



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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Via Electronic Mail Only

March 30, 2026

Fernando Nieto, Program Chief
County of Los Angeles
Department of Consumer and Business Affairs
Office of Cannabis Management
320 W. Temple Street, Room G-10
Los Angeles, CA 90021
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Subject: Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the Los Angeles County Commercial Cannabis Business Licensing Program, SCH No. 2025030223, San Diego County, CA

Dear Fernando Nieto:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) reviewed the draft Program Environmental Impact Report (DPEIR) from the County of Los Angeles, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (County) for the Los Angeles County Commercial Cannabis Business Licensing Program (Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines¹. CDFW supports the regulated cannabis market and actively seeks ways to partner with the regulated community and agency partners to avoid impacts to environmental resources and to achieve conservation benefits. CDFW commends the County's efforts to regulate cannabis business activities. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the County to create a mutually beneficial relationship that protects and conserves California's natural resources and supports legal cannabis businesses.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is California's Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the state (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802;

¹ CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

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Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a)). CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (Fish & G. Code, § 1802). For purposes of CEQA, CDFW is directed to provide, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources and are of regional and statewide significance (CCR 15086 and 15206).

CDFW may also act as a Responsible Agency under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381). CDFW expects that it may need to exercise regulatory authority pursuant to the Fish and Game Code. As proposed, for example, the Project may be subject to CDFW's lake and streambed alteration program (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 et seq.). If the Project as proposed may result in "take" as defined by State law² of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.) or the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA; Fish & G. Code, § 1900 et seq.), the Project proponent may seek related take authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW PERMITTING ROLE

The California Department of Cannabis Control (DCC) establishes regulations for cannabis businesses and issues licenses for commercial cannabis cultivation projects in in the State. To obtain a cannabis cultivation license from DCC, an entity shall provide a final LSA Agreement (Agreement) issued by CDFW, or written verification from CDFW that an Agreement is not required (Business and Professions Code 26060.1 (b) (3)). The proposed ordinance amendments in Section G (Prohibited Uses) recognizes this nexus and states that "[a]ny cannabis business or use that is not expressly recognized by both a County Cannabis License and a State cannabis license, and permitted by this Title 22, is prohibited."

CDFW has regulatory authority over activities in the State that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow, or change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake or use material from a river, stream, or lake. For any such activities, an entity must provide a LSA Notification (Notification) to CDFW of the proposed activities (Fish & G. Code, § 1602 et seq.). Based on the information contained in the Notification, CDFW then determines whether an Agreement is required prior to conducting the proposed activities. CDFW's issuance of an Agreement is an action subject to CEQA that will require CDFW to function as a Responsible Agency (CEQA Guidelines, § 15381). CDFW anticipates using the final Program Environmental Impact Report (FPEIR) to facilitate implementation of LSA and CESA review for the State's cannabis permitting program in the County. To minimize the need for additional

² "Take" is defined in Section 86 of the Fish and Game Code as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill."

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CEQA review when contemplating issuance of Agreements or CESA authorization for cannabis uses, CDFW recommends the FPEIR fully identify the potential impacts to listed species, streams and riparian resources, and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of Agreements or CESA authorizations (CEQA Guidelines, § 15096).

In addition, an entity must comply with guidelines for cannabis cultivation activities to protect water quality and instream flows including Fish & G. Code, §§ 1602, 5650, 5652, Water C. §§ 13260, 13264(a) & 13265. Compliance is typically provided through proof of enrollment in the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Cannabis Cultivation Policy and General Order that describes waste discharge requirements for cannabis cultivation, standards for setbacks to streams and forbearance provisions to protect flows (Fish & G. Code, § 5937).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Proponent: County of Los Angeles, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs

Objective: The Project is the adoption and implementation of a cannabis ordinance and regulatory licensing program for commercial cannabis activities/operations in the unincorporated areas of the County. The Project includes amendments to the Title 8 (Consumer Protection, Business and Wage Regulations) and Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) of the Los Angeles County Code (LACC) to allow for commercial cannabis cultivation (indoor only), manufacturing, distribution, retail sales, and testing on legal parcels in specific zones subject to County licensing. Amendments to LACC Title 22 will include changes to existing standards for personal cannabis cultivation, allowed or prohibited uses in each zone, required buffers from specified land uses, and a Site Plan approval requirement. The amendments would prohibit outdoor and mixed-light cultivation.

Indoor cultivation would be limited to a maximum of 22,000 square feet of canopy in eligible industrial zones (zones M-1, M-1.5, and M-2). Cultivation would be prohibited in all other zones, including agricultural zones. Cannabis distribution businesses would be allowed in eligible commercial (zone C-M) and industrial zones (zones M-1, M-1.5, and M-2). The Project would also allow cannabis microbusinesses in eligible commercial (zone C-M) and industrial zones (zones M-1, M-1.5, and M-2) that consist of at least three of the following: indoor cultivation (smaller than 10,000 square feet), non-volatile manufacturing, distribution, storefront retail sales, or non-storefront retail sales. Per Chapter 22.400 of the LACC, cannabis businesses would be permitted only where the unique zones of the respective Specific Plan are similar to the proposed eligible commercial, industrial, and institutional base zones. In addition to the buffers required in California Business and Professions Code § 26054, the Project would prohibit cannabis businesses within public lands or a Significant Ecological Area (LACC Chapter 22.102), within 600 feet of a youth-oriented use or drug abuse and

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recovery treatment center, and cannabis storefront retail businesses within 500 feet of another cannabis storefront retail business.

The Project would only allow commercial cannabis activities in existing (as of the time of application for a license), legally constructed, and permitted structures located in appropriate zoning. The Project would not permit the development of new buildings or the redevelopment of existing buildings to accommodate a proposed cannabis business. All commercial cannabis businesses would be required to conduct operations entirely within an enclosed building or structure. Any development or redevelopment associated with a potential cannabis business, or upgrades to comply with the LACC, would be subject to: (1) separate permitting and approval processes required under the existing LACC; and (2) consistency with policies of the General Plan/LCP. Initially, the Project would make available ten commercial cannabis cultivation licenses, ten manufacturing licenses, ten distribution licenses, ten testing licenses, and 50 retail licenses (25 storefront retail licenses and 25 non-storefront retail licenses).

Location: Unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

Biological Setting: The County is a regional biodiversity hotspot that provides habitat to support breeding, migration, and a high density of species, many of which are considered sensitive under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines, § 15380). Major habitat types in the County include chaparral, coastal sage scrub, riparian woodland, grassland, desert shrubland, riverine, and wetlands. While the Project area consists primarily of developed urban areas, undeveloped lands eligible for cannabis businesses are located within portions of Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita. The majority of eligible areas in Antelope Valley also lack structures sufficient for cannabis businesses.

According to the [California Natural Diversity Database](https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB)³ (CNDDDB), 14 sensitive natural communities occur within five miles of areas eligible for cannabis businesses, including Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland, Southern Riparian Scrub, Southern Willow Scrub, Mojave Riparian Forest, Southern Mixed Riparian Forest, Southern Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forest, Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest, Southern Riparian Forest, Canyon Live Oak Ravine Forest, Riversidian Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub, Southern Coastal Bluff Scrub, Valley Oak Woodland, California Walnut Woodland, and Open Engelmann Oak Woodland (CDFW 2026a, CDFW 2026b). In addition to the sensitive natural communities, the Project area also supports many California Endangered Species Act (CESA) listed, federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed, and/or Fully Protected species (collectively, Listed Species; CDFW 2026c, USFWS 2026), sensitive species, and rare plants species. CNDDDB records indicate 60 Listed Species (see Table 1), 79 rare plants (California Rare Plant Ranking of 1A, 1B.1, 1B.2, 1B.3, 2A, and 2B.2; see Table 2), and 46 California Species of Special

³ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB>

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Concern (SSC; see Table 3) were observed within five miles of the Project area. Notable species that occur in Antelope Valley where there is the most undeveloped land eligible for cannabis businesses include, but are not limited to, burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; CESA-candidate), western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*; CESA-candidate), and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*; CESA-threatened).

Project History: On February 15, 2022, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) directed Department of Consumer and Business Affairs' Office of Cannabis Management to move forward with the development and implementation of the Project for unincorporated areas of the County. In accordance with this directive, the County is proposing amendments to Title 22 (Zoning Ordinance Amendments) and Title 8 (Commercial Cannabis Administration Amendments) to allow for the permitting of legal commercial cannabis uses in eligible zone districts in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a draft programmatic environmental impact report (DPEIR) for the Project was received on March 5, 2025, and CDFW submitted comments on April 4, 2025. CDFW received the notice of available (NOA) of a DPEIR on February 13, 2026, which requested comments to be submitted by March 30, 2026. CDFW also appreciates the opportunity to meet with the County Office of Cannabis Management on March 3, 2026, regarding our NOP comments (CCR 15083).

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the County in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources. Additional comments or other suggestions are also included to improve the document.

1. Development or Redevelopment of Land

Issue: The development or redevelopment of land at the site level for cannabis cultivation may impact biological resources.

Specific impact: The ordinance amendments included in the Project may result in the individual development or redevelopment of land to support cannabis cultivation activities. Land development to support cultivation can impact sensitive habitats, stream resources, special status species, and wildlife connectivity.

Why impact would occur: The DPEIR does not discuss potential impacts to biological resources from site land development or the potential for the Project to induce land development resulting in potentially significant unmitigated impacts to biological resources. The DPEIR also does not identify a mechanism to evaluate potential impacts to biological resources at the individual or site level (CCR 15168(c)). Information for the Project on Eligible zones for cannabis businesses (see [Eligibility Zones for Commercial](#)

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[Cannabis in Unincorporated Los Angeles County](#)⁴) contain undeveloped lands (see Figure 1). A large portion of the eligible areas within Antelope Valley are undeveloped or lack structures suitable for cannabis businesses. While the DPEIR states on that commercial cannabis businesses “would only be allowed in existing (as of the time of application for a license), legally constructed, and permitted structures located in commercial/mixed-use, industrial, and institutional zones” (DPEIR page 2-8), the Project does not preclude the development of a vacant property for the purpose of a cannabis business. Instead, it just requires the building be constructed at the time of application for a business license and does not identify a mechanism at the land use approval to evaluate potential impacts to biological resources from development of vacant land at the site level. While the development of a property for a cannabis business would require separate licenses, approvals, and/or policy consistency analyses before applying for a cannabis business license, the Project can provide an incentive for the development of land that may not otherwise occur without the Project. Examples where vacant land with resources were developed for the sole purpose of cannabis businesses include the Coachillin’ Industrial Cultivation and Ancillary Canna-Business Park in the City of Desert Hot Springs and the High Season Industrial Park in the City of Adelanto. Similar to these areas with low land costs and sensitive resource, Antelope Valley may also provide a financial incentive for cannabis businesses to construct a new building rather than to lease or purchase an existing building in high land cost areas and redevelop the building to be suitable for cannabis business operations.

