Appendix B
Park Lane Homes Biological Resources Report
(Available on the city website)

HABITAT SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT & COACHELLA VALLEY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN CONSISTENCY REPORT

PALM AND PARK PROJECT
Assessor's Parcel Number: 656-040-061

Desert Hot Springs
Riverside County
California

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13 September 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the request of Terra Nova Planning & Research, this biological resource assessment report (BRAR) was prepared by WSP USA Environment & Infrastructure Inc. (WSP) for the proposed residential development of a portion of Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 656-040-061 (project or project site) located in the city of Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California (Figure 1). Information contained herein is intended to be used for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), as well as federal and California Endangered Species Acts.

2.0 SITE / PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes building 180 affordable dwelling units on an approximate 7-acre site located on a 13-acre parcel at the northeast junction of Palm Drive and Park Lane in Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California (Figure 1). The western 6± acres of the parcel are already developed, but the eastern portion is vacant. The lot would be split with entitlement. The project is within Section 6, Township 3 South, Range 5 East, United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' Seven Palms Valley, Calif. Quadrangle. Elevation of the project ranges from 275-280 meters (m) (905-917 feet [ft]) above mean sea level (Figure 2).

The project site is currently undeveloped vacant desert land. Surrounding, adjacent land uses include developed civic/public space to the east and west, developed commercial space to the north, and a mix of developed commercial, civic/public, and industrial space to the south. Residential developments (single and multi-family homes) occur a few parcels away to the north, west, and south. Small vacant, undeveloped lots, similar to the project site, are scattered among the developed residential areas, with larger areas of undeveloped land occurring in proximity to the project site to the east and southwest (Figure 3).

3.0 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.1 Federal

3.1.1 Federal Endangered Species Act

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service are the designated federal agencies accountable for administering the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA). The FESA defines species as "endangered" or "threatened" and provides regulatory protection at the federal level.

- Section 9 of the FESA prohibits the "take" of listed (i.e., endangered or threatened) species. The FESA definition of take is "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in such conduct." Recognizing that take cannot

always be avoided, Section 10(a) includes provisions for take that is incidental to, but not the purpose of, otherwise lawful activities. Specifically, Section 10(a)(1)(A) permits (authorized take permits) are issued for scientific purposes Section 10(a)(1)(B) permits (incidental take permits) are issued for the incidental take of listed species that does not jeopardize the species.

- Section 7 (a)(2) requires federal agencies to evaluate the proposed project with respect to listed or proposed listed, species and their respective critical habitat (if applicable). Federal agencies must employ programs for the conservation of listed species and are prohibited from authorizing, funding, or carrying out any action that would jeopardize a listed species or destroy or modify its "critical habitat." As defined by the FESA, "individuals, organizations, states, local governments, and other nonfederal entities are affected by the designation of critical habitat only if their actions occur on federal lands, require a federal permit, license, or other authorization, or involve federal funding.
- Section 10(a) of the FESA authorizes the issuance of incidental take permits and establishes standards for the content of habitat conservation plans (HCP). The CVMSHCP is an HCP, see discussion below.

3.1.2 Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Treaties signed by the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, Japan, and the countries of the former Soviet Union make it unlawful to pursue, capture, kill, and/or possess, or attempt to engage in any such conduct to any migratory bird, nest, egg, or parts thereof listed in this document. The Secretary of the Interior can issue permits for incidental take of migratory bird species. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) also allows the Secretary of the Interior to grant permits for specific actions for the incidental take of these protected migratory bird species, but this rarely occurs.

3.1.3 National Environmental Policy Act

If portions of a proposed project could fall under the jurisdiction of a federal agency (i.e., U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) they are subject to environmental review pursuant to NEPA. NEPA establishes certain criteria that must be adhered to for any project that is "financed, assisted, conducted or approved" by a federal agency. The federal lead agency is required to "determine whether the proposed action will significantly affect the quality of the human environment."

3.1.4 Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

In 1972, Congress enacted the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, also known as Public Law 92–500, 86 Stat. 816, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq., commonly referred to as the "Clean Water Act" or simply the "Act." The Clean Water Act's central concept is the

definition of "navigable waters," which encompasses the waters of the United States, including the territorial seas, as defined in 33 U.S.C. 1362(7). On January 18, 2023, the final rule titled "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States'" was published in the Federal Register, and it became effective on March 20, 2023.

In 2006, the Supreme Court addressed the scope of "waters of the United States (WUS)" in Rapanos v. United States, 547 U.S. 715 (2006) ("Rapanos"). The Court noted that no single position in Rapanos commanded a majority, but all nine members agreed that the term "WUS" includes some waters not traditionally considered navigable. A plurality in Rapanos defined it as covering "relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water" connected to traditional navigable waters, as well as wetlands with a "continuous surface connection" to such waterbodies. Justice Kennedy's concurring opinion emphasized the need for a "significant nexus" to waters that are or were navigable in fact.

The 2023 Final Rule incorporated the two jurisdictional standards from Rapanos into the definition of WUS. The "relatively permanent standard" identifies various types of waters connected to traditional navigable waters, while the "significant nexus standard" assesses their impact on the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of navigable waters.

The term "adjacent" was defined in line with longstanding regulatory practices. "Adjacent" was defined as "bordering, contiguous, or neighboring," and it included wetlands separated from other WUS by man-made dikes or barriers, natural river berms, beach dunes, and similar features.

On May 25, 2023, the Supreme Court decided Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). While the 2023 Rule was not directly before the Court, the Court considered the jurisdictional standards set forth in that rule. The enterprise of the 2023 Rule, to define WUS, was the same as the Supreme Court's enterprise in Sackett: "to identify with greater clarity what the Act means by WUS. The Supreme Court recognized the agencies' definition and utilization of "adjacent" and "significant nexus" "as set out in [the agencies'] the most recent rule," the 2023 Rule, but concluded that the significant nexus standard was "inconsistent with the text and structure of the Clean Water Act."

As a result, the involved regulatory agencies revised the 2023 Rule to remove the significant nexus standard and to amend its definition of "adjacent" as these provisions are invalid under the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Clean Water Act in Sackett.

WUS are no longer considered jurisdictional under the Clean Water Act based on the significant nexus standard, and wetlands are not defined as "adjacent" or jurisdictional under the Act solely because they are "bordering, contiguous, or neighboring... [or] separated from other 'waters of

the United States' by man-made dikes or barriers, natural river berms, beach dunes and the like." Furthermore, as a result of the decision in Sackett invalidating the significant nexus standard, the provision for assessment of streams and wetlands under the additional waters provision of paragraph (a)(5) is no longer valid, as any jurisdictional streams and wetlands are covered by paragraphs (a)(1) through (4) of the 2023 Rule.

Finally, the agencies are removing "interstate wetlands" from the 2023 Rule to conform with the decision in Sackett. The Supreme Court in Sackett examined the Clean Water Act and its statutory history and found the predecessor statute to the Act covered and defined "interstate waters" as "all rivers, lakes, and other waters that flow across or form a part of State boundaries." The Court concluded that the use of the term "waters" refers to such "open waters" and not wetlands. As a result, under Sackett, the provision authorizing wetlands to be jurisdictional simply because they are interstate is invalid.

The USACE delineates non-wetland waters in the Arid West Region by identifying the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM) in ephemeral and intermittent channels (USACE 2008a). The OHWM is defined in 33 CFR 328.3(e) as:

> "…that line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as clear, natural line impresses on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas."

Identification of the OHWM involves assessments of stream geomorphology and vegetation response to the dominant stream discharge. Determining whether any non-wetland water is a jurisdictional WUS involves further assessment in accordance with the regulations, case law, and clarifying guidance as discussed below.

