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VIA EMAIL & OVERNITE EXPRESS
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Subject: Results of Biological Reconnaissance Surveys of Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

Dear Ms. Cruz:

This letter report presents the findings of habitat assessment reconnaissance surveys of eight flood control facilities to be added to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Work's (LACDPW) existing California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) permits. These facilities include the following four debris basins (DB) and four soft-bottom channels (SBC) shown on Exhibits 1 and 2A-2H: Greensbrier DB (PD 2495), Golden Valley DB (PD 1772-1), Stevenson Ranch DB (PD 2528), Wellington DB (PD 2202 – Unit B), Hasley Canyon SBC (PD 2262), San Francisquito Canyon SBC – Right Bank Levee (PD 2262), Santa Clara River SBC – South Bank west of McBean Parkway (MTD 1510), and Pico Canyon SBC (PD 2528). The purpose of the surveys was to evaluate existing biological resources and map vegetation types in order to determine the potential for special status plant and wildlife species to occur at each facility.

The LACDPW maintains numerous soft-bottom channel reaches and debris basins that primarily function to control flood waters. Maintained soft-bottom channels are located in association with concreted segments of rivers and creeks in order to prevent backup of debris and sediment that moves downstream during high rainfall events. High volumes of stormwater carrying debris and sediment can cause considerable damage to downstream and upstream properties and can even result in the loss of human life. The dams, barriers, and debris basins also have spillways to allow removal of excess runoff water at safe velocities that will not damage dams or downstream structures. Vegetation within the maintained segments of the soft-bottom channels and debris basins increases the collection of debris. The LACDPW continues to remove vegetation and, as needed, sediment from the flood control facilities in a manner consistent with previously-approved and permitted maintenance activities.

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METHODS

BonTerra Consulting Biologists Brian Daniels and Andrea Edwards conducted general plant and wildlife surveys that included vegetation mapping on February 21 and March 5, 2007. The California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPS 2007) and CDFG's California Natural Diversity Database (CDFG 2007) were reviewed to identify special status plants, wildlife, and habitats known to occur in the vicinity of the project sites.

All species observed were recorded in field notes. Plant species were identified in the field or collected for subsequent identification using keys in Hickman (1993) and Munz (1974). Taxonomy follows Hickman (1993) and current scientific data (e.g., scientific journals) for scientific and common names. Nomenclature for vegetation types generally follows that of *The Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program: List of California Terrestrial Natural Communities Recognized by the California Natural Diversity Database* (CDFG 2003).

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 signs including scat, footprints, scratch-outs, dust bowls, burrows, and trails. Taxonomy and nomenclature for wildlife generally follows Fisher and Case (1997) for amphibians and reptiles, American Ornithologists Union (1998) for birds, and Baker *et al.* (2003) for mammals.

Vegetation maps for each facility are included as Exhibits 3A-3H, and site photographs are included as Exhibits 4A-4H. Table 1 presents the soil types at each of the eight facilities. Since most of the flood control facilities are surrounded by natural open space, special status species may have potential to occur in adjacent habitat areas; however, this evaluation of biological constraints (including recommendations for focused surveys) for each facility only includes the areas within the apparent clearing limits and immediately adjacent habitat that could be impacted by necessary maintenance activities.

TABLE 1
SOIL TYPES

Flood Control Facility	Soil Types
Greensbrier DB - PD 2495	Castaic - Balcom silty clay loams
Golden Valley DB – PD 1772-1	Saugus loam and Yolo loam
Stevenson Ranch DB - PD 2528	Yolo loam, Saugus loam, and Hanford sandy loam
Wellington DB - PD 2202 – Unit B	San Andreas – San Benito association (fine sandy loam and clay loam)
Hasley Canyon SBC - PD 2262	Cortina sandy loam, sandy alluvial land, Castaic-Balcom silty clay loams, and Sorrento loam
San Francisquito Canyon SBC – Right Bank Levee - PD 2262	Hanford sandy loam and sandy alluvial land
Santa Clara River SBC – South Bank MTD 1510	Sorrento loam, Cortina sandy loam, and sandy alluvial land
Pico Canyon SBC – PD 2528	Hanford sandy loam and riverwash

RESULTS

Greensbrier DB (PD 2495)

Location

Greensbrier DB is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, just west of Santa Clarita, and is bounded by residential development to the north and open space in all other directions. Although soils on the site were saturated, surface water was not present during the survey. The debris basin is located within the Oat Mountain (and close to the edge of the Newhall) U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle map. It is located at the end of Greensbrier Drive, which is south of Pico Canyon Road and west of Interstate-5. Refer to page 4640-B2 of the Thomas Guide, Los Angeles County. Regional and local vicinity maps are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2A.

Vegetation Types

This facility included California sagebrush scrub, southern riparian scrub, mulefat scrub (disturbed), and freshwater marsh (disturbed) vegetation types. California sagebrush scrub was dominated by California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*); other species present included chaparral bushmallow (*Malacothamnus fasciculatus*), coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), giant wild rye (*Leymus condensatus*), and thick-leaf yerba santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*). Southern riparian scrub was dominated by mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) and a willow (*Salix* sp.) [un-identifiable due to seasonality]; one additional species present was Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*). Mulefat scrub (disturbed) was dominated by mulefat; other species present included foxtail chess (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), and horseweed (*Conyza* sp.). Freshwater marsh (disturbed) was dominated by narrow-leaved cattail (*Typha angustifolia*); other species present included mulefat seedlings, willow seedlings, annual beard grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), and barnyard grass (*Echinochloa crus-galli*).

Ruderal areas (with mulefat seedlings present in some areas) that show signs of past soil disturbance were present, and dominated by weedy species such as annual beard grass, foxtail chess, tree tobacco, Russian thistle, horseweed, and black mustard (*Brassica nigra*). Ornamental areas consisting of landscaped plantings of various non-native species, disturbed areas consisting of mechanically altered areas that are generally devoid of vegetation, and developed areas including all paved areas, concrete lined channels, and other structures, were also present. Overall, this basin was mainly comprised of developed areas, ruderal areas (with mulefat seedlings present in some areas), and disturbed areas. A vegetation map is attached as Exhibit 3A along with site photographs provided in Exhibit 4A.

Wildlife

The facility was dry during the survey with minimal vegetative growth present in areas regularly maintained in the debris basin. The debris basin has two tributary canyons that support mostly scrub habitats, with relatively few trees evident in the watershed. An extensive open space area surrounds the debris basin and supports mostly dry chaparral habitats. Wildlife species expected to occur at the debris basin are characteristic of the surrounding habitats, although a wide variety of bird species may use the site when water is present.

The debris basin is located in a dry watershed and no fish species are expected to occur. The Pacific tree frog (*Pseudacris regilla*) was present during the survey and the western toad (*Bufo boreas*) may occur. No reptiles were observed during the survey but the widespread western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*) and side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*) are expected to occur. Several snakes characteristic of the chaparral habitats in the region may occasionally occur in the debris basin and include coachwhip (*Masticophis flagellum*) and western rattlesnake (*Crotalus oreganus*). Birds at the debris basin during the survey included Say's phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), northern rough-winged swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*), rock wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*), spotted towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), California towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), and lesser goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*). Several mammal species are expected to occur and include desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) and coyote (*Canis latrans*).

Special Status Species

Because potential habitat for special status plant species occurs in the California sagebrush scrub found on slopes around this basin, focused surveys are recommended for two CNPS List 1B plants: slender mariposa lily (*Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*) and Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*).

There is potential for several special status wildlife species to occur at or near this facility, but none of these species have a status that warrants focused surveys except for one. Since the facility is located within the Critical Habitat (2003 Proposed) for the coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) and potentially suitable habitat is present, focused surveys for this species are recommended.

Golden Valley DB (PD 1772-1)

Location

Golden Valley DB is located in Santa Clarita, and is bounded by Golden Valley Road to the east, industrial development to the northwest, and open space to the southwest. Surface water was not present during the survey. The debris basin is located within the Newhall (and close to the edge of the Mint Canyon) USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. It is accessed via Golden Valley Road, south of Soledad Canyon Road. Refer to page 4551-C4 of the Thomas Guide, Los Angeles County. Regional and local vicinity maps are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2B.

