

# Memorandum

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Date: February 19, 2023

To: John Kaye, Escondido North LLC  
Dylan Bird, Escondido North LLC

From: Brianna Bernard

Subject: Biological Resource Assessment for Ash Project in the City of Escondido

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On behalf of Escondido North, LLC., Carlson Strategic Land Solutions (CSLS) prepared this Biological Habitat Assessment and graphics documenting the findings of a field review for potential sensitive plants and wildlife for the approximately 5-acre Ash Project (Project) located in the City of Escondido. In support of Project efforts, CSLS biologist, Brianna Bernard, conducted an analysis of the biological resources within the Project site and surrounding 300-foot buffer, collectively referred to as the Study Area, on November 30, 2021. The site visit assessed suitability for sensitive plants and wildlife. This report provides the results of the site visit.

## **1.0 Project Location and Description**

The Project site is located at along Ash Street, in the City of Escondido. The Project site is located south of Stanley Avenue, east of N. Ash Street. And north of Lehner Avenue (Figures 1 and 2).

The Project site currently is disturbed and appears to be regularly maintained. The Project proposes to construct residential homes and associated infrastructure.

## **2.0 Methodology**

### **2.1 Biological Survey**

Prior to the field survey, available literature, historical aerials, and databases were reviewed regarding sensitive habitats, special status plants, and wildlife species within the vicinity. CSLS reviewed and consulted literature and databases focused on the San Diego County, California, including the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Critical Habitat database. The CNDDDB is a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) species account database that

inventories status and locations of rare plants and wildlife in California. The CNDDDB was used to identify any sensitive plant communities and special status plants and wildlife that have potential to occur within the Project site.

The USFWS's online service for information regarding Final Critical Habitat designation within California was reviewed to determine if the Project site is within any species' designated Critical Habitat. The USFWS regulatory mapping process for the designation of critical habitat is an imprecise, broad-based, mapping exercise of areas that may or may not include constituent elements of the critical habitat designation. Due to this approach in mapping, large areas are designated as critical habitat regardless of the existing habitat, and as a result may include developed areas, such as buildings, roads, hardscape, and other such facilities, as well as natural habitats.

## **2.2 City of Escondido Tree Survey**

The City establishes regulations and standards for the preservation, protection, and selected removal of mature and protected trees. A City issued vegetation removal permit is required prior to clearing, pruning, or destroying vegetation and prior to any encroachments by construction activities that disturb the root system within the dripline (e.g., the outer extent of a tree's canopy) of any mature and protected trees. Issuance of a vegetation removal permit requires the submittal of a tree survey and, as applicable, a tree protection and/or replacement mitigation plan. Tree protection, removal, and replacement standards are outlined in the City's General Plan and in Chapter 33 (Zoning), Article 55 (Grading and Erosion Control) of the City's Municipal Code (Ordinance 2001-21). The City's General Plan recognizes any oak tree species and other mature trees, as defined below, as significant aesthetic and ecological resources deserving protection within the boundaries of the City. Section 33-1052 and 33-1068 of the City's Municipal Code sets forth rules and standards related to mature tree removal, protection, and replacement.

The definition of mature tree states any self-supporting woody perennial plant, native or ornamental, with a single well-defined stem or multiple stems supporting a crown of branches. The single stem or one of the multiple stems of any mature oak tree (genus *Quercus*), shall have a diameter four inches or greater when measured at four and one-half feet (Diameter Breast Height [DBH]) above the tree's natural grade. All other mature trees shall have a diameter of eight inches DBH or greater for a single stem or one of the multiple stems.

Protected tree is defined as any oak which has a ten inch or greater DBH, or any other species of individual tree listed on the local historic register or determined to substantially contribute to the historic character of property or structure listed on the local historic register, pursuant to Article 40 of the City of Escondido Zoning Code.

### **2.3 Jurisdictional Waters**

The Project site was surveyed for Waters of the United States under jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). To determine the presence of a Corps and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) jurisdictional wetlands, three indicators are required: (1) hydrophytic vegetation, (2) hydric soils, and (3) wetland hydrology. The methodology published in the *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and the Arid West Supplement* sets the standards for meeting each of the three indicators, which normally require that 50 percent or more dominant plant species typical of a wetland, soils exhibiting characteristics of saturation, and hydrological indicators be present.

It is important to note that the RWQCB definition of wetland was re-defined and the new definition went into effect May 28, 2020. The definition of a wetland is as follows: An area is wetland if, under normal circumstances, (1) the area has continuous or recurrent saturation of the upper substrate caused by groundwater, or shallow surface water, or both; (2) the duration of such saturation is sufficient to cause anaerobic conditions in the upper substrate; and (3) the area's vegetation is dominated by hydrophytes or the area lacks vegetation. This RWQCB modified three-parameter definition is similar to the federal definition in that it identifies three wetland characteristics that determine the presence of a wetland: wetland hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation. Unlike the federal definition, however, the RWQCB wetland definition allows for the presence of hydric substrates as a criterion for wetland identification (not just wetland soils) and wetland hydrology for an area devoid of vegetation (less than 5% cover) to be considered a wetland.

However, if any vegetation is present, then the Corps delineation procedures would apply to the vegetated component (i.e., hydrophytes must dominate). Examples of waters that would be considered wetlands by the RWQCB definition, but not by the federal wetland definition, are non-vegetated wetlands, or wetlands characterized by exposed bare substrates like mudflats and playas, as long as they meet the three-parameters as described in the RWQCB definition. It is important to note that while the Corps may not designate a feature as a wetland, that feature could be considered a

special aquatic site or other water of the U.S. by the Corps and potentially subject to Corps' jurisdiction.

Additionally, jurisdiction over non-wetland Waters of the U.S. is typically determined through the observation of an Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM), which is defined as the "line on the shore established by the fluctuation of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as a clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas." Projects with impacts to Waters of the U.S. are regulated under Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act. Section 401 requires a project operator to obtain a federal license or permit that allows activities resulting in a discharge to waters of the United States to obtain state certification, thereby ensuring that the discharge will comply with provisions of the CWA. The RWQCB administers the certification program in California. Section 404 establishes a permit program administered by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) that regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. The Corps implementing regulations are found at 33 CFR 320 and 330. Guidelines for implementation are referred to as the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines, which were developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency in conjunction with the Corps (40 CFR 230).

Waters of the State are regulated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) through Section 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code. Section 1600 et seq. requires notifying the CDFW prior to any project activity that might (1) substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream, or lake; (2) substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake; or (3) deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake. If, after this notification, the CDFW determines that the activity may substantially adversely affect fish and wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will need to be obtained. CDFW may then place conditions in the Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any potentially significant adverse impacts within CDFW jurisdictional limits.

The limits of Waters of the State are defined as the "body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and supports fish or other aquatic life. This includes watercourses having surface or subsurface flow that



supports or has supported riparian vegetation." Therefore, the limits extend from the channel bed to the top of the bank, with the addition of the canopy of any riparian habitat associated with the watercourse.

## **2.4 Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) and Escondido's Subarea Plan (Subarea Plan)**

The North County Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) is a comprehensive, multiple jurisdictional planning program designed to create, manage, and monitor an ecosystem preserve in northwestern San Diego County. It is one of several large, multiple jurisdictional habitat planning efforts in San Diego County, each of which constitutes a "subregional" plan under the State of California's Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991. The preserve system is intended to protect viable populations of native plant and animal species and their habitats in perpetuity, while accommodating continued economic development and quality of life for residents of North County. The MHCP subregion encompasses the seven incorporated cities of northwestern San Diego County (Carlsbad, Encinitas, Escondido, Oceanside, San Marcos, Solana Beach, and Vista). These jurisdictions will implement their portions of the MHCP plan through citywide "subarea" plans, which describe the specific policies each city will institute for the MHCP.