Wetlands are defined at 33 CFR 328.3(b) as "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."

Special aquatic sites are geographic areas, large or small, possessing special ecological characteristics of productivity, habitat, wildlife protection, or other important and easily disrupted ecological values. These areas are generally recognized as significantly influencing or positively contributing to the general overall environmental health or vitality of the entire ecosystem of a region. Special aquatic sites include sanctuaries and refuges, wetlands, mud flats, vegetated shallows, coral reefs, and riffle and pool complexes. They are defined in 40 CFR 230 Subpart E.

3.2 State

3.2.1 California Environmental Quality Act

The basic goal of the CEQA is to maintain a high-quality environment now and in the future and the specific goals are for California's public agencies to:

1) Identify the significant environmental effects of their actions; and, either

2) Avoid those significant environmental effects, where feasible; or

3) Mitigate those significant environmental effects, where feasible.

The CEQA applies to "projects" proposed to be undertaken or requiring approval by State and local government agencies. Projects are activities which have the potential to have a physical impact on the environment and may include the enactment of zoning ordinances, the issuance of conditional use permits and the approval of tentative subdivision maps. Where a project requires approvals from more than one public agency, the CEQA requires one of these public agencies to serve as the "lead agency."

A "lead agency" must complete the environmental review process required by the CEQA. The most basic steps of the environmental review process are:

1) Determine if the activity is a "project" subject to the CEQA;

2) Determine if the "project" is exempt from the CEQA;

3) Perform an Initial Study to identify the environmental impacts of the project and determine whether the identified impacts are "significant". Based on its findings of "significance", the lead agency prepares one of the following environmental review documents:

   a) Negative Declaration if it finds no "significant" impacts;

   b) Mitigated Negative Declaration if it finds "significant" impacts but revises the project to avoid or mitigate those significant impacts;

   c) Environmental Impact Report (EIR) if it finds "significant" impacts.

While there is no ironclad definition of "significance", Article 5 of the CEQA Guidelines provides criteria to lead agencies in determining whether a project may have significant effects.

The purpose of an EIR is to provide State and local agencies and the general public with detailed information on the potentially significant environmental effects which a proposed project is likely to have and to list ways in which the significant environmental effects may be minimized and indicate alternatives to the project.

Project-related impacts to special status species covered under the CVMSHCP would be fully mitigated through payment of the requisite development fee and participation in the plan. Impacts to species not covered under the CVMSHCP must not exceed the significance thresholds as defined by the CEQA. Project design can incorporate avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures can be developed and implemented to reduce significant impacts to levels less than significant (where applicable).

3.2.2 Section 2081 of the State Fish and Game Code

Under Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code (FGC), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) authorizes individuals or public agencies to import, export, take, or possess state endangered, threatened, or candidate species in California through permits or memoranda of understanding. These acts, which are otherwise prohibited, may be authorized through permits or "memoranda of understanding" if (1) the take is incidental to otherwise lawful activities, (2) impacts of the take are minimized and fully mitigated, (3) the permit is consistent with regulations adopted in accordance with any recovery plan for the species in question, and (4) the applicant ensures suitable funding to implement the measures required by the CDFW. The CDFW shall make this determination based on the best scientific information reasonably available and shall include consideration of the species' capability to survive and reproduce.

3.2.3 Sections 3503, 3505.5, & 3513 of the State Fish and Game Code

Section 3503 of the FGC makes it unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird. Section 3505.5 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the order Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey, i.e.: owls, hawks, eagles, etc.) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any bird-of-prey. Section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird as designated in the MBTA.

3.2.4 Sections 1600-1603 of the State Fish and Game Code

The California Fish and Game Code (CFGC), pursuant to Sections 1600 through 1603, regulates all diversions, obstructions, or changes to the natural flow or bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake that supports fish or wildlife resources. Under state code, CDFW jurisdiction is assessed in the field based on one, or a combination, of the following criteria:

1) At minimum, intermittent and seasonal flow through a bed or channel with banks and that also supports fish or other aquatic life.

2) A watercourse having a surface or subsurface flow regime that supports or that has supported riparian vegetation.

3) Hydrogeomorphically distinct top-of-embankment to top-of-embankment limits.

4) Outer ground cover and canopy extents of, typically, riparian associated vegetation species that would be sustained by surface and/or subsurface waters of the watercourse.

The CDFW requires that public and private interests apply for a "Streambed Alteration Agreement" for any project that may impact a streambed or wetland. The CDFW has maintained a "no net loss" policy regarding impacts to streams and waterways and requires replacement of lost habitats on at least a 1:1 ratio.

3.2.5 Clean Water Act

The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) regulates activities pursuant to Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Section 401 of the CWA specifies that certification from the State is required for any applicant requesting a federal license or permit to conduct any activity including, but not limited to, the construction or operation of facilities that may result in any discharge into navigable waters. Through the Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the RWQCB asserts jurisdiction over Waters of the State of California (WSC) which is generally the same as WUS but may also include isolated waterbodies. The Porter Cologne Act defines WSC as "surface water or ground water, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state."

3.3 Regional

3.3.1 Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

Finalized in October 2008, the CVMSHCP is a comprehensive, relatively new regional plan that addresses the conservation needs of 27 species of native flora and fauna and 24 natural vegetation communities occurring throughout the Coachella Valley region of western Riverside County, California. Permits for the CVMSHCP were issued by the CDFW on September 9, 2008 and the USFWS on October 1, 2008 (TE104604-0). The CVMSHCP serves two primary purposes: Balancing environmental protection and economic development objectives in the CVMSHCP area and simplifying compliance with endangered species related laws. The CVMSHCP accomplishes this by conserving unfragmented habitat to permanently protect and secure viable populations of the covered species. The covered species include those plants and animals that are either currently listed as threatened or endangered, are proposed for listing, or are believed by an appointed Scientific Advisory Committee, USFWS and CDFW, to have a high probability of being proposed for listing in the future if not provided protection by the CVMSHCP. The goal of the CVMSHCP is to meet the requirements of the state and federal endangered species acts, while at the same time allowing for the economic growth (land development) within the plan area without significant

delay or hidden costs. Under the CVMSHCP, land development/mitigation fees are collected from all new development projects occurring in the plan area. The purpose of this fee is to support the assembly of a preserve system for the covered species and natural vegetation communities within areas identified as having high conservation value.

3.3.2 City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan

The City of Desert Hot Springs' (City) General Plan outlines policy, goals, standards, and guidelines for the physical development of the lands; residential, commercial and industrial structures; circulation; recreation; open space and conservation; safety; air quality; noise; and community design which are set forth in the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. More specifically, the City's Planning Division is responsible for the physical planning which includes development review, analysis and compliance, environmental review, long-range planning and development policies.

4.0 METHODS

4.1 Literature Review

In preparation for the field surveys, a literature search was conducted to identify special status biological resources known from the vicinity of the project site. In the context of this report, and for the purpose of this assessment, vicinity is defined as areas within a 5-mile radius of the project site.

The literature search included a review of the following documents:

- California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) RareFind 5 (CDFW 2024a)
- Special Animals List (CDFW 2024b)
- California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Inventory of Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2024)
- CVMSHCP (Coachella Valley Conservation Commission "CVCC" 2024)
- Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. (NRCS 2024) Web Soil Survey.
- USGS 7.5' *Seven Palms Valley* and *Desert Hot Springs, Calif.* quadrangles (USGS 2021)
- City of Desert Hot Springs General Plan (City of Desert Hot Springs 2020)

Scientific nomenclature for this document follows standard reference sources: For plant communities, CVMSHCP (CVCC 2024); for flora, Jepson eFlora (2024) and the USDA NRCS PLANTS Database (2024); for amphibians, reptiles, and mammals, CDFW (2016); and for birds, California Bird Records Committee (2024).