Land development or redevelopment can result in direct impacts to sensitive habitat and sensitive species from grading, clearing, type conversion, and grubbing of existing vegetation, which can have numerous impacts on the local ecosystem, stream resources, and to sensitive flora and fauna. For example, vegetation removal for pad development, site access, utility installation, and drainage improvements associated with cannabis uses may result in the loss of sensitive habitat that supports special status plant and animal species or the direct the direct take of these species. Land development can also result in habitat fragmentation and loss of wildlife connectivity.

Evidence impact may be significant: Through the development and redevelopment of land at the site level, the Project has the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; or substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15065, 15380). As a result, the Project may have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on species identified as a

⁴<https://lacounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=df60d1a4b1014df7866949fe465197>

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candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

CEQA Guidelines section 15121 and section 15123 require the document to analyze if the Project may have a significant effect on the environment as well as review if the Project will “identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects.” To analyze if a project may have a significant effect on the environment, the Project related impacts need to be disclosed during the public comment period. This information is necessary to allow CDFW to comment on alternatives to avoid impacts, as well as to assess the significance of the specific impact relative to the species (e.g., current range, distribution, population trends, and connectivity). The DPEIR does not analyze impacts to the development or redevelopment of lands for the purpose of cannabis businesses and the DPEIR does not provide any alternatives discussion or any avoidance strategies to mitigate the loss of habitat, impacts to sensitive species, or wildlife connectivity.

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s)

CDFW requests the following recommendations and mitigation measures are incorporated into the final CEQA document and ordinance text:

Mitigation Measure #1: Biological Surveys. A survey for biological resources shall be conducted at the site level by a qualified biologist (i.e., familiar with wildlife, plants, streams and habitats in the County) approved by the County prior to any staging or development activities. The survey area shall include the proposed development area, including areas of anticipated construction and ground disturbance, as well as staging areas, areas of anticipated light or noise impact, ingress and egress routes, and utility routes. The survey area shall be large enough to encompass areas subject to both direct and indirect impacts. The qualified biologist shall map land cover, identify natural communities and species observed, and assess the habitat suitability of the proposed activity footprint for special-status plants and wildlife, and sensitive habitats including streambed resources. A report with evidence to support a conclusion as to whether special status species and sensitive habitats are present or are likely to occur within the proposed activity footprint shall be submitted to the County for review. If special status species and sensitive habitats will be impacted by the Project, additional mitigation measures, permitting, and/or mitigation may be required.

Recommendation #1: Subsequent Environmental Review. CDFW is unclear of the process for how individual projects would be determined to be consistent with the LACC and General Plan. The LACC and General Plan do not appear to have mechanisms for site level analysis of impacts to biological resources from development of vacant land for structures that could then apply for a cannabis business license. The PEIR should clearly identify the process and have a mechanism for CDFW review, particularly for undeveloped land that may be developed for cannabis businesses (CCR 15168(c)). CDFW understands that the review of individual projects for impacts to biological

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resources would be led by the County Department of Regional Planning for consistency of the LACC and General Plan. In CDFW's experience development of a structure can often be ministerial. CDFW believes the development of land should not be ministerial in cases where vacant land is developed with structures and site improvements that may impact biological resources. In addition, the FPEIR should cite the specific requirements in the General Plan and LACC that address site level review for biological resources, or include them as part of the Project, prior to obtaining a final cannabis business license.

Recommendation #2: Land Development and Redevelopment Discussion. The PEIR should include a discussion of the Project's potential to induce land development for the purpose of cannabis businesses and a discussion of impacts associated with the development and redevelopment of lands. Alternatively, the PEIR could be revised to state the building used for cannabis businesses must be existing as of the time the NOP was published, not at the time of application for a license, and that any new structures would require separate environmental review. This would ensure undeveloped land is not developed for the purpose of cannabis cultivation without proper environmental review.

Recommendation #3: Environmental Baseline. Because the Project would allow for existing structures and may also result in development of properties for cannabis cultivation that may not occur without Project, the Environmental Baseline should include an analysis of properties within areas eligible for cannabis businesses that have existing, legally constructed, and permitted structures sufficient for cannabis businesses and properties that are undeveloped and will require development. CEQA Guidelines section 15125, subdivision (a)(1) requires a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, absent substantial evidence that an existing conditions analysis would be misleading or without informational value. In addition, *Environmental Planning and Information Council v. County of El Dorado* (1982) 131 Cal. App. 3rd 350, 354 determined that CEQA is focused on the "effects of projects on the actual environment upon which the proposed project will operate". This disclosure of an accurate baseline analysis is necessary to allow CDFW to comment on alternatives to avoid impacts, as well as to assess the significance of the specific impact relative to the species (e.g., current range, distribution, population trends, and connectivity).

2. Western Burrowing Owl

Issue: The development or redevelopment of lands at the site level may impact western burrowing owl and its habitat.

Specific impact: The development or redevelopment of a site for a cannabis business often requires ground-disturbing activities, such as vegetation removal and grading, which can result in habitat loss and can lead to death or injury of western burrowing owls. Development and redevelopment activities can also disrupt foraging behavior for western burrowing owl present on site.

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Why impact would occur: As discussed above in Comment 1, the Project does not preclude the development of a property for the purpose of a cannabis business. According to the CNDDDB, western burrowing owl have been historically observed near the Project area, including in undeveloped areas such as Antelope Valley. Urban development in Antelope Valley contributes to the ongoing loss of suitable habitat for burrowing owls and rapid decline of the burrowing owl population size on a regional scale. Due to various factors, including habitat loss and population decline, burrowing owls were recently petitioned to be listed as an endangered or threatened species under CESA by the Center of Biological Diversity (CBD 2024). According to the Antelope Valley Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (AVRCIS), suitable habitat for burrowing owl encompasses a variety of landscapes throughout the region, but it is imperative that burrows, typically from small mammals (e.g., California ground squirrel), already exist to allow burrowing owl to occupy them (DCMA 2021). Development and redevelopment induced by the Project can result in direct impacts western burrowing owl through take and indirect impacts through the removal of suitable habitat.

Evidence impact may be significant: Burrowing owl is a species designated as a candidate for listing as threatened or endangered pursuant to CESA (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.). Take of any endangered, threatened, or candidate species that results from the Project is prohibited, except as authorized by State law (Fish & G. Code, §§ 86, 2062, 2067, 2068, 2080, 2085; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 786.9). Additionally, take of individual western burrowing owl and their nests is defined by Fish and Game Code section 86 and prohibited by sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Take is defined in Fish and Game Code section 86 as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill." Inadequate avoidance and mitigation measures will result in the Project continuing to have a substantial adverse direct and cumulative effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW.

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s)

CDFW requests the following recommendations and mitigation measures are incorporated into the final CEQA document:

Mitigation Measure #2: Burrowing Owl Surveys. A burrowing owl survey at the site level shall be conducted prior to any staging or development activities to avoid impacts to burrowing owls and/or occupied burrows. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and in accordance with the methods outlined in CDFW's [Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation](#)⁵ (CDFW 2012) or CDFW's most recent guidance. Documentation of surveys and findings shall be submitted to the County for review. If no burrowing owls or

⁵ <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83843>

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occupied burrows are detected, project activities may begin, and no additional avoidance and minimization measures shall be required. If an active nest (i.e., occupied with eggs or fledglings) is found outside, but within 500 feet, of the development footprint, the qualified biologist shall establish a "no-disturbance" buffer around the burrow location(s). The size of the "no-disturbance" buffer shall be determined in consultation with CDFW and be based on the proposed level of disturbance. If an occupied burrow is found within the development footprint, the project proponent shall contact CDFW to develop appropriate mitigation and management procedures or obtain an Incidental Take Permit from CDFW. If burrowing owl presence is confirmed, the project proponent shall offset impacts by acquiring mitigation lands for the species. The potential mitigation land shall have the following: 1) have presence of burrowing owl; 2) sufficiently replace the impacted burrowing owl habitat area to ensure no net loss of habitat; and 3) be of equivalent or greater habitat value than that of the project site.

Mitigation Measure #3: Incidental Take Permit. If western burrowing owl is detected the Project and impacts cannot be avoided, the proponent shall coordinate with CDFW and obtain appropriate take authorization from CDFW (pursuant to Fish & Game Code, § 2080 et seq). The Project proponent shall comply with the mitigation measures detailed in the take authorization issued by CDFW. The Project proponent shall provide a copy of a fully executed take authorization to the County prior to implementing Project ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal.

Recommendation #4: Analysis of Western Burrowing Owl Impacts. The FPEIR should include a discussion of the Project's impact to western burrowing owl from the development or redevelopment of land and include mitigation measures sufficient to reduce the impact less than significant. CDFW's issuance of an ITP for a Project is subject to CEQA. As a Responsible Agency, CDFW may consider the CEQA document from the lead agency/Project proponent for the Project. However, additional documentation may be required as part of an ITP application for the Project in order for CDFW to adequately develop an accurate take analysis and identify measures that would fully mitigate for take of CESA-listed species. To minimize additional requirements by CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 and/or under CEQA, a project's CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to western Joshua trees and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of the ITP.

3. Western Joshua Tree

Issue: The development or redevelopment of a site may result in take of western Joshua tree, a CESA candidate species.

Specific impact: Many of the eligible areas for cannabis businesses in Antelope Valley are undeveloped and may support western Joshua tree. The development of a site for a cannabis business requires ground-disturbing activities that can result in direct and

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indirect take of western Joshua tree. The DPEIR does not propose avoidance and minimization measures to reduce Project impacts to western Joshua tree to less than significant.

Why impact would occur: As discussed above in Comment 1, the Project does not preclude the development of a property for the purpose of a cannabis business. Western Joshua tree occurs in areas of Antelope Valley that are eligible for cannabis businesses (CDFW 2022). Primary threats to the western Joshua tree are climate change, development and other human activities, and wildfire (CDFW 2022). Much of the recent western Joshua tree habitat modification and destruction has been the result of ongoing urban development, typically on private property within the general vicinity of existing developed areas (CDFW 2022). In addition, development often results in habitat fragmentation, which could disrupt plant and pollinator population dynamics by altering pollinator densities and behavior (Xiao et al. 2016), and potentially leading to a reduction in reproductive output for western Joshua tree. As fragmentation increases, specialist species (i.e., organisms adapted to a specific habitat and/or specific diet) such as the yucca moth needed for western Joshua tree reproduction, may decrease in number from the fragmented area while generalists species (i.e., organism that occurs in a wide range of habitats and can use a wide variety of resources) become more prevalent (Xiao et al. 2016). Development of properties for purposes of a cannabis business or redeveloping a property to support cannabis business operations (e.g., access improvements and fencing) could result in the direct take of western Joshua tree through grading, habitat conversion, and construction and indirect take through habitat fragmentation and reduced dispersal.

