

December 15, 2023

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VIA EMAIL
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Subject: Results of a Biological Resources Update for the Adelanto Gateway Logistics Center Project,
San Bernardino County, California

Dear Jessica Haughton:

This Letter Report presents the findings of a biological resources update for the Adelanto Gateway Logistics Center project site (hereinafter referred to as the “project site”) located in the unincorporated San Bernardino County, California (Exhibit 1). The purpose of the survey was to evaluate current biological conditions on the project site and to analyze whether conditions were consistent with the 2009 Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (RBF 2009) and Biological Technical Report (BonTerra Consulting 2008a).

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The approximate 478-acre project site is located in the southwestern portion of the County of San Bernardino approximately one mile southwest of the City of Adelanto, five miles northeast of the City of Victorville, and three miles west of the Mojave River. It is roughly bound to the north by Air Base Road (Air Expressway Boulevard), to the west by Adelanto Road, to the east by the Victorville Federal Correctional Institute, and to the south by an easement for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power powerlines.

The project site occurs on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Adelanto and Victorville 7.5-minute quadrangles at Sections 34 and 35 of Township 6 North, Range 5 West (Exhibit 2). Topography on the project site is relatively flat with elevations ranging from approximately 2,900 to 2,920 feet above mean sea level. Land uses in the vicinity of the project site consist of the Southern California Logistics Airport (formerly George Air Force Base) and undeveloped open space to the north, the Victorville Federal Correctional Institution and undeveloped open space to the east, and a mix of undeveloped open space and industrial areas to the south and west. Soils on the project site consist of Bryman loamy fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes (USDA NRCS 2023). These soils are well drained, nonsaline to very slightly saline, and the parent material is alluvium derived from granite sources. An unnamed blueline stream is mapped to the north of the project site and ends at the northern boundary. No blueline streams are mapped within the project boundary.

The project consists of a proposed industrial distribution facility, which would include industrial warehouse and office space. The entire project site would be developed. This is consistent with the 2009 EIR.

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SURVEY METHODS

As mentioned above, an EIR was prepared for the project in 2009 (RBF 2009). The 2009 EIR contained a Biological Technical Report that summarized general and focused surveys conducted between 2006 and 2008 (BonTerra Consulting 2008a). Focused surveys were conducted for special status plant species/western Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*), desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*). BonTerra Consulting monitored the clearing of vegetation (excluding western Joshua trees) from the project site in June/July 2009 (BonTerra Consulting 2009).

Prior to the 2023 survey, an updated literature review was conducted to identify special status plants, wildlife, and habitats that have been reported to occur in the vicinity of the project site. Resources reviewed included the California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (CNPS 2023a) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW's) California Natural Diversity Database (CDFW 2023b). Database searches included the USGS' Adelanto, Victorville, Victorville NW, Helendale, Baldy Mesa, and Hesperia 7.5-minute quadrangles; these quadrangles constitute the "project region".

Psomas Senior Biologists Allison Rudalevige and Jonathan Aguayo performed a general survey and vegetation mapping of the project site on November 9, 2023, to document current conditions and assess the suitability of the habitat to support special status plant and wildlife species. Vegetation was mapped on a 1 inch equals 700 feet (1"=700') scale color aerial photograph overlaid with the 2009 vegetation layer. These base layers were loaded onto the Avenza Maps application on an Apple iPad. Current vegetation types and extent were mapped on the iPad. Representative site photographs are included in Attachment A. All plant and wildlife species detected during the survey were documented in field notes.

Nomenclature of vegetation types generally follows that of *A Manual of California Vegetation* (CNPS 2023b), which is the most current vegetation classification system used by CDFW for assessing sensitive natural communities (CDFW 2023a). Nomenclature of plant taxa conform to the *Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List* (CDFW 2023d) for special status species and the Jepson eFlora (Jepson Flora Project 2022) for all other taxa.

Active searches for reptiles and amphibians included lifting, overturning, and carefully replacing rocks and debris. Birds were identified by visual and auditory recognition. Surveys for mammals were conducted during the day and included searching for and identifying diagnostic sign, including scat, footprints, scratch-outs, dust bowls, burrows, and trails. Taxonomy and nomenclature for wildlife follows the *Special Animals List* (CDFW 2023c) for special status species. Taxonomy and nomenclature for other species follows Crother (2017) for amphibians and reptiles, the American Ornithological Society (AOS 2023) for birds, and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (SNMNH 2011) for mammals.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Vegetation

The following vegetation types and other areas occur on the project site: creosote bush scrub, white bursage scrub, rubber rabbitbrush scrub, disturbed, and developed (Table 1, Exhibit 3). Vegetation is generally consistent with the vegetation that was described in the 2009 EIR, except that there are some additional disturbed areas along the southern edges of the project site and there are now small areas of rubber rabbitbrush scrub in the northwestern corner of the project site.