Vegetation Types

This facility includes chamise – hoaryleaf ceanothus chaparral and black sage scrub vegetation types. Chamise – hoaryleaf ceanothus chaparral was dominated by chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), hoaryleaf ceanothus (*Ceanothus crassifolius*), and black sage; other species present included sacapellote (*Acourtia microcephala*) and black mustard. Black sage scrub was dominated by black sage; other species present included deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), California sagebrush, tree tobacco, and foxtail chess. Disturbed and developed areas were also present. Overall, this basin was mainly comprised of disturbed and developed areas. Vegetation map is attached as Exhibit 3B along with site photographs provided in Exhibit 4B.

Wildlife

The facility was dry during the survey with almost no vegetative growth present in areas regularly maintained in the debris basin. The environmental setting for the debris basin is a mix of open space and development. The inlet to the basin appears to function primarily to catch run-off from development. Some wildlife species characteristic of the remaining scrub habitats in the area can be expected to occasionally occur at this debris basin.

Native or non-native fish species are not expected to occur at this debris basin. No amphibian species is expected to occur at the debris basin and, although not observed during the survey, a few reptile species are expected to occur and include the western fence lizard and maybe the occasional southern alligator lizard (*Elgaria multicarinata*) and gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer*). Only two bird species were observed during the survey: California quail (*Callipepla californica*) and Say's phoebe. A few mammals can be expected to occur at this debris basin and include Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*) and coyote.

Special Status Species

The chaparral and scrub vegetation types occur on slopes above this debris basin, and are not expected to be impacted by any necessary maintenance activities. Due to a lack of suitable habitat, no special status plant species are expected to occur within this debris basin.

The potential for special status wildlife species to occur at this facility is limited to the occasional bird visitor, such as the Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) that may temporarily use the site for foraging. No wildlife species are expected to use this facility to the extent that focused surveys would be warranted.

Stevenson Ranch DB (PD 2528)

Location

Stevenson Ranch DB is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, just west of Santa Clarita, and is bounded by Pico Canyon SBC to the northeast, residential development to the north and west, and open space to the south beyond Pico Canyon Road. Surface water was present during the survey. The debris basin is located within the Newhall (and close to the edge of the Oat Mountain) USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. It is located west of Interstate-5, and immediately northeast of the intersection of Pico Canyon Road and Stevenson Ranch Parkway. Refer to page 4640-C1 of the Thomas Guide, Los Angeles County. Regional and local vicinity maps are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2C.

Vegetation Types

This facility included southern riparian scrub and freshwater marsh (disturbed) vegetation types. Southern riparian scrub was dominated by mulefat and red willow (*Salix laevigata*); other species present included barnyard grass, horseweed, mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*), and annual bursage (*Ambrosia acanthicarpa*). Freshwater marsh (disturbed) was dominated by narrow-leaved cattail, red willow and mulefat seedlings, cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*), and barnyard grass. Disturbed areas, developed areas, and ruderal areas dominated by weedy species such as annual beard grass, horseweed, and annual bursage, were also present. Overall, this basin was mainly comprised of freshwater marsh (disturbed) and disturbed, developed, and ruderal areas. Vegetation map is attached as Exhibit 3C along with site photographs provided in Exhibit 4C.

Wildlife

The relatively large debris basin had water and supported a moderate amount of vegetative growth in areas regularly maintained. The facility is located within Pico Canyon and is generally surrounded by residential development, although open space areas are located across the roadway to the south. A variety of wildlife species are expected to occur at this debris basin due to its size and potential to support riparian and marsh habitats.

Although no native fish species are expected to occur at this facility, the non-native western mosquito fish (*Gambusia affinis*) may occur. The Pacific tree frog was not detected during the survey but is expected to occur at this debris basin and the western toad may also occur. No reptiles were observed during the survey, but the western fence lizard and southern alligator lizard are expected to occur. Do to its relative isolation from nearby open space areas, snakes are not expected to occur with any regularity, but the occasional gopher snake and western rattlesnake may occur. About 20 bird species were present during the survey of this debris basin and included mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Wilson's snipe (*Gallinago delicata*), Say's phoebe, rock wren, marsh wren (*Cistothorus palustris*), yellow-rumped warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), common yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*), song sparrow, Lincoln's sparrow (*Melospiza lincolnii*), white-crowned sparrow, red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), and lesser goldfinch. No mammals were observed during the survey, but several species are expected including the Virginia opossum, black rat (*Rattus rattus*), common raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), and coyote.

Special Status Species

Due to a lack of suitable habitat, no special status plant species are expected to occur.

The potential for special status wildlife species to occur at this facility is limited to the occasional bird visitor, such as the Cooper's hawk that may temporarily use the site for foraging. No wildlife species are expected to use this facility to the extent that focused surveys would be warranted. However, if not maintained on a regular basis, the riparian and marsh habitats do have the potential for special status species that would warrant focused surveys (e.g., least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)). Note that the facility is located within the Critical Habitat (2003 Proposed) for the coastal California gnatcatcher, but that potentially suitable habitat for this species is not present. Therefore, focused surveys for the coastal California gnatcatcher are not recommended at this facility.

Wellington DB (PD 2202 – Unit B)

Location

Wellington DB is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, just east of La Habra Heights, and is bounded by open space in all directions, with a revegetated manufactured slope to the northwest leading up to Harbor Boulevard and residential development present upslope to the north. A large amount of surface water was present during the survey. The debris basin is located within the La Habra USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. It is immediately southwest of the intersection of Harbor Boulevard and Wellington Lane. Refer to page 708-H2 of the Thomas Guide, Los Angeles County. Regional and local vicinity maps are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2D.

Vegetation Types

This facility included goldenbush scrub, sumac scrub, California annual grassland, southern riparian scrub, freshwater marsh, willow riparian woodland, and California walnut woodland vegetation types. Goldenbush scrub was dominated by goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*); other species present included laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*). Sumac scrub was dominated by laurel sumac; other species present included California sagebrush.

California annual grassland was dominated by annual grasses that could not be identified due to seasonality; other species present included black mustard and tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*). Southern riparian scrub was dominated by mulefat and red willow; freshwater marsh was dominated by a cattail, also unidentifiable due to seasonality (*Typha* sp.). Willow riparian woodland was dominated by red willow; California walnut woodland was dominated by southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica*). Developed areas were also present. Overall, this basin was mainly comprised of southern riparian scrub, freshwater marsh, and willow riparian woodland. A vegetation map is attached as Exhibit 3D along with site photographs provided in Exhibit 4D.

Wildlife

This facility contained water during the survey and vegetation in and around the basin showed no evidence of recent maintenance activities. One steep sided tributary canyon leads to this debris basin and its woodland habitats, especially on the north facing slope, indicate a relatively wet canyon. Residential developments are at the top of the slope to the north, but open space areas are east and south of the debris basin. A variety of wildlife species are expected to occur at this debris basin.

The debris basin is located in an isolated watershed, so native fish species are not expected to occur, though the western mosquito fish may occur. Several Pacific tree frogs were heard during the survey and the western toad is expected to occur at this debris basin. Other amphibians that may occur at this facility include the slender salamander (*Batrachoseps major*). The western fence lizard was observed at the debris basin and the southern alligator lizard and side-blotched lizard are both also expected to occur. Several snakes may occasionally occur and include the striped whipsnake (*Masticophis taeniatus*), gopher snake, and western rattlesnake. Birds at the debris basin during the survey included common raven (*Corvus corax*), yellow-rumped warbler, rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps*), red-winged blackbird, and house finch. Several mammal species are expected to occur and include Virginia opossum, desert cottontail, coyote, common raccoon, and striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*).

Special Status Species

There is potential for special status plant species to occur in this debris basin: southern tarplant (*Centromadia parryi* ssp. *australis*) and possibly smooth tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*), which are both CNPS List 1B species; focused surveys are recommended for these species.

