Updated Biological Resources and Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Consistency Report

Idyllwild Water District
Strawberry Creek Water Diversion Reconstruction Project

Community of Idyllwild, Riverside County, California

Submitted to:

Terra Nova Planning and Research, Inc.®
42635 Melanie Place, Suite 101
Palm Desert, California 92211

Contact: John Criste
(760) 341-4800

Submitted by:

WSP USA Inc
11870 Pierce St #160

Riverside, CA 92506

Contact: Dale Hameister
Senior Biologist
(951) 369-8060, dale.hameister@wwsp.com

WSP Project Number: 322520127

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strawberry Creek Water Diversion Reconstruction Project (project, project site) consist of the reconstruction/rehabilitation of an existing water diversion structure and the relocation of an above-grade waterline. The current diversion structure will be rebuilt in situ with construction staging within the existing Tahquitz Road. The associated water line will be relocated, and the current waterline will be dismantled and removed. The new waterline will be buried within a 45-foot easement along the west side of Tahquitz Road. The work area will also have a 20-foot-wide temporary construction easement. The project site is located within the boundaries of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and this consistency analysis was performed in accordance with the requirements of the MSHCP.

The project site is not within any MSHCP Criteria Cells, Cell Groups, Cores, or Linkages. Studies required by the MSHCP include assessment for riparian/riverine/vernal pool resources, mountain yellow legged frog, and a narrow endemic plant survey for species Johnston's rock cress (*Boechera johnstonii*), Munz's mariposa lily (*Calochortus palmeri* var. *munzii*), and San Jacinto Mtns. bedstraw (*Gallium angustifolium* ssp. *jacinticum*). There are no sensitive species potentially occurring on-site, which were not adequately conserved at the time of MSHCP implementation.

To date, results of those studies include:

- Riparian/riverine habitat is present within a portion of the project site.
- Vernal pools are not present on-site.
- Fairy shrimp habitat is not present on-site.
- No mountain yellow-legged frogs were observed and there is no habitat for breeding on-site.
- No Narrow-Endemic Plants were observed on-site.
- The project site is not within a designated mammal survey area.
- No soils suitable for Delhi Sands flower loving fly are present on-site and the project site is well beyond the known range of the species.
- No other wildlife species “not adequately conserved” have any potential to occur within the project site.

Mitigation for impacts to MSHCP resources will include payment of the standard MSHCP fee. No additional surveys or conservation measures are required. A Determination of Biological Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) report will not be required.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the request of Terra Nova Planning and Research, Inc. (Terra Nova), WSP USA (WSP) conducted a biological resource assessment for the Strawberry Creek Project (project). This document reports the results of that assessment.

1.1 Project description

The project will consist of the reconstruction of an existing water diversion structure and the relocation of an above-grade waterline. The current diversion structure will be rebuilt in situ with construction staging within the existing Tahquitz Road. The associated water line will be relocated, and the current waterline will be dismantled and removed. The new waterline will be buried within a 45-foot easement along the west side of Tahquitz Road. The work area will also have a 20-foot wide temporary construction easement on Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 906-040-021. The 2-acre project site is generally located north of Fern Valley Road, east of Pine Crest Avenue, and west of Tahquitz Road in the unincorporated community of Idyllwild, Riverside County. (Appendix A: Figures 1).

The project is mapped on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) *San Jacinto Peak, California* 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (USGS 1980) within Section 7, Range 3 East, Township 5 South (Appendix A: Figure 2). The site slopes to the west at an elevation of approximately 5,730-5,716 feet above sea level.

1.2 General Setting

A field assessment of the project site was conducted on 10 June 2022 by WSP senior biologist Dale Hameister. Weather conditions were favorable during the 0930–1400 survey with a starting temperature of 64 degrees Fahrenheit, with 0 percent cloud cover, and winds from 2–5 miles per hour. The project site was surveyed again for this updated report on 7 September 2024. The conditions during the second survey were 73 degrees Fahrenheit with 100 percent cloud cover and winds of 0-3 mph. The entire site was walked. All flora and fauna detected (e.g., through direct observation, vocalizations, presence of scat, tracks, and/or bones) during the assessment were recorded in field notes and are included in Appendix B. Representative photographs are included in Appendix C.

Surrounding land uses include residential development within a forest mountain setting. The project area within the channel of Strawberry Creek Soil mapping (Appendix A: Figure 3) indicates the soils within the project site are uniform with no indications of alkali soils, saline soils, or other unique soils characteristics. The project site contains one soil mapping unit:

- Wind River-Oak Glen families association, 2 to 15 percent slopes (USDA 2024b)

This soil type is not known to be specifically associated with any sensitive biological resources.

There is no evidence of recent agricultural usage. There are existing cabins on-site. There is one drainage within the project site (Strawberry Creek), which is characterized as a District-owned

grouted concrete channel with an existing diversion structure, which is proposed for insitu repair and replacement.

The project area contains Ponderosa pine - Incense Cedar - Douglas fir forest and woodland (*Pinus ponderosa - Calocedrus decurrens - Pseudotsuga menziesii* Forest & Woodland Alliance) (Saywer, Keeler, Wolf 2009), developed areas including existing cabins, and disturbed area with mostly bare soil. The project site does not contain Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), but it does meet the requirement for this vegetation community. Tree canopy species within the survey area include incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*), yellow pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), and California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*). Shrubs observed within the understory of the forest canopy include Eastwood's manzanita (*Arctostaphylos glandulosa*), sweet-shrub (*Calycanthus occidentalis*), mountain pink currant (*Ribes nevadense*), and mountain whitethorn (*Ceanothus cordulatus*). Understory grasses and herbaceous species include California mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*), feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*), imbricate phacelia (*Phacelia imbricata*), silver bird's-foot trefoil (*Acmispon argophyllus*), broad leaved lotus (*Hosackia crassifolia*), broad-leaved lupine (*Lupinus latifolius*), San Jacinto buckwheat (*Eriogonum apiculatum*), Grinnell's beard tongue (*Penstemon grinnellii*), plain mariposa lily (*Calochortus invenustus*), and squirrel tail grass (*Elymus elymoides*). Vegetation within the creek area was observed on the banks and among boulders and at the edges of the grouted creek bottom (existing diversion structure). Species observed within Strawberry Creek include cobwebby hedge nettle (*Stachys albens*), cardinal monkey flower (*Erythranthe cardinalis*), yellow monkeyflower (*Erythranthe guttata*), and sturdy sedge (*Carex alma*). One single narrowleaf willow (*Salix exigua*) shrub was observed near the bridge but is outside of the work area.

Representative vertebrate species observed in the project site included acorn woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*), white-headed woodpecker (*Picoides albolarvatus*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), spotted towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*), white-breasted nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis*), black-headed grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*), and house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*).