TABLE 1
VEGETATION TYPES ON THE PROJECT SITE (2023)

Vegetation Type	Acres
Creosote Bush Scrub	423.6
White Bursage Scrub	25.9
Rubber Rabbitbrush Scrub	0.6
Disturbed	24.3
Developed	3.2
Total	477.6

Creosote bush scrub occurs over the majority of the project site. This vegetation is dominated by scattered creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*); the size and density of shrubs vary across the site. Other shrubs scattered through this area include white bur-sage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), sticky snakeweed (*Gutierrezia microcephala*), silver cholla (*Cylindropuntia echinocarpa*), and Nevada ephedra (*Ephedra nevadensis*). Western Joshua tree is scattered in low densities throughout the project site; the density of the western Joshua trees is not high enough to map these areas separately as Joshua tree woodland¹. The herbaceous layer is dominated by non-native species such as redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), Mediterranean grass (*Schismus* sp.), cheat grass (*Bromus tectorum*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*). This vegetation type corresponds to the *Larrea tridentata* Association in *A Manual of California Vegetation* (CNPS 2023b). This vegetation type was identified during the previous surveys of the project site.

White bursage scrub occurs in the northwestern corner of the project site. This vegetation is dominated by scattered white bur-sage with scattered creosote bush. The herbaceous layer is dominated by redstem filaree and Mediterranean grass. This vegetation type corresponds to the *Ambrosia dumosa* Association in *A Manual of California Vegetation* (CNPS 2023b). This vegetation type was identified during the previous surveys of the project site.

Rubber rabbitbrush scrub occurs in the northwestern corner of the project site. This vegetation type is dominated by rubber rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*). Other shrubs scattered through this area include creosote bush and white bur-sage. The herbaceous layer is dominated by a mix of native and non-native species, including redstem filaree, cheatgrass, red brome (*Bromus rubens*), common chinch-weed (*Pectis papposa* var. *papposa*), and sand rice grass (*Stipa hymenoides*). This vegetation type corresponds to the *Ericameria nauseosa* Association in *A Manual of California Vegetation* (CNPS 2023b). This vegetation type was not identified during the previous surveys of the project site and rubber rabbitbrush was not listed as a dominant species in the vegetation descriptions.

Disturbed areas consist of unpaved access roads crossing the site. It also includes a recently graded area north of Yucca Road and east of Emerald Road; this area was undergoing active construction of a sewer line at the time of the 2023 site visit. These areas were unvegetated; therefore, there is no corresponding vegetation association in *A Manual of California Vegetation* (CNPS 2023b). The access roads were identified during the previous surveys of the project site.

¹ To be mapped as Joshua tree woodland, the cover of western Joshua trees must be greater than or equal to one percent cover in the tree canopy, as described in *A Manual of California Vegetation* (CNPS 2023b).

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Developed areas consist of paved Emerald Road bisecting the project site. This area is unvegetated; therefore, there is no corresponding vegetation association in *A Manual of California Vegetation* (CNPS 2023b). This area was identified during the previous surveys of the project site.

Wildlife Habitat

In the Mojave Desert, most washes are dry throughout the year and flow only after periods of rain. No running water and no temporary surface water were observed on the project site or immediate vicinity. Therefore, no fish or amphibian species are expected to occur on the project site.

No reptile species were observed during the 2023 survey, but common species that may occur include gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer*), southern Pacific rattlesnake (*Crotalus oreganus helleri*), and common side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*).

Common bird species observed during the 2023 survey include American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), Say's phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), and yellow-rumped warbler (*Setophaga coronata*).

One mammal, the California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), was observed on the project site during the survey. Other common mammal species that may occur on the project site include but are not limited to the desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), and Merriam's kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami*).

Special Status Resources

Special Status Vegetation Types

The CDFW provides a list of vegetation alliances, associations, and special stands that are considered "Sensitive Natural Communities" based on their rarity and threat. The *Ambrosia dumosa* Association, mapped as white bursage scrub, is currently considered a sensitive natural community (CDFW 2023a). At the time of the 2009 EIR, this community was considered a high priority for inventory, but was not listed as a special status vegetation type. The current distribution of white bursage scrub is the same as that mapped in the 2009 EIR.

Creosote bush scrub and rubber rabbitbrush scrub are not considered sensitive natural communities.