The City of Escondido's Subarea Plan (Subarea Plan) is not adopted by the City or approved by CDFW or USFWS, though the City uses it as guidance when reviewing impacts to biological resources. The Subarea Plan represents the City's contribution to the MHCP and to regional NCCP conservation goals. The city has prepared this subarea plan to direct the conservation of natural biotic communities and sensitive plant and animal species within the city pursuant to the California Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act of 1991 and the California and U.S. Endangered Species Acts (CESA and ESA). The Subarea Plan is an NCCP and a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) pursuant to Section 10(a) of the U.S. Endangered Species Act (as amended in 1982).

## **3.0 Results**

### **3.1 Biological Results**

CSLS Biologist conducted a general biological survey within the Project site on November 30, 2021. The survey was performed between 9:00 a.m. and 10:44 a.m. The temperature measured 66° F during the field survey, with clear skies. The Project site currently is disturbed with surrounding residential.

Wildlife species observed onsite during the survey include: mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), Say's phoebe (*Sayornis saya*),

American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*), and red tailed hawk (*Buteo jamicensis*).

Representative photographs of the Project site were taken and included within **Attachment A**.

### 3.1.1 Vegetation Communities

Based on the site visit, the Project site consists of three vegetation communities. The vegetation communities are described in detail below (**Figure 3**).

*Table 1. Vegetation Communities Observed Onsite*

Vegetation Community	Acreage
Arundo Stand	0.10
Non-Native Cactus Stand	0.02
Ruderal	5.04
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5.16</b>

#### Arundo Stand

This vegetation community consists entirely of arundo (*Arundo donax*). A total of 0.10 acres of arundo stand occurs onsite. This community is not associated with a drainage. The species is non-native. Once a stand establishes, the species naturally recruits through rhizomes and stem nodes that come in contact with the soil. Therefore, the species did not receive any maintenance and as a result has spread through rhizomes into the stand that was observed.

#### Non-Native Cactus Stand

This vegetation community consists entirely of the non-native cactus species Eve's pin (*Optuntia subulata*). A total of 0.02 acres non-native cactus stand occurs onsite.

#### Ruderal

This vegetation community appears to be generally maintained due to fire management. The community consists primarily of unvegetated bare soil. This community includes scattered Russian thistle (*Salsola australis*), cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), a single century plant (*Agave americana*), ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*), a single Jerusalem thorn shrub, and four Mexican palm trees (*Washingtonia robusta*). A total of 5.04 acres of ruderal occurs onsite.

### Surrounding 300-foot

The surrounding 300-foot buffer includes disturbed/developed communities and roadways as shown in **Figure 3**.

### **3.1.2 Sensitive Plant Communities**

A CNDDDB search within the Valley Center USGS topographic quadrangle found no special-status vegetation community designated by CDFW.

### **3.1.3 Sensitive Plant Species**

Sensitive plants include those listed, or candidates for listing, by the USFWS and CDFW; and species considered sensitive by the CNPS (particularly Lists 1A, 1B, and 2). Five sensitive plant species were reported within 2-miles of the Project site based on the CNDDDB and within the USGS 7.5' Valley Center quadrangle search. The potential for sensitive plant species to occur on the Project site is discussed below.

#### *3.1.3.1 Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur*

Due to the non-native cover of the Project site, it was determined no sensitive plant species had potential to occur and the Project site does not support the vegetation associations, soils, or hydrology required by many of the special status plants known to the region. A complete list of species and their potential to occur onsite can be found in **Attachment B**.

#### Rainbow manzanita (*Arctostaphylos rainbowensis*)

**Status:** California Rare Plant Rank 1B.1

**Distribution:** Riverside and San Diego Counties.

**Habitat(s):** Habitats supporting chaparral. Known from 205 to 670 meters (672 to 2,198 feet) MSL. Blooms December through March.

**Status onsite:** None. The Project site lacks suitable habitat. Not observed during field visit.

#### Orcutt's brodiaea (*Brodiaea orcuttii*)

**Status:** California Rare Plant Rank 1B.1, state threatened, federally endangered

**Distribution:** Riverside and San Diego Counties.

**Habitat(s):** Habitats supporting closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, meadows and seeps, valley and foothill grasslands and vernal pools supporting mesic and clay soils. Known from 30 to 1692 meters (98 to 5,551 feet) MSL. Blooms May through July.

**Status onsite:** None. The site lacks suitable habitat and soils. Not observed during field visit.

Southern tarplant (*Centromadia parryi* ssp. *australis*)

**Status:** California Rare Plant Rank 1B.1

**Distribution:** Los Angeles, Orange, Santa Barbara, Santa Catalina Island, San Diego and Ventura Counties.

**Habitat(s):** Habitats supporting marshes and swamps (margins), valley and foothill grasslands (vernally mesic), and vernal pools. Known from 0 to 480 meters (0 to 1,575 feet) MSL. Blooms May through November.

**Status onsite:** None. The site lacks suitable habitats. Not observed during field surveys.

Summer holly (*Comarostaphylis diversifolia* ssp. *diversifolia*)

**Status:** California Rare Plant Rank 1B.2

**Distribution:** Orange, Riverside, Santa Barbara, and San Diego Counties.

**Habitat(s):** Habitats supporting chaparral and cismontane woodlands. Known from 30 to 790 meters (98 to 2,591 feet) MSL. Blooms April through June.

**Status onsite:** None. The site lacks suitable habitat and soils. Not observed during field visit.

Ramona horkelia (*Horkelia truncata*)

**Status:** California Rare Plant Rank 1B.3

**Distribution:** San Diego County.

**Habitat(s):** Habitats supporting chaparral and cismontane woodland, supporting clay and gabbroic soils. Known from 400 to 1,330 meters (1,312 to 4,363 feet) MSL. Blooms May through June.

**Status onsite:** None. The site lacks suitable habitat and soils. Not observed during field visit.

### 3.2 Sensitive Wildlife Species

Sensitive wildlife include those species listed as Endangered or Threatened under the FESA or CESA, candidates for listing by the USFWS or CDFW, and California Watch List, Fully Protected and Species of Special Concern to CDFW. Several sensitive wildlife species were reported in the vicinity of the Project site based on the CNDDDB and within the 9-quadrangle search. No special status wildlife was identified or observed within the Project site during the field surveys. However, 23 sensitive wildlife species were determined to have the potential to occur within the 9-quadrangle. The 23 species include the following species: tricolor blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), southern California

rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), Southern California legless lizard (*Anniella stebbinsi*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), Bell's sage sparrow (*Artemisospiza belli belli*), orange-throated whiptail (*Aspidoscelis hyperythra*), coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), Dulzura pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus californicus femoralis*), western yellow-bellied cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*), California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*), pocket free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops femorosaccus*), big free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), white-faced ibis (*Plegadis chihi*), coastal California gnatcatcher, western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*), American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), and least Bell's vireo (*Vireo belli pusillus*).