2.0 WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MSHCP ANALYSIS

The Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional effort that includes western Riverside County, the cities within it, and seven public agencies. Rather than address sensitive species on an individual basis, the purpose of the MSHCP is to focus on the collective conservation of 146 species known to occur in the coverage area. Most importantly, the MSHCP allows participating entities to issue take permits for listed species so that individual applicants need not seek their own permits on a case-by-case basis from the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The MSHCP consists of a reserve system of approximately 500,000 acres, the “conservation area,” and includes a mechanism to fund and implement the reserve system (Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority [WRCRCA] 2021a). Approximately 347,000 acres of the reserve system are currently within public ownership (such as Public-Quasi

Public Conserved Lands [PQP] and WRCRCA Conserved Lands) and 153,000 acres are currently in private ownership (mostly in Criteria Areas that have not yet been added to the conservation area). This 500,000-acre reserve system throughout the County is intended to compensate for impacts to these sensitive species from development projects throughout the plan area. The MSCHP is designed to contribute to the economic viability of the County by providing landowners and developers with a more efficient and cost-effective regulatory and permitting process. The MSHCP was adopted on June 17, 2003 by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, and the Incidental Take Authorization issued by both the USFWS and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG, since becoming the CDFW) on 22 June 2004, thereby approving the final MSHCP. In western Riverside County many federal and state listed or sensitive species and habitats are now considered "covered species" under the MSHCP. In most instances the MSHCP requires no further surveys for covered species; however, under certain circumstances or in certain areas additional surveys for thirty-eight of these species are required. This plan satisfies requirements of the Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) legislation. The MSHCP does not address Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) nor the Streambed Alteration Agreement provisions of the California Fish and Game Code, (Section 1600). Projects that currently require a Section 404 permit or Streambed Alteration Agreement will continue to do so notwithstanding the MSHCP. Additionally, the MSHCP does not provide a means of compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). The MSHCP is permitted under the federal Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) program and the state Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program.

2.1 RESERVE ASSEMBLY ANALYSIS

2.1.1 Criteria Cells/Groups

No part of the project site lies within or adjacent to any MSHCP Criteria Cells or Cell Groups. Therefore, the project will have no effect on the assembly of the MSHCP reserve (Appendix A: Figure 4).

2.1.2 Public Quasi-Public Lands

No part of the project site lies within or adjacent to any Public Quasi-Public Lands (PQP). Therefore, the project will have no effect on PQP. Guidelines pertaining to the Urban/Wildlands Interface are not required for this project.

3.0 VEGETATION MAPPING

The project site contains no covered native vegetation communities/land cover categories. The project site is described as Ponderosa pine - Incense Cedar - Douglas fir forest and woodland (*Pinus ponderosa - Calocedrus decurrens - Pseudotsuga menziesii* Forest & Woodland Alliance), developed, and disturbed areas (Appendix A: Figure 5). Disturbed/developed areas are also present consisting of disrobed bare soil, existing cabins, and the paved roadways.

4.0 PROTECTION OF SPECIES ASSOCIATED WITH RIPARIAN/RIVERINE AREAS AND VERNAL POOLS (SECTION 6.1.2)

The MSHCP describes riparian/riverine areas as lands which contain habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, or emergent mosses and lichens, which occur close to or which depend upon soil moisture from a nearby fresh water source or areas with freshwater flow during all or a portion of the year. It also describes vernal pools as seasonal wetlands that occur in depression areas that have wetlands indicators of all three parameters (soils, vegetation and hydrology) during the wetter portion of the growing season but normally lack wetlands indicators of hydrology and/or vegetation during the drier portion of the growing season. Obligate hydrophytes and facultative wetlands plant species are normally dominant during the wetter portion of the growing season, while upland species (annuals) may be dominant during the drier portion of the growing season.

Based on the field assessment, the area within the banks of Strawberry Creek would be considered riverine. The tree canopy does not change significantly outside of the creek and therefore lacks any significant riparian areas. The riverine/riparian area is based on the upper banks of the creek and not defined by the edge of any riparian vegetation. There are a few white alder trees downstream from the project work area, but they are intermixed with pines, cedars, and black oak trees in an off-site location. The project site has no evidence of any vernal pools. There were small shallow pools observed within the existing diversion structure and associated grouted stream channel of Strawberry Creek. These small pools do not provide viable fairy shrimp habitat as they are part of an active channel that receives flows during storms and during periods of snowmelt. Therefore, the project site does not contain any suitable habitat for listed fairy shrimp species.

According to Terra Nova, the work within the channel will repair and rebuild the existing diversion structure, including the grouted bottom of the creek. The current above ground waterline connected to the existing diversion structure will be dismantled and removed. The new waterline will be buried within a 45-foot easement along the west side of Tahquitz Road.

Impacts to the riverine portions of the project co-terminus with the existing diversion structure will be limited to the in-situ repair and reconstruction of the diversion structure. Since no riparian vegetation will be removed, there will be no significant impacts to the riverine/riparian area. The project will be removing and replacing drainage hardware without significantly impacting vegetation, flow, or the bottom of the creek. A Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Report (DBESP) is not required due to a lack of impacts to riverine/riparian resources.

4.1 Potential Sensitive Species

Some plant and animal taxa are designated with and are managed as having "special status" due to declining populations, vulnerability to habitat change or loss, or because of restricted distributions. Certain special status species have been listed as Threatened

or Endangered by the USFWS and/or by the CDFW and are protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and the California Native Plant Protection Act (CNPPA). Other species have been identified as sensitive, or "special status" by the USFWS, CDFW, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or by private conservation organizations, including the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), but have not been federally or state listed as Threatened or Endangered. Impacts to these species can still be considered significant under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The literature review indicated that at least 30 special status biological resources have been reported or are known to occur in the vicinity (defined as a 5-mile radius) of the project site/action area (California Natural Diversity Database [CNDDB] [CDFW 2024a], CNPS 2024). Tables 1-2 below provide a summary of these species and vegetation communities, including their current taxonomy, conservation status, habitat preferences and occurrence potential. No species have a moderate or high potential to occur within the project area.