4.2 Field Assessment

The field assessment was conducted between the hours of 0645 and 0845 on 06 August 2024 by WSP biologist Melanie Bukovac and senior biologist Michael Wilcox. On-site suitable habitat was assessed based on the presence of constituent habitat elements (e.g., soils, vegetation, and topography) characteristic of the potentially occurring special status biological resources determined by the literature review. The entire site and adjacent properties (where accessible) were assessed on foot to record pertinent field data and current site conditions. Adjacent undeveloped areas within an approximate 150-meter (~500-foot) buffer zone were also assessed visually, from the project site, for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). All on-site flora and fauna observed or otherwise detected (e.g., vocalizations, presence of scat, tracks, and/or bones) during the assessment were recorded in field notes and are included in Appendices B and C. Special status species observations were entered onto the CDFW California Native Species Field Survey Form (Appendix E). General weather and site conditions were also recorded at the beginning and end of the survey. Temperatures and wind speeds were recorded with a handheld Kestrel 3000 anemometer. Percent cloud cover was visually estimated.

5.0 RESULTS

The fenced project site currently consists of undeveloped, vacant desert land. A mix of civic/public, commercial, and industrial developed space occurs on adjacent properties to the north, south, east, and west (Figure 3). One indistinct erosion feature, apparent overflow from the existing basin just north of the site, was detected at the northeast corner (Appendix D, Photos 7-9). It flows from off-site culverts on the north side, southeast through the corner of the site and into the adjacent schoolyard, where it sheet flows within the developed portion of the school. No other evidence of water flow or pooling was detected on-site. No active dunes or sand fields were detected. Although not immediately adjacent to the site, residential developments consisting of single and multi-family homes also occur to the northeast, north, northwest, west, southwest, south, and southeast of the site with small undeveloped, vacant lots located intermittently in-between existing houses. Minor illegal dumping and wind-blown debris is also intermittently present on and adjacent to the site. The project site is in an area that is designated as an "mixed-use corridor" under the city's general plan existing land use designations (City of Desert Hot Springs 2020). Representative site photos are included in Appendix D.

5.1 Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

The project site is located within the city limits of Desert Hot Springs, which as of 2016, is a signatory to the CVMSHCP.

The project site is not within any of the CVMSHCP-designated conservation areas. Three conservation areas are, however, located near the site. The Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo

Canyon Conservation Area is located approximately 0.60 mile to the west of the project site. The Willow Hole Conservation area is located approximately 1.4 miles southwest of the project site. The Long Canyon Conservation Area is located approximately 1.5 miles to southeast of the project site (Figure 3). No wildlife corridors or biological linkages are mapped on or adjacent to the project site.

5.2 Weather Conditions

Weather conditions during the assessment included partly cloudy skies that ranged from approximately 30% cover at the start of the survey, to 0% by the end. Temperatures ranged from 84 to 93 degrees Fahrenheit. Winds were low with intermittent wind speeds measured between 0-9 miles per hour (mph).

5.3 Topography, Soils and Waters

The project site is relatively flat and sandy. Two types of soil occur on the project site, classified as Carsitas fine sand, 0-5% slopes and Myoma fine sand, 0-5% slopes (NRCS 2024a, Figure 4). Carsitas soil is an excessively drained soil found in nearly level to gently sloping areas on alluvial fans, fan aprons, valley fills, dissected remnants of alluvial fans, and in drainageways. Carsitas soils formed in alluvium from granitoid and/or gneissic rocks. Slopes range from 0 to 30 percent. Myoma soil is typically light olive gray, moderately alkaline fine and very fine sands to a depth of about 31 inches. Below 31 inches they are strongly alkaline very fine sands.

The field surveys confirmed that on-site soils and substrates are typical of this area and consistent with the soil mapping (Appendix C). Although sandy, the site does not appear to contain active sand dunes. No drifts, hummocks, rock outcrops, significant rocky areas, clay lenses, springs, seeps, or bodies of water were detected. Additionally, no creeks, rivers, dry washes, blueline streams, lakes, ponds, or vernal pools are mapped or were observed on the project site. Mission Creek, an ephemeral, dry wash is located approximately 1.8 miles to the west of the project site and Morongo Wash is approximately 5 miles to the south. One indistinct erosion feature occurs in an otherwise upland portion of the northeast corner of the site (Appendix D, Photos 7-9). This feature appears to be created by overflow from an existing basin just north of the site. The off-site basin is fed by off-site culverts and run-off from an existing commercial development. The feature flows southeasterly through the northeast corner of the site and into an adjacent schoolyard.

5.4 Vegetation

The on-site vegetation community is mapped as Sonoran mixed woody and succulent scrub (CVAG 2009). The CVMSHCP refers to this community as Sonoran creosote bush scrub. Sawyer et. al. (2009) also refers to this community as "*Larrea tridentata-Ambrosia dumosa* shrubland alliance (creosote bush-white bursage scrub)" (Figure 5). Dominant perennial plant species observed

included creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), white bursage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), and Mojave indigo-bush (*Psorothamnus arborescens*). The dominant annual species, identified entirely through the presence of dead remnants included Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*), short-pod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), and common Mediterranean grass (*Schismus barbatus*). Other representative, but less abundant, plant species observed included annual bursage (*Ambrosia acanthicarpa*), California croton (*Croton californicus*), desert twinbugs (*Dicoria canescens*), primrose sp. (*Camissonia sp.*), cheesebush (*Ambrosia salsola*), fanleaf crinklemat (*Tiquila plicata*), four-wing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), desert palafox (*Palafoxia arida*), narrow-leaved johnstonella (*Johnstonella angustifolia*), rattlesnake weed (*Euphorbia albomarginata*), Mexican palo verde (*Parkinsonia aculeata*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*). Sonoran creosote bush scrub is the predominant vegetation community occurring below 762 m (2500 ft) in the Colorado Desert from the Little San Bernardino Mountains south and eastward into Arizona and Mexico (Holland 1986). No wetland, riparian or otherwise special status vegetation communities were observed on the project site. A list of the plant species observed during the assessment, including common and scientific names, is appended to this report (Appendix B).

5.5 Wildlife

Vertebrate wildlife directly observed and/or detected otherwise (e.g., scat, bones, tracks, feathers, burrows, etc.) during the assessment was not especially diverse or abundant, limited to only eleven species, 3 being of special status, while the remaining 8 are all common to the region. This included six birds, three mammals, and two reptiles (Appendix C).

The six bird species detected on site consisted of three common species and three special status species. The three common species included mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), and rock pigeon (*Columba livia*). The three special status species detected on site included loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris)*, and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*).

The three mammals detected on-site included desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), and Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*). Other small mammals, particularly rodents, may occur on the site as many small mammal burrows were observed. The total number of species that are present cannot be conclusively determined without an intensive trapping effort. Larger carnivores such as the coyote (*Canis latrans*) were not detected, however, have potential to forage on or move through the site.

The two reptiles observed on-site included the western whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris*), and side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*). Both are common in the Coachella Valley. Other common reptiles expected to occur on-site include, but are not limited to: desert iguana (*Dipsosaurus dorsalis*), zebra-tailed lizard (*Callisaurus draconoides*), desert horned lizard (*Phrynosoma platyrhinos*), red coachwhip (*Coluber flagellum*), glossy snake (*Arizona elegans*), Colorado Desert

shovel-nosed snake (*Chionactis occipitalis annulata*), and Colorado desert sidewinder (*Crotalus cerastes laterorepens*). The site supports no suitable habitat for amphibians of any kind.