Evidence impact may be significant: Western Joshua tree is a candidate for listing as threatened or endangered pursuant to CESA (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.). Take of any endangered, threatened, or candidate species that results from the Project is prohibited, except as authorized by State law (Fish & G. Code, §§ 86, 2062, 2067, 2068, 2080, 2085; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 786.9). Additionally, take of individual western burrowing owl and their nests is defined by Fish and Game Code section 86 and prohibited by sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Take is defined in Fish and Game Code section 86 as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill.” Inadequate avoidance and mitigation measures will result in the Project continuing to have a substantial adverse direct and cumulative effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW.

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s)

CDFW requests the following recommendations and mitigation measures are incorporated into the final CEQA document:

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Mitigation Measure #4: Western Joshua Tree Survey. Prior to any staging or development activities at the site level, a western Joshua tree census shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within the Project site and an appropriate distance around the Project site. The census shall be conducted in accordance with CDFW's [Western Joshua Tree Census Instructions](#).⁶ Findings from the census shall be compiled in a report submitted to the County prior to the beginning of Project activities.

Mitigation Measure #5: Incidental Take Permit. If western Joshua tree is detected and will be impacted by development of the site, the Project proponent shall coordinate with CDFW and obtain appropriate take authorization from CDFW (pursuant to Fish & Game Code, § 2080 et seq). The Project proponent shall comply with the mitigation measures detailed in the take authorization issued by CDFW. The Project proponent shall provide a copy of a fully executed take authorization to the County prior to implementing Project ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal.

Recommendation #5: Analysis of Western Joshua Tree Impacts. The FPEIR should include a discussion of the Project's impact to western Joshua tree from the development or redevelopment of land to support cannabis businesses and include mitigation measures sufficient to reduce the impact less than significant. CDFW's issuance of an ITP for a project is subject to CEQA. As a Responsible Agency, CDFW may consider the CEQA document from the lead agency/Project proponent for the project. However, additional documentation may be required as part of an ITP application for the Project in order for CDFW to adequately develop an accurate take analysis and identify measures that would fully mitigate for take of CESA-listed species. To minimize additional requirements by CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 and/or under CEQA, a project's CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to western Joshua trees and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of the ITP.

4. Mohave Ground Squirrel

Issue: The development or redevelopment of a site for cannabis uses may impact Mohave ground squirrel, a CESA-listed threatened species.

Specific Impact: Development and redevelopment construction activities (e.g., equipment staging, mobilization, and grading) at the site level may result in mortality or injury to Mohave ground squirrel. Project ground-disturbing activities such as vegetation removal may result in habitat destruction within the Project site and may contribute to further habitat decline within the range for this species.

⁶ <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=238156&inline>

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Why Impacts would occur: As discussed above in Comment 1, the Project does not preclude the development of a property for the purpose of a cannabis business. Mohave ground squirrel has been documented historically to occur within the Antelope Valley region (CNDDDB 2026a). Some eligible areas for cannabis businesses area in Antelope Valley are either undeveloped or surrounded undeveloped land, which may support local movement of small wildlife, such as Mohave ground squirrel. The DPEIR does not propose avoidance and minimization measures to reduce Project impacts to Mohave ground squirrel to less than significant. Development of land for cannabis businesses without avoidance measures could result in potential injury or mortality of Mohave ground squirrel and contribute to permanent loss of habitat.

Evidence impact would be significant: The Mohave ground squirrel has a restricted geographic range in the western Mojave Desert, where it has suffered from habitat loss as a result of conversion or degradation of native vegetation for residential, industrial, and energy-related developments, agriculture, recreation, and other human uses. On-going development plans, including residential, industrial, energy-related, agricultural, and recreational projects, present a serious threat to remaining Mohave ground squirrel populations (CDFW 2010). CDFW considers adverse impacts to a species protected by CESA to be significant without mitigation under CEQA. Inadequate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures for impacts on the Mohave ground squirrel will result in the Project continuing to have a substantial adverse direct, indirect, and cumulative effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on a wildlife species identified as special status by CDFW and USFWS. As to CESA, take of any endangered, threatened, candidate species that results from the Project is prohibited, except as authorized by State law (Fish & G. Code, §§ 86, 2062, 2067, 2068, 2080, 2085; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 786.9).

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s):

CDFW requests the following recommendations and mitigation measures are incorporated into the final CEQA document:

Mitigation Measure #6: Mohave Ground Squirrel Surveys. Prior to any staging or development activities at the site level, a qualified biologist familiar with Mohave ground squirrel behavior and life history shall conduct focused surveys for Mohave ground squirrel throughout the Project site. Focused Mohave ground squirrel surveys shall follow CDFW's [Mohave Ground Squirrel Survey Guidelines](#)⁷ (CDFW 2023).

If a survey conducted according to CDFW guidelines results in no capture or observation of Mohave ground squirrel on a Project site, this is not necessarily evidence that the

⁷ <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83975>

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Mohave ground squirrel does not exist on the site or that the site is not actual or potential habitat of the species. However, in the circumstance of such a negative result, CDFW may stipulate that the Project site harbors no Mohave ground squirrel. This stipulation would expire one year from the end date of the last trapping on the Project site conducted according to these guidelines. However, if Mohave ground squirrel or other listed species are discovered on the Project site, avoiding take of a listed species and/or securing authorization for incidental take of a listed species pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 2081 (b) et seq. remains the responsibility of the Project applicant.

Mitigation Measure #7: Incidental Take Permit. The Project applicant may choose to forgo focused Mohave ground squirrel presence/absence surveys and assume presence of Mohave ground squirrel on site. Under this option, an ITP shall be obtained for Mohave ground squirrel prior to ground/vegetation disturbance activities. The Project shall mitigate for temporary and/or permanent impacts to Mohave ground squirrel habitat as specified in conditions of the ITP through habitat acquisition at a CDFW-approved location and mitigation ratio.

Recommendation #6: Analysis of Mohave Ground Squirrel Impacts. The FPEIR should include a discussion of the Project's impact to Mohave ground squirrel from the development or redevelopment of land to support cannabis businesses and include mitigation measures sufficient to reduce the impact less than significant. CDFW's issuance of an ITP for a Project is subject to CEQA. As a Responsible Agency, CDFW may consider the CEQA document from the lead agency/Project proponent for the Project. However, additional documentation may be required as part of an ITP application for the Project in order for CDFW to adequately develop an accurate take analysis and identify measures that would fully mitigate for take of CESA-listed species. To minimize additional requirements by CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 and/or under CEQA, a project's CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to Mohave ground squirrel and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of the ITP.

5. Other Special Status and Sensitive Species

Issue: The proposed Project may impact sensitive species protected under CESA and/or ESA, species designated as SSC, or rare plant species.

Specific Impact: Development and redevelopment activities (e.g., equipment staging, mobilization, and grading) may impact the many Listed, SSC, or rare plant species that may occur within the Project areas (see Tables 1 through 3 for lists of special status species identified within five miles of the Project area). Development can result in direct mortality, nest abandonment, decreased feeding frequency, and a loss of breeding and/or foraging habitat.

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Why Impacts would occur: The DPEIR does not discuss impacts to biological resources from the development or redevelopment of properties at the site level for the purpose of cannabis businesses or provide mitigation measures to reduce the impact to less than significant. Individual sites in the Project area may contain suitable habitat for many special status and sensitive species. Development and redevelopment activities could include vegetation removal, grading, and general construction. Project activities could create elevated levels of noise, human activity, dust, ground vibrations, and vegetation disturbance. These disturbances and stressors occurring near potential nests could cause individuals to abandon their nests, resulting in the loss of fertile eggs or nestlings. After construction activities are completed, the Project could continue to impact these species through an increase in noise from heavier road use.

Evidence impact would be significant: CDFW considers adverse impacts to a species protected by CESA, absent appropriate mitigation, to be significant under CEQA. Under CESA, take of any endangered, threatened, candidate species that results from the Project is prohibited, except as authorized by State law (Fish & G. Code, §§ 86, 2062, 2067, 2068, 2080, 2085; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 786.9). In addition, nests of all native bird species are protected under State laws and regulations, including Fish and Game Code, sections 3503 and 3503.5.

SCC meet the CEQA definition of rare, threatened, or endangered species (CEQA Guidelines § 15065). CDFW considers adverse impacts to an SSC, for the purposes of CEQA, to be significant without mitigation.

Plants with a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1B and 2B meet the definition of endangered, rare, or threatened species under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines, § 15380; CNPS 2022). Plants with a California Rare Plant Rank of 1B are rare throughout their range with the majority of them endemic to California. Most of the plants that are ranked 1B have declined significantly over the last century. California Rare Plant Rank 1B plants constitute the majority of taxa in the CNPS Inventory, with more than 1,000 plants assigned to this category of rarity. Impacts on rare plants could require a mandatory finding of significance. The Project's impact on special-status plants has yet to be mitigated below a significant level. Accordingly, the Project continues to have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on a species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species by CDFW or USFWS. Take of any endangered, threatened, candidate species that results from the Project is prohibited, except as authorized by State law under CESA (Fish and Game Code, §§ 86, 2062, 2067, 2068, 2080, 2085; California Code of Regulations, title 14, § 786.9).

All the plants constituting California Rare Plant Rank 1B meet the definitions of the California Endangered Species Act of the California Fish and Game Code and are eligible for state listing. Impacts to these species or their habitat must be analyzed during preparation of environmental documents relating to CEQA, or those considered to be

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functionally equivalent to CEQA, as they meet the definition of Rare or Endangered under CEQA Guidelines section 15125; (c) and/or section 15380.

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s):

CDFW requests the following recommendations and mitigation measures are incorporated into the final CEQA document:

Mitigation Measure #8: Sensitive Species Surveys. Prior to any staging or development activities at the site level, a qualified biologist shall conduct biological surveys of any areas where potential special status biological resources (special status species and SSC), or sensitive natural communities may occur. During the design of the project, and prior to construction, the project proponent shall employ a qualified biologist to review the proposed project. To the extent feasible, the location(s) of a proposed project shall be on previously disturbed or developed sites and shall avoid undisturbed, high-quality, natural habitat that supports special status biological resources, areas that are used for regional or local wildlife movement, and jurisdictional wetlands and associated waters. If a desktop review indicates that special status biological resources or natural communities may occur in the project area, the project proponent shall either assume presence and mitigate accordingly, or a qualified biologist shall conduct species-specific biological surveys or botanical field surveys to confirm the presence and extent of special status biological resources and/or sensitive natural communities prior to the start of construction. Surveys shall be conducted according to protocols currently accepted by CDFW and/or USFWS. If no accepted survey protocol exists, the project proponent shall consult CDFW for guidance. To determine presence/absence or accurately identify rare plants, a qualified botanist shall conduct multiple rare plant surveys throughout the growing season for any given year. Surveys shall occur during the time of year when rare plants are more likely to be visually detectable. Rare plant surveys proceeding after a low water year should be supplemented with one or two additional rare plant surveys over a number of years depending on the rare plant species, annual weather patterns, and whether the project area was recently disturbed (e.g., fire). If special status biological resources or their sign (e.g., scat, burrows) are observed, the project proponent shall report the observation to CDFW through an entry in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and develop a plan to avoid impacts that is specific to each species. If impacts cannot be avoided, the project proponent shall consult with CDFW to obtain appropriate authorization for take of species protected under CESA (pursuant to Fish & G. Code, § 2080 et seq.). The project proponent shall have a copy of a fully executed take authorization prior to any activity that may result in take or CESA-protected species. If the desktop review indicates that no special status biological resources or natural communities may occur in the project area, then biological surveys are not required.