Table 1. Special Status Plant Species Potential for Occurrence

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status[1]			Habitat (for plants includes elevational range in meters & blooming period)	Occurrence Probability[2]
		Federal	State	Other		
Aphanisma blitoides	aphanisma	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Coastal scrub, bluffs, saline sand. < 200 m. Blooms (B): June-September.	Absent Suitable habitat not present.
Aphanisma blitoides	aphanisma	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Coastal scrub, bluffs, saline sand < 200 m. B. June - September	Absent Suitable habitat not present.
Calochortus palmeri var. *munzii*	Munz's mariposa lily	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Yellow-pine forest. 1200--2200 m Blooms May-July	Absent Suitable habitat is present. Not observed during surveys.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status[1]			Habitat (for plants includes elevational range in meters & blooming period)	Occurrence Probability[2]
		Federal	State	Other		
Calochortus plummerae	Plummer's mariposa-lily	None	None	CRPR 1B.3	Dry, rocky chaparral and yellow-pine forest < 1700 m. B: May-July	Absent Suitable habitat is present. Not observed during surveys.
Carex occidentalis	Western sedge	None	None	CRPR 2B.3	Dry woodland, meadows. 1600--3200 m B: March - May.	Absent Suitable habitat is present. Not observed during surveys.
Castilleja lasiorhyncha	San Bernardino Mountains owl's clover	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Meadows, flats, open forest 1000--2400 m. B: June-July	Absent Marginal habitat is present. Not observed during surveys.
Chaenactis parishii	Parish's chaenactis	None	None	CRPR 1B.3	Rocky to sandy openings in chaparral, woodland; 1300--2500 m. B: Apr--June	Absent Marginal habitat is present. Not observed during surveys. Closest records are from 1910.
Chorizanthe xanti var. *leucotheca*	White bracted spineflower	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Sand or gravel; Elevation: 400--1300 m. B: Apr--June	Absent Suitable habitat not present. Closest record on the east side of Mt. San Jacinto
Deinandra mohavensis	Mojave tarplant	None	Endangered	CRPR 1B.3	Moist sites, openings in chaparral, desert scrub, woodland 460--1600 m. B: May-January	Absent Marginal habitat is present. Not observed during surveys
Draba saxosa	Southern California rock draba	None	None	CRPR 1B.3	Rocky slopes . 2400--3300 m. B: June--July	Absent Suitable habitat not present.
Galium angustifolium ssp. *jacinticum*	San Jacinto Mtns. bedstraw	None	None	CRPR 1B.3	Mixed open forest 1350--2100 m B: May-July	Absent Suitable habitat is present. Not observed during surveys.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status[1]			Habitat (for plants includes elevational range in meters & blooming period)	Occurrence Probability[2]
		Federal	State	Other		
Galium californicum ssp. *primum*	California bedstraw	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Rocky slopes, river basins 1350-1700 m. B: February-May	Absent Suitable habitat is present. Not observed during surveys.
Heuchera hirsutissima	Shaggy haired alumroot	None	None	CRPR 1B.3	Rocky slopes at high elevations 2200--3500 m	Absent Suitable habitat not present.
Ivesia callida	Tahquitz mousetail	None	None	CRPR 1B.3	Granite crevices. 2500 m + B: Jul--Sep	Absent Suitable habitat not present.
Lilium parryi	Lemon lily	None	None	CRPR 1B.1	Meadows, streams in montane conifer forest. 1300--2600 m. B: June-September	Absent Suitable habitat is present. Not observed during surveys.
Linanthus jaegeri	San Jacinto linanthus	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Dry rocky areas 2900--3000 m. B: May– July	Absent Suitable habitat not present.
Malaxis monophyllos var. *brachypoda*	White bog adder's-mouth	None	None	CRPR 2B.1	Wet meadows, shaded places, conifer forest. 2200--2800 m. B: July--August	Absent Suitable habitat is present. Not observed during surveys. Only record in the vicinity is from 1922.
Monardella nana ssp. *leptosiphon*	Little monardella	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Montane chaparral, woodland, forest, dry desert-like slopes; 800--2600 m. B: May-August	Absent Marginal habitat is present. Not observed during surveys
Potentilla rimicola	Cliff cinquefoil	None	None	CRPR 2B.3	Granite crevices. 2400--2800 m. B: July--September	Absent Suitable habitat not present.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status[1]			Habitat (for plants includes elevational range in meters & blooming period)	Occurrence Probability[2]
		Federal	State	Other		
Scutellaria bolanderi ssp. *austromontana*	Southern skullcap	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Gravelly soils, stream banks, oak or pine woodland 600--2000 m. B: Feb--Aug	Absent Marginal habitat is present. Not observed during surveys
Sidotheca emarginata	White margined oxytheca	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Gravel. 1200--2500 m. B: July-October	Absent Suitable habitat not present.
Symphyotrichum defoliatum	San Bernardino aster	None	None	CRPR 1B.2	Grassland, disturbed places < 2050 m B: May-October	Absent Suitable habitat not present.

KEY TO TABLE 1

Definitions of occurrence probability:

Occurs: Observed on the site by WSP biologists or recorded on-site by other qualified biologists.

High: Observed in similar habitat in region by qualified biologists, or habitat on the site is a type often utilized by the species and the site is within the known range of the species.

Moderate: Reported sightings in surrounding region, or site is within the known range of the species and habitat on the site is a type occasionally used by the species.

Low: Site is within the known range of the species but habitat on the site is rarely occupied by the species.

Absent: A focused study failed to detect the species, or, no suitable habitat is present.

Unknown: Distribution and habitat use has not been clearly determined.

Federal designation: = F

California Native Plant Society (CNPS) California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) designations:

Primary Categories

LIST 1A: Plants Presumed Extirpated in California and Either Rare or Extinct Elsewhere

LIST 1B: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere

LIST 2A: Plants Presumed Extirpated in California, But Common Elsewhere

LIST 2B: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, But More Common Elsewhere

LIST 3: Plants About Which More Information is Needed - A Review List

LIST 4: Plants of Limited Distribution - A Watch List

Subdivisions within Categories

0.1: Seriously threatened in California

0.2: Moderately threatened in California

0.3: Not very threatened in California

Table 2. Special Status Animals

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status[1]			Habitat	Occurrence Probability[2]
		Federal	State	Other		
Invertebrates						
Bombus crotchii	Crotch's bumble bee	None	Candidate Endangered		Inhabits grasslands and shrublands. Prefers food source including milkweeds, dusty maidens, lupines, medics, phacelias, sages, clarkias, poppies, and wild buckwheats.	Absent Suitable habitat not present.
Amphibians						
Ensatina eschscholtzii klauberi	Large-blotched ensatina	None	None	CDFW:WL USFS:S	Inhabits moist shaded evergreen and deciduous forests and oak woodlands. Found under rocks, logs, other debris, especially bark that has peeled off and fallen beside logs and trees	Low Minimal habitat present due to grouted streambed and lack fallen trees.
Rana muscosa	southern mountain yellow-legged frog	Endangered	Endangered		Found in streams that range from rocky, steep drainages to those with a gentle gradient, marshy margins, and sod banks. Large clear	Absent Suitable habitat not present

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status[1]			Habitat	Occurrence Probability[2]
		Federal	State	Other		
					pools up to three feet deep are especially favored	
Birds						
Aquila chrysaetos	golden eagle	None	None	CDFW-WL USFWS-Fully Protected	Nests in wetland cattails and bulrushes. Forages in open areas and agricultural fields.	Absent Suitable habitat not present
Cypseloides niger	American black swift	MBTA	None	SSC	Nest on high cliff faces, either above the ocean surf or behind or next to waterfalls.	Absent Suitable nesting habitat not present.
Mammals						
Antrozous pallidus	pallid bat	None	S3	SSC	Found in arid or semi-arid habitats, often in mountainous or rocky areas near water. Pallid bats typically roost in cracks and crevices, which may include tile roofs, exfoliating bark of trees, or rocky outcrops.	Moderate Roosting habitat is present onsite.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status[1]			Habitat	Occurrence Probability[2]
		Federal	State	Other		
Glaucomys oregonensis californicus	San Bernardino flying squirrel	None	None	CDFW:SSC USFS:S	Found in coniferous forest from 4,500 to 11,000 feet above sea level.	Absent They are thought to be extinct in the Mount San Jacinto range; last seen in the 1990s.
Corynorhinus townsendii	Townsend's big-eared bat	None	None	CDFW:SSC	Generally viewed as a cave-dwelling species, but the western subspecies are also found on/in human-made structures (e.g. old mine workings and buildings). Roosts in open but extremely sensitive to human disturbance.	Absent Suitable habitat not present

KEY TO TABLE 2

Definitions of occurrence probability:

Occurs: Observed on the site by WSP USA biologists or recorded on-site by other qualified biologists.

High: Observed in similar habitat in region by qualified biologists, or habitat on the site is a type often utilized by the species and the site is within the known range of the species.

Moderate: Reported sightings in surrounding region, or site is within the known range of the species and habitat on the site is a type occasionally used by the species.

Low: Site is within the known range of the species but habitat on the site is rarely occupied by the species.

Absent: A focused study failed to detect the species, or, no suitable habitat is present.

Unknown: Distribution and habitat use has not been clearly determined.

Federal designation =F

State designation =C

5.0 PROTECTION OF NARROW ENDEMIC PLANT SPECIES (SECTION 6.1.3)

The WRCRCA MSHCP Information Tool (WRCRCA 2024a) indicates that the project site lies within the required survey area for narrow endemic plant species Johnston's rock cress (*Boechera johnstonii*), Munz's mariposa lily (*Calochortus palmeri* var. *munzii*), and San Jacinto Mountains bedstraw (*Gallium angustifolium* ssp. *jacinticum*).

The entire site was surveyed for these three species in the spring and late summer, and they were not observed on-site.