Of the 23 sensitive wildlife species, no listed species has potential to occur onsite. The 23 special status animal species known to the region have a no potential to occur within the Project site due primarily to the lack of suitable habitat, isolation of the Project site from undeveloped habitat blocks in the region, and disturbances associated with the highly urbanized setting. The Project site does not support the constituent elements required by many of the special status animals known to the region for nesting/breeding, foraging, dispersal, and other life history requirements.

Several raptor, non-listed, sensitive Watch List bird species, have potential to forage over the site, although the potential is low. The Project site could provide area for hunting and foraging for raptors or other avian species within the disturbed and ruderal areas.

The potential for sensitive wildlife species to occur on the Project site is discussed further in **Attachment C**.

### **3.2.1 Critical Habitat**

The Project site is not located in any mapped critical habitat (**Figure 4**). The closest mapped critical habitat is for the coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) located approximately 0.75 miles to the northwest. The Project site does not contain any suitable habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher.

### **3.3 Tree Survey Results**

CSLS biologists Brianna Bernard completed an inventory and mapping of native and non-native "mature" and "protected" trees that occur on the Project site on November 30, 2021. Mature and protected trees are defined in Section 33-1069, Article 55 of

Chapter 33 of the City's Municipal Code. A total of four mature trees are located on the Project site, specifically on the south side of the Project site. All four mature trees are non-natives species. **Figure 5** depicts the tree locations. The Project site does not contain any protected or heritage trees. Table 2 below summarizes the trees found onsite.

*Table 2. Mature Trees Onsite*

	Tree Species	DBH (inches)	Tree Height (feet)
1	Mexican Fan Palm ( <i>Washingtonia robusta</i> )	26.4	75
2	Mexican Fan Palm (multi-trunk) ( <i>Washingtonia robusta</i> )	70+	85
3	Mexican Fan Palm ( <i>Washingtonia robusta</i> )	26.4	30
4	Mexican Fan Palm ( <i>Washingtonia robusta</i> )	20	15

### 3.4 Jurisdictional Waters

Based on the methodology described in Section 2.3 above, no Waters of the United States or Waters of the State are present on the Project site. While there is Arundo stand onsite, it is not associated with jurisdictional waters. Furthermore, the species is non-native and highly invasive. Once an arundo stand establishes, the species naturally recruits through rhizomes and stem nodes that come in contact with the soil. The species did not receive any maintenance or removal measures and as a result has spread through rhizomes and established into a stand. While the species is traditionally associated with wetlands, no features meeting the definition of Waters of the United States or Waters of the State was observed.

### 3.5 Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) and Escondido's Subarea Plan (Subarea Plan)

The Project site is located within the North County MHCP. The proposed Project occurs within the boundaries of the Draft City of Escondido Subarea Plan (Subarea Plan), which has not yet been approved or adopted. Within the Subarea Plan, the Project site is identified as urban/developed land. The Project site is not found inside any Biological Core or Linkage Area. Furthermore, the Project site is located outside of areas targeted for conservation, including Focused Planning Areas, Hardline Preserve, Major Amendment Area, Natural Habitats (Outside of FPA), Core Gnatcatcher Conservation, Biological Core and Linkage Area (BCLA), and Edge Habitat.

## 4.0 Impacts

### 4.1 Regulatory Setting

Sensitive species are provided protection by either Federal or State resource management agencies, or both, under provisions of the FESA and CESA.

There are a number of performance criteria and standard conditions that must be met as part of any review and approval of the proposed project. These include compliance with all of the terms, provisions, and requirements with applicable laws that relate to Federal, State, and local regulating agencies related to potential impacts to sensitive plant and wildlife species, wetlands, riparian habitats, and blue lined stream courses. Impacts are sometimes locally important but not significant because, although they would result in an adverse alteration of existing local conditions, they would not substantially diminish or result in the permanent loss of an important resource on a population-wide or region-wide basis.

### 4.2 Project Related Impacts

For the purpose of this assessment, project-related impacts consist of direct and indirect impacts. Direct impacts are considered to be those that involve the loss, modification or disturbance of natural habitats (i.e., vegetation or plant communities), which in turn, directly affect plant and wildlife species dependent on that habitat. Direct impacts also include the destruction of individual plants or wildlife, which is typically the case in species of no to low mobility (i.e., plants, amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals). The collective loss of individuals in these manners may also directly affect regional population numbers of a species or result in the physical isolation of populations thereby reducing genetic diversity and, hence, population stability.

Indirect impacts are considered to be those that involve the effects of increases in ambient levels of sensory stimuli (e.g., noise, light), unnatural predators (e.g., domestic cats and other non-native animals), and competitors (e.g., exotic plants, non-native animals). Indirect impacts may be associated with the construction and/or operation of a project; therefore, these impacts may be both short-term and long-term in their duration. These impacts are commonly referred to as "edge effects" and may result in changes in the behavioral patterns of wildlife and reduced wildlife diversity and abundance in habitats adjacent to the Project site.

The determination of impacts in this analysis is based on the proposed project development plan and the biological values of the habitat and/or sensitivity of plant and

wildlife species to be affected. Any recommended mitigation measures to address impacts are discussed below, along with compliance of existing regulations. Based on Project design, the entire Project site is anticipated to be impacted. This area consists of disturbed ruderal vegetation and non-native communities. Table 3 below provides a breakdown of the vegetation communities to be impacted.

*Table 3. Impacted Vegetation Communities*

Vegetation Community	Acreage
Arundo Stand	0.10
Non-Native Cactus Stand	0.02
Ruderal	5.04
<b>TOTAL IMPACTS</b>	<b>5.16</b>

#### **4.2.1 Sensitive Plant Species**

Development of the Project site would result in the direct removal of non-native species, such as Arundo and a cactus stand, and ruderal habitat. No special status plant species were identified to occur onsite, nor were any observed onsite. The Project site lack suitable habitat and soil for sensitive plant species. Implementation of the Project impacts non-native and ruderal vegetation; therefore, no impacts to sensitive plant species are expected to occur.

#### **4.2.2 Sensitive Wildlife Species**

Since the Project consists of non-native and ruderal vegetation, there is no sensitive wildlife species expected to occur onsite. Furthermore, the site is surrounded by residential development to the north, west and south, with Ash Street and residential development to the east. There development of the Project site would result in the disruption and removal of habitat and the loss and displacement of non-sensitive common wildlife species. Due to the level of existing disturbance and surrounding urban development in the vicinity (e.g., nearby development), these impacts would not be expected to reduce the general wildlife populations below self-sustaining levels within the region and impacts to non-sensitive wildlife species do not meet the significance thresholds. The surrounding 300-foot buffer area consists of urban/developed areas. Therefore, impacts to common wildlife species would not be considered a significant impact and no mitigation is required.

Direct impacts associated with the development of the Project site and vegetation removal may occur to all avian species covered under the MBTA with the removal of potential nesting habitat for ground nesting avian species. The MBTA protects nesting



activities of both native and non-native bird species. Under the Act it is unlawful to harm, harass, or take a nest. If Project construction is scheduled to occur during the typical breeding bird season (January 15 through August 31 for raptors and February 15 through August 31 for all other avian species), direct removal of vegetation and indirect short-term noise effects to birds that may forage or nest onsite or within the buffer area may occur. In order to reduce impacts on nesting birds, if vegetation removal and/or construction activities were to occur during nesting bird season, a pre-construction nesting bird survey would be required within five (5) days of disturbances during typical nesting bird season to delineate any active nests found within the Project site. Pre-construction nesting bird surveys as outlined within **Mitigation Measure BIO - 1 (MM BIO - 1)** would ensure protection against direct impacts associated with vegetation removal or indirect impacts associated with construction related noise impacts for avian species covered under the MBTA during the typical nesting bird season. Implementation of **MM BIO-1** would reduce potential impacts to the avian species to a less than significant level if nesting individuals are present.