Jurisdictional Areas

It appears that a jurisdictional delineation has not been performed for the project site; no Jurisdictional Delineation is included in the 2009 EIR. Additionally, the 2009 EIR biological resources significance criteria related to jurisdictional resources include a statement that these were effects found not to be significant and refers the reader to Section 8 (Effects Not Found Significant). However, Section 8 of the 2009 EIR does not address jurisdictional resources. The 2009 EIR lists the following significance criteria related to jurisdictional resources as effects found not significant:

- If the project has a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFG or USFWS (Refer to Section 8, Effects Not to be Found Significant)

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- If the project has a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means (Refer to Section 8, Effects Not to be Found Significant)

However, based on aerial imagery, the blueline stream to the north of the project site, and observations made during the 2023 site visit, it is expected that drainage(s) under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and/or the CDFW are present on the project site. A jurisdictional delineation would be necessary to determine the type and extent of jurisdictional water resources on the project site.

These drainages were previously present but were not described as jurisdictional resources in the 2009 EIR (RBF 2009). Regulatory guidance changes over time; the areas may not have been previously considered jurisdictional at the time of EIR preparation. However, under the current regulatory guidance, drainages on the project site are expected to be under the jurisdiction of CDFW and RWQCB, and potentially also under the jurisdiction of USACE.

Special Status Plant and Wildlife Species

Plant or wildlife species may be considered to have “special status” due to declining populations, vulnerability to habitat change, or restricted distributions. Certain special status species have been listed as Rare, Threatened, or Endangered under State and/or Federal Endangered Species Acts (CESA and/or FESA).

Special Status Plants

One federally and/or State listed Endangered, Threatened, or Rare plant species or Candidate was reported from the project region, the western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*). Multiple western Joshua trees occur on the project site. This species is currently a Candidate for listing under the CESA. It is also protected under the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA), which went into effect on July 10, 2023. The WJTCA authorizes the CDFW to permit the incidental take of western Joshua trees provided the permittee meets certain conditions.

Several California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1B² or 2B³ have been reported from the project region based on the 2023 literature review and may occur. Mojave monkeyflower (*Diplacus mohavensis*), Booth’s evening-primrose (*Eremothera boothii* ssp. *boothii*), sagebrush loeflingia (*Loeflingia squarrosa* var. *artemisiarum*), short-joint beavertail (*Opuntia basilaris* var. *brachyclada*), Beaver Dam breadroot (*Pediomelum castoreum*), and Latimer’s woodland-gilia (*Saltugilia latimeri*). Focused surveys for these species were conducted in 2008 (BonTerra Consulting 2008b); none of these species were observed during previous surveys.

Southern mountains skullcap (*Scutellaria bolanderi* ssp. *austromontana*) and San Bernardino aster (*Symphyotrichum defoliatum*) were reported in the literature review but are not expected to occur on the project site due to lack of suitable habitat.

² CRPR 1B: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere

³ CRPR 2B: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California but more common elsewhere

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The following special status plant species were discussed in the 2009 EIR: small-flowered androstephium (*Androstephium breviflorum*) and desert cymopterus (*Cymopterus deserticola*). The project site is outside the current known range of both species, and they would not be expected to occur.

Special Status Wildlife

Eleven federally and/or State listed Endangered or Threatened species, or those proposed for listing, were reported from the project region in the 2023 literature review: Mohave tui chub (*Siphateles bicolor mohavensis*), California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*), western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), desert tortoise, tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), and Mohave ground squirrel. Of these species, desert tortoise, Swainson's hawk, and Mohave ground squirrel have potential or limited potential to occur on the project site. The remainder of these species are not expected to occur due to lack of suitable habitat.

Desert tortoise, Mohave ground squirrel, and Swainson's hawk were addressed in the 2009 EIR. Focused surveys were conducted for desert tortoise in 2008; no desert tortoise were observed (BonTerra Consulting 2008c). Focused trapping surveys were conducted for Mohave ground squirrel in 2008; no Mohave ground squirrel were observed (BonTerra Consulting 2008d). The 2009 EIR stated that the project site provides suitable foraging habitat for the Swainson's hawk, but that there is no suitable nesting habitat. The project site currently provides potentially suitable habitat for desert tortoise, Mohave ground squirrel, and foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk. The previous focused surveys would no longer be considered valid due to their age; focused surveys for desert tortoise and Mohave ground squirrel would need to be updated to confirm the species' absence.

In addition to species formally listed by the resource agencies, several California Species of Special Concern have been reported from the project region in the 2023 literature review. Of those, burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) has potential to occur and is a species for which impacts may be considered significant per CEQA Section 15380 because they are considered to meet the definition of rare, threatened, and endangered in the project region. Focused surveys were conducted in 2008 (BonTerra Consulting 2008e); no breeding burrowing owls were observed at the time of the surveys, but sign of burrowing owl was observed at multiple burrow locations, indicating that they likely occur in the wintering season.

The Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) is proposed as a Candidate to be State listed as Endangered. The Crotch bumble bee is a ground nester and often makes its nest in abandoned mammal burrows; it can be found in most native habitat types, although it prefers grassland and scrub habitats. It is primarily associated with plants from the following families: *Fabaceae*, *Apocynaceae*, *Asteraceae*, *Lamiaceae*, and *Boraginaceae* (Richardson 2017, Thorp et. al. 1983). A historic observation (1944) is located approximately 10 miles to the east. The nearest recent observations (2019) of Crotch bumble bee is approximately 18 miles away, located in Apple Valley (CDFW 2023a). The project site would be considered potentially suitable habitat. A focused survey would be needed to determine the presence or absence of this species. This species was not addressed in the 2009 EIR.

Other Considerations

California Native Desert Plants Act

The California Desert Native Plants Act, codified in Sections 80001–80201 of the *California Food and Agricultural Code*, was enacted to protect California desert native plants from unlawful harvesting (i.e.,

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removing or cutting and removing from the place where grown) on both public and privately-owned lands. This act is applicable within Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties. Within these counties, the act prohibits the harvest, transport, sale, or possession of specific native desert plants without a valid permit or wood receipt and with the required tags and seals. The appropriate permits, tags, and seals must be obtained from the sheriff or commissioner of the county where collecting will occur; and the county will charge a fee. A permit is not required for the removal of five or fewer individuals (California Desert Native Plants Act, Section 80118).

The following native plants, or any parts thereof, may not be harvested except for scientific or educational purposes under a permit issued by the commissioner of the county in which the native plants are growing:

- All species of *Burseraceae* family (elephant tree)
- *Carnegiea gigantea* (saguaro cactus)
- *Ferocactus acanthodes* (barrel cactus)
- *Castela emoryi* (crucifixion thorn)
- *Dudleya saxosa* (Panamint dudleya)
- *Pinus longaeva* (bristlecone pine)
- *Washingtonia filifera* (fan palm)

The following native plants, or any part thereof, may not be harvested except under a permit issued by the commissioner or the sheriff of the county in which the native plants are growing:

- All species of the family *Agavaceae* (century plant, nolina, yucca)
- All species of the family *Cactaceae* (cacti), except for the plants listed in subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 80072, which may be harvested under a permit obtained pursuant to that section
- All species of the family *Fouquieriaceae* (ocotillo, candlewood)
- All species of the genus *Prosopis* (mesquite)
- All species of the genus *Parkinsonia* (palo verde)
- *Acacia greggii* (catclaw)
- *Atriplex hymenelytra* (desert-holly)
- *Dalea spinosa* (smoke tree)
- *Olneya tesota* (desert ironwood), including both dead and live desert ironwood

Mexican palo verde (*Parkinsonia aculeata*) tree occurs on the project site. This species is an escaped cultivar and is not native to the project region.

Both western Joshua tree and silver cholla (*Cylindropuntia echinocarpa*) were observed on the project site and are protected by this Act. The 2009 EIR states that western Joshua tree is protected by the California Native Plant Protection Act, but does not state that silver cholla also needs to be protected to comply with this act.

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Wildlife Movement

Landscape features or travel routes that connect the larger open space areas would be considered “wildlife corridors” if they provide adequate space, cover, food, and water and do not contain obstacles or distractions (e.g., man-made noise, lighting) that would generally hinder wildlife movement.

The project site and surrounding areas are somewhat open and wildlife would be expected to move throughout the area without being confined to wildlife movement corridors. The Southern California Logistics Airport to the north and the Victorville Federal Correctional Institution to the east are fenced, which may limit local movement of medium to large-sized mammals. The 2009 EIR discussion of wildlife movement is consistent with current conditions.

Nesting Birds/Raptors

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) protects the taking of migratory birds and their nests and eggs. Bird species protected under the provisions of the MBTA are identified by the List of Migratory Birds (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 50, §10.13). Section 3503 of the *California Fish and Game Code* makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any bird’s nest or any bird’s eggs. Section 3513 of the *California Fish and Game Code* prohibits the take and possession of any migratory nongame bird, as designated in the MBTA. Birds have potential to nest throughout the project site in vegetation, on bare ground, and on adjacent structures (i.e., transmission towers). If construction would be initiated during the nesting season (generally between February 1 and August 31), a pre-construction survey would be required to ensure that no nests are impacted. If an active nest is present, construction may be restricted in the immediate vicinity of the nest until nesting is complete. The 2009 EIR discussion of nesting birds is consistent with current conditions.