No *Boechera* species were observed on-site. Johnston's rock cress has no records within the Idyllwild/Pine Cover area. All records for Johnston's rock cress are located near Garner Valley and Thomas Mountain approximately 7 miles to the south.

No Munz's mariposa lily were observed on-site. There were several blooming plain mariposa lilies observed on-site. That showed that the timing of the survey and moisture content of the soil was suitable for *Calochortus* species to be blooming. Munz's mariposa lily is more commonly found in grasslands, and most sightings are centered around Garner Valley and Thomas Mountain approximately 7 miles to the south.

No San Jacinto Mountains Bedstraw were observed on-site. Although suitable habitat for this species occurs on-site and there are records of the species approximately 2.4 miles to the west. No bedstraw species were observed.

6.0 ADDITIONAL SURVEY NEEDS AND PROCEDURES (SECTION 6.3.2)

6.1 Criteria Area Plant Species

The WRCRCA MSHCP Information Tool indicates the project site is not located within a Criteria Area Species Survey Area (CASSA) for plants.

6.2 Amphibians

The WRCRCA MSHCP Information Tool indicates that the project site is within a MSHCP designated amphibian survey area for mountain yellow legged frog.

Mountain yellow legged frog inhabits lakes, ponds, meadow streams, isolated pools, sunny riverbanks in the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains. In the mountains of southern California, this species inhabits rocky streams in narrow canyons and in the chaparral belt.

"...frequents streams that range from rocky, steep drainages to those with a gentle gradient, marshy margins, and sod banks. Large clear pools up to three feet deep are especially favored." (Stebbins & McGinnis 2012).

Breeding habitat requires large clear pools for the development of larvae. The small areas of pooled water on-site observed were approximately 1-3 inches deep. The area of the creek where the existing diversion structure is located and where its repair and reconstruction will occur is also grouted without a lot of vegetative cover. The area of Strawberry Creek within the project site

does not provide suitable habitat for mountain yellow-legged frogs. The closest known population occurs approximately 4.9 miles to the northwest within Dark Canyon (CDFW 2024a).

Due to the lack of suitable breeding habitat and the disturbed and grouted nature of the stretch of the creek within the project area, additional surveys for mountain yellow-legged frog are not recommended.

6.2.1 Impacts

The impacts of the project will include temporary impact from the work removing, repairing, and reconstructing of the diversion structure, the removal of the existing pipe, and excavation of a narrow-trenched area to install the new pipeline. All trees will be avoided when installing the pipe.

6.2.2 Mitigation

- Coordinate with the WRCRCA, CDFW, and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) to determine if there is an exception for working within the channel and permitting will not be required due to the project being classified as maintenance.
- No heavy equipment shall be parked overnight within the creek bed and no maintenance or refueling shall occur within the creek bed.
- The final pipeline alignment shall be established so that no trees shall be removed to install the new pipeline.
- A preconstruction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to any trenching of the pipeline to ensure no impacts to sensitive species.

6.3 Mammals

The WRCRCA MSHCP Information Tool indicates that the project site is not within a MSHCP designated mammal survey area.

7.0 INFORMATION ON OTHER SPECIES

7.1 Delhi Sands Flower Loving Fly

The project does not fall within an area with mapped Delhi soils (USDA 2024b) and is outside of the range of the Delhi Sands flower loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*).

7.2 Protection of Nesting Birds

The MSHCP does not provide take for impacts to nesting birds (WRCRCA 2019d). The project site contains suitable nesting habitat for several ground-nesting bird species protected under state code (California Legislative Information 2021) and the federal MBTA (USFWS 2021). These include most native bird species. Impacts to nesting birds, both direct and indirect, can be minimized or eliminated during project activities by conducting work outside of the breeding season. Although nesting can occur year-round in southern California for some species, the typical avian breeding season is from approximately February 1 through August 31, so it is recommended to schedule initial clearing and grubbing work between September 1 and January 31 to avoid nesting activity. If site disturbance must be done during the nesting season, the project site and adjacent areas should be examined by a qualified biologist prior to disturbance, especially where there could be any direct impacts. If active nests are found, the nests should be avoided and a "no disturbance" buffer zone established and observed until young have fledged. While there is no established protocol for nest avoidance and buffer zones, when consulted, the CDFW generally recommends avoidance buffers of 500 feet for raptors and listed species and 100–300 feet for other unlisted birds.

8.0 GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO THE URBAN/WILDLANDS INTERFACE (MSHCP SECTION 6.1.4)

To preserve the integrity of areas described as existing or future parts of the MSHCP Conservation Area, the guidelines contained in MSHCP Section 6.1.4 Urban Wildlands Interface Guidelines (UWIG) shall be implemented. The intent is to control the potential adverse effects of development on adjacent existing and future parts of the MSHCP Conservation Area. The site is not currently in or adjacent to any MSHCP Conservation Area, therefore, implementation of the Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines will not be required.

9.0 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (MSHCP VOLUME I, APPENDIX C)

The project will implement the following MSHCP Volume I, Appendix C Standard BMPs, as applicable:

- Water pollution and erosion control plans shall be developed and implemented in accordance with RWQCB requirements.
- The footprint of disturbance shall be minimized to the maximum extent feasible. Access to sites shall be via pre-existing access routes to the greatest extent possible.
- To avoid attracting predators of the species of concern, the project site shall be kept as clean of debris as possible. All food related trash items shall be enclosed in sealed containers and regularly removed from the site(s).
- Construction employees shall strictly limit their activities, vehicles, equipment, and construction materials to the project footprint and designated staging areas and routes of

travel. The construction area(s) shall be the minimal area necessary to complete the project and shall be specified in the construction plans. Construction limits will be fenced with orange snow screen. Exclusion fencing should be maintained until the completion of all construction activities. Employees shall be instructed that their activities are restricted to the construction areas.

10.0 ADDITIONAL NON-MSHCP CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to the above mentioned MSHCP consistency analysis, impacts to additional sensitive biological resources should be addressed and includes Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands, and Wildlife Corridors.

10.1 Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

The site was assessed for the presence of waters or wetlands that may be considered under the jurisdiction of either the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), RWQCB, CDFW, and/or MSHCP. Strawberry Creek is likely to be considered RWQCB, CDFW jurisdictional as well as riverine/riparian under the MSHCP. The project is not considered to be USACE jurisdictional and therefore does not have any federal nexus due to the subject drainage being intermittent and not containing permanent flows. Also, the receiving drainage of Strawberry Creek at the bottom of the mountain, the San Jacinto River, is also intermittent and is usually dry with the exception of large rain and flooding events. The project may qualify for an exception for working within the channel and permitting will not be required due to the project being classified as maintenance and the function and value of the drainage will not change from current conditions. The final determination of jurisdiction falls on the discretion of each of the agencies.

10.2 Wildlife Corridors

The ability of the project site to act as a wildlife corridor was assessed. Wildlife corridors link together areas of suitable habitat that are otherwise separated by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. Corridors mitigate the effects of habitat fragmentation by (1) allowing animals to move between remaining habitats. Wildlife movements usually fall into one of three categories: (1) dispersal (e.g., juvenile animals from natal areas, individuals extending range distributions); (2) seasonal migration; and (3) movements related to home range activities (foraging for food or water, defending territories, searching for mates, breeding areas, or cover). The project site is surrounded by similar wooded residential areas and is not located within any significant wildlife corridor.

