

APPENDIX 5.11 GP-1

SBLAFCO CORTESE-KNOX HERTZBERG LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION ACT

Barstow International Gateway Proposed General Plan SBLAFCO Cortese-Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BIG	Barstow International Gateway
BNSF	BNSF Railway
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CKH Act	Cortese-Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
MP	Mile Pole
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
SBCFCD	San Bernardino County Flood Control District
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cortese-Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization (CKH) Act grants Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) various powers but primarily the powers to act on local agency boundary changes and adopt local agency sphere of influence (SOI). The Local Agency Formation Commission for San Bernardino County (SBLAFCO) is the LAFCO governing the Project area. In their review of proposed actions, the SBLAFCO uses the definition for Prime Agricultural Land provided in California Government Code §56064; see Section 0:

Cortese Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 for definition. In contrast, CEQA Environmental Quality Statute § 21060.1 defines Important Farmland categories as “agricultural land” for purposes of CEQA analysis. This Appendix for the City of Barstow’s General Plan Update (“Proposed General Plan”) was prepared on behalf of the City of Barstow to identify the land which qualifies as Prime Agricultural Land within the Proposed General Plan’s Annexation Action areas. This Appendix only evaluates land which would be annexed from San Bernardino County into the City of Barstow and excludes land which would be annexed into Special Districts.

1.1 Project Location

As depicted in **Figure 1: SBLAFCO Action Area A and B**, the proposed General Plan proposes SBLAFCO Actions A and B, which are located at the eastern extent of the City of Barstow. SBLAFCO Action A would include annexation to the City of Barstow of approximately 2,686 acres (expansion), including 2,676 acres within the BIG Specific Plan area and 10 acres to be rezoned Business Park (BP). SBLAFCO Action B would include annexation to the City of Barstow of approximately 99 acres (expansion), to be rezoned Business Park (BP).

1.2 Cortese Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000

Local area formation commissions (LAFCOs) are public agencies within each county with regulatory authority over local agency boundary changes. Among the stated legislative purposes for their creation, LAFCOs are formed to discourage urban sprawl, preserve open space and prime agricultural lands, efficiently provide government services, and encourage orderly formation and development of local agencies. As discussed above, various laws have been enacted further defining LAFCO responsibility and authority. The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH Act) substantially amended the Cortese-Knox Local Government Reorganization Act of 1985 and further clarified the purpose and mission of LAFCOs. California Government Code §56064, defines Prime Agricultural Land as an area of land, whether a single parcel or contiguous parcels, which has not been developed for a use other than an agricultural use and that meets any of the following criteria:

Criteria 1. Land that qualifies, if irrigated, for rating as class I or class II in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service land use capability classification, whether or not land is actually irrigated, provided that irrigation is feasible.

Criteria 2. Land that qualifies for rating 80 through 100 Storie Index Rating.