Tables 1-6 below summarize information on special status species known to occur in the vicinity of the project site, including the status of each species on the project site based on the best available information and the collective expertise of WSP biologists.

5.6 Special Status Species

Plant or animal taxa may be considered "sensitive" or as having "special status" due to declining populations, vulnerability to habitat change, or because they have restricted ranges. Some are listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or by the CDFW and are protected by the federal and state Endangered Species acts and the California Native Plant Protection Act. Others have been identified as sensitive or as special status species by the USFWS, the BLM, the CDFW, or by private conservation organizations, including the CNPS. Unlisted sensitive species do not have formal state or federal status but impacts may nevertheless be considered significant under the CEQA.

The review of the CNDDB, CNPS Online Inventory of Rare Plants, other biological reports from the vicinity, and consultation with other experienced biologists/naturalists resulted in the identification of thirty-four (34) special status biological resources known to occur in the vicinity (within an approximate 5-mile radius) of the project site. These included twelve (12) plants, two (2) vegetation communities, one (1) invertebrate, five (5) reptiles, seven (7) birds and seven (7) mammals. Tables 1 through 6 provide a complete list of the special status biological resources, their associated legal status, and their respective on-site occurrence potentials.

The CVMSHCP provides conservation for twenty-seven (27) imperiled plant and animal species (5 plants, 2 insects, 1 amphibian, 3 reptiles, 11 birds, and 5 mammals). These include federal and state-listed species, federal and California Species of Concern, and species on the CNPS California Rare Plant Ranking system. CVMSHCP covered species are designated on the tables below.

The site appears to be within modeled habitats for four special status fauna species addressed by the CVMSHCP. These include desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), Le Conte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*), Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus tereticaudus chlorus*), and Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*). CVMSHCP modeled habitat is also present within the nearby designated conservation areas. These include but are not necessarily limited to: Coachella Valley milk-vetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*), Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus (*Linanthus maculatus* ssp. *maculatus*), Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket (*Stenopelmatus cahuilaensis*), Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (*Uma inornata*), and flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*) (CVCC 2022).

No special status flora was detected on-site during the field assessment. The project site also does not appear to fall within designated critical habitat for any special status flora species (USFWS 2022).

Three special status wildlife species were detected and observed on-site during the assessment. These included burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike, and horned lark. Limited potentially suitable habitat remains present for several other special status wildlife species known from the vicinity. These include Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, pallid San Diego pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax pallidus*), Palm Springs pocket mouse and Coachella Valley (Palm Springs) round-tailed ground squirrel.

Tables 1 through 6 summarize information on all special status species that have been reported within the vicinity (5-mile radius) or are considered to have some potential to occur on-site based on known geographic distribution and the presence of potentially suitable habitat. These tables provide the names, legal or conservation status, general habitat associations, and the probability of occurrence for each of these species.

Table 1. Special Status Plants

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Abronia villosa var. aurita **chaparral sand-verbena**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = S2 CNPS: CRPR 1B.1	Sandy areas in chaparral & coastal sage scrub; 80-1,600 meters (m) (260-5,250 feet [ft]). Known only from Riverside, Orange (believed extirpated), and San Diego Counties. Blooms (B): Jan-Aug.	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. Nearest CNDDB records from Palm Springs.
Aloysia wrightii **Wright's beebrush**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = S3 CNPS: CRPR 4.3	Rocky, often carbonate soils in Joshua tree woodland & pinyon and juniper woodland; 900-1600 m (2,952-5,249 ft). B: Apr–Oct.	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking, site below known elevational range.
Astragalus lentiginosus var. *coachellae* **Coachella Valley milk-vetch**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = **END** C = S1 CNPS: CRPR 1B.2	Sonoran Desert scrub; sandy flats, washes, outwash fans, sometimes on dunes; 40-665 m (131-2,182 ft). B: Jan–Sept.	**High** Suitable habitat present, species known from vicinity.

Table 1. Special Status Plants

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Astragalus tricarinatus **triple-ribbed milk-vetch**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = **END** C = S2 CNPS: CRPR 1B.2	Joshua tree woodland & Sonoran Desert scrub on hot, rocky slopes in canyons & along edge of boulder-strewn desert washes with *Larrea* and *Encelia*; 455-1525 m (1,492-5,000 ft). B: Feb–May.	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking, site below known elevational range.
Chorizanthe xanti var. *leucotheca* **white-bracted spineflower**	CVMSCHP = No F = None C = S3 CNPS: CRPR 1B.2	Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon & juniper woodland, sandy or gravelly; 300-1200 m (980-3,940 ft). B: Apr-Jun.	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking, site below known elevational range.
Dodecahema leptoceras **slender-horned spineflower**	CVMSCHP = No F = **END** C = S1 CNPS: CRPR 1B.1	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Coastal scrub (alluvial fans); 200-760m (655-2495 ft); B: Apr-Jun	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking, nearest CNDDB records ~7 miles west of site.
Eriastrum harwoodii **Harwood's eriastrum**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = S2 CNPS: CRPR 1B.2	Desert dunes; 125-915 m (410-3000 ft). B: Mar-Jun.	**Very Low** Marginally suitable habitat present but site is stabilized and disturbed, nearest CNDDB records ~4.5 miles northwest of site.
Eschscholzia androuxii **Joshua Tree poppy**	CVMSCHP = No F = None C = S3 CNPS: CRPR 4.3	Joshua tree "woodland", Mojavean desert scrub; 585-1685 m (1920-5530 ft); B: Feb-May (Jun)	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking, site below known elevational range.
Euphorbia arizonica **Arizona spurge**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = S3 CNPS: CRPR 2B.3	Sandy soils in Sonoran Desert scrub; 50-300 m (200-1000 ft). B: Mar-Apr.	**Very Low** Marginally suitable habitat present, but site is disturbed and isolated from other contiguous suitable habitat. Nearest CNDDB records are outside of vicinity at ~7 miles southeast of site.
Euphorbia misera **cliff spurge**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = S2 CNPS: CRPR 2B.2	Coastal bluff scrub, coastal scrub & Mojavean Desert scrub; 10-500 m (35-1640 ft). B: Oct-Aug (perennial shrub).	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking, nearest records from Whitewater Canyon and Palm Springs.

Table 1. Special Status Plants

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Galium angustifolium ssp. gracillimum **slender bedstraw**	CVMSCHP = No F = None C = S4 CNPS: CRPR 4.2	Joshua tree "woodland", Sonoran Desert scrub; 130-1550 m (425-5085 ft); B: Apr-Jun (Jul)	**Absent** Suitable granitic, rocky habitat lacking. No CNDDB records within vicinity of site.
Galium johnstonii **Johnston's bedstraw**	CVMSCHP = No F = None C = S4 CNPS: CRPR 4.3	Chaparral, Lower montane coniferous forest, Pinyon and juniper woodland, Riparian woodland; 1220-2300 m (4005-7545 ft) B: Jun-Jul	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking, site below known elevational range.
Linanthus maculatus maculatus **Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus (gilia)**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = None C = S2 CNPS: CRPR 1B.2	Desert dunes, Sonoran & Mojavean Desert scrub, Joshua tree woodland; most often on low benches along washes or bajadas where substrate shows evidence of water flow; 195-2075 m (635-6,800 ft). B: Mar–May.	**Very Low** Marginally suitable habitat present, nearest CNDDB records ~1 mile west of site.
Mentzelia tricusis **spiny-hair blazing star**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = S2 CNPS: CRPR 1B.2	Mojavean Desert scrub & creosote bush scrub. Occurs in sandy, gravelly, slopes, and washes; 150-1280 m (490-4,200 ft). In California known only from Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego Counties. B: Mar–May.	**Very Low** Marginally suitable habitat present. Nearest CNDDB records ~7 miles southwest of site.
Nemacaulis denudata var. *gracilis* **slender cottonheads**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = S2 CNPS: CRPR 2B.2	Sandy places in coastal dunes, desert dunes & Sonoran Desert scrub; 50-400 m (164-1315 ft). B: Mar– May.	**Very Low** Marginally suitable habitat present. Nearest CNDDB record ~6 miles southwest.
Selaginella eremophila **desert spike-moss**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = S2S3 CNPS: CRPR 2B.2	Chaparral, Sonoran Desert scrub; shaded sites, gravelly soils, crevices or among rocks; 200-900 m (656-2953 ft). B: May–Jul.	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking.