There is potential for several special status wildlife species to occur at or near this facility. For example, the subspecies of rufous-crowned sparrow present at the project site is the Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*) which is a California Species of Special Concern. Although the Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow is California Species of Special Concern, the potential impacts on this species due to maintenance activities at the facility would not be considered as significant under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and therefore would not require focused surveys. However,

the willow riparian habitat at the facility provides potentially suitable habitat for the least Bell's vireo, a State and Federally listed Endangered bird species. Focused surveys are recommended for the least Bell's vireo at this debris basin. Note that the facility is located within the Critical Habitat (2003 Proposed) for the coastal California gnatcatcher, but that potentially suitable habitat for the species is considered marginal and that focused surveys for the coastal California gnatcatcher are not recommended.

Hasley Canyon SBC (PD 2262)

Location

Hasley Canyon SBC is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, west of Castaic Junction, and is bounded by industrial development along both the north and south sides, with some open space present to the west and east. Surface water was not present during the survey. The reach is located within the Val Verde (and close to the edge of the Newhall) USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. It is accessed off of Commerce Center Drive, northwest of the intersection of Interstate-5 and State Route 126. Refer to page 4459-G6 of the Thomas Guide, Los Angeles County. Regional and local vicinity maps are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2E.

Vegetation Types

This facility included a southern riparian scrub vegetation type dominated by mulefat, red willow, narrow-leaved willow (*Salix exigua*), and small Fremont cottonwoods (*Populus fremontii*); other species present included coyote brush and annual bursage. Unvegetated wash (with mulefat seedlings present in some areas) and developed areas were also present. Overall, this reach was mainly comprised of unvegetated wash areas and southern riparian scrub. A vegetation map is attached as Exhibit 3E along with site photographs provided in Exhibit 4E.

Wildlife

This facility is mostly surrounded by light industrial developments, but there are some open space areas situated at the upstream and downstream ends of this soft-bottom channel reach. No surface water was present during the survey, but riparian vegetation was fairly substantial in some parts of the channel reach. Most of the channel reach consisted of unvegetated wash that provides minimal resources for wildlife. However, this facility is expected to support some wildlife movement between the open space areas at either end of this channel reach.

Downstream of this channel reach is Castaic Creek which supports native fish species including some special status species. However, Hasley Canyon is primarily a dry canyon and at the downstream terminus of this channel reach is a substantial drop structure that precludes any native fish species from Castaic Creek moving upstream into this facility. Therefore, no native fish species are expected to occur in this facility. No amphibians were detected during the survey, but the Pacific tree frog and western toad may occur in this facility. The western fence lizard is expected to occur in this channel reach and the southern alligator lizard may occasionally occur. Bird species observed during the survey included common raven, Cassin's kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*), bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), rock wren, Bewick's wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*), savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), and lesser goldfinch. Mammals expected to use this facility include the Virginia opossum, desert cottontail, coyote, and common raccoon.

Special Status Species

Due to a lack of suitable habitat, no special status plant species are expected to occur.

There is potential for special status wildlife species to occur at or near this facility. At this time, however, the willow riparian habitat is not considered to be substantial enough to support the least Bell's vireo. Therefore, focused surveys are not recommended for this soft-bottom channel reach.

San Francisquito Canyon SBC – Right Bank Levee (PD 2262)

Location

San Francisquito Canyon SBC is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, north of Santa Clarita, and is bounded by residential development to the west and open space to the north, south, and east. Surface water was present during the survey. The reach is located within the Newhall USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. It is accessed via Avenida Rancho Tesoro, northwest of the intersection of Copper Hill Drive and McBean Parkway. Refer to page 4460–F3 of the Thomas Guide, Los Angeles County. Regional and local vicinity maps are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2F.

Vegetation Types

This facility included goldenbush scrub (disturbed) and southern riparian scrub vegetation types. Goldenbush scrub (disturbed) was dominated by interior goldenbush (*Ericameria linearifolia*) and black mustard; other species present included California sagebrush, mugwort, California buckwheat, and tocalote. Southern riparian scrub was dominated by mulefat and red willow; other species present included broad-leaved cattail (*Typha latifolia*). Ruderal areas in this reach supported weedy species such as black mustard, tree tobacco, horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), annual bursage, and red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*). Disturbed and developed areas were also present. Overall, this reach was mainly comprised of ruderal, disturbed, and developed areas. A vegetation map is attached as Exhibit 3F along with site photographs provided in Exhibit 4F.

Wildlife

This facility is situated on the west side of San Francisquito Wash and, except for an outlet that conveys run-off from nearby residential areas to the west, is dry for most of the year. This channel reach generally provides minimal vegetative cover for wildlife, but nearby areas support alluvial sage scrub and several Fremont cottonwoods that provide high quality habitats for wildlife. The new outlet had substantial surface water during the survey and the riparian habitats growing at its edge indicate that the surface water may be a permanent feature in this facility.

Native fish species are known from both upstream and downstream of this facility in San Francisquito Wash. Therefore, the surface water at the mouth of the new outlet in this soft-bottom channel reach may harbor native fish species in the future. No amphibians were observed during the survey but the Pacific tree frog and western toad are expected to occur in this facility. The western fence lizard, side-blotched lizard, and southern alligator lizard are expected to occur. Snakes with potential to occur in this channel reach include the coachwhip, gopher snake, and western rattlesnake. Bird species observed during the survey included American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*), common raven, black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), Say's phoebe, Cassin's kingbird, northern rough-winged swallow, bushtit, yellow-rumped warbler, California towhee, song sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, house

finch, and lesser goldfinch. Mammals expected to use this facility include the Virginia opossum, desert cottontail, coyote, and common raccoon.

Special Status Species

Due to a lack of suitable habitat, no special status plant species are expected to occur.

There is potential for special status wildlife species to occur at or near this facility. The surface water at the new outlet of this facility provides potentially suitable habitat for the State and Federally Endangered unarmored threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus santaannae*). Therefore, pre-clearing surveys for the unarmored threespine stickleback are recommended prior to annual maintenance activities if surface water is present in this soft-bottom channel reach.

Santa Clara River SBC – South Bank West of McBean Parkway (MTD 1510)

Location

The Santa Clara River SBC (MTD 1510) is located in Santa Clarita, and is bounded by McBean Parkway to the east, open space to the north and west, and development (a commercial parking lot) to the south. Surface water was present during the survey. The reach is located within the Newhall USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. It is northwest of the intersection of Magic Mountain Parkway (State Route 126) and McBean Parkway. Refer to page 4550-E2 of the Thomas Guide, Los Angeles County. Regional and local vicinity maps are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2G.

Vegetation Types

This facility included a willow riparian woodland vegetation type, which was dominated by red willow and arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*); other species present included Fremont cottonwood, mulefat, mugwort, hoary nettle (*Urtica dioica* ssp. *holosericea*), and giant reed (*Arundo donax*). Disturbed and developed areas were also present. This reach was mainly comprised of willow riparian. A vegetation map is attached as Exhibit 3G along with site photographs provided in Exhibit 4G.

Wildlife

This facility is a miscellaneous transfer drain that empties into the Santa Clara River from the concrete levee on the south bank of the river just west of McBean Parkway. The Santa Clara River west of McBean Parkway supports a dense riparian woodland that essentially extends from bank to bank. The riparian woodland provides high quality habitat for a variety of wildlife species.

Native fish species are known from both upstream and downstream of this facility in the Santa Clara River. Therefore, the surface water at the mouth of this miscellaneous transfer drain may harbor native fish species. No amphibians were observed during the facility but the Pacific tree frog and western toad are expected to occur at this facility. The western fence lizard, side-blotched lizard, and southern alligator lizard are expected to occur. Snakes with potential to occur in this channel reach include the gopher snake and western rattlesnake. Bird species observed during the survey included mallard, western scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), and yellow-rumped warbler. Mammals expected to use this facility include the Virginia opossum, desert cottontail, coyote, and common raccoon.