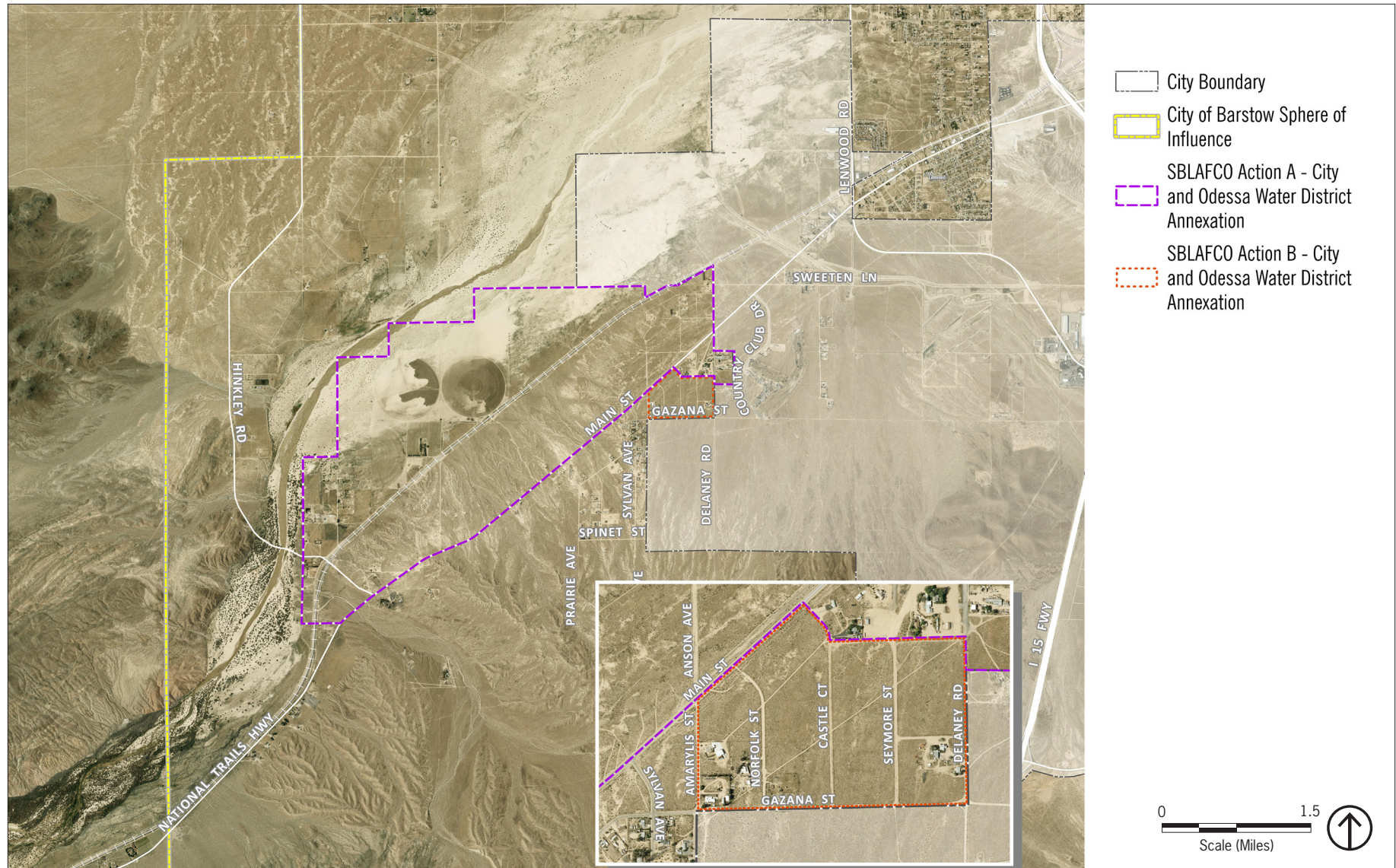
Criteria 3. Land that supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and that has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the USDA in the

National Handbook on Range and Related Grazing Lands, July 1967, developed pursuant to Public Law 46, December 1935.

Criteria 4. Land planted with fruit or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops that have a nonbearing period of less than five years and that will return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than four hundred dollars (\$400) per acre.

Criteria 5. Land that has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant products an annual gross value of not less than four hundred dollars (\$400) per acre for three of the previous five calendar years.

It is noted, land identified as “Prime Agricultural Land” under the CKH Act is not incorporated into the CEQA significance thresholds, or State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Checklist questions from which the significance thresholds are derived.



Sources:
City of Barstow, 2025.