Structures adjacent to the project site have potential to be used for nesting by raptors. Regulations prohibit activities that “take, possess, or destroy” any raptor nest or egg (*California Fish and Game Code* §3503, 3503.5, and 3513). Additionally, the noise and disturbance associated with construction may disturb a nesting raptor adjacent to the proposed project. If construction would be initiated during the raptor nesting season (generally between February 1 and August 31), a pre-construction survey would be required to ensure that no raptor nests are impacted. If an active nest is present, construction may be temporarily restricted in the immediate vicinity of the nest until nesting is complete. The 2009 EIR discussion of nesting raptors is consistent with current conditions.

Indirect Impacts

Noise Impacts

Noise levels would increase over present levels during construction of the project. During construction, temporary noise impacts have the potential to disrupt foraging, nesting, roosting, and denning activities for a variety of wildlife species. Construction activities would likely occur during the day; thus, construction noise would not affect nocturnal species (i.e., those active at night). Diurnal species (i.e., those active during the day) would be deterred from the area during active construction. This impact would be relatively short-term in nature and wildlife would be expected to disperse to adjacent open space.

Following construction of the project, the ambient noise levels adjacent to the project site are expected to incrementally increase. Wildlife species stressed by noise may disperse from the habitat immediately adjacent to the project site.

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The 2009 EIR discussion of indirect impacts adequately addresses noise impacts.

Increased Dust and Urban Pollutants

Grading activities would disturb soils and could result in the accumulation of dust on the surface of the leave of trees, shrubs, and herbs. The respiratory function of the plants in the area would be impaired when dust accumulation is excessive.

Drainages in the vicinity of the project could be impacted as a result of changes in water quality. During construction, runoff carrying excessive silt or petroleum residues from construction equipment could potentially impact water quality and, in turn, affect plant and wildlife species using habitat adjacent to the project. Desert storms can be high intensity and could also transfer urban pollutants to drainages.

The 2009 EIR discussion of indirect impacts adequately addresses increased dust and urban pollutants impacts.

Invasive Exotic Plant Species

The project may include landscaping adjacent to the proposed structures. The landscaping could include planting of ornamental species that are known to be invasive. Seeds from invasive species may escape to natural areas and degrade the native vegetation, particularly along downstream drainages.

Construction activities create disturbance, which in turn provides a place for non-native weedy species to spread. Additionally, construction equipment can introduce non-native weed seeds to the area (or other work areas) if equipment is not properly cleaned. Weeds from the construction may then spread to adjacent habitat areas, which would degrade habitat quality for native species. Erosion control measures (i.e., haybales or straw wattles) may also introduce invasive species.

The 2009 EIR discussion of indirect impacts adequately addresses invasive exotic plant species.

Night Lighting

Night lighting may impact the behavioral patterns of nocturnal and crepuscular (i.e., active at dawn and dusk) wildlife adjacent to the night lighting. Of greatest concern is the effect on small, ground-dwelling animals that use the darkness to hide from predators and/or owls, which are specialized night foragers. Due to the nature of the project, it is expected to include night lighting of the area on and potentially immediately adjacent to the project site. These additional light sources may negatively affect wildlife in the surrounding open space. However, increased night lighting in the vicinity of the project would not be expected to reduce wildlife in the region below self-sustaining levels.

The 2009 EIR discussion of indirect impacts adequately addresses night lighting impacts.

Human Activity

Following project implementation, human activity is expected to increase. This could disrupt the normal foraging and breeding behavior of wildlife that remains in the area adjacent to the development, which would diminish the value of the habitat. This impact would potentially contribute to an additional incremental loss of habitat. However, increased human activity in the vicinity of the project would not be expected to reduce wildlife in the region below self-sustaining levels.

The 2009 EIR discussion of indirect impacts adequately addresses increased human activity impacts.

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COMPARISON TO 2009 EIR

Since the 2009 EIR was approved, various changes have occurred that may affect the document's conclusions. For example, regulations or their interpretations may have changed (e.g., the definition of waters of the U.S. has undergone numerous revisions); new laws have been passed (e.g., the WJTC), and the status designation of plant or wildlife species have changed (e.g., western Joshua tree and Crotch bumble bee are now Candidates for State listing). This section addresses whether the project would have any new impacts not previously addressed in the 2009 EIR.

Special Status Vegetation Types

The 2009 EIR did not consider white bursage scrub to be a sensitive natural community; therefore, impacts to this vegetation type were not considered significant, and no mitigation was included. Given that the CDFW currently considers the *Ambrosia dumosa* Association to be a sensitive natural community, the City of Adelanto may consider impacts on 25.9 acres of this vegetation type significant and may require mitigation.