Special Status Species

Due to a lack of suitable habitat, no special status plant species are expected to occur.

There is potential for special status wildlife species to occur at or near this facility. The surface water at this facility provides potentially suitable habitat for the State and Federally Endangered unarmored threespine stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus santaannae*). Therefore, pre-clearing surveys for the unarmored threespine stickleback are recommended prior to annual maintenance activities if surface water is present in this soft-bottom channel reach. The Federally Endangered arroyo toad (*Bufo californicus*) is known to occur in this part of the Santa Clara River. Therefore, prior to clearing activities, it is expected that the LACDPW will need a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service similar to the one that was issued for soft-bottom channel reaches 71 and 82. In addition, the riparian woodland habitats provide potentially suitable habitat for the Federally Endangered southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traili extimus*) and the State and Federally Endangered least Bell's vireo at this facility. Therefore, focused surveys are recommended for the southwestern willow flycatcher and least Bell's vireo prior to maintenance activities at this facility

Pico Canyon SBC (PD 2528)

Location

Pico Canyon SBC is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, just west of Santa Clarita, and is bounded mainly by residential development; Stevenson Ranch DB is located at the southwest end of this channel reach. Surface water was present during the survey. The reach is located within the Newhall (and close to the edge of the Oat Mountain) USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. It is located north of Pico Canyon Road, and west of The Old Road and Interstate-5. Refer to pages 4640-C1 and D1 and 4550-D7 of the Thomas Guide, Los Angeles County. Regional and local vicinity maps are attached as Exhibits 1 and 2H.

Vegetation Types

This facility included a freshwater marsh (disturbed) vegetation type, which was dominated by narrow-leaved cattails and red willow seedlings; other species present included mulefat seedlings, cocklebur, annual beard grass, barnyard grass, horseweed, and white water cress (*Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum*). Open water, ornamental, and developed areas were also present. Overall, this reach was mainly comprised of freshwater marsh (disturbed) and areas of open water. A vegetation map is attached as Exhibit 3H along with site photographs provided in Exhibit 4H.

Wildlife

This facility is immediately downstream from the Stevenson Ranch Debris Basin and is mostly surrounded by residential developments. The banks of the soft-bottom channel reach are concrete. The relatively narrow soft-bottom invert supports open water and patches of vegetation that are mostly freshwater marsh and do provide relatively low quality habitat value for wildlife. Since the facility is surrounded by fences and development, goes underground at its downstream terminus, and starts upstream at the debris basin spillway, wildlife use is expected to be limited.

The relative isolation of this facility indicates that native fish species are not expected to occur, although the western mosquito fish may have been introduced for mosquito control. The Pacific tree frog was detected during the survey and the western toad may occur. The western fence lizard is expected to occur but other lizard species or snake species would be unexpected at this facility. Bird species observed during the survey included American kestrel, mallard, black phoebe, yellow-rumped warbler, common yellowthroat, red-winged blackbird, and song sparrow. Mammals expected to use this facility include the Virginia opossum and common raccoon.

Special Status Species

Due to a lack of suitable habitat, no special status plant species are expected to occur.

The potential for special status wildlife species to occur at this facility is limited to the occasional bird visitor, such as the Cooper's hawk that may temporarily use the site for foraging. No wildlife species are expected to use this facility to the extent that focused surveys would be warranted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, BonTerra Consulting recommends that focused surveys be conducted at four of the eight facilities discussed above.

Greensbrier Debris Basin – Focused plant surveys for the slender mariposa lily and Plummer's mariposa lily are recommended. Focused wildlife surveys are recommended for the coastal California gnatcatcher.

Wellington Debris Basin – Focused plant surveys for southern tarplant and smooth tarplant are recommended. Focused wildlife surveys for least Bell's vireo are recommended.

San Francisquito Canyon SBC (Right Bank Levee [PD 2262]) – If surface water is present prior to clearing activities in this facility, then surveys for the unarmored threespine stickleback are recommended.

Santa Clara River SBC (South Bank West of McBean Parkway [MTD 1510]) – If surface water is present prior to clearing activities in this facility, then surveys for the unarmored threespine stickleback are recommended. In addition, since the arroyo toad is known to occur in this part of the Santa Clara River, it is expected that the LACDPW will need a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service similar to the one issued for soft-bottom channel reaches 71 and 82 prior to clearing activities. Focused wildlife surveys for the southwestern willow flycatcher and least Bell's vireo are recommended.

BonTerra Consulting has appreciated the opportunity to assist on this project. If you have any comments or questions, please call Marc Blain or Tom Smith at (626) 351-2000.

Sincerely,

BONTERRA CONSULTING

Thomas E. Smith, Jr., AICP, FSMPS
Principal

Marc T. Blain
Biological Resources Manager

Attachments: Exhibit 1 – Regional Location
Exhibits 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2G and 2H – Local Vicinity
Exhibits 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E, 3F, 3G and 3H – Vegetation Types
Exhibits 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E, 4F, 4G and 4H – Site Photographs

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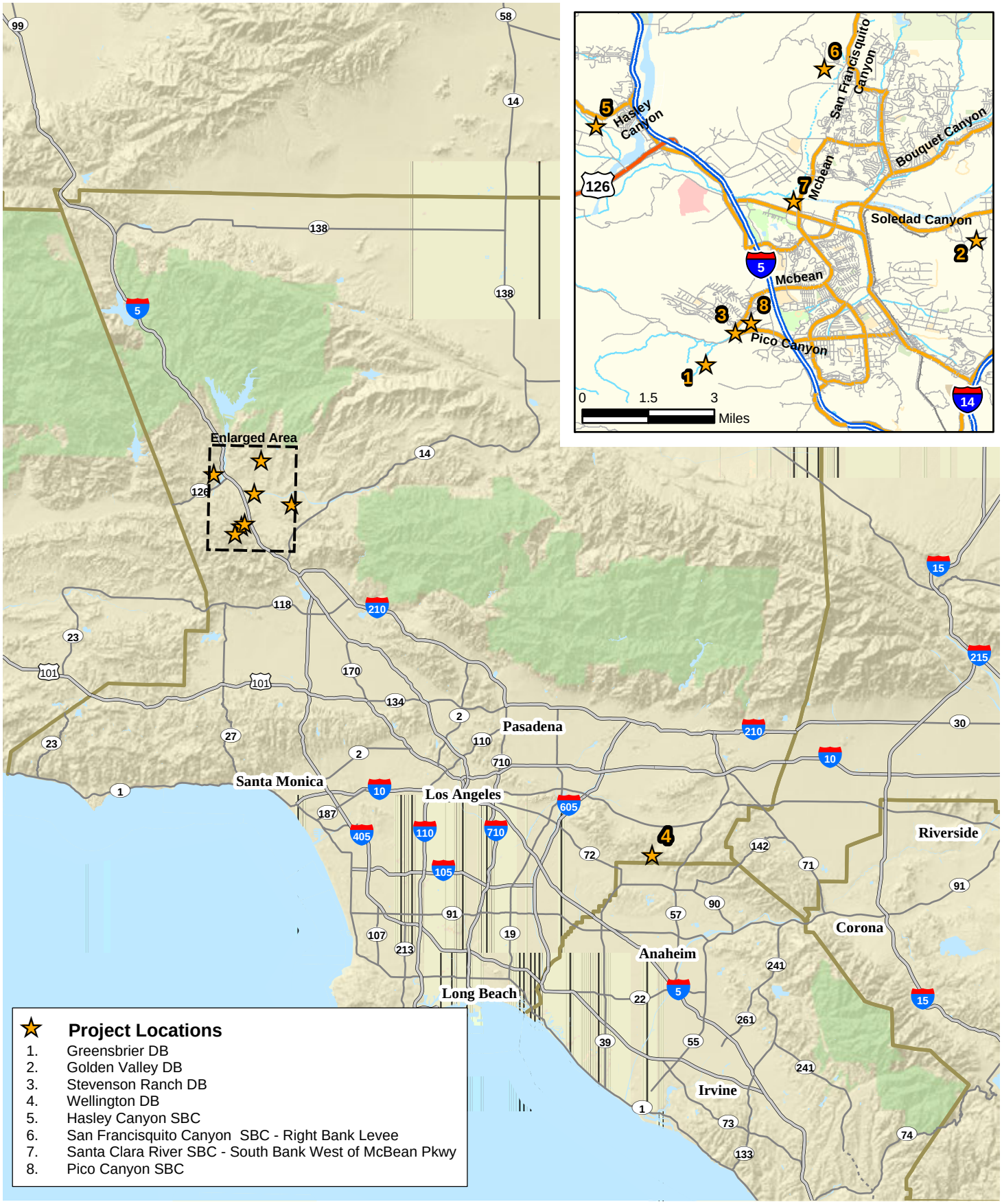
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Regional Location

