shady edges of streams, in open boggy meadows and seeps. Elevations: 4,005-9,005 ft. (1,220-2,745 m.) Blooms Jul-Aug.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in forests along edges of streams, boggy meadows, and seeps at higher elevations than are found on site.
Linanthus concinnus San Gabriel linanthus	None/None G2/S2 1B.2	Annual herb. Chaparral, lower montane coniferous forest, upper montane coniferous forest. Dry rocky slopes, often in Jeffrey pine/canyon oak forest. Elevations: 4,985-9,515 ft. (1,520-2,800 m.) Blooms Apr-Jul.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in forests along dry rocky slopes associated with Jeffery pine and canyon oak at higher elevations than are found on site.
Loeflingia squarrosa var. *artemisiarum* sagebrush loeflingia	None/None G5T3/S2 2B.2	Annual herb. Desert dunes, great basin scrub, Sonoran Desert scrub. Sandy flats and dunes. Sandy areas around clay slicks with *Sarcobatus, Atriplex, Tetradymia* etc. Elevations: 2,295-5,300 ft. (700-1,615 m.) Blooms Apr-May.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species is found in desert dunes, great basin scrub, and Sonoran Desert scrub which are not found on site.
Lupinus peirsonii Peirson's lupine	None/None G3/S3 1B.3	Perennial herb. Joshua tree woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, pinyon and juniper woodland, upper montane coniferous forest. Decomposed granite slide and talus, on slopes and ridges. Elevations: 3,280-8,205 ft. (1,000-2,500 m.) Blooms Apr-Jun.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in woodlands at a higher elevation than are found on site.
Nemacladus secundiflorus var. *robbinsii* Robbins' nemacladus	None/None G3T2/S2 1B.2	Annual herb. Chaparral, valley and foothill grassland. Dry sandy or gravelly slopes. Openings. Elevations: 1,150-5,580 ft. (350-1,700 m.) Blooms Apr-Jun.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in chaparral and valley and foothill grassland which are not found on site.
Opuntia basilaris var. *brachyclada* short-joint beavertail	None/None G5T3/S3 1B.2	Perennial stem. Chaparral, Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland. Sandy soil or coarse, granitic loam. Elevations: 1,395-5,905 ft. (425-1,800 m.) Blooms Apr-Jun (Aug).	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species is found in chaparral, Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, and juniper woodland which are not found on site.
Oreonana vestita woolly mountain-parsley	None/None G3/S3 1B.3	Perennial herb. Lower montane coniferous forest, subalpine coniferous forest, upper montane coniferous forest. High ridges; on scree, talus, or gravel. Elevations: 5,300-11,485 ft. (1,615-3,500 m.) Blooms May-Sep.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in forests at higher elevations than are found on site.
Stylocline masonii Mason's neststraw	None/None G1/S1 1B.1	Annual herb. Chenopod scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland. Sandy washes. Elevations: 3,280-3,935 ft. (100-1,200 m.) Blooms Mar-May.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in chenopod scrub, pinyon and juniper woodlands, and sandy washes which are not found on site.

Scientific Name Common Name	Status	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur in Project Area	Habitat Suitability/Observations
Symphyotrichum greatae Greata's aster	None/None G2/S2 1B.3	Perennial rhizomatous herb. Broad-leafed upland forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, riparian woodland. Mesic canyons. Elevations: 985-6,595 ft. (300-2,010 m.) Blooms Jul-Oct.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in broad-leafed upland forests, chaparral, and riparian woodlands which are not found on site.
Thysanocarpus rigidus rigid fringepod	None/None G1G2/S2 1B.2	Annual herb. Pinyon and juniper woodland. Dry, rocky slopes and ridges of oak and pine woodland in arid mountain ranges. Elevations: 1,970-7,220 ft. (600-2,200 m.) Blooms Feb-May.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in pinyon and juniper woodlands along dry and rocky slopes in higher elevations and is not found on site.
Invertebrates				
Bombus crotchii Crotch bumble bee	None/None G2/S1S2	Coastal California east to the Sierra-Cascade crest and south into Mexico. Food plant genera include *Antirrhinum*, *Phacelia*, *Clarkia*, *Dendromecon*, *Eschscholzia*, and *Eriogonum*.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	Quality foraging habitat for this species is not present on site. Individual *Eriogonum* sp. were observed, however overall, the site lacks suitable foraging habitat for this species.
Helminthoglypta fontiphila Soledad shoulderband	None/None G1/S1	Air-breathing terrestrial snail. Known from type locality, Little Rock Creek Canyon on north side of San Gabriel Mountains; west to Santa Clarita in Soledad Canyon; east to the vicinity of Big Rock Creek; and north to Elizabeth Lake Canyon in the Sierra Pelona Mountains. Frequently found in riparian habitat (springs, seeps, along streams). May be found in rock piles, floodborne debris, or under dead yuccas where other cover is not available.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in riparian habitat which is not found on site.
Reptiles				
Anniella pulchra Northern California legless lizard	None/None G3/S3 SSC	Sandy or loose loamy soils under sparse vegetation. Soil moisture is essential. Soils with a high moisture content are preferred.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species requires soils with a high moisture content which is not found on site.
Arizona elegans occidentalis California glossy snake	None/None G5T2/S2 SSC	Patchily distributed from the eastern portion of San Francisco Bay, southern San Joaquin Valley, and the Coast, Transverse, and Peninsular ranges, south to Baja California. Habitat generalist reported from a range of scrub and grassland habitats, often with loose or sandy soils.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species is typically found in coastal dune, valley foothill, coastal scrub, sandy or marshy habitats that contain leaf litter, or in moist substrates which are not found on site.