**MM BIO-1** *Prior to ground disturbances that would impact potentially suitable nesting habitat for avian species, the project applicant shall adhere to the following:*

- 1. Vegetation removal activities shall be scheduled outside the nesting season (September 1 to February 14 for songbirds; September 1 to January 14 for raptors) to the extent feasible to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds and/or ground nesters.*
- 2. Any construction activities that occur during typical nesting season (February 15 to August 31 for songbirds; January 15 to August 31 for raptors) will require that all suitable habitat, on-site and within 300-feet surrounding the site (as feasible), be thoroughly surveyed for the presence of nesting birds by a qualified biologist within 5 days prior to commencing ground disturbances. If active nests are identified, the biologist would establish buffers around the vegetation (500 feet for raptors and sensitive species, 200 feet for non-raptors/non-sensitive species). All work within these buffers would be halted until the nesting effort is finished (i.e. the juveniles are surviving independent from the nest). The onsite biologist would review and verify compliance with these nesting boundaries and would verify the nesting effort has finished. Work can resume within these areas when no other active nests are found. Alternatively, a qualified biologist may determine that*

*construction can be permitted within the buffer areas and would develop a monitoring plan to prevent any impacts while the nest continues to be active (eggs, chicks, etc.). Upon completion of the survey and any follow-up construction avoidance management, a report shall be prepared and submitted to City for mitigation monitoring compliance record keeping.*

#### **4.2.3 Wildlife Movement**

The Project site is surrounded by existing development, and as such, does not by itself function as and does not contribute to any wildlife corridors or linkages. The site supports potential live-in and movement habitat for species on a local scale (i.e., some limited live-in and marginal movement habitat for reptile, bird, and mammal species), however, the site provides little to no function to facilitate wildlife movement on a regional scale. Furthermore, the site is not identified as a Special Linkage area within the Subarea Plan or the County’s MSCP. Movement on a local scale likely occurs with species adapted to urban environments due to the surrounding development and disturbances in the vicinity of the site. Although implementation of the Project would result in disturbances to local wildlife movement within the site, those species adapted to urban areas would be expected to persist on-site following construction.

#### **4.2.4 Sensitive Plant Communities**

No sensitive plant communities occur onsite, therefore no impacts are expected to occur as a result of Project implementation.

#### **4.2.5 Tree Impacts**

The Project site does not contain any heritage or protected trees but does have 4 mature trees subject pursuant to Section 33-1069, Article 55 of Chapter 33 of the City’s Municipal Code. The Project would result in unavoidable impacts to all trees observed onsite, as summarized in **Table 4** below.

**Table 4. Impacts to Protected and Mature Trees on the Proposed Project site**

<b>Mature Trees</b>	<b>DBH</b>	<b>Existing Number of trees</b>	<b>Total Impacted</b>	<b>Total Avoided</b>
Native trees	4 inches to 9.99 inches	0	0	0
Non-native trees species	8-inches or greater	4	4	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>

The four impacted mature trees are all Mexican Fan Palms, a common, non-native tree species that provides very limited biological value. However, the trees are subject to the City's tree ordinance and therefore impacts to the trees constitutes a significant impact. To offset this impact, the Project Applicant shall implement **Mitigation Measure MM BIO-2 (MM BIO-2)**, which requires the replacement of Mature trees either on or off site.

**MM BIO-2** The Project Applicant shall replace impacted mature trees at a minimum of 1:1 ratio, a total of 4 trees, unless other biologically equivalent or superior mitigation has been determined by the City. Trees may be replaced either on- or off-site. The number, size, and species of replacement trees shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Development Services Director pursuant to Escondido Municipal Code Section 33-1069

#### **4.2.6 Jurisdictional Waters**

No jurisdictional features were identified on the Project site subject to Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code, as regulated by CDFW. No jurisdictional non-wetland or wetland waters regulated under Section 404 of the CWA by RWQCB or under Section 401, as regulated by the Corps were identified on the Project site. Therefore, no impacts would occur to jurisdictional features as a result of Project implementation.

#### **5.0 Summary**

The Study Area does not contain sensitive habitat or suitable habitat for sensitive plant or wildlife species. Furthermore, no sensitive plant or wildlife species are anticipated to occur onsite due to the disturbed and ruderal vegetation found onsite.

As part of Project implementation, the entire site will be impacted. Should ground disturbances occur during typical nesting season (January 1 through August 15 for raptors and March 15 through August 31 for songbirds), any vegetation removal must comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by conducting pre-construction nesting bird surveys as outlined within **MM BIO-1**.

During the field survey a total of four trees were observed on the Project site that meet the definition of Mature Tree as outlined within the Escondido Municipal Code and consists of common non-native tree species, which provide very limited biological value. However, impacts to the mature trees are subject to the City's tree ordinance and

therefore are to be mitigated at a 1:1 ratio of trees, planted either on- or offsite as outlined within **MM BIO-2**.

Please contact me at [bbernard@carlsonsls.com](mailto:bbernard@carlsonsls.com) or 949.542.7042, should you have any questions or comments.