Table 2. Special Status Vegetation Communities

Community	Status	Habitat	Probability
desert fan palm oasis woodland	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F=None C= S3.2	Natural California fan palm (*Washingtonia filifera*) stands	**Absent** No palms present.

Table 2. Special Status Vegetation Communities

mesquite bosque	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F=None C= 2.1	Stands of honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*)	**Absent** No mesquite present.

Table 3. Special Status Invertebrates

Community	Status	Habitat	Probability
Stenopelmatus cahuilaensis **Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = None C = S1S2	Sandy, moist soils in Coachella Valley	**Low** Suitable habitat present but disturbed and stabilized.

Table 4. Special Status Reptiles

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Crotalus ruber ruber **northern red-diamond rattlesnake**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = SSC	Chaparral, woodland, grassland, desert in rocky areas & dense vegetation, Needs burrows, rock cracks, or surface cover objects.	**Absent** Site highly disturbed, not rocky, and isolated from other suitable contiguous habitat.
Gopherus agassizii **desert tortoise**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F: **END** C: **END**, S2S3	Creosote bush scrub, Joshua tree woodland, saltbush scrub); washes, arroyos, bajadas, rocky hillsides, open flat desert.	**Absent** Sign not observed, site isolated and located in civic/commercial area and significantly degraded, nearest CNDDB records over 3.5 miles northeast of site.
Phrynosoma blainvillii **coast horned lizard**	CVMSHCP = No F: None C: SSC	Annual grassland, coastal sage scrub, chaparral & woodland communities. Prefers sandy open areas, washes & floodplains. Requires open areas for sunning, bushes for cover, patches of loose soil for burial & an abundant supply of ants or other insects. Occurs adjacent foothills below 1200 m (4,000 ft), in coastal areas of central California & in non-desert areas of southern California below 1830 m (6000 ft).	**Absent** Marginally suitable habitat present, however, site isolated, surrounded by existing development and likely outside known distribution.

Table 4. Special Status Reptiles

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Phrynosoma mcallii **flat-tailed horned lizard**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = None C = SSC, S2	Sandy and gravelly areas in desert washes, edges of dunes and desert flats; requires vegetative cover, ants & fine sand.	**Absent** Habitat marginally suitable, but isolated and site is at edge of species historic range & very likely outside of current range. Nearest CNDDB record approximately 4 miles southwest.
Uma inornata **Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = **THR** C = **END**, S1	Requires fine, loose, windblown sand (dunes) interspersed with hardpan & widely spaced desert shrubs. Known only from the Coachella Valley.	**Absent** On-site sands too stabilized for this species. Proximal open space to E may contain suitable habitat. CNDDB records within vicinity.

Table 5. Special Status Birds

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Aquila chrysaetos **golden eagle**	CVMSHCP = No F = **MBTA**, Non-BCC-Vulnerable (Eagle Act) C = S3, FGC	Rolling foothills, mountain areas, sage-juniper flats & desert.	**Breeding: Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. **Foraging: Low** May nest or winter nearby & forage over site. CNDDB records from project quadrangle.
Athene cunicularia **burrowing owl**	CVMSHCP = **Yes*** F = **MBTA**, BCC C = SSC (burrows), S2, FGC	Open, dry annual or perennial grassland, deserts & scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. Burrow sites essential.	**Breeding: Occurs** Site is occupied. Suitable habitat and occupied burrows present. Live individuals and sign detected. **Foraging: Occurs** Active burrows and multiple owls observed on-site and adjacent to the site. on-site

Table 5. Special Status Birds

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Eremophila alpestris **horned lark**	CVMSHCP = No F = **MBTA**, BCC C = WL, S4, FGC	Coasts and Shorelines, Desert and Arid Habitats, Fields, Meadows, and Grasslands, Saltwater Wetlands, Shrublands, Savannas, and Thickets, Tundra and Boreal Habitats. Nests in small depressions on open, sparsely vegetated ground, often near clumps of grass, rocks, or other objects.	**Breeding: Low-Moderate** Suitable habitat present. **Foraging: Occurs** Observed.
Falco mexicanus **prairie falcon**	CVMSHCP = No F = **MBTA**, BCC C = SSC (nesting), S3, FGC	Inhabits dry, open terrain, either level or hilly. Breeding sites located on cliffs, but forages far afield.	**Breeding: Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. **Foraging: Low** May nest or winter nearby & forage over site. CNDDB records from project quadrangle.
Lanius ludovicianus **loggerhead shrike**	CVMSHCP = No F = **MBTA**, BCC C = SSC (nesting), S4, FGC	Open fields with scattered trees or shrubs, open country with short vegetation, pastures, old orchards, cemeteries, golf courses, riparian areas & open woodlands. Nests in trees and/or shrubs with dense and/or thorny or spiny branches.	**Breeding: Absent** Suitable dense thorny or spiny tree/shrub habitat lacking. **Foraging: Occurs** Observed.
Toxostoma lecontei **Le Conte's thrasher**	CVMSHCP = **Yes*** F = **MBTA**, BCC C = SSC (nesting), S3, FGC	Desert resident; primarily of open desert wash, desert scrub, alkali desert scrub, and desert succulent scrub habitats. Nest in dense, spiny shrub or densely branched cactus in desert wash habitat, usually 2-8 feet above ground.	**Breeding: Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. **Foraging: Very Low** May nest or winter nearby and/or forage over site. CNDDB records from project quadrangle.
Vireo bellii pusillus **least Bell's vireo**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = **MBTA**, BCC C = SSC (nesting), S3, FGC	Riparian forest, Riparian scrub, Riparian woodland	**Breeding: Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. **Foraging: Absent** Suitable habitat lacking.