Exhibit 1

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

N W E S

12 6 0 12 Miles

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Local Vicinity: Greensbrier DB (PD 2495)

Exhibit 2A

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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0.5 0.25 0 0.5 Miles

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Local Vicinity: Golden Valley DB (PD 1772-1)

Exhibit 2B

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

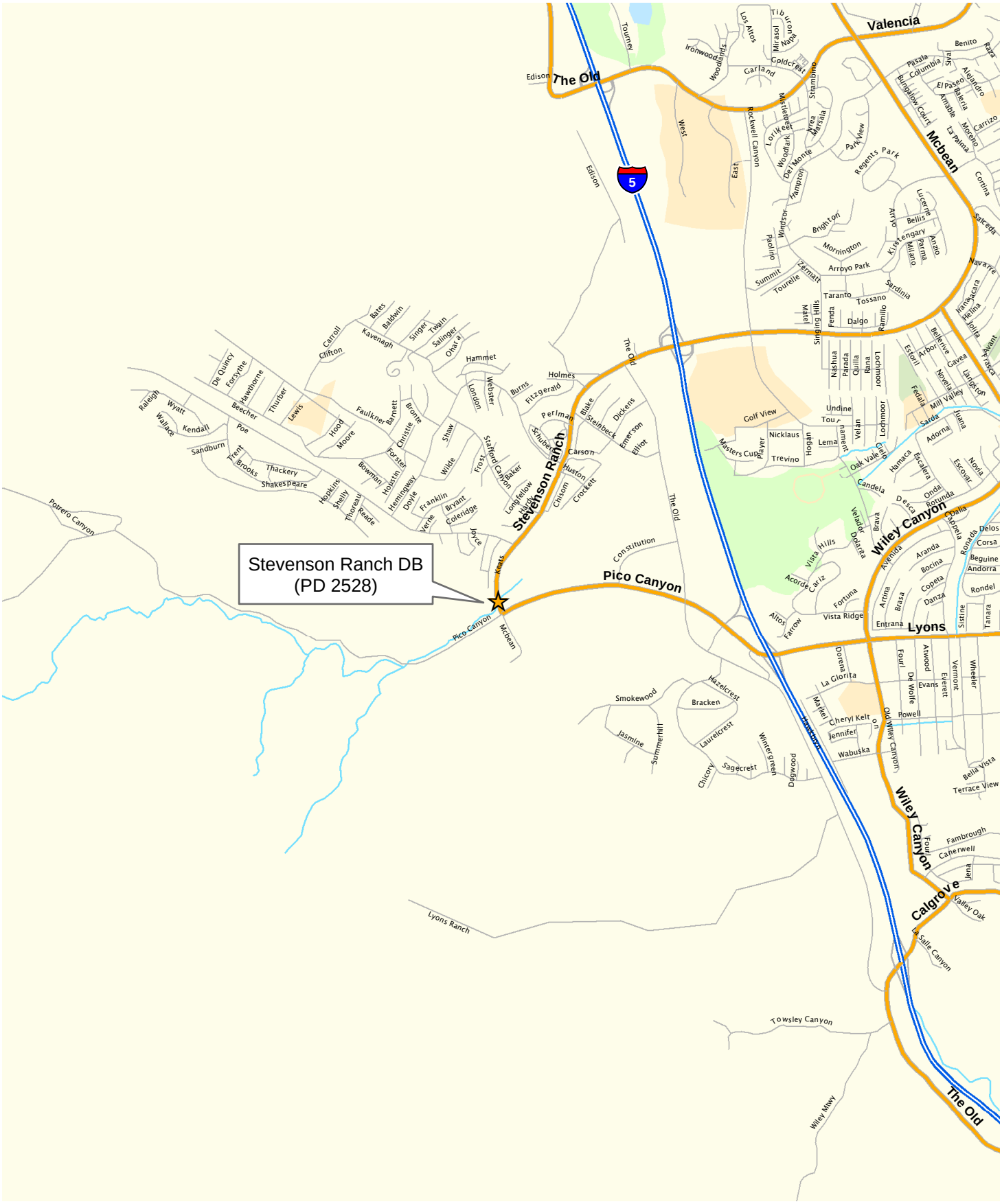
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BonTerra CONSULTING

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Local Vicinity: Stevenson Ranch DB (PD 2528)

Exhibit 2C

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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0.5 0.25 0 0.5 Miles

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Local Vicinity: Wellington DB (PD 2202 – Unit B)

Exhibit 2D

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

N W E S

0.5 0.25 0 0.5 Miles

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Local Vicinity: Hasley Canyon SBC (PD 2262)

Exhibit 2E

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

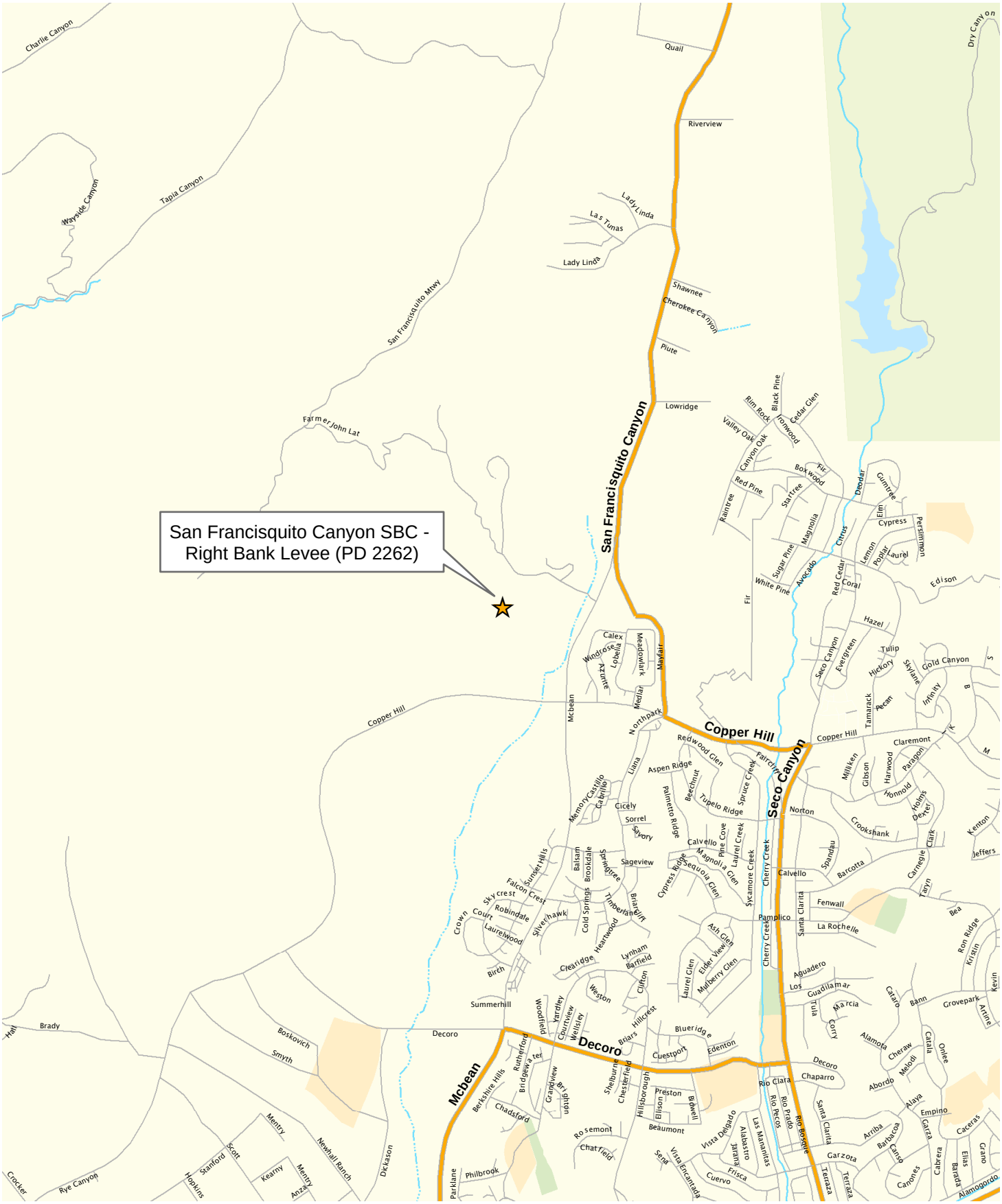
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BonTerra CONSULTING