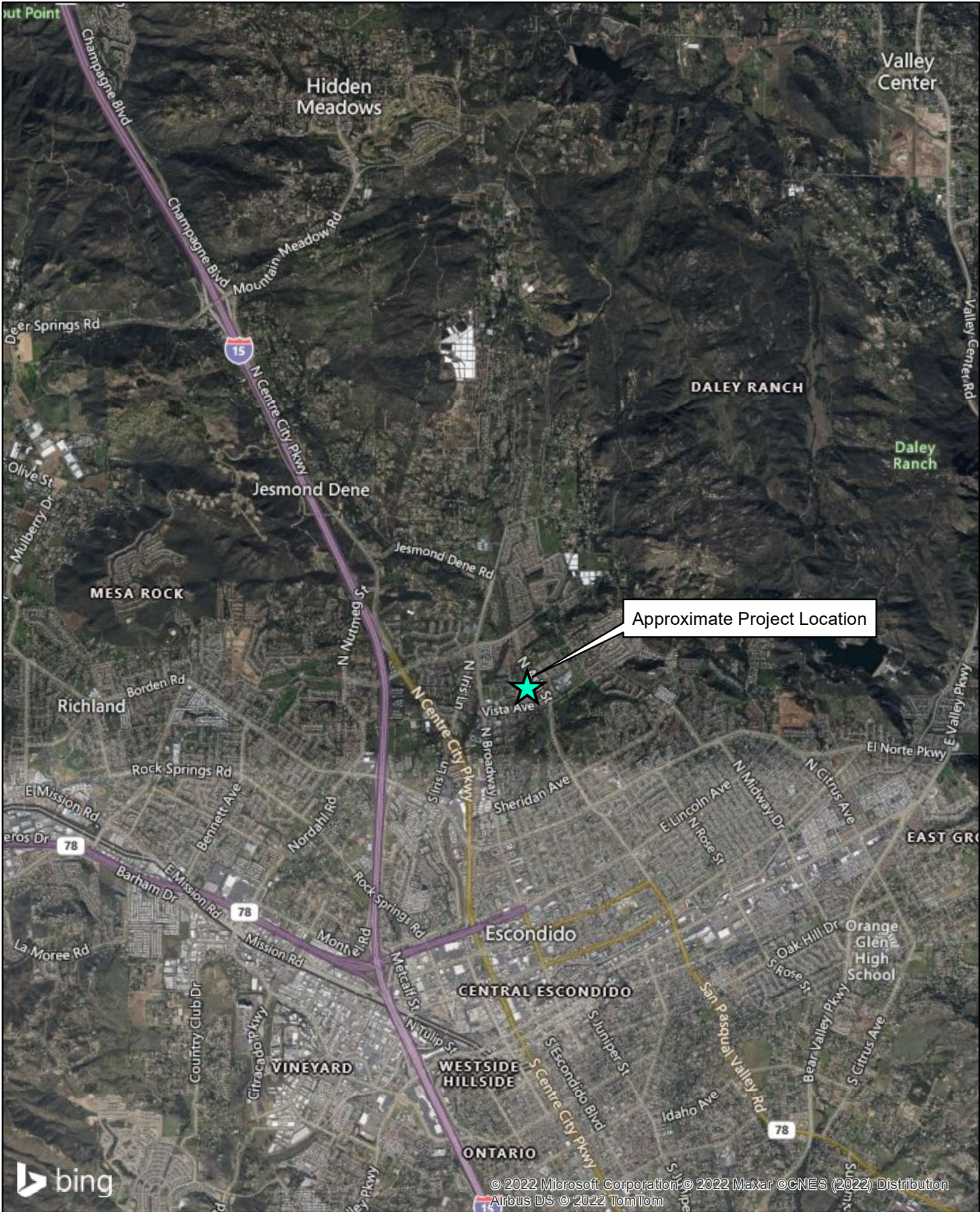
**Enclosures:**

- Figures
  - Figure 1: Regional Location
  - Figure 2: Vicinity Map
  - Figure 3: Vegetation Map
  - Figure 4: CNDDDB Occurrences and Critical Habitat Results
  - Figure 5: Tree Survey
- Attachment A: Representative Photographs
- Attachment B: Special Status Plant Species Potential Occurrence Determination
- Attachment C: Special Status Wildlife Species Potential Occurrence Determination

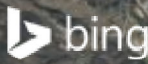
## Figures

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Approximate Project Location

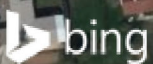


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<p>GIS Prepared By: Carlson SLS</p> <p>Created: February 7, 2022</p>	<p>0 1,250 2,500 5,000 Feet 1 inch = 5,000 feet</p>	<p>Data Sources: Bing Maps</p>	<p><b>Argus Partners: Ash Project</b> <b>Regional Map</b></p>
--	---	--------------------------------	---

FIGURE 1

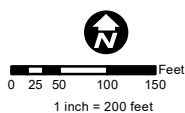




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GIS Prepared By:  
Carlson SLS

Created: February 7, 2022



Data Sources: Bing Maps

**Argus Partners: Ash Project**  
**Project Vicinity**

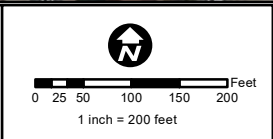
**FIGURE 2**





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Carlson SLS  
Created: February 7, 2022

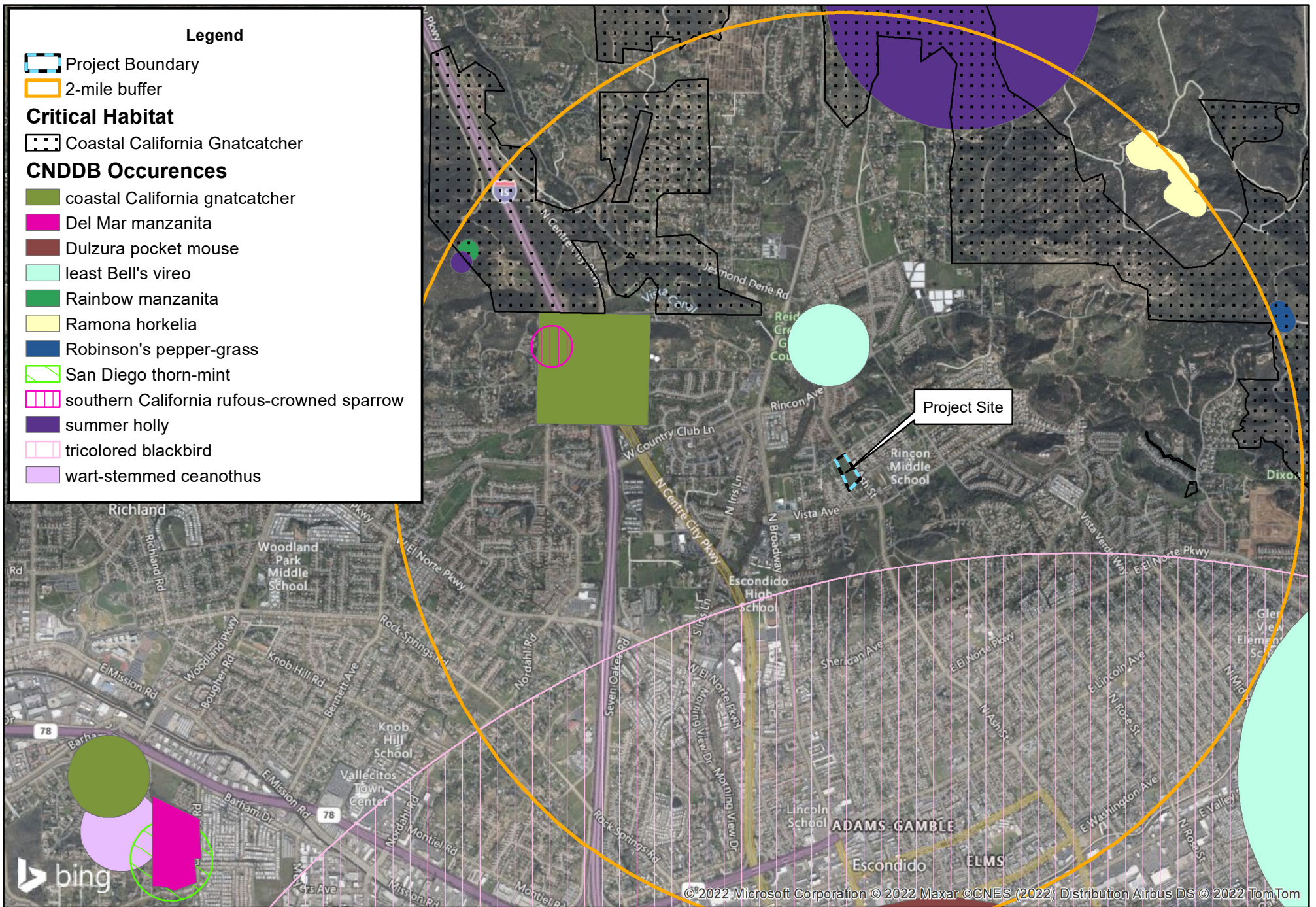


Data Sources: Bing Maps

**Argus Partners: Ash Project**  
**Vegetation Map**

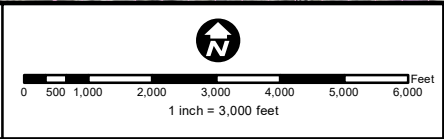
**FIGURE 3**





GIS Prepared By:  
Carlson SLS

Created: February 7, 2022



Data Source: Bing Map  
CNDDB (01/2022)




**Argus Partners: Ash Project**  
CNDDB Occurrence and Critical Habitat

**FIGURE 4**





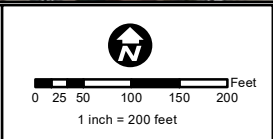
**Legend**

-  Project Boundary
-  300-foot Buffer
-  Mexican Fan Palms



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GIS Prepared By:  
Carlson SLS  
Created: February 7, 2022



Data Sources: Bing Maps

**Argus Partners: Ash Project**  
**Tree Survey**

**FIGURE 5**



Attachment A:  

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Representative Photographs



Look south over the Project site. The site consists of primarily ruderal vegetation.