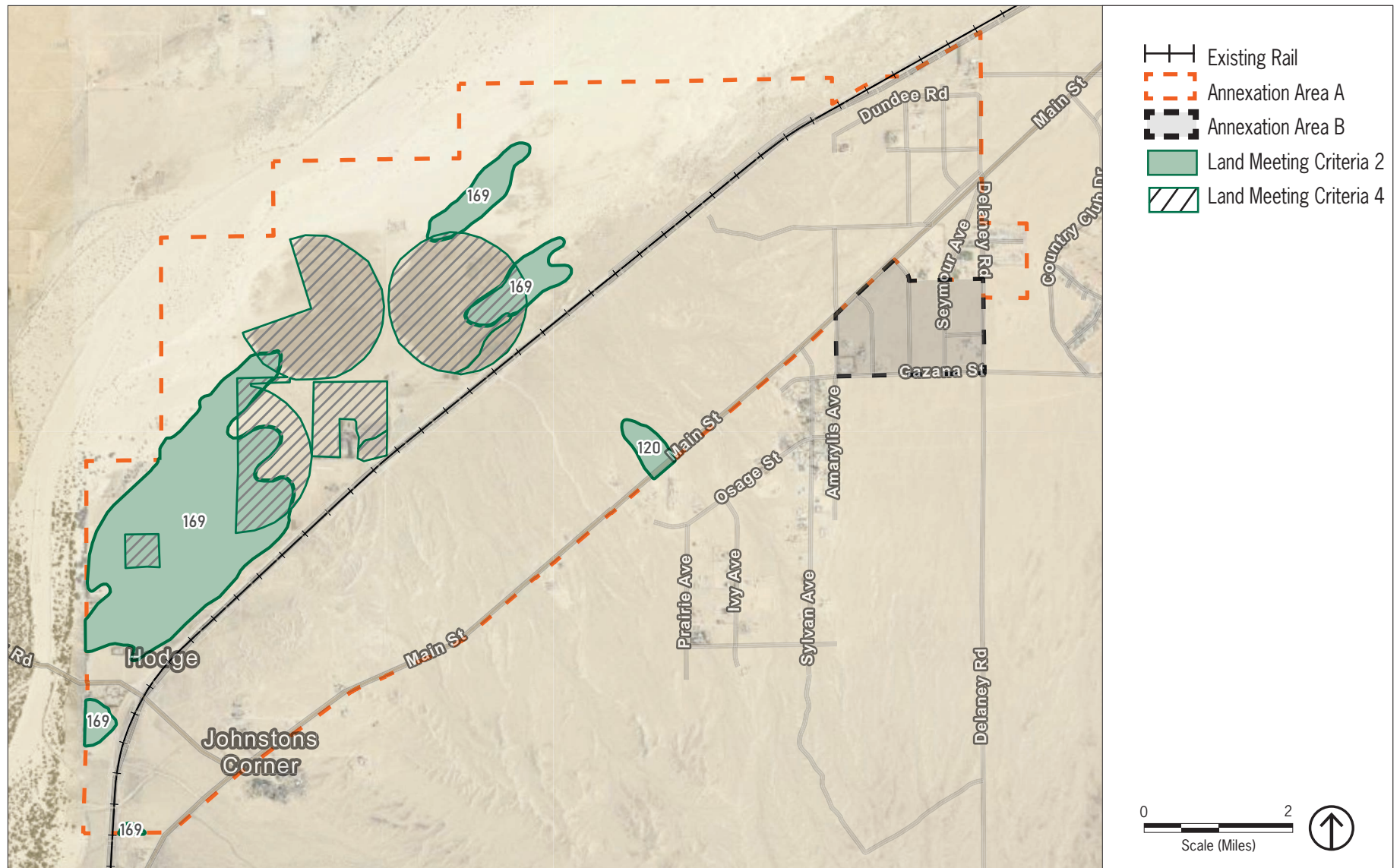
Figure 1
SBLAFCO Action Area A and B

2.0 PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND UNDER THE CKH ACT

The Proposed General Plan proposes to annex into the City approximately 2,785 total acres of currently unincorporated County land. Thus, per the CKH Act, this analysis calculates the acreage of Prime Agricultural Land within the approximately 2,785 acres Annexation Action Area A and B. Analysts reviewed data from NRCS for parcels within that area to determine whether they would meet the CKH Act definition of Prime Agricultural Land. As previously stated above, Prime Agricultural Land is defined as an area of land, whether a single parcel or contiguous parcels, which has not been developed for a use other than an agricultural use and that meets any of the five criteria regarding irrigation, soil type, and historical or current livestock and agricultural production. Within Annexation Action Area A and B, the amount of land that would meet any of the CKH Act criteria for Prime Agricultural Land differs from the amount of land that would qualify as Important Farmland under the FMMP.

2.1 CKH Act Criteria Methodology

Figure 2: Prime Agricultural Land (Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act) depicts the Prime Agricultural Lands, as defined under the CKH Act, that are within Annexation Action Area A and B. Per California Government Code § 56064, land within Annexation Action Area A and B was determined to be Prime Agricultural Land if it had not been developed for a use other than an agricultural use and met one of the five criteria detailed in **Section 1.2** above. Therefore, analysis was focused on land within Annexation Action Area A and B which has not been developed for a use other than an agricultural use. This area was then further analyzed to determine if it met any of the criteria.



Sources:
United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Services, 2025
Soil Shapefiles, 2025; United States Department of Agriculture, Custom Soil Resource
Reports for San Bernardino County, California, Mojave River Area: Barstow International
Gateway Annexation Area Report, 2025.

Figure 2
Prime Agricultural Land (Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act)

2.2 Prime Agricultural Land (SBLAFCO)

As displayed above in **Figure 2** and outlined below in **Table 1: Prime Agricultural Land (LAFCO)**, the analysis determined approximately 543 acres of Annexation Area A qualifies as Prime Agricultural Land as defined by the CKH Act, including approximately 236 acres under CKH Act Criteria 2 and approximately 307 acres under CKH Act Criteria 2 and 4. **Table 1** below provides a breakdown of the acreages under each criteria designation. Note that because the Prime Agricultural Land qualifies based on soil status (i.e., CKH Act Criteria 2) and agricultural production (CKH Act Criteria 4), the Prime Agricultural Land boundaries do not necessarily correspond to parcel boundaries. As shown by **Figure 2**, Annexation Area B does not contain any areas that qualify as Prime Agricultural Land as defined by the CKH Act. That is, no areas of Annexation Area B qualify based on soils status (i.e., CKH Act Criteria 2) and agricultural production (CKH Act Criteria 4).¹

Further, approximately 56 acres of land which qualifies as meeting Criteria 4 (i.e., contains land which is currently or historically been used for agricultural purposes) is also located within land that qualifies as Criteria 2 (i.e., contains soils with a Storie Index rating between 80 and 100).