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Local Vicinity: San Francisquito Canyon SBC – Right Bank Levee (PD 2262)

Exhibit 2F

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

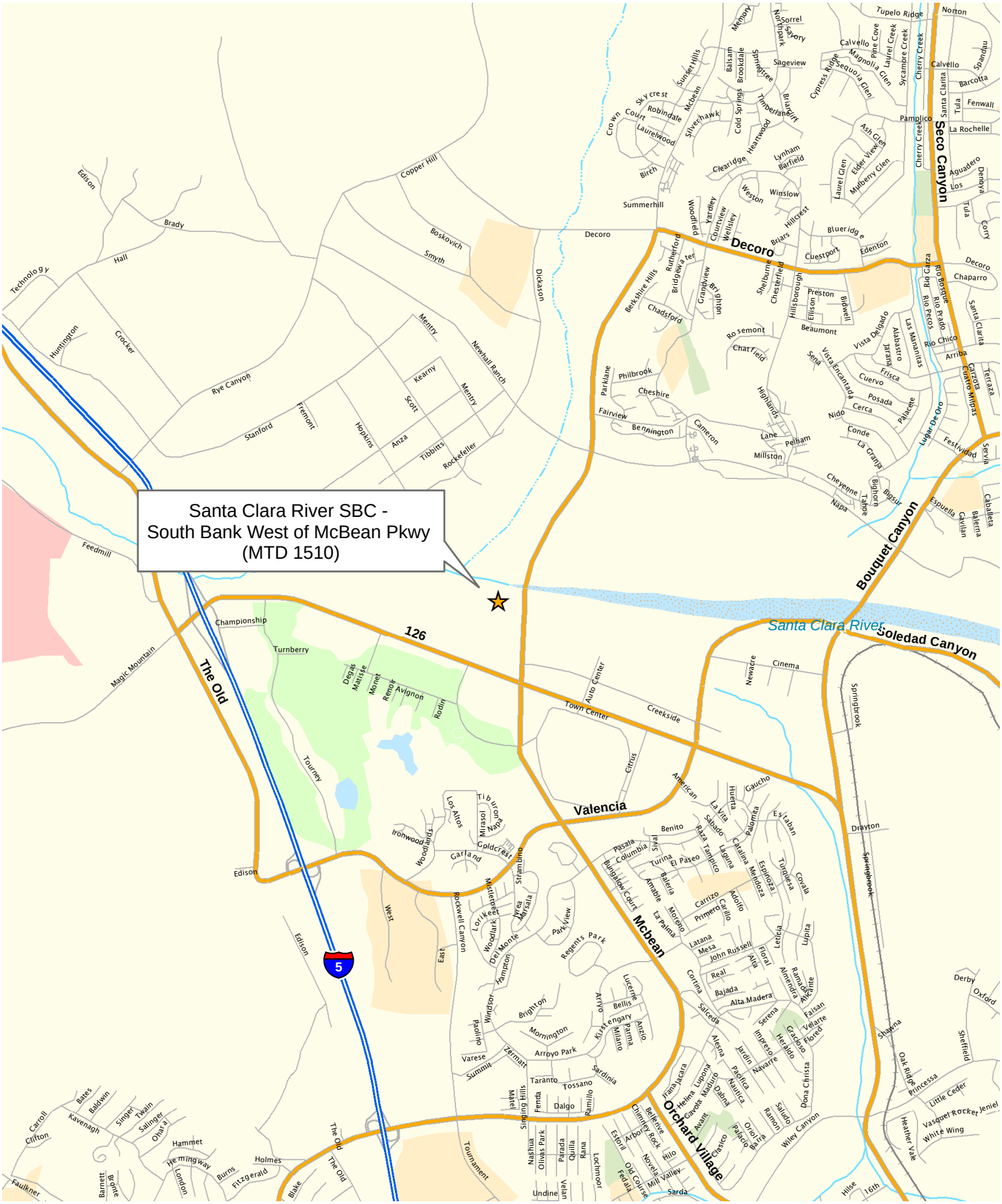
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Local Vicinity: Santa Clara River SBC – South Bank West of McBean Pkwy (MTD 1510) Exhibit 2G

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

N W E S

0.5 0.25 0 0.5 Miles

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Local Vicinity: Pico Canyon SBC (PD 2528)

Exhibit 2H

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

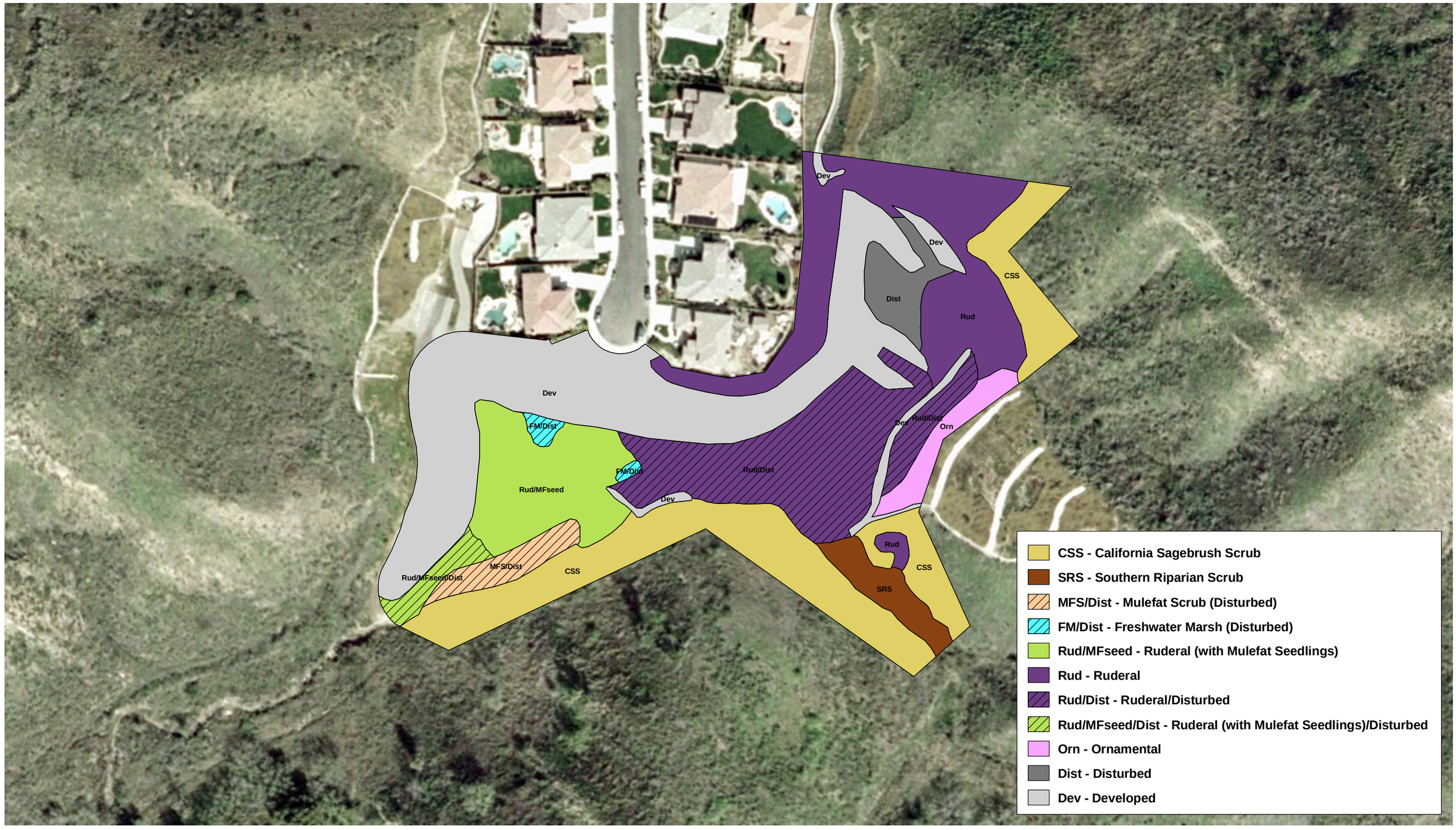
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Vegetation Types: Greensbrier DB (PD 2495)