Scientific Name Common Name	Status	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur in Project Area	Habitat Suitability/Observations
Phrynosoma blainvillii coast horned lizard	None/None G3G4/S3S4 SSC	Frequents a wide variety of habitats, most common in lowlands along sandy washes with scattered low bushe Open areas for sunning, bushes for cover, patches of loose soil for burial, and abundant supply of ants and other insects.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species is found along the coastal an inland regions. It occurs in loose or sandy soil, sandy washes, valleys, foothills, and semi-arid mountains associated with woodlands, coniferous forests, chaparral and open areas. The site is highly disturbe and contains unsuitable habitat for this species.
Birds				
Accipiter cooperii / 2 2 LJ Ŝ NJ Ω ă K l· ø ⌇	None/None G5/S4 WL	Woodland, chiefly of open, interrupted or marginal type. Nest sites mainly in riparian growths of deciduous trees as in canyon bottoms on river floodplains; also, live oaks.	Potential to occur is low.	¢ K Ŝ ă LJ Ŝ Ŏ ƛ Ŝ ă Ω l· ă ă 2 Ŏ ƛ foraging habitat is not present on site. Potential for foraging or nesting on adjacent urban land.
Agelaius tricolor tricolored blackbird	None/ST G1G2/S1S2 SSC	Highly colonial species, most numerous in Central Valle and vicinity. Largely endemic to California. Requires op water, protected nesting substrate, and foraging area with insect prey within a few kilometers of the colony.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species requires open water which is not found on site.
Athene cunicularia burrowing owl	None/None G4/S3 SSC	Open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts, and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. Subterranean nester, dependent upon burrowing mammals, most notably, the California ground squirrel.	Potential to occur is high.	¢ K Ŝ ă LJ Ŝ Ŏ ƛ Ŝ ă Ω l· ă ă 2 Ŏ ƛ foraging habitat is present on site. California ground squirrels and suitable burrows were identified during the field reconnaissance survey. CNDDB records c pair of BUOW southeast of corner of 47th street East and Highway 138 in 2006, approximately 2 miles from the Project site. This species was not observed during the survey.
Buteo swainsoni Swainson's hawk	None/ST G5/S3	Breeds in grasslands with scattered trees, juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, savannahs, and agricultural or ranc lands with groves or lines of trees. Requires adjacent suitable foraging areas such as grasslands, or alfalfa or grain fields supporting rodent populations.	Potential to occur is low.	This species is a seasonal migrant. Preferred foraging habitat for this species i typically found in agricultural or open fields but can utilize open desert scrub or disturbed scrub habitats. Prey availability such as small mammals and lizards are present on site. Suitable nesting habitat is not present due to lack of shrubs and trees The disturbed desert scrub and open space within the site and surrounding areas could provide foraging opportunities for this