Table 1: Prime Agricultural Land (LAFCO)		
Description	Criteria Applicability	Total (Acres)
Criteria 1: Land qualifies under Criteria 1 if soil conditions are considered to be USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service class I or II, provided that irrigation is feasible.	As determined in Appendix 5.2 BIG-1 , irrigation is feasible within the Annexation Action Area. However, as identified in the USDA Soil Report (see Appendix 5.2 BIG-1 , Attachment A), no soils within Annexation Action Area A are classified as USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service class I or II. Therefore, no land within Annexation Action Area A qualifies as Prime Agricultural Land under Criteria 1.	0
Criteria 2: Land qualifies under Criteria 2 if the soil is determined to have a Storie Index Rating from 80 to 100.	As identified in the USDA Soil Report (see Appendix 5.2 BIG-1 , Attachment A), approximately 292 acres concentrated in the southwestern portion of Annexation Action Area A were identified as having a Storie Index Rating from 80 to 100. The approximately 292 acres of land include approximately 10 acres of cave loam dry (0 to 2 percent slope) and 282 acres of Victorville sandy loam (USDA, 2025). Therefore, these areas are considered Prime Agricultural Land by CKH. It should be noted that approximately 56 acres of land which qualifies as meeting Criteria 2 are also located within land that qualifies as Criteria 4 (i.e., contains land which is currently or historically been used for agricultural purposes), therefore, approximately 236 acres meet Criteria 2.	236
Criteria 3: Land qualifies under Criteria 3 if the properties have	No land within Annexation Action Area A has been found to support livestock used for the production of food and fiber.	0

¹ Note: Annexation Area B lies outside of the BIG Specific Plan area and, therefore, is not being converted from its existing uses by the Barstow International Gateway Project (i.e., that would result in the pre-mature conversion of agricultural land). Annexation Area B would be incorporated into the City and subject to the City's zoning. However, there are no specific development proposals at this time for Annexation Area B.

Table 1: Prime Agricultural Land (LAFCO)

Description	Criteria Applicability	Total (Acres)
supported livestock used for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre, as defined by the USDA in the National Handbook on Range and Related Grazing Lands, July 1967, developed pursuant to Public Law 46, December 1935.	Therefore, no land within Annexation Action Area A qualifies as Prime Agricultural Land under Criteria 3.	
Criteria 4¹: Land qualifies under Criteria 4 if the properties have been planted with fruit or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops that have a nonbearing period of less than five years and which will return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than \$400 per acre.	Annexation Action Area A includes land comprised of approximately 578 acres of alfalfa croplands and three single-family residential dwelling units. This area has been continuously used as farmland since the 1950s (TRC, 2022). Per the California Agricultural Statistics Review, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) determined that the price of alfalfa in calendar year 2021-2022 was approximately \$1,546.60 per acre. Therefore, given 307 acres within Annexation Action Area A have been planted with a crop (alfalfa) which will return more than \$400 per acre, this area is considered Prime Agricultural Land by CKH.	307
Criteria 5: Land qualifies under Criteria 5 if it has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant products an annual gross value of not less than \$400 per acre for three of the previous five calendar years.	No land within Annexation Action Area A has been found to produce unprocessed agricultural plant products. Therefore, no land within Annexation Action Area A qualifies as Prime Agricultural Land under Criteria 5.	0
Total		543
Note: ¹ Approximately 56 acres of the 292 acres of land which qualifies as meeting Criteria 2 (i.e., contains soils with a Storie Index rating between 80 and 100) is also located within land that qualifies as Criteria 4 (i.e., contains land which is currently or historically been used for agricultural purposes), and this area has been removed to avoid duplication.		
Sources: - United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. (2025). <i>2025 Soil Shapefiles</i>. Retrieved from https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/resources/data-and-reports/soil-survey-geographic-database-ssurgo. - Appendix 5.2 BIG-1: California Land Evaluation Site Assessment Model for Barstow International Gateway Project – Custom Soil Resource Report for San Bernardino County, California, Mojave River Area. - California Department of Food and Agriculture. (2024). <i>2023-2024 California Agricultural Statistics Review</i>, page 36. Retrieved from https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/Statistics/.		

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