11.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Virtually all native bird species are protected by the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code (FGC). Impacts to nesting birds are not covered by the MSHCP. The project site mainly provides habitat for montane tree nesting birds. Although some nesting birds can occur year-round in Southern California, the primary avian breeding season is from approximately 1 February through 31 August. If possible, it is recommended to schedule work between September 1 and January 31 to avoid nesting activity. If work must be done during the nesting season, the site and immediately

adjacent areas should be examined by a qualified biologist in the week prior to disturbance, especially where there could be any direct impacts. If active nests are found, the nests should be avoided, with a “no disturbance” buffer zone established and observed until young have fledged. While there is no established protocol for nest avoidance and buffer zones, when consulted, the CDFW generally recommends avoidance buffers of 500 feet for raptors and listed species and 100–300 feet for other unlisted birds. Nest avoidance and buffer zones are decided on a case-by-case basis by the biologist and can sometimes be reduced depending on a variety of factors including topography, vegetation structure, the species in question, and avian behavior. Construction activity may encroach into the buffer area at the discretion of the biologist. CDFW and/or USFWS concurrence may be required. The distance for avoidance buffers is related to the disturbance tolerance and status of each individual species. Endangered/threatened species and/or species such as raptors with a very low tolerance for disturbance will have a larger avoidance buffer. Species with a high disturbance tolerance will have a smaller avoidance buffer. The use of noise attenuation barriers when adjacent to nesting habitat or known nests may also allow such buffers to be reduced.

To summarize the results of the MSHCP Consistency Analysis:

- Riverine habitat is present within a portion of the project site, but not likely to be impacted.
- Vernal pools are not present on-site.
- Fairy shrimp habitat is not present on-site.
- No mountain yellow-legged frogs were observed and there is no habitat for breeding on-site.
- No Narrow-Endemic Plants were observed on-site.
- The project site is not within a designated mammal survey area.
- No soils suitable for Delhi Sands flower loving fly are present on-site and the project site is well beyond the known range of the species.
- No other wildlife species “not adequately conserved” have any potential to occur within the project site.

Mitigation for impacts to MSHCP resources will include payment of the standard MSHCP fee. No additional surveys or conservation measures are required. A Determination of Biological Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) report will not be required.

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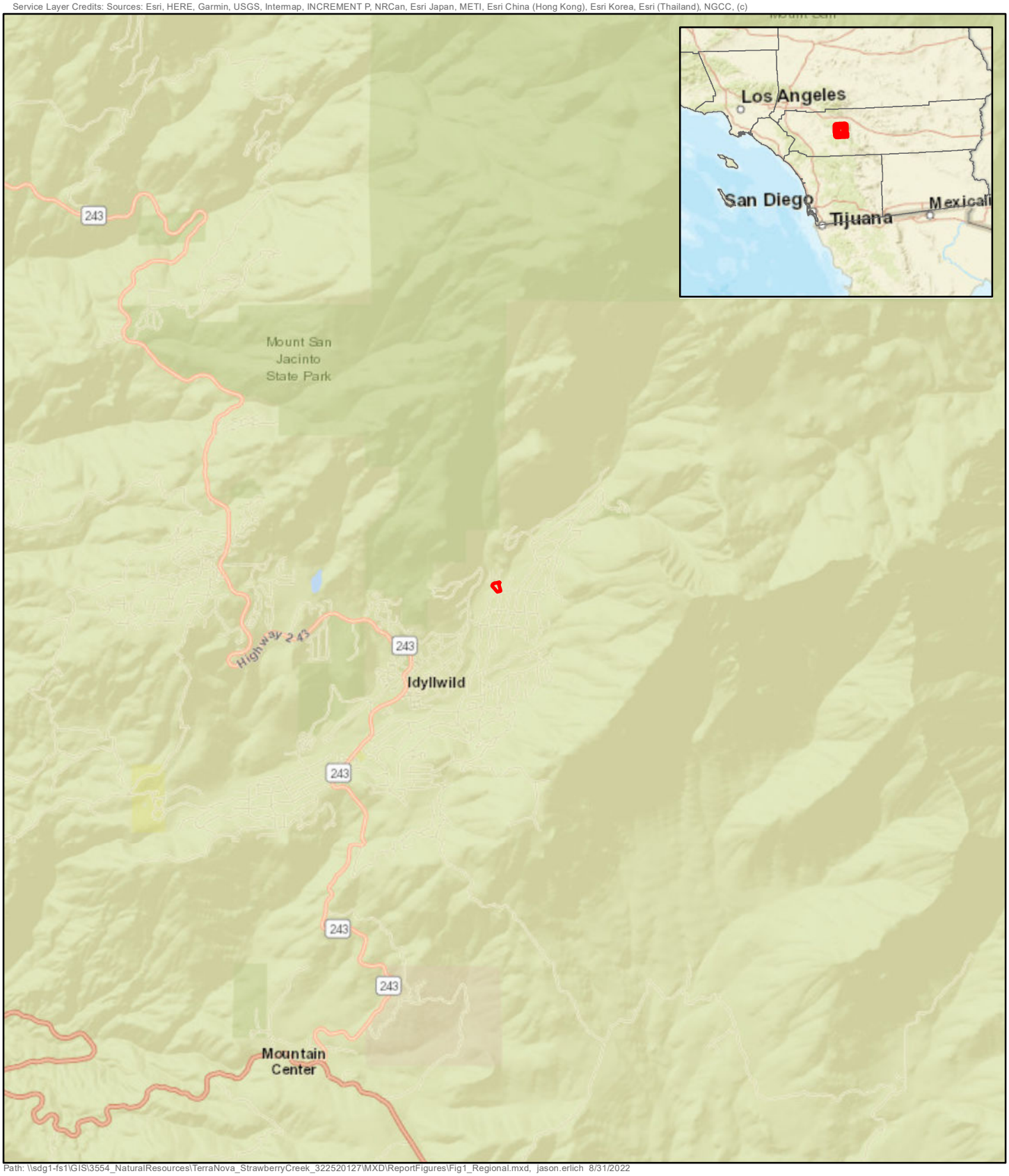
APPENDIX A

MAPS AND FIGURES

Service Layer Credits: Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c)