Recommendation #7: Analysis of Special Status Species Impacts. The FPEIR should include a discussion and disclosure of potential impacts to biological resources from the

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development or redevelopment of sites for the purpose of cannabis businesses. This information is necessary to allow CDFW to comment on alternatives to avoid impacts, as well as to assess the significance of the specific impact relative to the species (e.g., current range, distribution, population trends, and connectivity).

6. Security Fencing

Issue: Site alterations required for security fencing to obtain a license may impact biological resources.

Specific impact: Cannabis businesses often require specific types of fencing and lighting for security purposes as a requirement for licensing. If not located and designed properly, fencing can result in wildlife entrapment or mortality, create barriers, and impede wildlife movement, and significantly alter wildlife connectivity at the local and regional level.

Why impact would occur: Cannabis businesses generally require the installation of security fencing to prevent theft and unauthorized access. The Initial Study on page 28 states “[a]ny site alterations that are required to comply with permitting requirements (e.g., improvements to fencing or security lighting) would be subject to applicable standards of the LACC, which are designed to protect the movement of wildlife.” The Initial Study indicates that new fencing may be a permitting requirement for cannabis businesses. The Initial Study and DPEIR do not describe the fencing that would be required, nor does the Initial Study or DPEIR cite the section of the LACC that specifies the type and design of fencing that would be required.

Fencing can be a hazard to wildlife causing entanglement and mortality (van der Ree 1999, Stuart et al. 2001, Harrington and Conover 2006). Running animals and low-flying birds may not see a wire fence clearly against the landscape. Birds can collide with fences, breaking wings, impaling themselves on barbs, and tangling in wires. Large, low-flying birds such as ducks, geese, cranes, grouse, hawks, and owls are especially vulnerable. Waterfowl can fly into fences that run near or across waterways, and low-flying hawks and owls may careen into fences when swooping in on prey.

Evidence impact may be significant: The Project may require security fencing for new cannabis businesses, which may create a new or increased barrier and interfere substantially with the movement of wildlife especially in rural areas like Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita where many properties currently have no fencing. The Project has the potential to substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; or substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15065, 15380). As a result, the Project may have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on a species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS.

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Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s)

CDFW requests the following recommendations and mitigation measures are incorporated into the final CEQA document:

Mitigation Measure #9: Fencing Plan. A fencing plan should be provided for each cannabis operation at the site level to demonstrate that wildlife entrapment and mortality and connectivity are mitigated to less than significant. Should any subsequent proposed project occur in a location that has been identified as a wildlife movement corridor or found to impede the free movement of wildlife, the FPEIR should include mechanisms at the site level to provide compensatory mitigation measures for the Project's significant impacts (direct and/or through habitat modification) to sensitive and special status plants, animals, and habitats. Mitigation measures should emphasize avoidance and minimization of Project-related impacts. For unavoidable impacts, on-site habitat restoration or enhancement should be discussed in detail. If on-site mitigation is not feasible or would not be biologically viable and therefore inadequate to mitigate the loss of biological functions and values, off-site mitigation through habitat creation and/or acquisition and preservation in perpetuity should be addressed. Areas proposed as mitigation lands should be protected in perpetuity with a conservation easement and financial assurance and dedicated to a qualified entity for long-term management and monitoring.

Recommendation #8: Analysis of Fencing Impact. FPEIR should analyze impacts from required security measures and other fencing/barriers required for cannabis projects to animal species and wildlife movement/connectivity. The FPEIR should include information on the height, length, type of materials, maintenance requirements, and location of fencing that would be needed for cannabis businesses. The FPEIR should also provide a mechanism for analyzing and mitigating potential impacts from fencing at the individual (site) level.

7. Stream Crossings

Issue: Site alterations required to obtain a license may impact stream resources.

Specific impact: Individual cannabis businesses may require construction, replacement, paving, and maintenance for site access, including stream crossings, which can result in temporary and permanent impacts to stream resources and sensitive habitats.

Why impact would occur: Cannabis businesses often require site and access improvements to support business operations. Access improvements can include the construction, replacement, or maintenance of stream crossings or other activities like road rolling, compaction and paving in or near stream areas. Stream crossings are often located sensitive habitat that can support wildlife and wildlife movement. Crossings can be at-grade, culverts, and bridges to allow access to cannabis businesses. If not designed

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or maintained properly, structures designed to accommodate site access can create or exacerbate fish passage issues (Fish & G. Code § 5901), alter the flow of streams, erode stream banks, impede wildlife movement, become hydraulic constrictions, and create scour and increase sedimentation to streams. Paving, grading and other maintenance activities for site access can also occur within or adjacent to streams.

Evidence impact may be significant: CDFW exercises its regulatory authority pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq. to conserve fish and wildlife resources which includes rivers, streams, or lakes and associated natural communities. Fish and Game Code section 1602 requires any person, state or local governmental agency, or public utility to notify CDFW prior to beginning any activity that may do one or more of the following:

- 1) Divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream, or lake;
- 2) Change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake;
- 3) Use material from any river, stream, or lake; or,
- 4) Deposit or dispose of material into any river, stream, or lake.

The Project may adversely affect streams through the construction, replacement, paving, or maintenance of crossings or other or other activities required for access. Inadequate avoidance and mitigation measures will result in the Project continuing to have a substantial adverse direct and cumulative effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW.

Recommended Potentially Feasible Mitigation Measure(s)

CDFW requests the following recommendations and mitigation measures are incorporated into the final CEQA document:

Mitigation Measure #10: LSA. Individual businesses shall notify the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) pursuant to Fish and Game Code 1602 and obtain an LSA Agreement from CDFW prior to Project activities that will impact streams. For projects requiring a LSA, the Notification shall include a hydrology report to evaluate whether altering streams within the Project site may impact hydrologic activity. The hydrology report shall also include a hydrological evaluation of any potential scour or erosion at the

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Project site due to a storm event for existing and proposed conditions. Please visit CDFW's [Lake and Streambed Alteration Program webpage](#)⁸ for more information (CDFW 2026d).

Mitigation Measure #11: Compensatory Mitigation. If impacts to streams are unavoidable, the cannabis business shall provide compensatory mitigation for impacts on streams and associated plant communities as part of the County land use and business license process. Any off-site mitigation shall occur where a stream supports the same plant communities impacted by the project and preferably within the same watershed.

Recommendation #9: Analysis of Stream Crossing Impacts. The FPEIR should analyze impacts from construction, replacement, paving, and maintenance of stream crossings for cannabis business access to plant and animal species and wildlife movement/connectivity. The FPEIR should also provide a mechanism for analyzing and mitigating potential impacts from stream crossings at the individual (site) level.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- 1. Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Plan.** CDFW recommends the Project's environmental document include mitigation measures recommended in this letter. CDFW has provided comments via a mitigation monitoring and reporting plan to assist in the development of feasible, specific, detailed (i.e., responsible party, timing, specific actions, location), and fully enforceable mitigation measures (CEQA Guidelines, § 15097; Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6). The Lead Agency is welcome to coordinate with CDFW to further review and refine the Project's mitigation measures. Per Public Resources Code section 21081.6(a)(1), CDFW has provided a summary of our suggested mitigation measures and recommendations in the form of an attached Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (Attachment A).
- 2. Prior Business Occupancy Requirement.** The DPEIR states "commercial cannabis activities would either replace existing businesses that currently occupy these sites or would occupy currently vacant (yet previously occupied and currently developed) properties." (DPEIR page 2-8). The DPEIR further states that it is a requirement that cannabis businesses occupy existing buildings that are either currently or were previously occupied by other businesses (DPEIR page 3.2-22). As discussed above in Comment 1, the Project does not preclude the development of a property for the purpose of a cannabis business, rather it requires the building be constructed at the time of application for a license. A cannabis business would not replace an existing business in a building if a building was constructed for the purpose of a cannabis business.

The DPEIR uses the requirement that a building be occupied or previously occupied as justification for determining the Project will have less than significant impacts. For

⁸ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA>

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example, the DPEIR on page 3.7-33 states “[p]otential locations for indoor cultivation either currently are, or were previously, occupied by industrial uses of similar utility profiles and possess the necessary infrastructure to support cannabis cultivation. Therefore, future cannabis cultivation operations would not likely exceed utility service capacities, hinder providers (e.g., wastewater treatment providers and water suppliers), or require the construction of infrastructure to accommodate commercial cannabis businesses plus other existing and planned future customers of utilities, which may cause a significant environmental impact.” This statement may not be accurate as undeveloped areas are eligible for cannabis businesses (see Figure 1) and the DPEIR only requires the building be constructed at the time of application for licensing. In this example, some of the undeveloped land eligible for cannabis businesses may not have available utilities; therefore, these areas would require construction of infrastructure to accommodate the cannabis businesses and, as the DPEIR notes, may cause significant environmental impacts. These impacts are not analyzed in the PEIR.

The FPEIR should clarify the meaning of the requirement for cannabis businesses to occupy existing buildings that are either currently occupied or were previously occupied by other businesses. The FPEIR should also include a minimum duration a non-cannabis business must occupy the building prior to the building being eligible for cannabis businesses. Alternatively, as discussed above in Comment 1, the PEIR could be revised to state the building must be existing as of the time the NOP was published, and not the time of application for a license. If a building does not need to be previously occupied by another business, the FPEIR should remove this as justification that the Project will have less than significant impacts.