Conclusion: *The Lead Agency must determine whether the impact on white bursage scrub would be considered significant. If it is determined to be significant, a new mitigation measure would be needed.*

Jurisdictional Areas

The 2009 EIR did not address impacts to wetland or non-wetland waters of the U.S. under the regulatory authority of the USACE, waters of the State under the regulatory authority of the RWQCB, and/or drainages or waterbodies under the regulatory authority of the CDFW. A jurisdictional delineation would be required to determine the type and extent of jurisdictional water resources on the project site. It is expected that jurisdictional areas are present and would be impacted by the project. This impact would be considered significant and mitigation would be required to obtain permits from the USACE (if applicable), RWQCB, and CDFW and to mitigation for the loss of jurisdictional resources.

Conclusion: *A jurisdictional delineation is needed to confirm the presence of jurisdictional resources on the project site. Assuming jurisdictional resources are present, the impact would be considered significant, and a new mitigation measure would be needed.*

Special Status Plants

All special status plant species with potential to occur were addressed in the 2009 EIR. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 required focused surveys for special status plants and provided a mitigation strategy if any of the species were observed. The 2009 special status plant survey would no longer be considered valid because of its age; special status plant surveys would need to be updated to confirm absence of special status plant species.

Conclusion: *Special status plants are adequately addressed in the 2009 EIR.*

Although the western Joshua tree is now proposed as a State Candidate species, the species was addressed in the 2009 EIR. Mitigation Measure BIO-3 required a Joshua tree survey and provided a strategy to mitigate for the loss of this species. It is expected that the Project Applicant could mitigate through CDFW's in-lieu mitigation program with approval from the City of Adelanto.

Conclusion: *Western Joshua tree is adequately addressed in the 2009 EIR.*

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Special Status Wildlife

Desert tortoise, burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk, and Mohave ground squirrel were all addressed in the 2009 EIR. Mitigation Measures BIO-4, BIO-5, BIO-6, and BIO-7 required pre-construction focused surveys for desert tortoise, burrowing owl, nesting raptors, and Mohave ground squirrel and provided mitigation strategies if any of the species were observed. The 2009 focused surveys for desert tortoise, burrowing owl, and Mohave ground squirrel would no longer be considered valid because of their age; these focused surveys would need to be updated to confirm absence of these species.

***Conclusion:** Desert tortoise, burrowing owl, Swainson's hawk, and Mohave ground squirrel are adequately addressed in the 2009 EIR.*

Crotch bumble bee is a State Candidate for listing. It was not addressed in the 2009 EIR. A focused survey would be needed to determine the presence or absence of this species. If this species is absent, no impact would occur, and no mitigation would be needed. If this species is present, the impacts would be considered potentially significant, and a new mitigation measure would be needed.

***Conclusion:** If Crotch bumble bee is present, a new mitigation measure would be needed.*

California Native Desert Plants Act

Cacti protected by the California Desert Native Plants Act were observed on the project site in 2023 and were not addressed in the 2009 EIR. A survey documenting these species would be required to determine whether a permit would be required for their removal. While not specifically addressed, these species could be incorporated into Mitigation Measure BIO-2 to address special status plant species and/or Mitigation Measure BIO-3 to address Western Joshua Tree.

***Conclusion:** The Lead Agency should confirm that Mitigation Measure BIO-2 or BIO-3 could be used to mitigate for the loss of plants under the California Native Desert Plants Act.*

Wildlife Movement

The 2009 EIR addressed impacts on wildlife movement and determined that they would be adverse but less than significant, and no mitigation would be required. The developed area surrounding the project site has not changed substantially since 2009. Therefore, the conclusions of the 2009 EIR are still valid.

***Conclusion:** Wildlife movement is adequately addressed in the 2009 EIR.*

Nesting Birds/Raptors

The 2009 EIR addressed impacts on nesting birds and raptors. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-6 were required to avoid the loss of any active nests. These mitigation measures are still applicable.

***Conclusion:** Nesting birds and raptors are adequately addressed in the 2009 EIR.*

Indirect Impacts

The 2009 EIR addressed the following indirect impacts: noise impacts, increased dust and urban pollutants, invasive exotic plant species, night lighting, and human activity. The 2009 EIR included Mitigation Measure BIO-8 to ensure no invasive exotic species were planted in landscaped areas. The

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developed area surrounding the project site has not changed substantially since 2009. Therefore, the conclusions of the 2009 EIR are still valid.