Look south over the Project site. The site consists of primarily ruderal vegetation.





A single century plant was observed within the Ruderal community.



Look north west over the Project site. The site consists of primarily ruderal vegetation.





The non-native cactus stand consists of Eve's pin.



The Arundo stand consists entirely of *Arundo donax*.





The single Jerusalem thorn shrub observed within the ruderal community.



Ruderal vegetation dominates the Project site.

Attachment B:

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Special Status Plant Species Potential  
Occurrence Determination



## ATTACHMENT B

### Special Status Plant Species Potential Occurrence Determination

This table summarizes conclusions from analysis and field surveys regarding the potential occurrence of special status plant species within the Project site for the USGS 7.5-Minute Topographic Map Valley Center and the surrounding two-mile radius. During the field surveys, the potential for special status plant species to occur within the Project site was assessed based on the following criteria:

- Present: observed on the site during the field surveys, or recorded on-site by other qualified biologists.
- Known to Occur: observed on site in the recent past, but not observed during the most recent biological survey.
- High potential to occur: observed in similar habitat in the region by a qualified biologist or habitat on the site is a type often utilized by the species, and the site is within the known distribution and elevation range of the species.
- Moderate potential to occur: reported sightings in surrounding region, or the site is within the known distribution and elevation range of the species, and habitat on the site is a type occasionally used by the species.
- Low potential to occur: the site is within the known distribution and elevation range of the species, but habitat on the site is rarely used by the species or for which there are no known recorded occurrences of the species within or adjacent to the site.
- None: a focused study failed to detect the species or no suitable habitat is present.
- Unknown: the species' distributional/elevation range and habitat are poorly known.

Even with field surveys, biologists assessed the probability of occurrence rather than make a definitive conclusion about species presence or absence. Failure to detect the presence of the species is not definitive and may be due to variable effects associated with fire, rainfall patterns, and/or season.

## Special Status Plants: Potential to Occur within the Study Area

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence within the Study Area
<i>Arctostaphylos rainbowensis</i>	Rainbow manzanita	CRPR: 1.B1	Habitats supporting chaparral. Known from 205 to 670 meters (672 to 2,198 feet) MSL. Blooms December through March.	None. The Project site lacks suitable habitat. Not observed during field visit.
<i>Brodiaea orcuttii</i>	Orcutt's brodiaea	FE, SE CRPR: 1.B1	Habitats supporting closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, meadows and seeps, valley and foothill grasslands and vernal pools supporting mesic and clay soils. Known from 30 to 1692 meters (98 to 5,551 feet) MSL. Blooms May through July.	None. The Project site lacks suitable habitat. Not observed during field visit.
<i>Centromadia parryi ssp. australis</i>	Southern tarplant	CRPR: 1.B1	Habitats supporting marshes and swamps (margins), valley and foothill grasslands (vernally mesic), and vernal pools. Known from 0 to 480 meters (0 to 1,575 feet) MSL. Blooms May through November.	None. The Project site lacks suitable habitat. Not observed during field visit.
<i>Comarostaphylos diversifolia ssp. diversifolia</i>	Summer holly	CRPR: 1.B2	Habitats supporting chaparral and cismontane woodlands. Known from 30 to 790 meters (98 to 2,591 feet) MSL. Blooms April through June.	None. The Project site lacks suitable habitat. Not observed during field visit.
<i>Horkelia truncata</i>	Ramona horkelia	CRPR: 1.B3	Habitats supporting chaparral and cismontane woodland, supporting clay and gabbroic soils. Known from 400 to 1,330 meters (1,312 to 4,363 feet) MSL. Blooms May through June.	None. The Project site lacks suitable habitat. Not observed during field visit.

*Attachment B – Special Status Plant Species Potential Occurrence Determination*

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence within the Study Area
<i>Lepidium virginicum</i> var. <i>robinsonii</i>	Robinson's pepper-grass	CRPR: 4.3	Habitats include chaparral and coastal scrub. Known from 1 to 885 meters (3 to 2,900 feet) MSL. Blooming Period: January through July.	None. The site lacks suitable habitats. Not observed during field surveys.

**Legend**

Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) Listing Codes: federal listing is pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA).

FE = federally listed as endangered: any species, subspecies, or variety of plant or animal that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range.

FT = federally listed as threatened: any species, subspecies, or variety of plant or animal that is considered likely to become endangered throughout all or a significant portion of its range within the foreseeable future.

California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Listing Codes: state listing is pursuant to § 1904 (Native Plant Protection Act of 1977) and §2074.2 and §2075.5 (California Endangered Species Act of 1984) of the Fish and Game Code, relating to listing of Endangered, Threatened and Rare species of plants and animals.

SE = state listed as endangered: any species, subspecies, or variety of plant or animal that are in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion, of their range.

ST = state listed as threatened: any species, subspecies, or variety of plant or animal that, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future.

California Rare Plant Ranks (Formerly known as CRPR Lists): the CRPR is a statewide, non-profit organization that maintains, with CDFW, an Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California. In the spring of 2011, CRPR and CDFW officially changed the name "CRPR List" or "CRPR Ranks" to "California Rare Plant Rank" (or CPRP). This was done to reduce confusion over the fact that CRPR and CDFW jointly manage the Rare Plant Status Review Groups and the rank assignments are the product of a collaborative effort and not solely a CRPR assignment.

CRPR: 1B - California Rare Plant Rank 1B (formerly List 1B): Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere. All of the plants constituting California Rare Plant Rank 1B meet the definitions of Sec. 1901, Chapter 10 (Native Plant Protection Act) or Sections 2062 and 2067 (California Endangered Species Act) of the California Department of Fish and Game Code, and are eligible for state listing. It is mandatory that they be fully considered during preparation of environmental documents relating to CEQA.

CRPR: 2 - California Rare Plant Rank 2 (formerly List 2): Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, But More Common Elsewhere. All of the plants constituting California Rare Plant Rank 2 meet the definitions of Sec. 1901, Chapter 10 (Native Plant Protection Act) or Sections 2062 and 2067 (California Endangered Species Act) of the California Department of Fish and Game Code,

and are eligible for state listing. It is mandatory that they be fully considered during preparation of environmental documents relating to CEQA.

CRPR: 4 - California Rare Plant Rank 4 (formerly List 4): Plants of Limited Distribution - A Watch List. Very few of the plants constituting California Rare Plant Rank 4 meet the definitions of Sec. 1901, Chapter 10 (Native Plant Protection Act) or Secs. 2062 and 2067 (California Endangered Species Act) of the California Department of Fish and Game Code, and few, if any, are eligible for state listing. Nevertheless, many of them are significant locally, and CRPR and CDFW strongly recommend that California Rare Plant Rank 4 plants be evaluated for consideration during preparation of environmental documents relating to CEQA.