- 3. Updated Eligibility Map.** The [Eligibility Zones for Commercial Cannabis in Unincorporated Los Angeles County](#)⁹ map included in the NOP and DPEIR should be updated to remove locations that are not eligible for cannabis businesses per the requirements in the PEIR. For example, the Project would prohibit cannabis businesses in Significant Ecological Areas, but the eligibility map includes areas within Significant Ecological Areas (see Figure 2). This would provide a full disclosure of areas eligible for cannabis businesses.
- 4. Unpermitted Cannabis Environmental Baseline.** Under CEQA, the environmental setting represents the conditions that exist at a certain point in time referred to as the “baseline” from which project impacts, individual and cumulative, must be evaluated (CEQA Guidelines, § 15125). The DPEIR Environmental Baseline includes an estimated number of unpermitted cannabis storefront retail businesses operating within unincorporated County but does not include an estimate of unpermitted cannabis cultivation, which may be greater than unpermitted cannabis storefront retail businesses, nor does the DPEIR identify measures to address associated impacts to environmental resources

⁹ <https://lacounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=df60d1a4b1014df7866949fe46519711>

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affected by unpermitted cultivation sites (CEQA Guidelines, § 15125, Pub. Resources Code §§ 21060, 21068).

As discussed in CDFW comments on the NOP, all unpermitted facilities should be evaluated. CDFW and partner law enforcement agencies have investigated over 160 unpermitted cannabis cultivation sites in the Antelope Valley area of the County. County Sheriffs also participate, both independently and with CDFW, in the investigation of unpermitted cultivation and should have additional data available for the FPEIR.

CDFW often finds significant environmental damage at unpermitted outdoor cultivation sites, including stream alterations without LSA notification (Fish & G. Code, § 1602), pollution (Fish & G. Code, §§ 5650 and 5652), and take of western Joshua tree (Fish & G. Code, § 2080). Unpermitted cultivation sites in Antelope Valley may also impact other CESA-listed or candidate species, including but not limited to western burrowing owl, Crotch's bumble bee, Mojave ground squirrel, Nelson's antelope squirrel, Swainson's hawk, and desert tortoise. Unpermitted cannabis activities along the Santa Clara River may impact other species, including but not limited to southern California steelhead and unarmored threespine stickleback.

CDFW considers existing cannabis violations that have not been remediated when the NOP was issued as part of the CEQA baseline. The FPEIR should also analyze potential impacts from compliance and enforcement activities that can be foreseeably associated with the Project. CDFW believes that partnering with the County through a legal permitting program as currently proposed will assist in reducing the extent of unpermitted cannabis activities in the County.

5. **LACC Title 8 and 22 Amendments and Operating Requirements Framework.** The DPEIR does not include the specific amendments to Title 8 and Title 22 of the LACC or the proposed requirements for cannabis businesses. The [proposed operating requirements framework](#)¹⁰ and the [amendments to Title 8 and 22 of the LACC in redline/strike](#)¹¹ are found on the [County's website](#);¹² however, these documents should also be incorporated into the FPEIR since they are part of the Project.
6. **Expansion of Licensing Program.** The DPEIR states “[i]nitially, the County would issue a maximum of 10 cultivation licenses, 10 manufacturing licenses, 10 distribution licenses, 10 testing licenses, 25 delivery licenses, and 25 retail licenses with the potential to increase the number of licenses in the future.” (DPEIR page 1-7). CDFW requests to be notified when the County proposes to increase the number of available licenses. The PEIR should

¹⁰ https://dcba.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Commercial-Cannabis-Business-Operating-Requirements-Framework_revised-04.06.25.pdf

¹¹ https://dcba.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Draft-Title-22-Cannabis-Ordinance_updated-052925.pdf

¹² <https://dcba.lacounty.gov/cannabis/>

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also identify the mechanism for environmental review of any increase in cultivation licenses.

- 7. Agency Collaboration.** CDFW looks forward to partnering with the County to minimize significant impacts to wildlife resources through collaboration and review of individual projects and mitigation that will follow under the Project. CDFW recommends regular meetings between the County and CDFW regional staff to discuss permitting, enforcement, and compliance topics related to cannabis cultivation. In such meetings, agency priorities can be identified, important environmental issues addressed, site visits and enforcement efforts coordinated, and opportunities for grant funding discussed. CDFW also requests the County include a mechanism that includes CDFW and other resource agency review and input on individual projects that come under the Project as early in the process as possible. Prior to the issuance of administrative or ministerial permits, the County should coordinate with CDFW regarding appropriate enforceable measures to address and mitigate for site-specific impacts to biological resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e).) Accordingly, please report any special status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to the CNDDDB. The [CNDDDB website](#)¹³ provides direction regarding the types of information that should be reported and allows on-line submittal of field survey forms.

In addition, information on special status native plant populations and sensitive natural communities, should be submitted to CDFW's Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program using the [Combined Rapid Assessment and Relevé Form](#)¹⁴.

The County should ensure data collected for the preparation of the draft PEIR is properly submitted.

FILING FEES

The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of environmental document filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the environmental document filing fee is required in order for

¹³ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB>

¹⁴ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities/Submit>

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the underlying project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.)

CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft PEIR to assist the County in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources. We look forward to partnering with the County. CDFW requests an opportunity to review and comment on any response that the County has to our comments and to receive notification of any forthcoming hearing date(s) for the Project (CEQA Guidelines, § 15073(e)).

Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to [Keith Yaeger](#)¹⁵, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Victoria Tang
Environmental Program Manager
South Coast Region

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Draft Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program

Attachment B: Figures and Tables

ec: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Victoria Tang, Environmental Program Manager
Randy Rodriguez, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor)
Keith Yaeger, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)

Office of Planning and Research
State.Clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

REFERENCES

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¹⁵ Phone: 562-519-7144; Email: Keith.Yaeger@wildlife.ca.gov

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Attachment A: Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)

CDFW provides the following language to be incorporated into the MMRP for the Project.

Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>Mitigation Measure #1: Biological Surveys. A survey for biological resources shall be conducted at the site level by a qualified biologist (i.e., familiar with wildlife, plants, streams and habitats in the County) approved by the County prior to any staging or development activities. The survey area shall include the proposed development area, including areas of anticipated construction and ground disturbance, as well as staging areas, areas of anticipated light or noise impact, ingress and egress routes, and utility routes. The survey area shall be large enough to encompass areas subject to both direct and indirect impacts. The qualified biologist shall map land cover, identify natural communities and species observed, and assess the habitat suitability of the proposed activity footprint for special-status plants and wildlife, and sensitive habitats including streambed resources. A report with evidence to support a conclusion as to whether special status species and sensitive habitats are present or are likely to occur within the proposed activity footprint shall be submitted to the County for review. If special status species and sensitive habitats will be impacted by the Project, additional mitigation measures, permitting, and/or mitigation may be required.</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>
<p>Recommendation #1: Subsequent Environmental Review. CDFW is unclear of the process for how individual projects would be determined to be consistent with the LACC and General Plan. The LACC and General Plan do not appear to have mechanisms for site level analysis of impacts to biological resources from development of vacant land for structures that could then apply for a</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA document</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>cannabis business license. The PEIR should clearly identify the process and have a mechanism for CDFW review, particularly for undeveloped land that may be developed for cannabis businesses (CCR 15168(c)). CDFW understands that the review of individual projects for impacts to biological resources would be led by the County Department of Regional Planning for consistency of the LACC and General Plan. In CDFW's experience development of a structure can often be ministerial. CDFW believes the development of land should not be ministerial in cases where vacant land is developed with structures and site improvements that may impact biological resources. In addition, the FPEIR should cite the specific requirements in the General Plan and LACC that address site level review for biological resources, or include them as part of the Project, prior to obtaining a final cannabis business license.</p>		
<p>Recommendation #2: Land Development and Redevelopment Discussion. The PEIR should include a discussion of the Project's potential to induce land development for the purpose of cannabis businesses and a discussion of impacts associated with the development and redevelopment of lands. Alternatively, the PEIR could be revised to state the building used for cannabis businesses must be existing as of the time the NOP was published, not at the time of application for a license, and that any new structures would require separate environmental review. This would ensure undeveloped land is not developed for the purpose of cannabis cultivation without proper environmental review.</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA document</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>
<p>Recommendation #3: Environmental Baseline. Because the Project would allow for existing structures and may also result in development of properties for cannabis cultivation that may not occur without Project, the Environmental Baseline should include an analysis of properties within areas</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA document</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>eligible for cannabis businesses that have existing, legally constructed, and permitted structures sufficient for cannabis businesses and properties that are undeveloped and will require development. CEQA Guidelines section 15125, subdivision (a)(1) requires a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, absent substantial evidence that an existing conditions analysis would be misleading or without informational value. In addition, Environmental Planning and Information Council v. County of El Dorado (1982) 131 Cal. App. 3rd 350, 354 determined that CEQA is focused on the “effects of projects on the actual environment upon which the proposed project will operate”. This disclosure of an accurate baseline analysis is necessary to allow CDFW to comment on alternatives to avoid impacts, as well as to assess the significance of the specific impact relative to the species (e.g., current range, distribution, population trends, and connectivity).</p>		
<p>Mitigation Measure #2: Burrowing Owl Surveys. A burrowing owl survey at the site level shall be conducted prior to any staging or development activities to avoid impacts to burrowing owls and/or occupied burrows. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and in accordance with the methods outlined in CDFW’s Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFW 2012) or CDFW’s most recent guidance. Documentation of surveys and findings shall be submitted to the County for review. If no burrowing owls or occupied burrows are detected, project activities may begin, and no additional avoidance and minimization measures shall be required. If an active nest (i.e., occupied with eggs or fledglings) is found outside, but within 500 feet, of the development footprint, the qualified biologist shall establish a “no-disturbance” buffer around the burrow location(s). The size of the “no-disturbance” buffer shall be determined in consultation with CDFW and be</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>based on the proposed level of disturbance. If an occupied burrow is found within the development footprint, the project proponent shall contact CDFW to develop appropriate mitigation and management procedures or obtain an Incidental Take Permit from CDFW. If burrowing owl presence is confirmed, the project proponent shall offset impacts by acquiring mitigation lands for the species. The potential mitigation land shall have the following: 1) have presence of burrowing owl; 2) sufficiently replace the impacted burrowing owl habitat area to ensure no net loss of habitat; and 3) be of equivalent or greater habitat value than that of the project site.</p>		
<p>Mitigation Measure #3: Incidental Take Permit. If western burrowing owl is detected the Project and impacts cannot be avoided, the proponent shall coordinate with CDFW and obtain appropriate take authorization from CDFW (pursuant to Fish & Game Code, § 2080 et seq). The Project proponent shall comply with the mitigation measures detailed in the take authorization issued by CDFW. The Project proponent shall provide a copy of a fully executed take authorization to the County prior to implementing Project ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal.</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>Recommendation #4: Analysis of Western Burrowing Owl Impacts. The FPEIR should include a discussion of the Project's impact to western burrowing owl from the development or redevelopment of land and include mitigation measures sufficient to reduce the impact less than significant. CDFW's issuance of an ITP for a Project is subject to CEQA. As a Responsible Agency, CDFW may consider the CEQA document from the lead agency/Project proponent for the Project. However, additional documentation may be required as part of an ITP application for the Project in order for CDFW to adequately develop an accurate take analysis and identify measures that would fully mitigate for take of CESA-listed species. To minimize additional requirements by CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 and/or under CEQA, a project's CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to western Joshua trees and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of the ITP.</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA document</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>
<p>Mitigation Measure #4: Western Joshua Tree Survey. Prior to any staging or development activities at the site level, a western Joshua tree census shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within the Project site and an appropriate distance around the Project site. The census shall be conducted in accordance with CDFW's Western Joshua Tree Census Instructions.¹⁶ Findings from the census shall be compiled in a report submitted to the County prior to the beginning of Project activities.</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>
<p>Mitigation Measure #5: Incidental Take Permit. If western Joshua tree is detected and will be impacted by development of the site, the Project proponent shall coordinate with CDFW and obtain appropriate take</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>