Exhibit 3A

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

N W E S

100 50 0 100 Feet

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Vegetation Types: Golden Valley DB (PD 1772-1)

Exhibit 3B

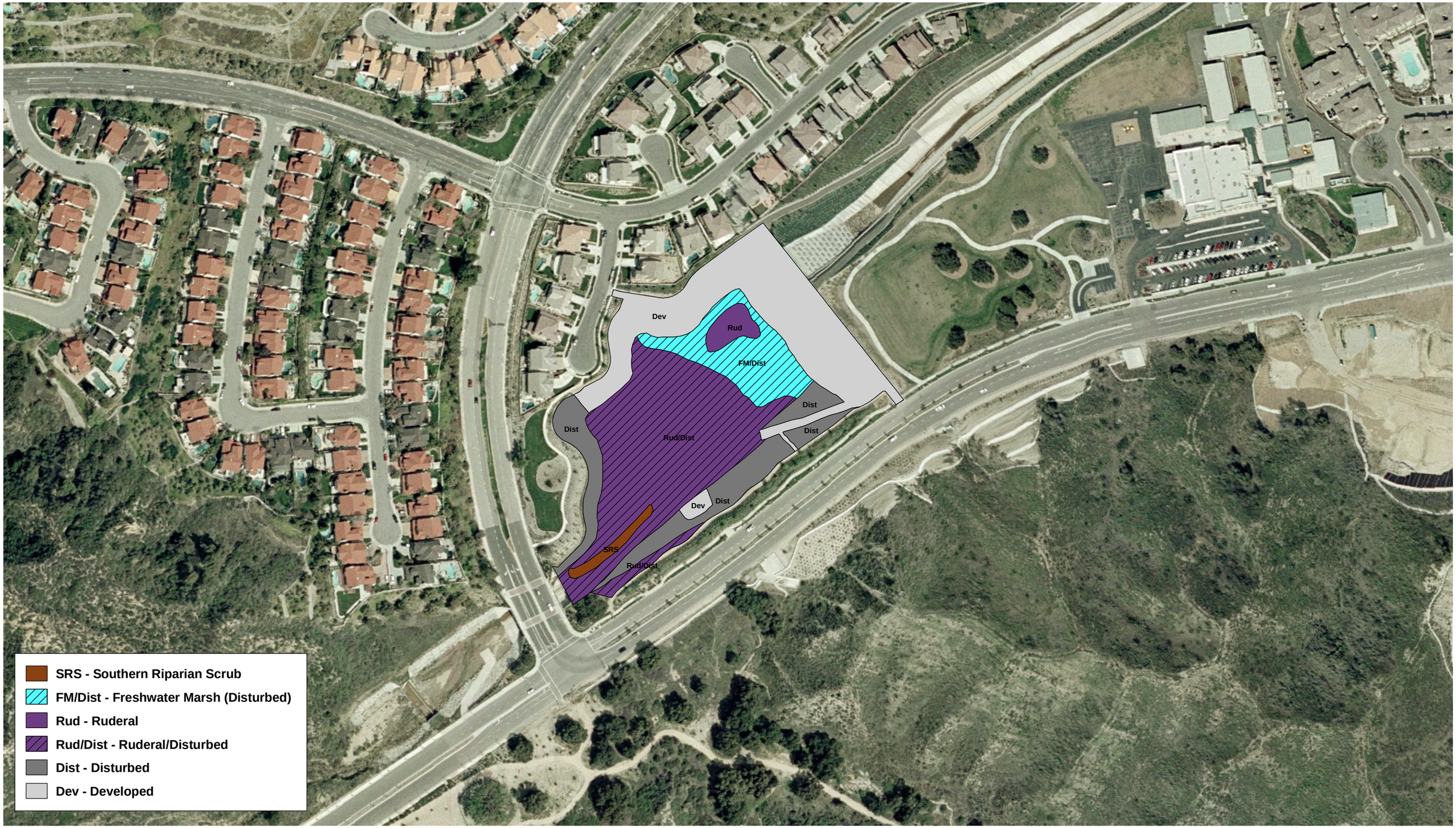
Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

N W E S

100 50 0 100 Feet

BonTerra CONSULTING

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Vegetation Types: Stevenson Ranch DB (PD 2528)

Exhibit 3C

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

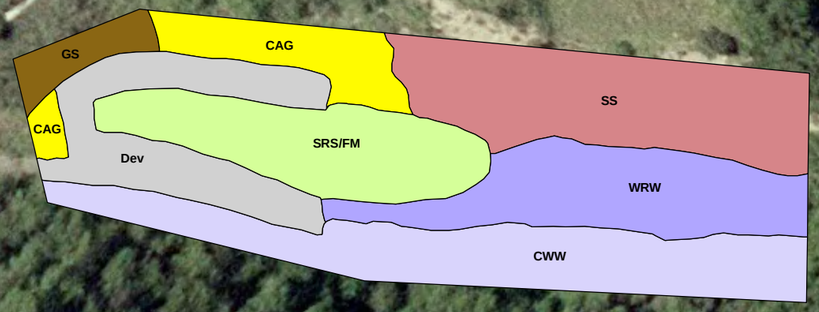
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200 100 0 200

Feet

BonTerra CONSULTING

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- GS - Goldenbush Scrub
- SS - Sumac Scrub
- CAG - California Annual Grassland
- SRS/FM - Southern Riparian Scrub/Freshwater Marsh
- WRW - Willow Riparian Woodland
- CWW - California Walnut Woodland
- Dev - Developed

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Vegetation Types: Wellington DB (PD 2202 – Unit B)