* Species is to be conserved under the CVMSHCP, but is still protected by the MBTA

Table 6. Special Status Mammals

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Chaetodipus fallax pallidus **pallid San Diego pocket mouse**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = SSC, S3S4	Desert border areas in desert wash, desert scrub, desert succulent scrub, pinon-juniper, etc. Sandy herbaceous areas usually in association with rocks or coarse gravel.	**Low** On-site habitat marginal, nearest CNDDB record is about 2.5 miles northwest.
Corynorhinus townsendii **Townsend's big-eared bat**	CVMSHCP = No F = Candidate, Threatened C = SSC, S2 WBWG: H	Known to occur throughout California is a wide variety of habitats. Roosts in the open, hanging from walls & ceilings. Roosting sites limiting. Extremely sensitive to human disturbances.	Roost Site: **Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. Foraging: **Low** Habitat marginal; may forage over site if roosting nearby. CNDDB records from project quadrangle.
Neotoma lepida intermedia **San Diego desert woodrat**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = SSC, S3S4	Coastal scrub of southern California. Moderate to dense canopies preferred. Particularly abundant in rock outcrops & rocky cliffs & slopes.	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. Woodrat sign (middens) not observed.
Ovis canadensis nelsoni **desert bighorn sheep**	CVMSHCP = No F = None C = FP, S3	Open, rocky, steep areas with available water and herbaceous forage.	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. Known from Whitewater Canyon, Morongo Valley, and Little San Bernardino Mountains
Ovis canadensis nelsoni (pop. 2) **Peninsular bighorn sheep (DPS)**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = Endangered C = Threatened, Fully Protected	Mountainous terrain, rocky hillsides and outcrops, cliffs, steep canyons.	**Absent** Suitable habitat lacking. Known from San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains
Perognathus longimembris bangsii **Palm Springs pocket mouse**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = None C = FP, S2S3	Desert riparian, desert scrub, desert wash & sagebrush habitats. Most common in creosote-dominated desert scrub.	**Very Low** Habitat marginally suitable but disturbed and isolated from other suitable habitats. Nearest CNDDB record is northwest, over 4.5 miles away.

Table 6. Special Status Mammals

Species	Status	Habitat	Probability
Xerospermophilus tereticaudus chlorus **Coachella Valley (Palm Springs) round-tailed ground squirrel**	CVMSHCP = **Yes** F = None C = SSC, S1S2	Prefers open, flat, grassy areas in fine-textured, sandy soil in desert succulent scrub, desert wash, desert scrub, alkali scrub, & levees.	**Very Low** Marginally suitable habitat present but disturbed and isolated from other contiguous suitable habitat.

Definitions of status designations and occurrence probabilities for Tables 1-6

Definitions for Species

Italics – Scientific name (*i.e., Genus species subspecies*)
Bold – Standard common name (if any)
[*Genus*] – Previous genus, relatively recent taxonomic revision
var. – variety (plants only)
DPS – Distinct Population Segment (i.e., Peninsular bighorn sheep)

Definitions of occurrence probability:

Occurs*:* Observed or detected on-site by WSP or recently reported by another reliable source.
High*:* Observed in similar habitat in region by qualified biologists, or habitat on-site is a type often utilized by the species and the site is within the known range of the species.
Moderate*:* Reported sightings in surrounding region, or site is within the known range of the species and habitat on-site is a type occasionally used by the species.
Low*:* Site is within the known range of the species, but habitat on-site is rarely used by the species
Very Low: Habitat is of marginal suitability and/or site is at the edge of species known range or distribution.
Absent*:*A focused study failed to detect the species, suitable habitat not present, or site is outside the geographic distribution of the species.
Unknown*:* No focused surveys have been performed in the region, & the species' distribution & habitat are poorly known.

CVMSHCP designations

Yes: Conserved by the CVMSHCP
No: Not Specifically Conserved by the CVMSHCP

Federal designations: (F = federal Endangered Species Act or USFWS designations)
END: Federally listed, Endangered
THR: Federally listed, Threatened
CAN: Candidate for Federal listing
MBTA: Migratory Bird Treaty Act
BEPA: Bald Eagle Protection Act (also protects Golden Eagles)
BCC: Birds of Conservation Concern
None: No designation

***State designations*:** (C = California Endangered Species Act or CDFW designations)
END: State listed, Endangered
THR: State listed, Threatened
CAN: Candidate for State listing
RARE: State listed, Rare
FP: Fully Protected Species
SSC: Species of Special Concern
FGC: Fish and Game Code

WL: Watch List Species

CDFW state rankings are a reflection of the overall condition of an element throughout its California range. The number after the decimal point represents a threat designation attached to the rank:

S1 = Critically Imperiled. Less than (<) 6 Element Occurrences (EOs) OR < 1,000 individuals OR < 2,000 acres
- **S1.1** = very threatened
- **S1.2** = threatened
- **S1.3** = no current threats known

S2 = Imperiled. 6-20 EOs OR 1,000-3,000 individuals OR 2,000-10,000 acres
- **S2.1** = very threatened
- **S2.2** = threatened
- **S2.3** = no current threats known

S3 = Vulnerable. 21-80 EOs OR 3,000-10,000 individuals OR 10,000-50,000 acres
- **S3.1** = very threatened
- **S3.2** = threatened
- **S3.3** = no current threats known

S4 = Apparently Secure. Uncommon but not rare in the state; some cause for long-term concern.
S5 = Secure. Common, widespread, and abundant in the state.
SH = All known California sites are historical, not extant

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

Primary Categories
LIST 1A: Plants Presumed Extirpated in California and Either Rare or Extinct Elsewhere
LIST 1B: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere
LIST 2A: Plants Presumed Extirpated in California, But Common Elsewhere
LIST 2B: Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, But More Common Elsewhere
LIST 3: Plants About Which More Information is Needed - A Review List
LIST 4: Plants of Limited Distribution - A Watch List
Subdivisions within Categories
0.1: Seriously threatened in California
0.2: Moderately threatened in California
0.3: Not very threatened in California

Western Bat Working Group (WBWG) designations:

The Western Bat Working Group is comprised of agencies, organizations and individuals interested in bat research, management and conservation from the 13 western states and provinces. Its goals are (1) to facilitate communication among interested parties and reduce risks of species decline or extinction; (2) to provide a mechanism by which current information on bat ecology, distribution and research techniques can be readily accessed; and (3) to develop a forum to discuss conservation strategies, provide technical assistance and encourage education programs.

H: High: Species which are imperiled or are at high risk of imperilment based on available information on distribution, status, ecology and known threats.
M: Medium: Species which warrant a medium level of concern and need closer evaluation, more research, and conservation actions of both the species and possible threats. A lack of meaningful information is a major obstacle in adequately assessing these species' status and should be considered a threat.
L: Low: Species for which most of the existing data support stable populations, and for which the potential for major changes in status in the near future is considered unlikely. There may be localized concerns, but the overall status of the species is believed to be secure. Conservation actions would still apply for these bats, but limited resources are best used on High and Medium status species.
P: Periphery: This designation indicates a species on the edge of its range, for which no other designation has been determined.

6.0 DISCUSSION

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the permanent loss of approximately 7 acres of undeveloped Sonoran creosote bush scrub and the biological resources, sensitive and otherwise, potentially occurring on-site.

The CVMSHCP was designed to streamline the permitting process and to mitigate potential impacts resulting from covered projects and the lawful activities of permittees through payment of the requisite development fee and participation in plan's requirements. A few species, which are not covered by the CVMSHCP and/or are not yet adequately conserved by the CVMSHCP (e.g., nesting birds, burrowing owl) require additional consideration and/or action, which are detailed below.