¹⁶ <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=238156&inline>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>authorization from CDFW (pursuant to Fish & Game Code, § 2080 et seq). The Project proponent shall comply with the mitigation measures detailed in the take authorization issued by CDFW. The Project proponent shall provide a copy of a fully executed take authorization to the County prior to implementing Project ground-disturbing activities and vegetation removal.</p>		
<p>Recommendation #5: Analysis of Western Joshua Tree Impacts. The FPEIR should include a discussion of the Project’s impact to western Joshua tree from the development or redevelopment of land to support cannabis businesses and include mitigation measures sufficient to reduce the impact less than significant. CDFW’s issuance of an ITP for a project is subject to CEQA. As a Responsible Agency, CDFW may consider the CEQA document from the lead agency/Project proponent for the project. However, additional documentation may be required as part of an ITP application for the Project in order for CDFW to adequately develop an accurate take analysis and identify measures that would fully mitigate for take of CESA-listed species. To minimize additional requirements by CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 and/or under CEQA, a project’s CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to western Joshua trees and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of the ITP.</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA document</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>
<p>Mitigation Measure #6: Mohave Ground Squirrel Surveys. Prior to any staging or development activities at the site level, a qualified biologist familiar with Mohave ground squirrel behavior and life history shall conduct focused surveys for Mohave ground squirrel throughout the Project site. Focused Mohave ground squirrel surveys shall follow CDFW’s Mohave Ground Squirrel</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p><u>Survey Guidelines</u>¹⁷ (CDFW 2023).</p> <p>If a survey conducted according to CDFW guidelines results in no capture or observation of Mohave ground squirrel on a Project site, this is not necessarily evidence that the Mohave ground squirrel does not exist on the site or that the site is not actual or potential habitat of the species. However, in the circumstance of such a negative result, CDFW may stipulate that the Project site harbors no Mohave ground squirrel. This stipulation would expire one year from the end date of the last trapping on the Project site conducted according to these guidelines. However, if Mohave ground squirrel or other listed species are discovered on the Project site, avoiding take of a listed species and or securing authorization for incidental take of a listed species pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 2081 (b) et seq. remains the responsibility of the Project applicant.</p>		
<p>Mitigation Measure #7: Incidental Take Permit. The Project applicant may choose to forgo focused Mohave ground squirrel presence/absence surveys and assume presence of Mohave ground squirrel on site. Under this option, an ITP shall be obtained for Mohave ground squirrel prior to ground/vegetation disturbance activities. The Project shall mitigate for temporary and/or permanent impacts to Mohave ground squirrel habitat as specified in conditions of the ITP through habitat acquisition at a CDFW-approved location and mitigation ratio.</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>
<p>Recommendation #6: Analysis of Mohave Ground Squirrel Impacts. The FPEIR should include a discussion of the Project’s impact to Mohave ground squirrel from the development or redevelopment of land to support cannabis</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>

¹⁷ <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83975>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>businesses and include mitigation measures sufficient to reduce the impact less than significant. CDFW's issuance of an ITP for a Project is subject to CEQA. As a Responsible Agency, CDFW may consider the CEQA document from the lead agency/Project proponent for the Project. However, additional documentation may be required as part of an ITP application for the Project in order for CDFW to adequately develop an accurate take analysis and identify measures that would fully mitigate for take of CESA-listed species. To minimize additional requirements by CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 and/or under CEQA, a project's CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to Mohave ground squirrel and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring, and reporting commitments for issuance of the ITP.</p>	<p>document</p>	
<p>Mitigation Measure #8: Sensitive Species Surveys. Prior to any staging or development activities at the site level, a qualified biologist shall conduct biological surveys of any areas where potential special status biological resources (special status species and SSC), or sensitive natural communities may occur. During the design of the project, and prior to construction, the project proponent shall employ a qualified biologist to review the proposed project. To the extent feasible, the location(s) of a proposed project shall be on previously disturbed or developed sites and shall avoid undisturbed, high-quality, natural habitat that supports special status biological resources, areas that are used for regional or local wildlife movement, and jurisdictional wetlands and associated waters. If a desktop review indicates that special status biological resources or natural communities may occur in the project area, the project proponent shall either assume presence and mitigate accordingly, or a qualified biologist shall conduct species-specific biological surveys or botanical field surveys to confirm the presence and extent of special status biological resources and/or sensitive natural communities prior</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>to the start of construction. Surveys shall be conducted according to protocols currently accepted by CDFW and/or USFWS. If no accepted survey protocol exists, the project proponent shall consult CDFW for guidance. To determine presence/absence or accurately identify rare plants, a qualified botanist shall conduct multiple rare plant surveys throughout the growing season for any given year. Surveys shall occur during the time of year when rare plants are more likely to be visually detectable. Rare plant surveys proceeding after a low water year should be supplemented with one or two additional rare plant surveys over a number of years depending on the rare plant species, annual weather patterns, and whether the project area was recently disturbed (e.g., fire). If special status biological resources or their sign (e.g., scat, burrows) are observed, the project proponent shall report the observation to CDFW through an entry in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and develop a plan to avoid impacts that is specific to each species. If impacts cannot be avoided, the project proponent shall consult with CDFW to obtain appropriate authorization for take of species protected under CESA (pursuant to Fish & G. Code, § 2080 et seq.). The project proponent shall have a copy of a fully executed take authorization prior to any activity that may result in take or CESA-protected species. If the desktop review indicates that no special status biological resources or natural communities may occur in the project area, then biological surveys are not required.</p>		
<p>Recommendation #7: Analysis of Special Status Species Impacts. The FPEIR should include a discussion and disclosure of potential impacts to biological resources from the development or redevelopment of sites for the purpose of cannabis businesses. This information is necessary to allow CDFW to comment on alternatives to avoid impacts, as well as to assess the significance of the specific impact relative to the species (e.g., current range, distribution,</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA document</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
population trends, and connectivity).		
<p>Mitigation Measure #9: Fencing Plan. A fencing plan should be provided for each cannabis operation at the site level to demonstrate that wildlife entrapment and mortality and connectivity are mitigated to less than significant. Should any subsequent proposed project occur in a location that has been identified as a wildlife movement corridor or found to impede the free movement of wildlife, the FPEIR should include mechanisms at the site level to provide compensatory mitigation measures for the Project's significant impacts (direct and/or through habitat modification) to sensitive and special status plants, animals, and habitats. Mitigation measures should emphasize avoidance and minimization of Project-related impacts. For unavoidable impacts, on-site habitat restoration or enhancement should be discussed in detail. If on-site mitigation is not feasible or would not be biologically viable and therefore inadequate to mitigate the loss of biological functions and values, off-site mitigation through habitat creation and/or acquisition and preservation in perpetuity should be addressed. Areas proposed as mitigation lands should be protected in perpetuity with a conservation easement and financial assurance and dedicated to a qualified entity for long-term management and monitoring.</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>
<p>Recommendation #8: Analysis of Fencing Impact. FPEIR should analyze impacts from required security measures and other fencing/barriers required for cannabis projects to animal species and wildlife movement/connectivity. The FPEIR should include information on the height, length, type of materials, maintenance requirements, and location of fencing that would be needed for cannabis businesses. The FPEIR should also provide a mechanism for analyzing and mitigating potential impacts from fencing at the individual (site) level.</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA document</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>

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Mitigation Measure	Timing	Responsible Party
<p>Mitigation Measure #10: LSA. Individual businesses shall notify the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) pursuant to Fish and Game Code 1602 and obtain an LSA Agreement from CDFW prior to Project activities that will impact streams. For projects requiring a LSA, the Notification shall include a hydrology report to evaluate whether altering streams within the Project site may impact hydrologic activity. The hydrology report shall also include a hydrological evaluation of any potential scour or erosion at the Project site due to a storm event for existing and proposed conditions. Please visit CDFW's Lake and Streambed Alteration Program webpage¹⁸ for more information (CDFW 2026d).</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>
<p>Mitigation Measure #11: Compensatory Mitigation. If impacts to streams are unavoidable, the cannabis business shall provide compensatory mitigation for impacts on streams and associated plant communities as part of the County land use and business license process. Any off-site mitigation shall occur where a stream supports the same plant communities impacted by the project and preferably within the same watershed.</p>	<p>Prior to Project construction and activities</p>	<p>Lead Agency/ Applicant</p>
<p>Recommendation #9: Analysis of Stream Crossing Impacts. The FPEIR should analyze impacts from construction, replacement, paving, and maintenance of stream crossings for cannabis business access to plant and animal species and wildlife movement/connectivity. The FPEIR should also provide a mechanism for analyzing and mitigating potential impacts from stream crossings at the individual (site) level.</p>	<p>Prior to finalizing CEQA document</p>	<p>Lead Agency</p>

¹⁸ <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA>

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Attachment B: Figures and Tables