***Conclusion:** Indirect impacts are adequately addressed in the 2009 EIR.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Psomas recommends the following:

- A jurisdictional delineation should be conducted to determine the extent of jurisdictional resources present on the project site.
- A Western Joshua Tree survey should be conducted to determine the number and size of individuals present on the project site.
- Updated focused surveys should be conducted for special status plant species (including those protected by the California Native Desert Plants Act), desert tortoise, burrowing owl, and Mohave ground squirrel to confirm whether these species occur on the project site.
- A focused survey for Crotch bumble bee should be conducted to determine the presence or absence of this species on the project site.
- The Lead Agency should be consulted to determine whether the impact to white bursage scrub would be considered significant and to determine whether plants protected under the California Native Desert Plants Act can be mitigated per Mitigation Measures BIO-2 or BIO-3.

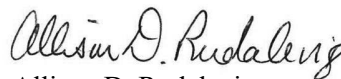
Thank you for the opportunity to prepare this letter report. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Amber Heredia at Amber.Heredia@psomas.com or 714.481.8049.

Sincerely,

P S O M A S



Amber O. Heredia
Senior Project Manager, Resource Management



Allison D. Rudalevige
Senior Biologist

Enclosures: Exhibit 1 – Project Location
 Exhibit 2 – USGS 7.5-Minute Digital Quadrangle
 Exhibit 3 – Vegetation Types and Other Areas
 Attachment A – Representative Photographs – November 9, 2023

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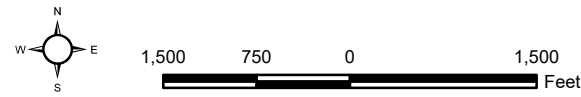