6.1 Discussion of the Special-status Species Tables

A review of the CNDDB, CNPS, and the collective knowledge of WSP senior biologists resulted in a total of thirty-four (34) special status biological resources that are known from the vicinity of the project site (Tables 1-6). These include: twelve plants (12), two (2) vegetation communities, one (1) invertebrate, five (5) reptiles, seven (7) birds and seven (7) mammals. Of these, twenty-six (26) are considered to be absent from the site due to a lack of suitable habitat. These include: Chaparral sand-verbena (*Abronia villosa var. aurita*), Wright's beebrush (*Aloysia wrightii*), triple-ribbed milkvetch (*Astragalus tricarinatus*), white-bracted spineflower (*Chorizanthe xanti* var. *leucotheca*), slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*), Joshua Tree poppy (*Eschscholzia androuxii*), cliff spurge (*Euphorbia misera*), slender bedstraw (*Galium angustifolium ssp. gracillimum*), Johnston's bedstraw (*Galium johnstonii*), desert spike-moss (*Selaginella eremophila*), desert fan palm oasis woodland, mesquite bosque, northern red-diamond rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber ruber*), desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*), Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (*Uma inornata*), nesting golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), nesting prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), nesting loggerhead shrike, nesting Le Conte's thrasher, nesting least Bell's vireo, roosting Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) and Peninsular bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni* [pop. 2]). Although two of these species, loggerhead shrike and horned lark, were observed foraging on-site during the field assessment, nesting habitat for one of these, loggerhead shrike, was not present on-site. Loggerhead shrike primarily nest in densely vegetated trees and shrubs, often with thorny or spiny branches that provide cover and protection from the elements and predators. Densely vegetated trees and shrubs were not observed on-site. Only a very few sparsely vegetated trees and shrubs were present. For these reasons, suitable nesting habitat for loggerhead shrike was determined to not be present on-site. These twenty-six (26) special status biological resources will not be discussed further.

Six (6) of the remaining twelve (13) species are fully covered and conserved under the CVMSHCP. Participation in the CVMSHPS and payment of the requisite CVMSHCP development fee and participation in the plan is expected to fully mitigate project related impacts (if any) to these species. These include: Coachella Valley milk-vetch, Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, burrowing owl, Palm Springs pocket mouse and Coachella Valley (Palm Springs) round-tailed ground squirrel. Regardless of whether these species occur on the project site or not, with one exception, participation in the CVMSHCP and payment of the development fee is designed and intended to provide full coverage of all potential project-related impacts. With the exception of burrowing owl, for which further discussion follows, these species will not be discussed further.

The remaining eight (8) species, which are not covered, or not fully covered, under the CVMSHCP are discussed below.

6.1.1 Potentially Occurring Plant Species Not Fully Covered Under the CVMSHCP

Harwood's eriastrum (*Eriastrum harwoodii*) is considered to have a very low potential of occurrence as it is associated with desert dunes, it is known from nearby Mission Creek and remnants of stabilized sand fields are present on the project site. This species was not detected during the field assessment as the assessment was conducted outside of this species blooming period (March-June). Harwood's eriastrum is not listed as threatened or endangered but is designated as S2 by the CDFW and List 1B.2 by the CNPS meaning that it is considered to be "imperiled" by the CDFW and "rare, threated or endangered in California and elsewhere" and "moderately threatened in California". This species is not covered under the CVMSHCP therefore payment of development fees and participation in the plan offers no mitigation for impacts to this species. If a significant population were to be present, unmitigated impacts may be considered significant under the CEQA. The likelihood of a significant population occurring on the project site, however, is very low.

Arizona spurge (*Euphorbia arizonica*) is considered to have a very low potential of occurrence as it is associated with sandy soils in Sonoran Desert scrub which is present on the project site. The disturbed condition and isolated nature of the site from other contiguous suitable habitat further reduce the likelihood of occurrence. This species was not detected during the field assessment as the assessment was conducted outside of this species blooming period (March-April). Arizona spurge is not listed as threatened or endangered but is designated as S3 by the CDFW and List 2B.3 by the CNPS meaning that it is considered to be "vulnerable" by the CDFW and "rare, threated or endangered in California but more common elsewhere" and "not very threatened in California". This species is not covered under the CVMSHCP so development fees and participation in the plan offer no mitigation for impacts to this species. If a significant population were to be present, unmitigated impacts may be considered significant under the CEQA. The likelihood of a significant population of Arizona spurge occurring on the project site, however, is considered to be remote.

Spiny-hair blazing star (*Mentzelia tricusis*) is considered to have a low potential of occurrence as it is associated with sandy, and/or gravelly soils in Sonoran Desert (creosote bush) scrub and sandy Sonoran creosote bush scrub is present on the project site. Spiny-hair blazing star is not listed as threatened or endangered but is designated as S2 by the CDFW and List 1B.2 by the CNPS meaning that it is considered to be "imperiled" by the CDFW and "rare, threated or endangered in California and elsewhere" and "moderately threatened in California". This species was not detected during the field assessment as the assessment was conducted outside of this species blooming period (March-May). Spiny-hair blazing star is not covered under the CVMSHCP, therefore development fees and participation in the plan offer no mitigation for impacts to this species. If a significant population were to be present, unmitigated impacts may be considered significant under the CEQA. The likelihood of a significant population of spiny-hair blazing star occurring on the project site, however, is unlikely.

There is a low potential for slender cottonheads (*Nemacaulis denudata* var. gracilis) to occur on-site as suitable habitat (sandy soils in Sonoran Desert scrub) is present. This species was not detected during the field assessment; however, the assessment was conducted outside of this species blooming period (Mar-May). Slender cottonheads is not listed as threatened or endangered; this species is, however, designated as S2 by the CDFW meaning that it is designated as "imperiled" by the CDFW and List 2B.2 meaning that it is considered to be "rare, threatened or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere" and "moderately threatened in California" by the CNPS. Slender cottonheads is not covered under the CVMSHCP. For these reasons, payment of CVMSHCP development fees would not provide mitigation for potential project-related impacts to this species and impacts may be considered significant under CEQA if a significant population were to be present., It is unlikely that a significant population of slender cottonheads occurs on this site.

6.1.2 Potentially Occurring Bird Species Not Covered by the CVMSHCP

The only special status bird species that are known to occur/nest, or have the potential to nest on the project site include horned lark and burrowing owl. These species were detected on and directly adjacent to the project site during the assessment.

A small flock of horned larks were observed foraging on the project site during the assessment. Horned larks nest in small depressions on bare ground, often immediately adjacent to clumps of grass, rocks, cow pies or some other existing object. Habitats that this species nest in include sparsely vegetated areas including grasslands, prairies, desert scrubs, dry lake beds, agricultural fields, grazed pastures, beaches, tundra, and disturbed areas, including airport runways and roadsides. The disturbed, sparsely vegetated condition of the project site provides suitable nesting habitat for this species. Impacts to nesting horned lark would be considered significant under the CEQA and would not be allowed by the MBTA and CFGC. To avoid potential impacts to nesting

horned lark, either avoidance of project-related disturbance (initial grading, vegetation clearance, operation of heavy equipment) during the nesting season (generally 15 January through 31 August) or conducting a nesting bird clearance survey prior to commencement of project-related disturbance during the nesting season would be required.

A minimum of at least 10 individual burrowing owls, consisting of at least two adult pairs occupying different burrows at different parts of the site were present at the time of the assessment. This species nests and roosts underground and is particularly sensitive to ground disturbing activities, loud noise created by operation of heavy equipment up to 500 feet away and may cause the owls to abandon nests or burrows if/when such activities occur. Therefore, in addition to on-site impacts, impacts to off-site burrowing owls occurring adjacent to the site must also be considered. The burrowing owl is not listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or CDFW. It is, however, managed as a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) by the USFWS and designated as an SSC by the CDFW. It is also protected from take by the MBTA and California FGC. Although the burrowing owl is a covered species under the CVMSHCP, take is not allowed under the federal permit for the CVMSHCP or by the MBTA or California FGC. For these reasons, because the site is not within a conservation area, generally two pre-construction take avoidance surveys (the first within 14-30 days prior to ground disturbance and the second within 24 hours of ground disturbance) are required to ensure that no direct take of burrowing owls occur. However, since it is already known that at least 10 burrowing owls, consisting of multiple pairs of adults and juveniles, currently occur on- and adjacent to the site, it is likely burrowing owls will also be present during the standard two pre-construction take avoidance surveys. It is a goal of the CVMSHCP to conserve burrowing owl habitat in the conservation areas as well as minimize fragmentation of and loss of linkages between areas of core habitat nearby. At the time of publication of the CVMSHCP, there were 33 known locations of burrowing owls outside of conservation areas in the plan area. The habitat outside of conservation areas was, however, already highly fragmented and surrounded by existing development, which is consistent with the existing conditions at the site. The potential for these fragmented habitats to provide for the long-term persistence of burrowing owls was determined to be low by the CVMSHCP. These fragmented areas are more susceptible to edge effects, including mortality resulting from traffic collisions and feral animals. In such cases an assessment by the CVAG and CDFW of the quality of this habitat is required to ensure compliance with the goals and objectives of the CVMSHCP.