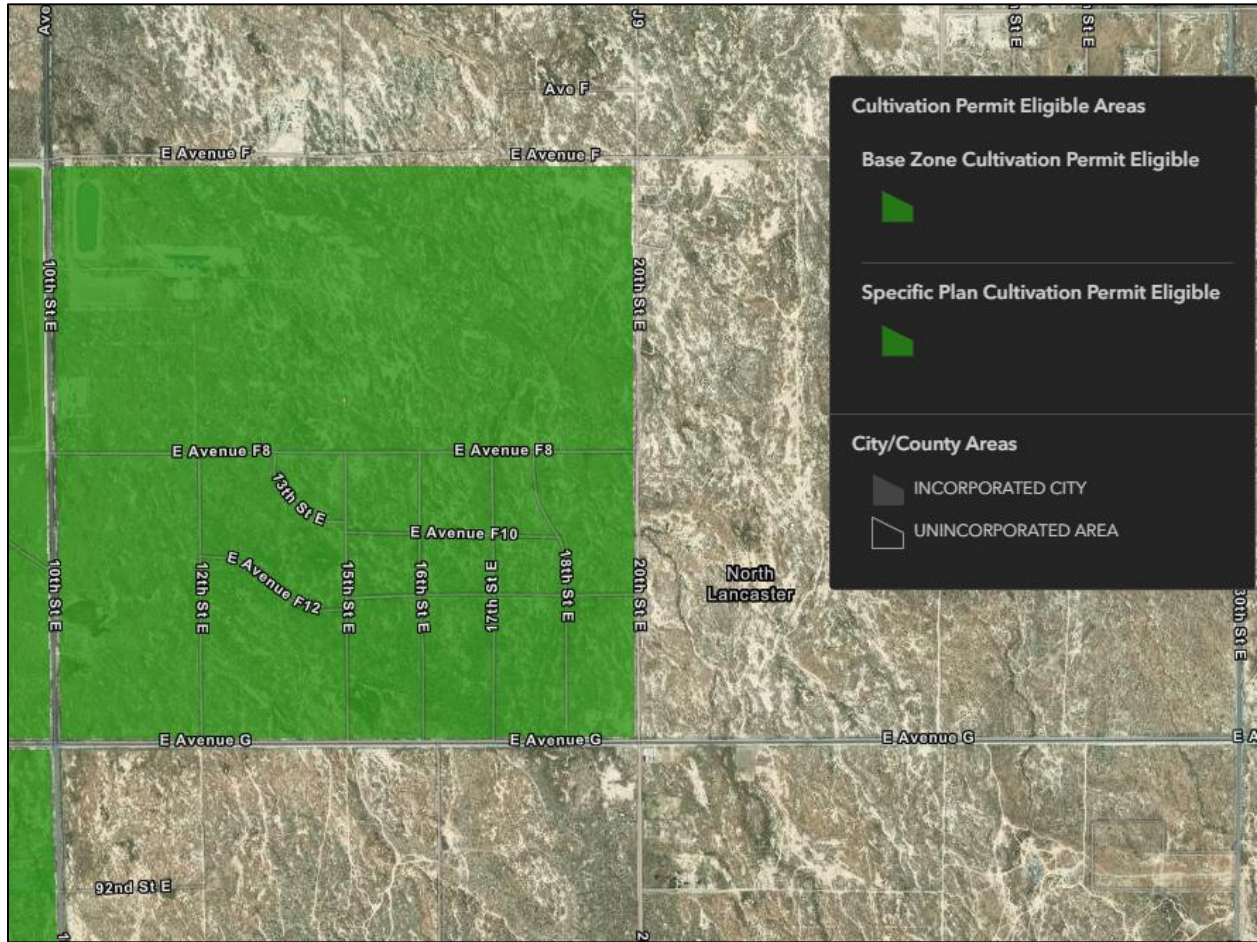


Figure 1. Map from the County's [Eligibility Zones for Commercial Cannabis in Unincorporated Los Angeles County](#)¹⁹ showing an example of undeveloped land that is eligible for commercial cannabis cultivation, non-storefront retail, testing, distribution, volatile and non-volatile manufacturing, and microbusinesses (approximately Latitude 34.742646, Longitude - 118.099724).

¹⁹ <https://lacounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=df60d1a4b1014df7866949fe46519711>

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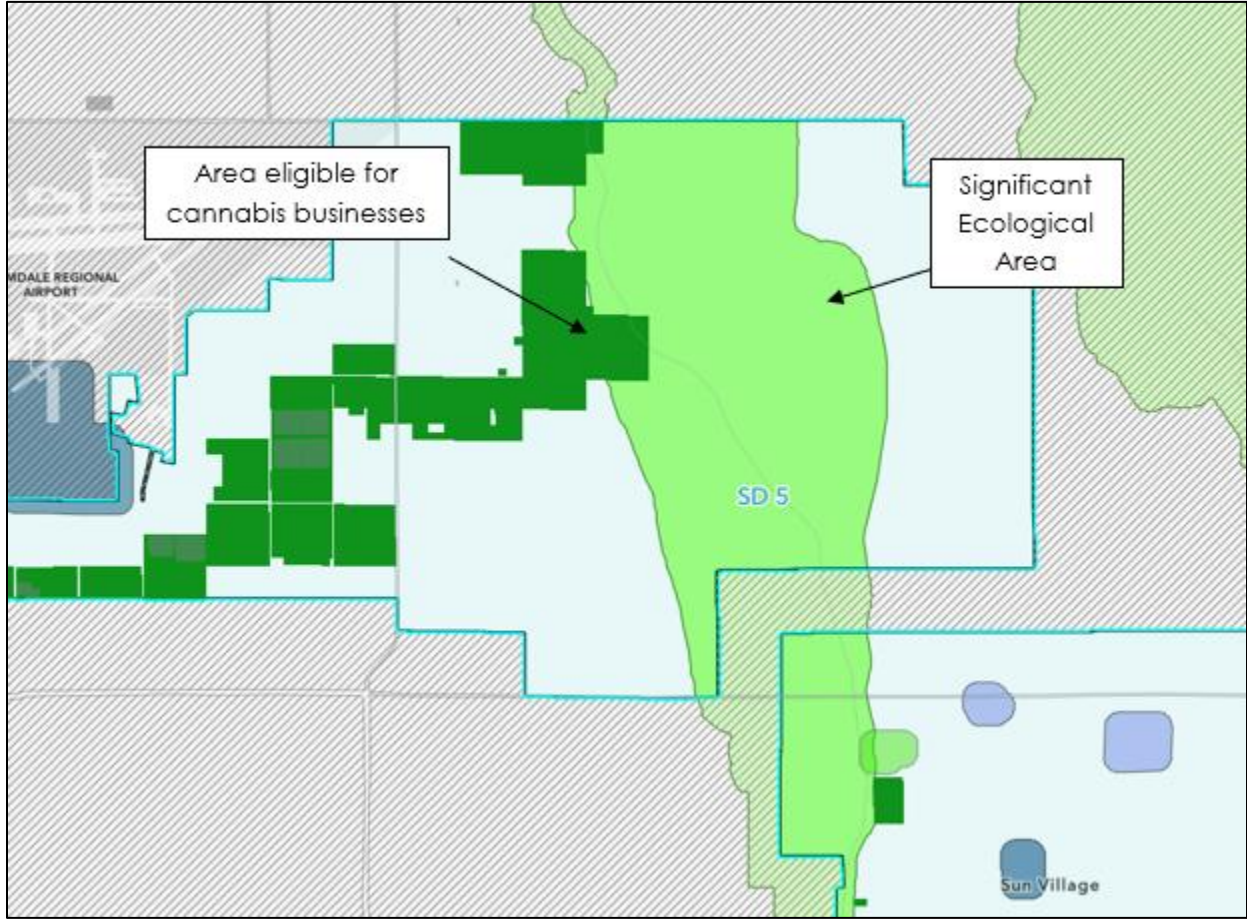


Figure 2: Map from the County's Eligibility Zones for Commercial Cannabis in Unincorporated Los Angeles County showing an example of a location within a Significant Ecological Area that is eligible for commercial cannabis cultivation, non-storefront retail, testing, distribution, volatile and non-volatile manufacturing, and microbusinesses (approximately Latitude 34.61928, Longitude -118.00811). However, this location does not meet the eligibility requirements of the PEIR as the location is within a Significant Ecological Area.

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Table 1: CNDDDB Records of Listed Species Occurring within Five Miles of the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Listing Status	State Listing Status
southern mountain yellow-legged frog	<i>Rana muscosa</i>	Endangered	Endangered
foothill yellow-legged frog - south coast DPS	<i>Rana boylei</i> pop. 6	Endangered	Endangered
arroyo toad	<i>Anaxyrus californicus</i>	Endangered	SSC
western spadefoot	<i>Spea hammondi</i>	Proposed Threatened	SSC
California red-legged frog	<i>Rana draytonii</i>	Threatened	None
burrowing owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	None	Candidate Endangered
bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Delisted	Endangered
least Bell's vireo	<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	Endangered	Endangered
California condor	<i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>	Endangered	Endangered
southwestern willow flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	Endangered	Endangered
California least tern	<i>Sternula antillarum browni</i>	Endangered	Endangered
Belding's savannah sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi</i>	None	Endangered
western yellow-billed cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	Threatened	Endangered
coastal California gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>	Threatened	None
western snowy plover	<i>Anarhynchus nivosus nivosus</i>	Threatened	None
tricolored blackbird	<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	None	Threatened
Swainson's hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	None	Threatened
bank swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	None	Threatened
California black rail	<i>Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus</i>	None	Threatened
Riverside fairy shrimp	<i>Streptocephalus woottoni</i>	Endangered	None
vernal pool fairy shrimp	<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	Threatened	None
western Joshua tree	<i>Yucca brevifolia</i>	None	Candidate Threatened
slender-horned spineflower	<i>Dodecahema leptoceras</i>	Endangered	Endangered
Nevin's barberry	<i>Berberis nevinii</i>	Endangered	Endangered
Lyon's pentachaeta	<i>Pentachaeta lyonii</i>	Endangered	Endangered
salt marsh bird's-beak	<i>Chloropyron maritimum ssp. maritimum</i>	Endangered	Endangered

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Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Listing Status	State Listing Status
Ventura Marsh milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus pycnostachyus</i> <i>var. lanosissimus</i>	Endangered	Endangered
coastal dunes milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus tener</i> <i>var. titi</i>	Endangered	Endangered
marsh sandwort	<i>Arenaria paludicola</i>	Endangered	Endangered
San Diego button-celery	<i>Eryngium aristulatum</i> <i>var. parishii</i>	Endangered	Endangered
San Fernando Valley spineflower	<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> <i>var. fernandina</i>	None	Endangered
Braunton's milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus brauntonii</i>	Endangered	None
spreading navarretia	<i>Navarretia fossalis</i>	Threatened	None
Agoura Hills dudleya	<i>Dudleya cymosa</i> <i>ssp. agourensis</i>	Threatened	None
Santa Monica dudleya	<i>Dudleya cymosa</i> <i>ssp. ovatifolia</i>	Threatened	None
Mt. Gleason paintbrush	<i>Castilleja gleasoni</i>	None	Rare
Santa Susana tarplant	<i>Deinandra minthornii</i>	None	Rare
Conejo buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum crocatum</i>	None	Rare
marcescent dudleya	<i>Dudleya cymosa</i> <i>ssp. marcescens</i>	Threatened	Rare
Gambel's water cress	<i>Nasturtium gambelii</i>	Endangered	Threatened
beach spectaclepod	<i>Dithyrea maritima</i>	None	Threatened
unarmored threespine stickleback	<i>Gasterosteus aculeatus</i> <i>williamsoni</i>	Endangered	Endangered
Mohave tui chub	<i>Siphateles bicolor</i> <i>mohavensis</i>	Endangered	Endangered
steelhead - southern California DPS	<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> <i>irideus</i> <i>pop. 10</i>	Endangered	Endangered
tidewater goby	<i>Eucyclogobius newberryi</i>	Endangered	SSC
Santa Ana speckled dace	<i>Rhinichthys gabrielino</i>	Proposed Threatened	SSC
Santa Ana sucker	<i>Pantosteus santaanae</i>	Threatened	None
quino checkerspot butterfly	<i>Euphydryas editha quino</i>	Endangered	Candidate Endangered
Crotch's bumble bee	<i>Bombus crotchii</i>	None	Candidate Endangered
Palos Verdes blue butterfly	<i>Glaucopsyche lygdamus</i> <i>palosverdesensis</i>	Endangered	None
El Segundo blue butterfly	<i>Euphilotes allyni</i>	Endangered	None