Scientific Name Common Name	Status	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur in Project Area	Habitat Suitability/Observations
				species; therefore, this species has a low potential to occur on site.
Charadrius montanus mountain plover	None/None G3/S2S3 SSC	Short grasslands, freshly plowed fields, newly sprouting grain fields, and sometimes sod farms. Short vegetation bare ground, and flat topography. Prefers grazed areas and areas with burrowing rodents.	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in freshly plowed fields short grasslands, and grazed areas which are not found on site.
Falco mexicanus prairie falcon	None/None G5/S4 WL	Inhabits dry, open terrain, either level or hilly. Breeding sites located on cliffs. Forages far afield, even to marshlands and ocean shores.	Potential to occur is low.	Foraging habitat occurs on site with prey species such as California ground squirrel are present. This species requires high cliffs, ledges, or steep overhangs for nesting which is not found on site.
Lanius ludovicianus loggerhead shrike	None/None G4/S4 SSC	Broken woodlands, savannah, pinyon-juniper, Joshua tree, and riparian woodlands, desert oases, scrub and washes. Prefers open country for hunting, with perches for scanning, and fairly dense shrubs and brush for nesting.	Potential to occur is low.	This species occurs in savannah, pinyon juniper, woodlands, desert oases, and washes which do not occur on site. Foraging habitat is present. Nesting habitat is not present on site due to lack of shrub cover.
Toxostoma lecontei Le Conte's thrasher	None/None G4/S3 SSC	Desert resident; primarily of open desert wash, desert scrub, alkali desert scrub, and desert succulent scrub habitats. Commonly nests in a dense, spiny shrub or densely branched cactus in desert wash habitat, usually two (2) to eight (8) feet above ground	Potential to occur is low.	This species occurs in open desert wash, desert scrub, and desert succulent scrub habitats. The site contains open, sparse disturbed desert scrub vegetation but lacks suitable nesting habitat.
Vireo bellii pusillus least Bell's vireo	FE/SE G5T2/S2	Summer resident of southern California in low riparian vegetation in vicinity of water or in dry river bottoms; below 2,000 ft. Nests placed along margins of bushes or on twigs projecting into pathways, usually willow (*Salix* spp.), *Baccharis* spp., and mesquite (*Prosopis* spp.).	Species is not expected to occur onsite.	This species occurs in riparian habitats which are not found on site.
Mammals				
Perognathus inornatus San Joaquin pocket mouse	None/None G2G3/S2S3	Grassland, oak savanna and arid scrubland in the southern Sacramento Valley, Salinas Valley, San Joaquin Valley and adjacent foothills, south to the Mojave Desert. Associated with fine-textured, sandy, friable soils.	Potential to occur is low.	Potential suitable habitat is present on site based on the detection of numerous small mammal burrows, open ground cover, and evidence of small mammal activity. This species was not observed during the field reconnaissance survey.

Scientific Name Common Name	Status	Habitat Requirements	Potential to Occur in Project Area	Habitat Suitability/Observations
Xerospermophilus mohavensis Mohave ground squirrel	None/ST G2G3/S2S3	Open desert scrub, alkali scrub and Joshua tree woodland. Also feeds in annual grasslands. Restricted to Mojave Desert. Prefers sandy to gravelly soils, avoids rocky areas. Uses burrows at base of shrubs for cover. Nests are in burrows.	Potential to occur is low.	The site lacks suitable habitat for this species. It is outside of the known predicted occupied habitat and is highly disturbed due to anthropogenic disturbances and surrounded by development. Additionally, this species is unlikely to compete with California ground squirrels, which occur on site. This species was not observed during the field reconnaissance survey.

For the purpose of this report, special-status species are those plants and animals listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as Threatened or Endangered by the USFWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under the ESA; those listed as Threatened, or Endangered by the CDFW under the CESA or NPPA; those recognized as SSC or WL by the CDFW; and plants occurring on lists 1 and 2 of the CNPS California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) system per the following definitions:

[1] Regional Vicinity refers to within a 5-mile search radius of site.