Exhibit 3D

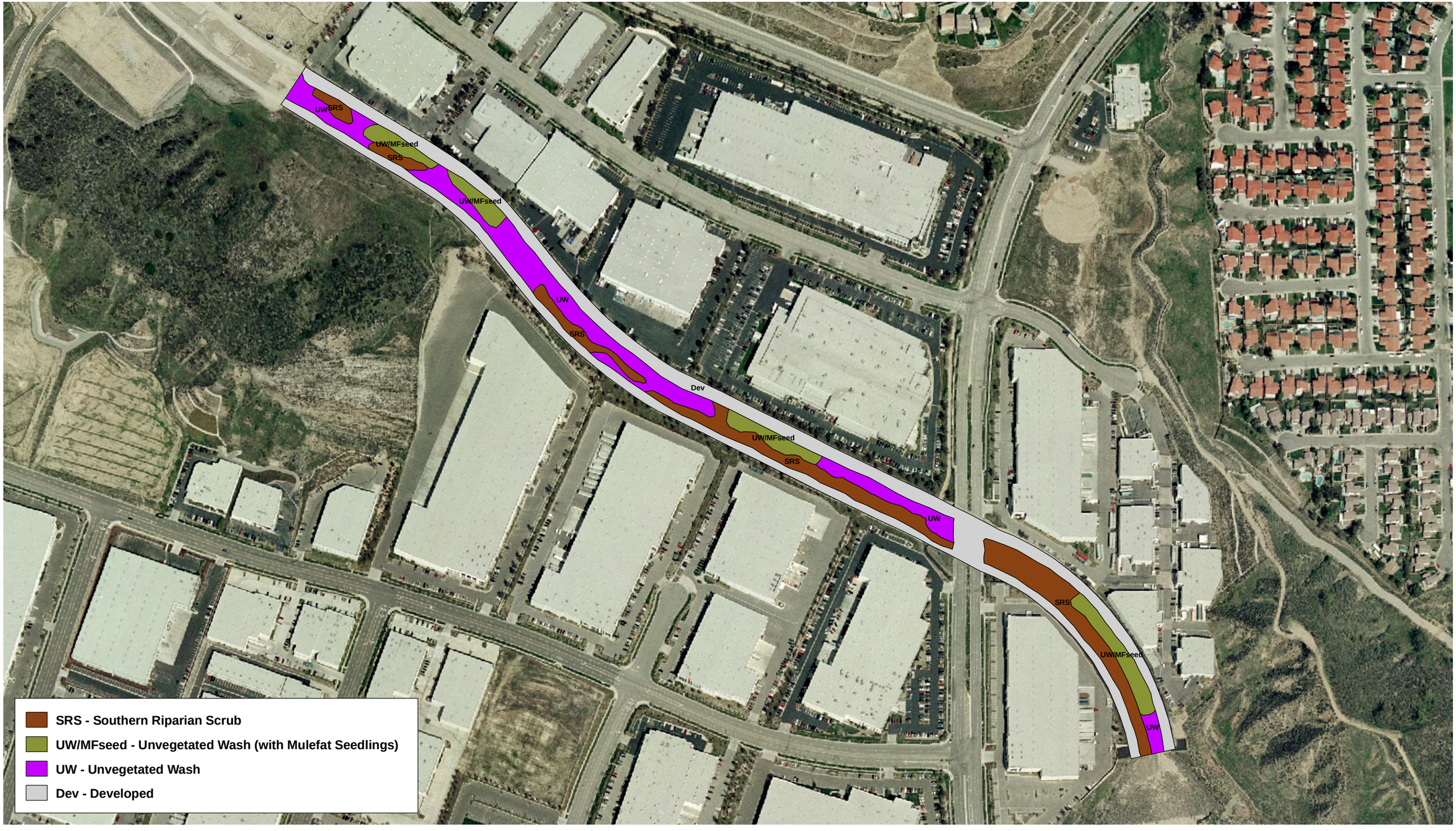
Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

N W E S

100 50 0 100 Feet

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Vegetation Types: Hasley Canyon SBC (PD 2262)

Exhibit 3E

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

N W E S

300 150 0 300

Feet

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Vegetation Types: San Francisquito Canyon SBC – Right Bank Levee (PD 2262)

Exhibit 3F

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Vegetation Types: Santa Clara River SBC – South Bank West of McBean Pkwy (MTD 1510)

Exhibit 3G

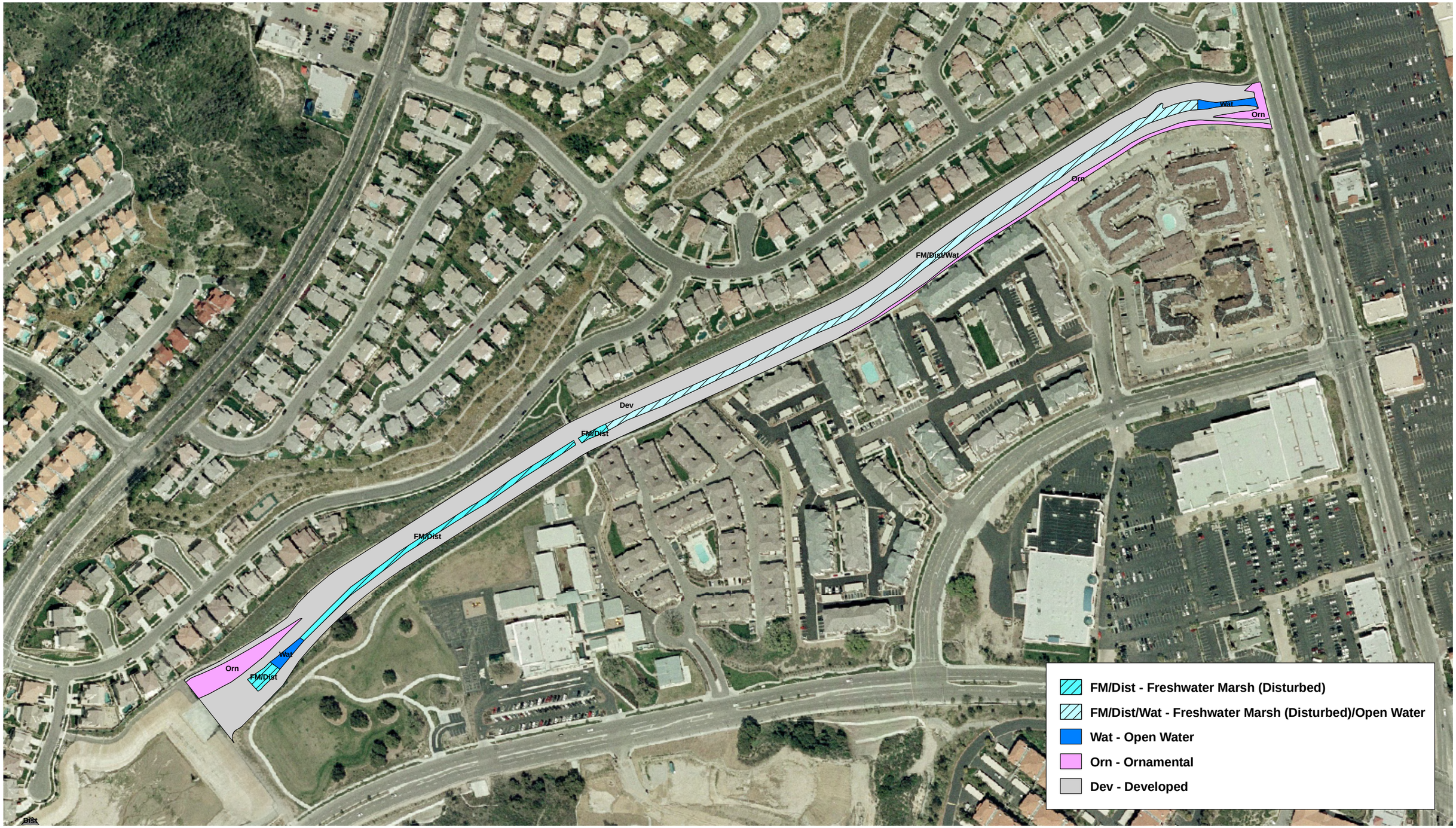
Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Vegetation Types: Pico Canyon SBC (PD 2528)

Exhibit 3H

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Site Photographs: Greensbrier DB (PD 2495) Exhibit 4A

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Site Photographs: Golden Valley DB (PD 1772-1) Exhibit 4B

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Site Photographs: Stevenson Ranch DB (PD 2528)

Exhibit 4C

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Site Photographs: Wellington DB (PD 2202- Unit B) Exhibit 4D

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Site Photographs: Hasley Canyon SBC (PD 2262) Exhibit 4E

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Site Photographs: San Francisquito Canyon SBC – Right Bank Levee (PD 2262)

Exhibit 4F

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Site Photographs: Santa Clara River SBC –
South Bank West of McBean Pkwy (MTD 1510)

Exhibit 4G

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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Site Photographs: Pico Canyon – SBC (PD 2528) Exhibit 4H

Eight Flood Control Facilities, Los Angeles County, California

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