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Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Listing Status	State Listing Status
monarch - California overwintering population	<i>Danaus plexippus plexippus pop. 1</i>	Proposed Threatened	None
Pacific pocket mouse	<i>Perognathus longimembris pacificus</i>	Endangered	Candidate Endangered
Mohave ground squirrel	<i>Xerospermophilus mohavensis</i>	None	Threatened
Nelson's (=San Joaquin) antelope squirrel	<i>Ammospermophilus nelsoni</i>	None	Threatened
California Orcutt grass	<i>Orcuttia californica</i>	Endangered	Endangered
thread-leaved brodiaea	<i>Brodiaea filifolia</i>	Threatened	Endangered
blunt-nosed leopard lizard	<i>Gambelia sila</i>	Endangered	Endangered
desert tortoise	<i>Gopherus agassizii</i>	Threatened	Endangered
southwestern pond turtle	<i>Actinemys pallida</i>	Proposed Threatened	SSC
northwestern pond turtle	<i>Actinemys marmorata</i>	Proposed Threatened	SSC

Table 2: CNDDDB Records of Rare Plant Species Occurring within Five Miles of the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	California Rare Plant Rank
Los Angeles sunflower	<i>Helianthus nuttallii</i> ssp. <i>parishii</i>	1A
Parish's gooseberry	<i>Ribes divaricatum</i> var. <i>parishii</i>	1A
Ballona cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla multijuga</i>	1A
Mason's neststraw	<i>Stylocline masonii</i>	1B.1
Parish's popcornflower	<i>Plagiobothrys parishii</i>	1B.1
Parry's spineflower	<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>parryi</i>	1B.1
Piute Mountains navarretia	<i>Navarretia setiloba</i>	1B.1
Newhall sunflower	<i>Helianthus inexpectatus</i>	1B.1
Ojai navarretia	<i>Navarretia ojaiensis</i>	1B.1
Horn's milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus hornii</i> var. <i>hornii</i>	1B.1
Malibu baccharis	<i>Baccharis malibuensis</i>	1B.1
Blochman's dudleya	<i>Dudleya blochmaniae</i> ssp. <i>blochmaniae</i>	1B.1
Parish's brittlescale	<i>Atriplex parishii</i>	1B.1
southern tarplant	<i>Centromadia parryi</i> ssp. <i>australis</i>	1B.1
Brand's star phacelia	<i>Phacelia stellaris</i>	1B.1
Coulter's goldfields	<i>Lasthenia glabrata</i> ssp. <i>coulteri</i>	1B.1
Lancaster milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus preussii</i> var. <i>laxiflorus</i>	1B.1

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Common Name	Scientific Name	California Rare Plant Rank
San Gabriel Mountains dudleya	<i>Dudleya densiflora</i>	1B.1
Orcutt's pincushion	<i>Chaenactis glabriuscula</i> var. <i>orcuttiana</i>	1B.1
mesa horkelia	<i>Horkelia cuneata</i> var. <i>puberula</i>	1B.1
Rosamond eriastrum	<i>Eriastrum rosamondense</i>	1B.1
Nuttall's scrub oak	<i>Quercus dumosa</i>	1B.1
lucky morning-glory	<i>Calystegia felix</i>	1B.1
smooth tarplant	<i>Centromadia pungens</i> ssp. <i>laevis</i>	1B.1
Payne's bush lupine	<i>Lupinus paynei</i>	1B.1
slender mariposa-lily	<i>Calochortus clavatus</i> var. <i>gracilis</i>	1B.2
short-joint beavertail	<i>Opuntia basilaris</i> var. <i>brachyclada</i>	1B.2
chaparral ragwort	<i>Senecio aphanactis</i>	1B.2
alkali mariposa-lily	<i>Calochortus striatus</i>	1B.2
Ross' pitcher sage	<i>Lepechinia rossii</i>	1B.2
San Gabriel linanthus	<i>Linanthus concinnus</i>	1B.2
Robbins' nemacladus	<i>Nemacladus secundiflorus</i> var. <i>robbinsii</i>	1B.2
Palmer's mariposa-lily	<i>Calochortus palmeri</i> var. <i>palmeri</i>	1B.2
Davidson's bushmallow	<i>Malacothamnus davidsonii</i>	1B.2
rigid fringe-pod	<i>Thysanocarpus rigidus</i>	1B.2
many-stemmed dudleya	<i>Dudleya multicaulis</i>	1B.2
Coulter's saltbush	<i>Atriplex coulteri</i>	1B.2
southern mountains skullcap	<i>Scutellaria bolanderi</i> ssp. <i>austromontana</i>	1B.2
San Gabriel River dudleya	<i>Dudleya cymosa</i> ssp. <i>crebrifolia</i>	1B.2
south coast saltscale	<i>Atriplex pacifica</i>	1B.2
Davidson's saltscale	<i>Atriplex serenana</i> var. <i>davidsonii</i>	1B.2
aphanisma	<i>Aphanisma blitoides</i>	1B.2
intermediate mariposa-lily	<i>Calochortus weedii</i> var. <i>intermedius</i>	1B.2
coast woolly-heads	<i>Nemacaulis denudata</i> var. <i>denudata</i>	1B.2
dune larkspur	<i>Delphinium parryi</i> ssp. <i>blochmaniae</i>	1B.2
island green dudleya	<i>Dudleya virens</i> ssp. <i>insularis</i>	1B.2
prostrate vernal pool navarretia	<i>Navarretia prostrata</i>	1B.2
estuary seablite	<i>Suaeda esteroa</i>	1B.2

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Common Name	Scientific Name	California Rare Plant Rank
Catalina crossosoma	Crossosoma californicum	1B.2
San Bernardino aster	Symphyotrichum defoliatum	1B.2
Clokey's cryptantha	Cryptantha clokeyi	1B.2
coastal goosefoot	Chenopodium littoreum	1B.2
Baja navarretia	Navarretia peninsularis	1B.2
decumbent goldenbush	Isocoma menziesii var. decumbens	1B.2
California screw moss	Tortula californica	1B.2
chaparral nolina	Nolina cismontana	1B.2
San Gabriel bedstraw	Galium grande	1B.2
Sanford's arrowhead	Sagittaria sanfordii	1B.2
Big Bear Valley woollypod	Astragalus leucolobus	1B.2
San Antonio milk-vetch	Astragalus lentiginosus var. antonius	1B.3
Greata's aster	Symphyotrichum greatae	1B.3
late-flowered mariposa-lily	Calochortus fimbriatus	1B.3
southern jewelflower	Streptanthus campestris	1B.3
Raven's blazing-star	Mentzelia ravenii	1B.3
white-veined monardella	Monardella hypoleuca ssp. hypoleuca	1B.3
Mt. Pinos onion	Allium howellii var. clokeyi	1B.3
western bristly scaleseed	Spermolepis lateriflora	2A
Rocky Mountain bulrush	Schoenoplectiella saximontana	2B.1
California satintail	Imperata brevifolia	2B.1
sagebrush loeflingia	Loeflingia squarrosa var. artemisiarum	2B.2
white rabbit-tobacco	Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum	2B.2
Sonoran maiden fern	Pelazoneuron puberulum var. sonorensis	2B.2
salt spring checkerbloom	Sidalcea neomexicana	2B.2
California saw-grass	Cladium californicum	2B.2
mud nama	Nama stenocarpa	2B.2
Peruvian dodder	Cuscuta obtusiflora var. glandulosa	2B.2
Mt. Gleason paintbrush	Castilleja gleasoni	1B.2
Santa Susana tarplant	Deinandra minthornii	1B.2
Conejo buckwheat	Eriogonum crocatum	1B.2

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Table 3: CNDDDB Records of SSC Occurring within Five Miles of the Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name
tidewater goby	<i>Eucyclogobius newberryi</i>
Santa Ana sucker	<i>Pantosteus santaanae</i>
Santa Ana speckled dace	<i>Rhinichthys gabrielino</i>
arroyo chub	<i>Gila orcuttii</i>
western mastiff bat	<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>
coast horned lizard	<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>
spotted bat	<i>Euderma maculatum</i>
California leaf-nosed bat	<i>Macrotus californicus</i>
two-striped gartersnake	<i>Thamnophis hammondii</i>
pallid bat	<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>
Townsend's big-eared bat	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>
Le Conte's thrasher	<i>Toxostoma lecontei</i>
western spadefoot	<i>Spea hammondii</i>
mountain plover	<i>Anarhynchus montanus</i>
southwestern pond turtle	<i>Actinemys pallida</i>
northwestern pond turtle	<i>Actinemys marmorata</i>
arroyo toad	<i>Anaxyrus californicus</i>
yellow-breasted chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>
yellow warbler	<i>Setophaga petechia</i>
American badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>
grasshopper sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>
western yellow bat	<i>Lasiurus xanthinus</i>
big free-tailed bat	<i>Nyctinomops macrotis</i>
western red bat	<i>Lasiurus frantzii</i>
pocketed free-tailed bat	<i>Nyctinomops femorosaccus</i>
red-diamond rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus ruber</i>
yellow rail	<i>Coturnicops noveboracensis</i>
short-eared owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
northern harrier	<i>Circus hudsonius</i>
loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>
California red-legged frog	<i>Rana draytonii</i>
Tehachapi pocket mouse	<i>Perognathus alticolus inexpectatus</i>
black swift	<i>Cypseloides niger</i>
Northern California legless lizard	<i>Anniella pulchra</i>
Southern California legless lizard	<i>Anniella stebbinsi</i>
coastal cactus wren	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis</i>
southern grasshopper mouse	<i>Onychomys torridus ramona</i>

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California legless lizard	<i>Anniella spp.</i>
coastal whiptail	<i>Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri</i>
coastal California gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>
Coast Range newt	<i>Taricha torosa</i>
California glossy snake	<i>Arizona elegans occidentalis</i>
south coast gartersnake	<i>Thamnophis sirtalis pop. 1</i>
western snowy plover	<i>Anarhynchus nivosus nivosus</i>
south coast marsh vole	<i>Microtus californicus stephensi</i>
southern California saltmarsh shrew	<i>Sorex ornatus salicornicus</i>