Aerial Source: NearMap 2023

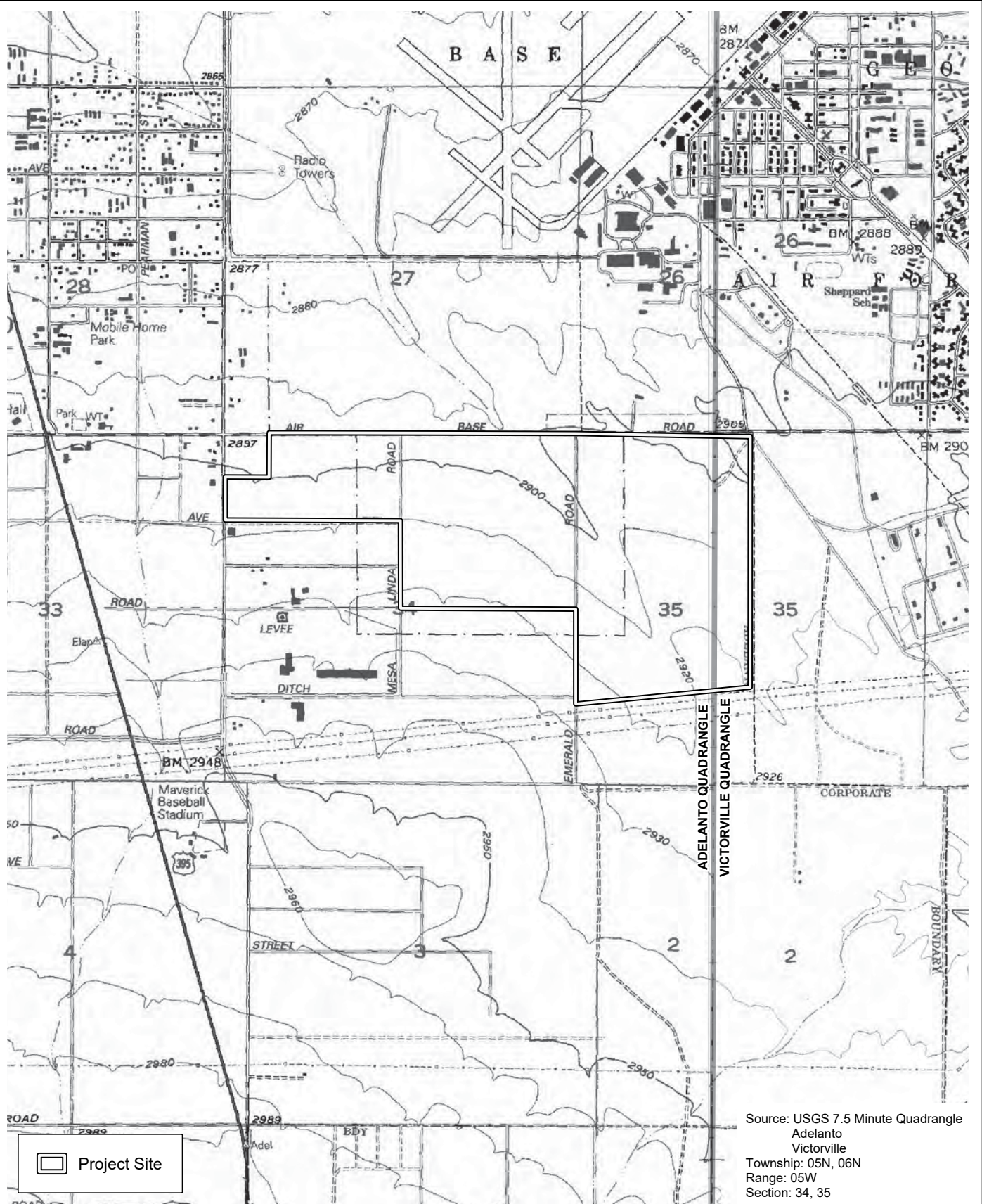
Project Location

Adelanto Gateway Logistics Center

Exhibit 1



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USGS 7.5-Minute Digital Quadrangle

Adelanto Gateway Logistics Center

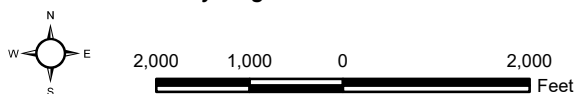


Exhibit 2





Vegetation Types and Other Areas

Adelanto Gateway Logistics Center

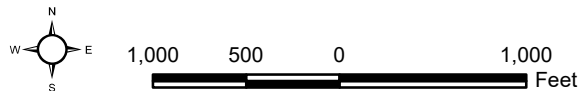


Exhibit 3



ATTACHMENT A
REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1 - Typical creosote bush scrub on the project site.

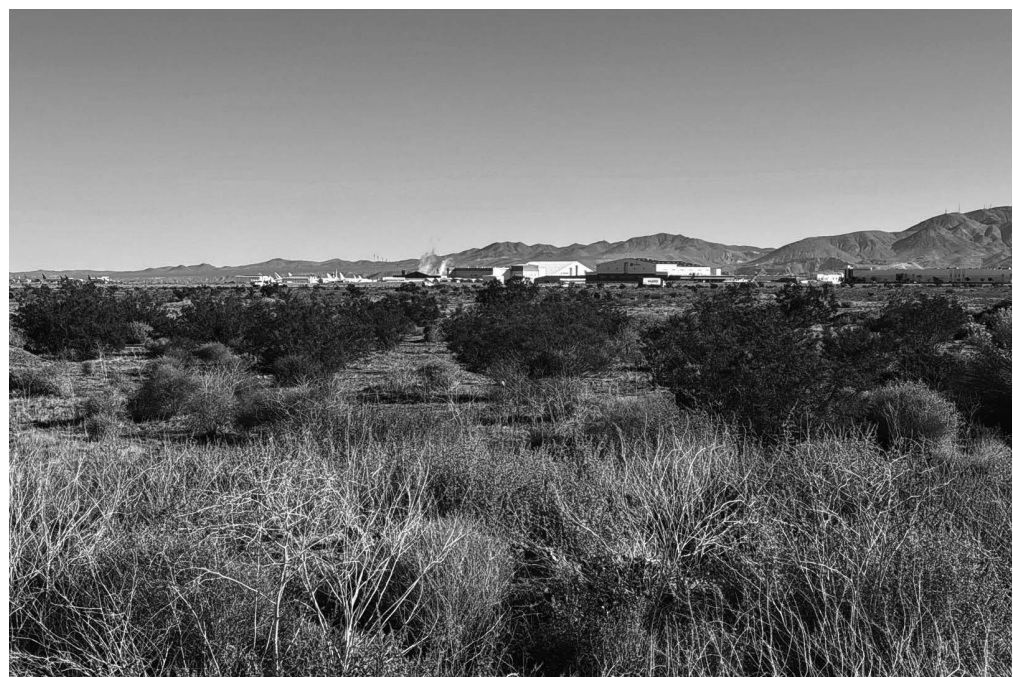


Photo 2 - Denser area of creosote bush scrub on the project site.

Representative Photographs – November 9, 2023

Attachment A-1

Adelanto Gateway Logistics Center





Photo 3 - Typical white bursage scrub on the project site.



Photo 4 - Typical rubber rabbitbrush scrub on the project site.

Representative Photographs – November 9, 2023

Attachment A-2

Adelanto Gateway Logistics Center





Photo 5 - Recently disturbed area on the project site.



Vegetation Types and Other Areas

Adelanto Gateway Logistics Center

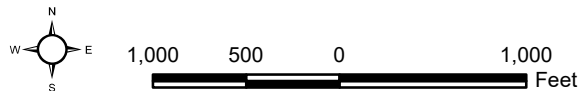


Exhibit 3