CRPR (CNPS California Rare Plant Rank)

1B = Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere

2B= Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere

4 = Limited Distribution (Watch List)

Status (Federal/State)

FE = Federal Endangered

FT = Federal Threatened

SE = State Endangered

SR: State Rare

CRPR Threat Code Extension SR = State Rare

.1 = Seriously endangered in California (>80% of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat)

.2 = Moderately threatened in California (20-80% of occurrences threatened/moderate degree and immediacy of threat

In addition, special-status species are ranked globally (G) and subnationally (S) 1 through 5 based on NatureServe's (2010) methodologies:

G1 or S1 - Critically Imperiled Globally or Subnationally (state)

G2 or S2 - Imperiled Globally or Subnationally (state)

G3 or S3 - Vulnerable to extirpation or extinction Globally or Subnationally (state)

G4 or S4 - Apparently secure Globally or Subnationally (state)

G5 or S5 - Secure Globally or Subnationally (state)

? – Inexact Numeric Rank

T – Infraspecific Taxon (subspecies, varieties, and other designations below the level of species)

Q – Questionable taxonomy that may reduce conservation priority

Attachment 2

Site Photographs

Photograph 1. View of adjacent surface run off at south end of Project site, intersection of 27th St E, and East Avenue R12.

Photograph 2. View showing southwest portion of Project site with RV dwelling (left), facing north.

Photograph 3. Small mammal burrow located in southwest portion of Project site.

Photograph 4. View showing southwest portion of Project site, fence structure and RV dwelling, facing northwest.

Photograph 5. View of California ground squirrel burrow complex located in western portion of Project site.

Photograph 6. View of eastern portion of Project site, unpaved path, facing east.

Photograph 7. Small mammal burrow complex and rubble piles located in eastern portion of Project site.

Photograph 8. View of manmade depression located within the survey area, just north of the Project site.

Photograph 9. View of northeast portion of Project site, facing northeast.

Photograph 10. View of northeast portion of Project site, East Avenue R-9, facing east.

Photograph 11. View of northeast portion of Project site, facing west.

Photograph 12. View of eastern portion of Project site, facing south.

Photograph 13. View of western portion of Project site, showing disturbed land cover, facing east.

Photograph 14. View of manmade depression located in the central portion of the Project site, facing northeast.

Photograph 15. View of central portion of Project site, facing south.

Photograph 16. View of northern portion of Project site, facing northeast.

Attachment 3

Floral and Faunal Compendium

Species Observed within the Survey Area on October 4, 2022

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Native or Introduced
Plants			
Shrubs			
Ericameria nauseosa	rubber rabbitbrush	–	Native
Eriogonum fasciculatum var. *polifolium*	interior California buckwheat	–	Native
Eriogonum angulosum	angled stem buckwheat	–	Native
Ephedra nevadensis	Nevada ephedra	–	Native
Gutierrezia sarothrae	broom snake weed	–	Native
Larrea tridentata	creosote bush	–	Native
Lycium andersonii	Anderson thornbush	–	Native
Herbs			
Amaranthus blitoides	prostrate pigweed	–	Native
Brassica nigra	black mustard	–	Introduced; Cal-IPC: Moderate
Brassica tournefortii	Sahara mustard	–	Introduced; Cal-IPC: High
Croton setiger	dove weed	–	Native
Datura wrightii	sacred datura	–	Native
Erodium cicutarium	common storksbill	–	Introduced; Cal-IPC: Limited
Euphorbia albomarginata	white margin sandmat	–	Introduced
Helminthotheca echioides	bristly oxtongue	–	Introduced; Cal-IPC: Limited
Melilotus albus	white sweetclover	–	Introduced
Oenothera laciniata	southern evening primrose	–	Introduced
Portulaca oleracea	common purslane	–	Introduced
Salsola tragus	Russian thistle	–	Introduced; Cal-IPC: Limited
Sphaeralcea ambigua var. *rugosa*	desert globemallow	–	Native
Sphaeralcea hastulata	spear globemallow	–	Introduced
Tribulus terrestris	puncture vine	–	Introduced; Cal-IPC Limited
Grasses			
Bromus diandrus	ripgut brome	–	Introduced; Cal-IPC: Limited
Bromus madritensis ssp. *rubens*	red brome	–	Introduced; Cal-IPC: High
Distichlis spicata	salt grass	–	Native
Echinochloa crusgalli	barnyard grass	–	Introduced
Wildlife			
Birds			
Buteo jamaicensis	red-tailed hawk	–	Native
Columbia livia	rock pigeon	–	Introduced
Corvus brachyrhynchos	American crow	–	Native
Corvus corax	common raven	–	Native
Haemorhous mexicanus	house finch	–	Native
Sayornis saya	Say's phoebe	–	Native
Sturnella neglecta	western meadowlark	–	Native
Mammals			
Otospermophilus beecheyi	California ground squirrel	–	Native
Canis familiaris	domestic dog	–	–
Felis catus	domestic cat	–	–