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1 inch = 1 miles

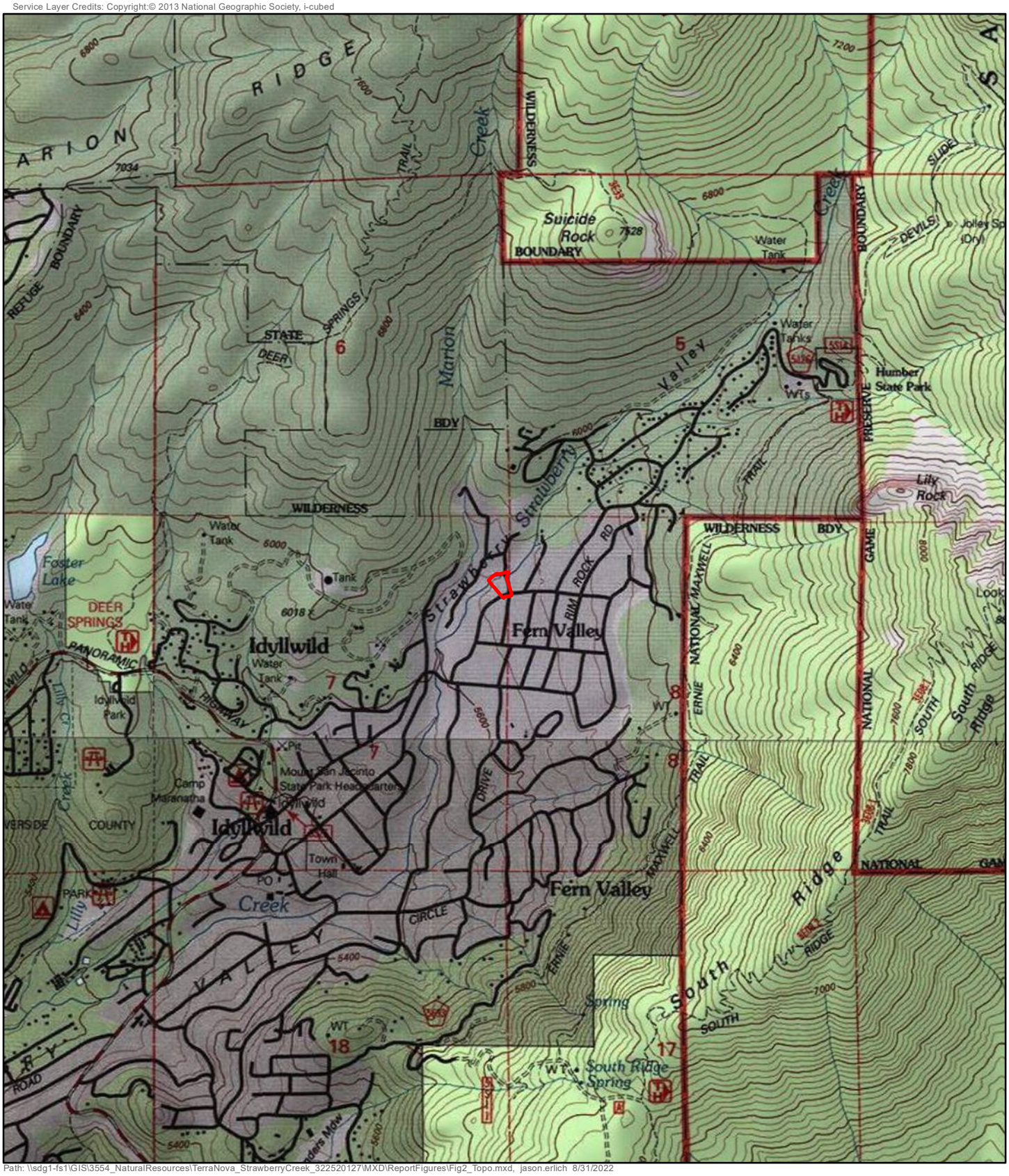
0 0.5 1 Miles

Project Boundary

FIGURE 1

Vicinity & Location
Strawberry Creek
Terra Nova
Idyllwild, Riverside County, CA

Service Layer Credits: Copyright:© 2013 National Geographic Society, i-cubed



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1 inch = 2,000 feet

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Project Boundary

FIGURE 2

USGS 7.5' Quad: San Jacinto Peak
Strawberry Creek
Terra Nova
Idyllwild, Riverside County, CA

Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

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1 inch = 250 feet

0 125 250 Feet

Project Boundary

KoD - Wind River-Oak Glen Families Association, 2 to 15 percent slopes

FIGURE 3

Soils
Strawberry Creek
Terra Nova
Idyllwild, Riverside County, CA

Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

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1 inch = 1,500 feet

0 750 1,500 Feet

Project Boundary

Johnston's Rock Cress, Munz's Mariposa Lily, San Jacinto Mtns. Bedstraw

Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog

FIGURE 4

MSHCP Survey Areas
Strawberry Creek
Terra Nova
Idyllwild, Riverside County, CA

Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

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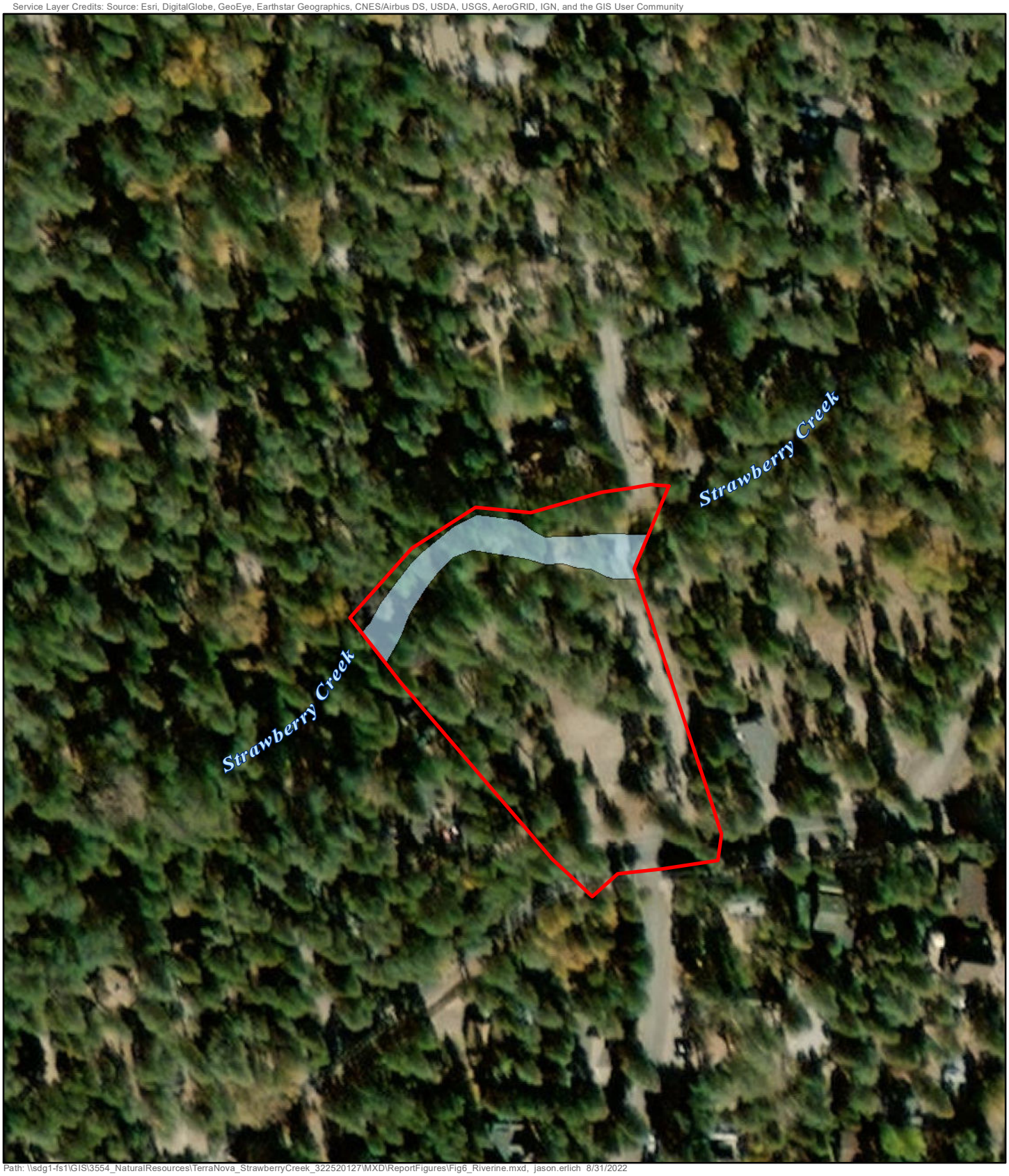
Project Boundary
Developed
Disturbed
Paved Road
Ponderosa pine - Incense Cedar - Douglas fir forest and woodland