California Native Plant Society (CRPR) Threat Ranks: The CRPR Threat Rank is an extension added onto the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) and designates the level of endangerment by a 1 to 3 ranking with 1 being the most endangered and 3 being the least endangered. A Threat Rank is present for all California Rare Plant Rank 1B's, 2's, 4's, and the majority of California Rare Plant Rank 3's. California Rare Plant Rank 4 plants are seldom assigned a Threat Rank of 0.1, as they generally have large enough populations to not have significant threats to their continued existence in California; however, certain conditions exist to make the plant a species of concern and hence be assigned a California Rare Plant Rank. In addition, all California Rare Plant Rank 1A (presumed extinct in California), and some California Rare Plant Rank 3 (need more information) plants, which lack threat information, do not have a Threat Rank extension.

0.1 = seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)

0.2 = fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)

Sources:

- Calflora website - search for plants (Calflora 2022).
- CRPR Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (CRPR 2022).
- The Status of Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants and Animals of California, 2000-2004 (CDFW 2022).
- The Jepson Manual: *Vascular Plants of California*, second edition (Baldwin *et al.* 2012).
- RareFind, CDFW, California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) (CDFW 2022f).
- State and Federally Listed Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Plants of California (CDFW 2022).

Attachment C:

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Special Status Wildlife Species Potential  
Occurrence Determination

## ATTACHMENT C

### Special Status Wildlife Potential Occurrence Determination

This table summarizes conclusions from analysis and field surveys regarding the potential occurrence of special status wildlife species within the Project site for the USGS 7.5-Minute Topographic Map Riverside East and the surrounding two-mile radius. During the field surveys, the potential for special status wildlife species to occur within the Project Site was assessed based on the following criteria:

- Present: observed on the site during the field surveys, or previously recorded on-site by other qualified biologists.
- Known to Occur: observed on site in the recent past, but not observed during the most recent biological survey.
- High potential to occur: observed in similar habitat in the region by a qualified biologist or habitat on the site is a type often utilized by the species, and the site is within the known distribution and elevation range of the species.
- Moderate potential to occur: reported sightings in surrounding region, or the site is within the known distribution and elevation range of the species, and habitat on the site is a type occasionally used by the species.
- Low potential to occur: the site is within the known distribution and elevation range of the species, but habitat on the site is rarely used by the species or for which there are no known recorded occurrences of the species within or adjacent to the site.
- None: a focused study failed to detect the species or no suitable habitat is present.
- Unknown: the species' distributional/elevation range and habitat are poorly known.

Even with field surveys, biologists assessed probability of occurrence rather than make definitive conclusions about species presence or absence. Failure to detect the species is not definitive and may be due to variable effects associated with migration, weather, fire, and/or time of day and year.

## Special Status Wildlife: Potential to Occur within the Project Site

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	Tricolor blackbird	ST, SSC, BLMS, BBC	Tricolor blackbird colonies require nearby water, a suitable nesting substrate, and open-range foraging habitat composed of grassland, woodland, or agricultural cropland.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Aimophila ruficeps canescens</i>	southern California rufous-crowned sparrow	WL	They are found on grass-covered hillsides, coastal sage scrub, and chaparral and often occur near the edges of the denser scrub and chaparral associations. Preference is shown for tracts of California sagebrush. Optimal habitat consists of sparse, low brush or grass, hilly slopes preferably interspersed with boulders and outcrops. The species may occur on steep grassy slopes without shrubs if rock outcrops are present. It is a very secretive species.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field surveys.
<i>Anniella stebbinsi</i>	Southern California legless lizard	SSC	Coastal sand dunes and a variety of interior habitats, including sandy washes and alluvial fans.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	Pallid bat	BLMS, SSC	Arid deserts and grasslands. Shallow caves, crevices, rock outcrops, buildings, tree cavities. Especially near water. Colonial. Audible echolocation signal.	None. Limited suitable habitat found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Artemisiospiza belli belli</i>	Bell's sage sparrow	WL, BBC	Chaparral and coastal sage scrub along the coastal lowlands, inland valleys and in the lower foothills of local mountains.	None. Suitable habitat does not exist within Project site. Not observed during field survey.

*Attachment C – Special Status Wildlife Potential Occurrence Determination*

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence
<i>Aspidoscelis hyperythra beldingi</i>	orangethroat whiptail	SSC, FSS	The species is generally found in semi-arid brushy areas typically with loose soil and rocks, including washes, stream sides, rocky hillsides, and coastal chaparral. Habitat types include low elevation chaparral, non-native grassland, (Riversidian) coastal sage scrub, juniper woodland and oak woodland. Associations include alluvial fan scrub and riparian areas. Friable soil appears to be a necessary requirement for excavating burrows and hiding eggs.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri</i>	coastal whiptail	SSC	This species is found in a variety of habitats, primarily hot and dry open areas with sparse vegetation including chaparral, woodland, and riparian areas. This subspecies is found in coastal southern California, north into Ventura County, and south into Baja California. Additional important habitat characteristics include Important habitat components include shrub cover with accumulated leaf litter, and an abundance of invertebrate prey, particularly termites.	Low. Suitable habitat does not exist within Project site in the form of open areas, however lack sparse vegetation. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Athene cunicularia hypugaea</i>	burrowing owl	SSC, BLMS, BCC	Burrowing owls are a year-round resident of California including habitats of open, dry grassland, and desert. They are generally restricted to mostly flat, open country with suitable nest sites. They use rodent or other burrows for roosting and	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.



*Attachment C – Special Status Wildlife Potential Occurrence Determination*

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence
			nesting cover and acquire their burrows from either abandonment or eviction. Burrowing owls typically hunt from a perch.	
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson's hawk	ST, BLMS, BBC	This hawk prefers open grasslands and desert-like habitats. It is common to see this hawk perched on a fence post in a prairie or open range. The Swainson's Hawk also inhabits agricultural areas, and is known to follow farmer's tractors in search of insect or rodent prey.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Chaetidipus californicus femoralis</i>	Dulzura pocket mouse	SSC	Brushy areas of coastal sage scrub, chamise-redshank & montane chaparral, sagebrush, annual grassland, valley foothill hardwood, valley foothill hardwood-conifer & montane hardwood. Probably most attracted to interface of grassland and brush.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	western yellow-billed cuckoo	FT, SE, BLMS, FSS, BCC	This species is an uncommon to rare summer resident of valley foothill and desert riparian habitats in scattered locations in California. Formerly much more common and widespread throughout lowland California. Roosts and nests in densely foliated, deciduous trees and shrubs in extensive thickets, particularly willows.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat	BLMS, SSC	Caves, mines, buildings. Found in a variety of habitats, arid and mesic. Individual or colonial. Extremely sensitive	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field surveys.

*Attachment C – Special Status Wildlife Potential Occurrence Determination*

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence
			to disturbance.	
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	western pond turtle	SCC, BLMS	Inhabits permanent or nearly permanent water below 1,830 meters (6000 feet) throughout California, west of the Sierra Cascade.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field surveys.
<i>Lasiurus xanthinus</i>	western yellow bat	SSC	Roost in trees, hanging from the underside of a leaf. Commonly found in the southwestern U.S. roosting in the skirt of dead fronds in both native and non-native palm trees and have also been documented roosting in cottonwood trees.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus</i>	California black rail	ST, BLMS, BBC, Fully Protected	Black Rails nest in marshes and wet meadows across North America, including riparian marshes, coastal prairies, saltmarshes, and impounded wetlands. All of the habitats have stable shallow water. Nests are primarily made of southern cattail or spikerush and are elevated above the mud substrate in clumps of vegetation. Black rails have also been known to nest on top of a mat of dead vegetation from the previous years' growth.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Nyctinomops femorosaccus</i>	pocketed free-tailed bat	SSC	This bat species prefers rocky desert areas with high cliffs or rock outcrops. Rock crevices in cliffs are preferred as roosting sites, since the bat must drop from the roost to gain flight speed. Typically reproduces in rock crevices,	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.