1 inch = 125 feet
0 62.5 125 Feet

FIGURE 5

Vegetation
Strawberry Creek
Terra Nova
Idyllwild, Riverside County, CA

Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



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1 inch = 125 feet

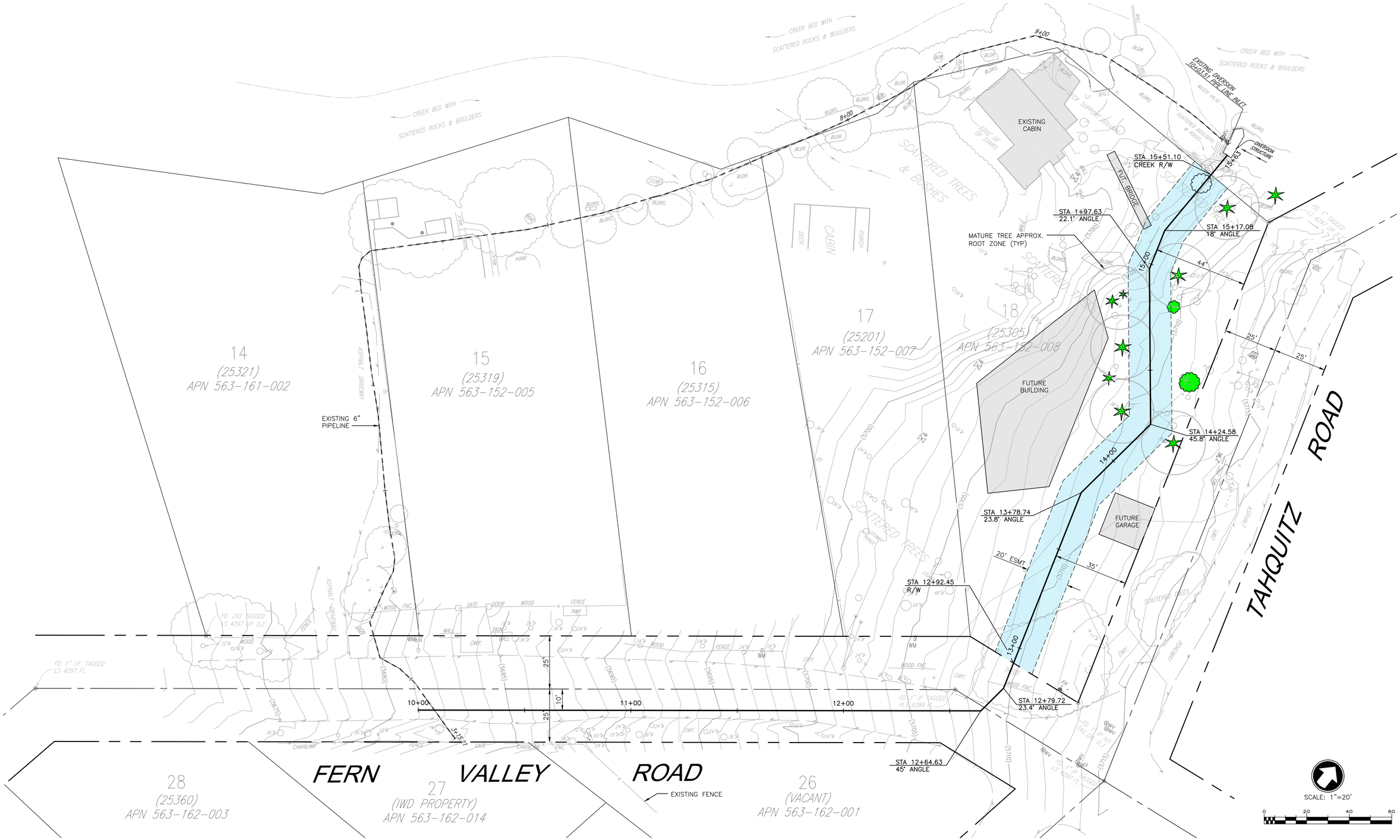
0 62.5 125 Feet

Project Boundary

Riverine/Riparian

FIGURE 6

Riverine/Riparian
Strawberry Creek
Terra Nova
Idyllwild, Riverside County, CA



Underground Service Alert

811

TWO WORKING DAYS BEFORE YOU DIG

MARK	REVISIONS	APPR.	DATE

DESIGNED BY: E.H. DRAWN BY: J.G. CHECKED BY: E.H.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER ERIK T. HOWARD No. C53318 CIVIL STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PREPARED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF:

DISTRICT ENGINEER — DATE

ERIK T. HOWARD, R.C.E. C53318 — DATE

ERSC INC.COM Engineering Resources of Southern California

1861 West Redlands Blvd.
Building 7-8
Redlands, California 92373-3119
(909) 890-1255

SCALE: 1" = 20'

BENCH MARK: ELEVATION=5575.93 FEET NGVD 29
RIVERSIDE CO. B.M. I-12 (IDY 2-2) A BRASS DISK STAMPED "I-12" SET IN THE TOP OF THE END OF THE SOUTHEASTERLY CONCRETE WING WALL OF BRIDGE NO. S-145 OVER STRAWBERRY CREEK, 165 FEET EAST OF THE INTERSECTION OF PINECREST DRIVE AND SOUTH CIRCLE DRIVE.

IDYLLWILD WATER DISTRICT

RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

STRAWBERRY CREEK DIVERSION PIPELINE

PLAN

PIPELINE REPLACEMENT EVALUATION

FOR: IDYLLWILD WATER DISTRICT

W.O.

SHEET 1 OF 2 SHEETS

DWG. NO. C1

T:\Projects\03018008 - IWD Strawberry Creek Survey\CAD\03018008 WORKING ALIGNMENT.dwg, 11/8/2022 3:11:02 PM

APPENDIX B

PLANT AND VERTEBRATE SPECIES LISTS

Fauna Compendium

Picidae		**Woodpeckers**
Melanerpes	*formicivorus*	acorn woodpecker
Picoides	*albolarvatus*	white-headed woodpecker
Corvidae		**Jays/Crows**
Corvus	*brachyrhynchos*	American crow
Sittidae		**Nuthatches**
Sitta	*carolinensis*	white-breasted nuthatch
Timaliidae		**Old world babblers**
Turdus	*migratorius*	American robin
Cardinalidae		**Cardinals**
Pheucticus	*melanocephalus*	black-headed grosbeak
Fringillidae		**Finches**
Haemorhous	*mexicanus*	house finch

Flora Compendia

Dennstaedtiaceae		**Bracken Family**
Pteridium	*aquilinum var. pubescens*	western bracken
Cupressaceae		**Cypress Family**
Calocedrus	*decurrens*	incense cedar
Pinaceae		**Pine Family**
Pinus	*lambertiana*	sugar pine
Pinus	*ponderosa*	yellow pine
Calycanthaceae		**Sweet-shrub Family**
Calycanthus	*occidentalis*	sweet-shrub
Asteraceae		**Sunflower Family**
Artemisia	*douglasiana*	California mugwort
Tanacetum	*parthenium*	feverfew
Betulaceae		**Birch Family**
Alnus	*rhombifolia*	white alder
Boraginaceae		**Borage Family**
Emmenanthe	*penduliflora*	whispering bells
Phacelia	*imbricata*	imbricate phacelia
Ericaceae		**Heath Family**
Arctostaphylos	*glandulosa*	Eastwood's manzanita
Fabaceae		**Legume Family**
Acmispon	*argophyllus*	silver bird's-foot trefoil
Acmispon	*heermannii*	Heermann's lotus
Hosackia	*crassifolia*	broad leaved lotus
Lathyrus	*vestitus*	common pacific pea
Lupinus	*latifolius*	broad-leaved lupine
Fagaceae		**Oak Family**
Quercus	*kelloggii*	California black oak
Grossulariaceae		**Gooseberry Family**
Ribes	*nevadense*	mountain pink currant
Lamiaceae		**Mint Family**
Stachys	*albens*	cobwebby hedge nettle
Phrymaceae		**Lopseed Family**
Erythranthe	*cardinalis*	cardinal monkey flower
Erythranthe	*guttata*	yellow monkeyflower
Plantaginaceae		**Plantain Family**
Penstemon	*grinnellii*	Grinnell's beard tongue
Polemoniaceae		**Phlox Family**
Gilia	*angelensis*	chaparral gilia
Polygonaceae		**Buckwheat Family**