*Attachment C – Special Status Wildlife Potential Occurrence Determination*

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence
			caverns, or buildings. Ranges from southern California to New Mexico.	
<i>Nyctinomops macrotis</i>	Big free-tailed bat	SSC	Big free-tailed bats mainly inhabit rugged, rocky habitats in arid landscapes. It has been located in a variety of plant associations including desert shrub, woodlands, and evergreen forests.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	coast horned lizard	SSC, BLMS	Occurs in a variety of vegetation types including coastal sage scrub, chaparral, annual grassland, oak woodland and riparian woodlands.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Plegadis chihi</i>	White-faced ibis	WL	White-faced Ibises forage in shallow wetlands, usually among short plants such as sedges, spikerush, glasswort, saltgrass, and greasewood. Salt, brackish, and freshwater marshes all provide foraging habitat. They also frequent wet agricultural fields with low plant cover, including alfalfa, barley, wheat, oats, and rice, along with livestock pastures and hayfields.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>	coastal California gnatcatcher	FT, SSC	A non-migratory, permanent resident of coastal sage scrub habitat, which is a broad category of vegetation that includes the following plant communities: Ventura coastal sage scrub, Diegan coastal sage scrub, maritime succulent scrub, Riversidean sage scrub, Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub, southern coastal bluff scrub, and coastal	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.

*Attachment C – Special Status Wildlife Potential Occurrence Determination*

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence
			sage-chaparral scrub. They also use chaparral, grassland and riparian habitats next to coastal sage scrub, but these habitats are used dispersal and foraging. They avoid nesting on steep slopes.	
<i>Spea hammondii</i>	western spadefoot	SSC, BLMS	May be found in coastal sage scrub, open chaparral, pine-oak woodlands and grassland habitats, but is most common in grasslands with vernal pools or mixed grassland/coastal sage scrub areas. Within these habitats, they require rain pools/vernal pools in which to reproduce and that persist with more than three weeks of standing water in which to metamorphose successfully. They can also breed in slow-moving streams (e.g., areas flooded by intermittent streams). Water breeding sites must lack fish, bullfrogs, and crayfish in order for to successfully reproduce and metamorphose. They estivate in sandy, gravelly soil in upland habitats adjacent to potential breeding sites in burrows approximating 1 meter in depth.	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American badger	SSC	Badgers prefer to live in dry, open grasslands, fields, and pastures. They are found from high alpine meadows to sea level	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed during field survey.
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	least Bell's vireo	FE, SE	Least Bell's vireos primarily occupy riverine riparian habitats that typically	None. No suitable habitat is found within the Project site. Not observed

*Attachment C – Special Status Wildlife Potential Occurrence Determination*

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	General Habitat Description	Potential For Occurrence
			feature dense cover within 1-2 m of the ground and a dense, stratified canopy. Typically, it is associated with southern willow scrub, cottonwood-willow forest, mule fat scrub, sycamore alluvial woodland, coast live oak riparian forest, arroyo willow riparian forest, or mesquite in desert localities. It uses habitat which is limited to the immediate vicinity of water courses. 2,000 feet elevation in the interior. This species is generally restricted to major river systems in San Diego County.	during field survey.

Legend
<p><u><i>Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) Listing Codes:</i></u> federal listing is pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended. The official federal listing of Endangered and Threatened Animals is published in the Federal Register, 50 CFR 17.11.</p> <p>FE = federally listed as endangered: any species, subspecies, or variety of plant or animal that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range.</p> <p>FT = federally listed as threatened: any species, subspecies, or variety of plant or animal that is considered likely to become endangered throughout all or a significant portion of its range within the foreseeable future.</p> <p>FC = federal candidate for listing.</p> <p>FPT = federally proposed threatened.</p> <p><u><i>California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Listing Codes:</i></u> state listing is pursuant to §2074.2 and §2075.5 (California Endangered Species Act of 1984) of the Fish and Game Code, relating to listing of Endangered, Threatened and Rare species of plants and animals. The official California listing of Endangered and Threatened animals is contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, and Section 670.5.</p> <p>SE = state listed as endangered: any species, subspecies, or variety of plant or animal that are in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion, of their range.</p> <p>ST = state listed as threatened: any species, subspecies, or variety of plant or animal that, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future.</p> <p>SCT = state candidate for listing as threatened.</p> <p>SCE = state candidate for listing as endangered.</p>

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):

SSC = species of special concern: status applies to animals which 1) are declining at a rate that could result in listing, or 2) historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist. The CDFW has designated certain vertebrate species as “species of special concern” because declining population levels, limited ranges, and/or continuing threats have made them vulnerable to extinction.

Fully protected = animal species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except for collecting these species for necessary scientific research and relocation of the bird species for the protection of livestock.

WL = watch list: these birds have been designated as “Taxa to Watch” in the *California Bird Species of Special Concern report* (Shuford and Gardali 2008).

The report defines “Taxa to Watch” as those that are not on the current special concern list that (1) formerly were on the 1978 (Remsen 1978) or 1992 (CDFG 1992) special concern lists and are not currently listed as state threatened and endangered; (2) have been removed (delisted) from either the state or federal threatened and endangered lists (and remain on neither), or (3) are currently designated as “fully protected” in California.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):

BCC = USFWS bird of conservation concern: listed in the USFWS'S 2008 *Birds of Conservation Concern* report. The report identifies species, subspecies, and populations of all migratory non-game birds that, without additional conservation actions, are likely to become candidates for listing under the ESA. While all of the bird species included in the report are priorities for conservation action, the list makes no finding with regard to whether they warrant consideration for ESA listing.

United States Forest Service (USFS):

FSS = Forest Service sensitive: those plant and animal species identified by a Regional Forester that are not listed or proposed for listing under the ESA and for which population viability is a concern, as evidenced by: (a) significant current or predicted downward trends in population numbers or density or (b) significant current or predicted downward trends in habitat capability that would reduce a species' existing distribution.”

United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM):

BLMS = BLM sensitive: those plant and animal species on BLM administered lands and that are (1) under status review by the USFWS/NMFS; or (2) whose numbers are declining so rapidly that federal listing may become necessary, or (3) with typically small and widely dispersed populations; or (4) those inhabiting ecological refugia or other specialized or unique habitats. BLM policy is to provide the same level of protection as USFWS candidate species.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF):

CDF: S = CDF sensitive: species is a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection sensitive species. The Board of Forestry classifies as sensitive species those species that warrant special protection during timber operations.

Sources:

- A Guide to the Reptiles and Amphibians of California (CaliforniaHerps.com 2022).
- *A Field Guide to Hawks of North America, Second Edition* (Clark and Wheeler 2001).
- *Atlas of Breeding Birds, Orange County, California* (Gallagher 1997).
- Amphibian and Reptile Species of Special Concern in California (Jennings and Hayes 1994).
- *A Field Guide to Mammals of North America North of Mexico. Fourth Edition* (Reid 2006).
- *A Natural History of California* (Schoenherr 1992).

- *A Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians, Third Edition* (Stebbins 2003).
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