Flora Compendia

Eriogonum	*apiculatum*	San Jacinto buckwheat
Rumex	*crassus*	willow dock
Ranunculaceae		**Buttercup Family**
Aquilegia	*formosa*	columbine
Rhamnaceae		**Buckthorn Family**
Ceanothus	*cordulatus*	snow bushs
Rosaceae		**Rose Family**
Drymocallis	*glandulosa*	sticky cinquefoil
Rosa	*californica*	California wild rose
Rubus	*parviflorus*	thimbleberry
Salicaceae		**Willow Family**
Salix	*exigua*	narrowleaf willow
Urticaceae		**Nettle Family**
Urtica	*dioica*	stinging nettle
Cyperaceae		**Sedge Family**
Carex	*alma*	sturdy sedge
Liliaceae		**Lilly Family**
Calochortus	*invenustus*	plain mariposa lily
Poaceae		**Grass Family**
Elymus	*elymoides*	squirrel tail grass

APPENDIX C

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

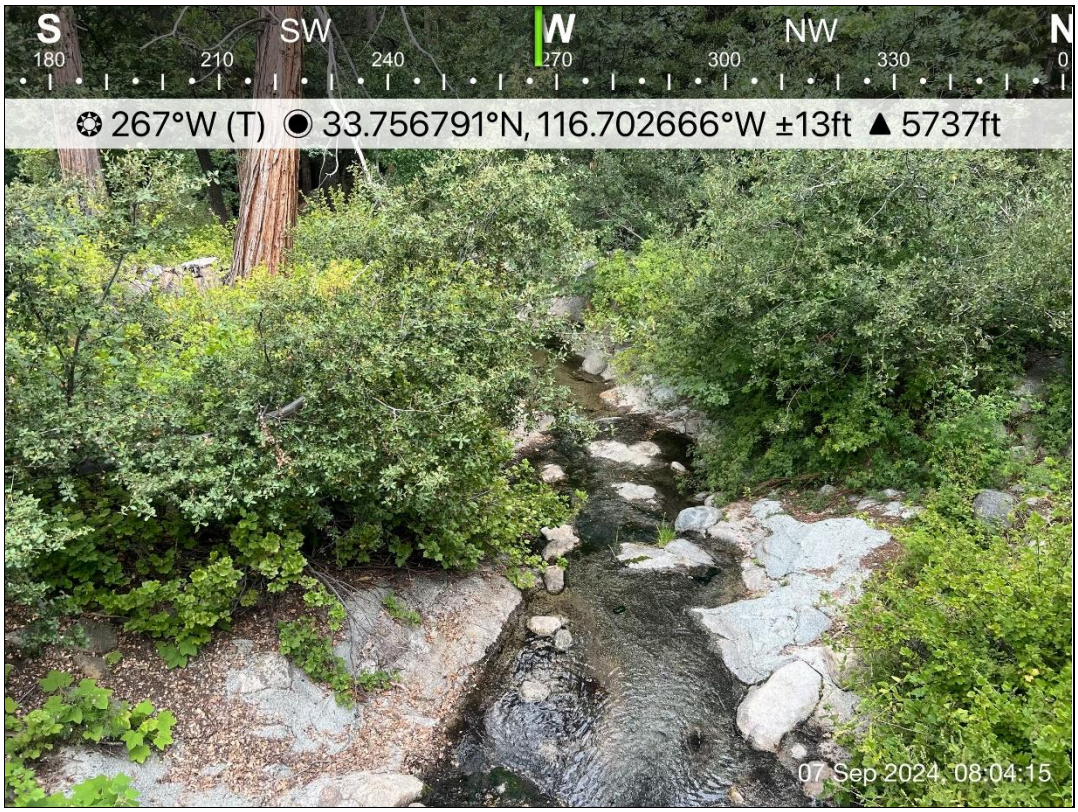


Photo 1. View from the bridge at Tahquitz Road looking downstream.

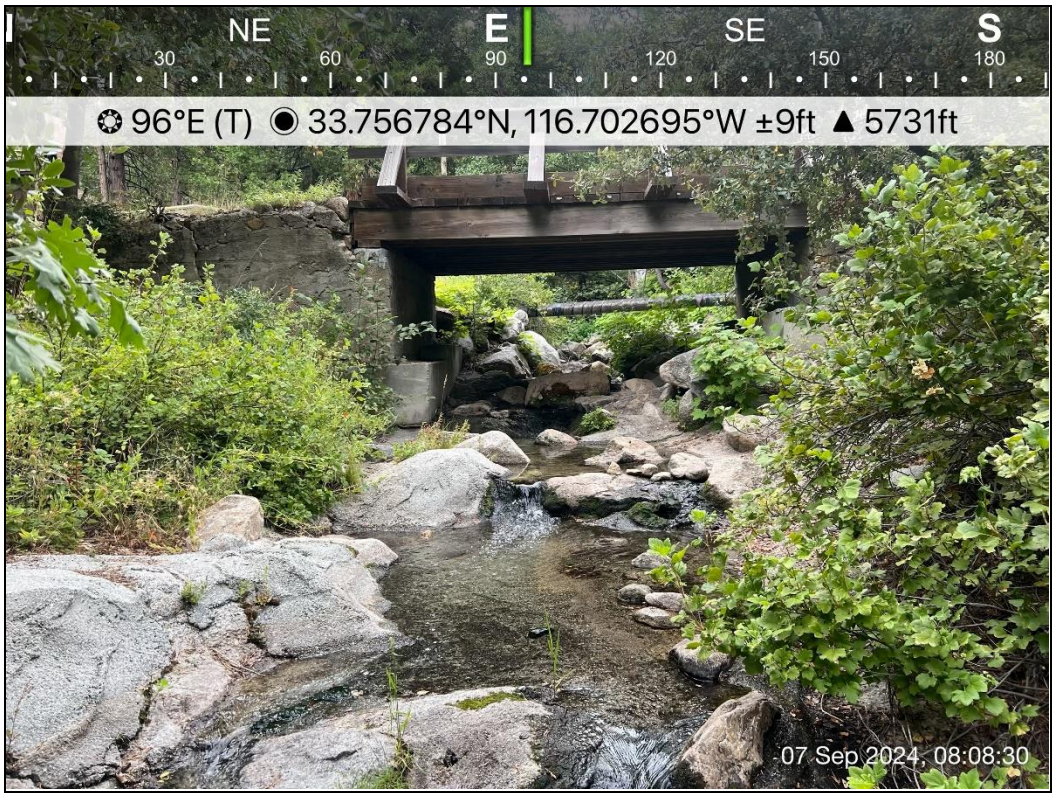


Photo 2. View within the creek showing the grouted bottom and very shallow pools.

Photo 3. View of the water diversion structure.

Photo 4. View of the water diversion structure and existing pipeline.

Photo 5. View of pipeline easement adjacent to the stream

Photo 6. View of the disturbed area within the project site.