Because more than 10 burrowing owls consisting of at least two adult pairs and juveniles were observed occupying multiple burrows on- and immediately adjacent to the site, it is assumed that these individuals are resident to this site. Due to the developed conditions surrounding the project site, the site does not likely serve as an important linkage area between populations at other nearby occupied sites. One of the conservation goals and objectives of the CVMSHCP is to ensure conservation of burrowing owls by maintaining the long-term persistence of self-sustaining

populations or metapopulations through adaptive management actions within the conservation area. The population at this site may be self-sustaining and contribute to the success of the greater metapopulation, but is not within or immediately adjacent to a conservation area and therefore conservation of the project site is not required. To avoid impacts to burrowing owl, a Burrowing Owl Relocation Plan (plan) will be required prior to any vegetation removal and/or soil disturbance activities. The plan must be reviewed and approved by CDFW prior to implementation. The plan will include two pre-construction clearance surveys, one within two weeks of initial vegetation removal/ground disturbance and the second within 48-hours of vegetation removal/ground disturbance. If no burrowing owl are detected during the pre-construction surveys, no additional monitoring will be required. Site disturbance should be scheduled to occur outside of the species breeding/nesting season (1 March-31 August) or until it is determined that young owls are no longer reliant on the nest/burrows. If burrowing owl are detected during the pre-construction surveys, passive relocation will be required. The plan will include a detailed description of the passive relocation methods (based on standard practice) as well as other standard avoidance measures.

6.1.3 Additional Bird Species Protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Excluded from coverage under the CVMSHCP are a variety of common bird species that are protected by the MBTA. This includes virtually all native migratory and resident bird species, including birds already known to occur in the vicinity. Avoidance of impacts to these nesting migratory and resident birds is a requirement of the federal permit issued for the CVMSHCP. In order to avoid impacting nesting birds, either avoidance of project-related disturbance during the nesting season (generally from approximately 15 January through 31 August) or nesting bird surveys conducted by a qualified ornithologist or biologist immediately prior to on-site disturbance during the nesting season would be required.

If nesting birds are found, no work would be permitted near the nest until young have fledged. There is no established protocol for nest avoidance, however, when consulted the CDFW generally recommends avoidance buffers of about 500 feet for listed species and birds-of-prey, and 100–300 feet for unlisted songbirds.

6.1.4 Potentially Occurring Mammal Species Not Covered by the CVMSHCP

The only potentially occurring mammal species that is not covered under the CVMSHCP is the pallid San Diego pocket mouse. This species is not listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or CDFW. It is, however, designated as an SSC by the CDFW. Although the state has designated it an SSC, it is ranked S3S4 which means that it is "vulnerable to apparently secure". It is WSP's opinion that even if this species was present, impacts associated with the project site would not likely meet the threshold of significance under the CEQA, given impacts (if any) would

not likely result in: 1) a substantial reduction of habitat for these this species, 2) a drop in self-sustaining population levels, 3) an elimination of these this species population levels, or 4) substantially reduce this species numbers or reduce its geographic range. Therefore, presence/absence survey(s) for pallid San Diego pocket mouse is not recommended at this time.

7.0 CONCLUSION

In 2016 the city of Desert Hot Springs was accepted as a signatory to the CVMSHCP. Since then, payment of the required development fee for approved projects are designed to mitigate the impacts to covered species resulting from the loss/conversion of the approximately 7-acres of vacant desert land. Covered species that occur or have at least some potential to occur on-site and would potentially be affected by implementation of the proposed project include: Coachella Valley milk-vetch, Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus, Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket, burrowing owl, Palm Springs pocket mouse, and Coachella Valley (Palm Springs) round-tailed ground squirrel. Impacts to these species (if present) and their habitat, with the exception of burrowing owl (and other bird species protected by the MBTA), would be fully covered and mitigated under the CVMSHCP with the payment of the requisite development fee and participation in the requirements of the plan.

Some rare plant species that are not covered under the CVMSHCP are considered to have at least a low potential to occur on-site. Under CEQA guidelines, impacts to rare plants species are only considered significant if a significant portion of the population is lost due to project development. Impacts (if any) are not considered significant, due to the small size of the site, its isolation from adjacent desert habitat, and the remote likelihood of substantial populations of these species occurring. The project site is not within a conservation area. For these reasons, a rare plant survey is not required for project approval.

Because at least ten (10) individual burrowing owls including at least two adult pairs and juveniles were observed on and immediately adjacent to the site, the project proponent is required to notify the CVCC with the results of the BRAR, including the status of burrowing owls on the site. WSP is also required to notify the CDFW of all observations of special status species, including burrowing owls and submit the requisite data to the CNDDB. Because the site is largely surrounded by existing development and not within or adjacent to a conservation area, CVCC and CDFW may not consider the site to be important for the long-term conservation of the species in the plan area and simply request that the standard pre-construction take avoidance survey be conducted prior to commencement of site disturbance. Scheduled site disturbance would need to avoid the burrowing owl breeding/nesting season (1 March-31 August) or until it is determined that the young are no longer dependent on the burrow to minimize the impact. If burrowing owls are present at the time of the pre-construction take avoidance surveys, a biologist authorized by CDFW to relocate the burrowing owls would then be required to prepare a burrowing owl management and relocation plan and either passively evict or actively relocate the burrowing

owls, in accordance with CDFW protocol before commencement of any project site disturbance or activities. A copy of the completed CDFW California Native Species Field Survey Form is attached to this report and will be sent by WSP to the CDFW, as required (Appendix E).

Impacts to other bird species not covered under the CVMSHCP require avoidance. If project activities (i.e., site grading, vegetation removal/trimming, earthwork in undisturbed areas, etc.) are conducted during the nesting season (i.e., generally between 15 January and 31 August), a nesting bird clearance survey is recommended to ensure impacts to nesting birds are avoided. If project activities are conducted outside of the nesting season (1 September to 14 January), a nesting bird clearance survey could likely be avoided. If active bird nests or burrows are found, at any time, proposed project activities would need to be postponed until the young have fledged the nest(s) and impacts to nesting birds are entirely avoided.

One small, indistinct erosion feature was observed on the northeast corner of the site. This feature enters the site as a result of overflow from an existing detention basin that is fed by runoff and culverts adjacent to the site. It exits the site and sheet flows into a school yard east of the site. It is WSP's opinion that this small erosion feature is located in an otherwise upland area and is not considered jurisdictional by the USACE, RWQCB, or CDFW. For these reasons, a jurisdictional delineation and regulatory permitting is not required.

With participation in and compliance with the requirements of the CVMSHCP and implementation of the recommendations above, and any requirements of CVCC and CDFW for the on-site and adjacent burrowing owls, impacts to special status species and their habitats are anticipated to be mitigated to a less than significant level.

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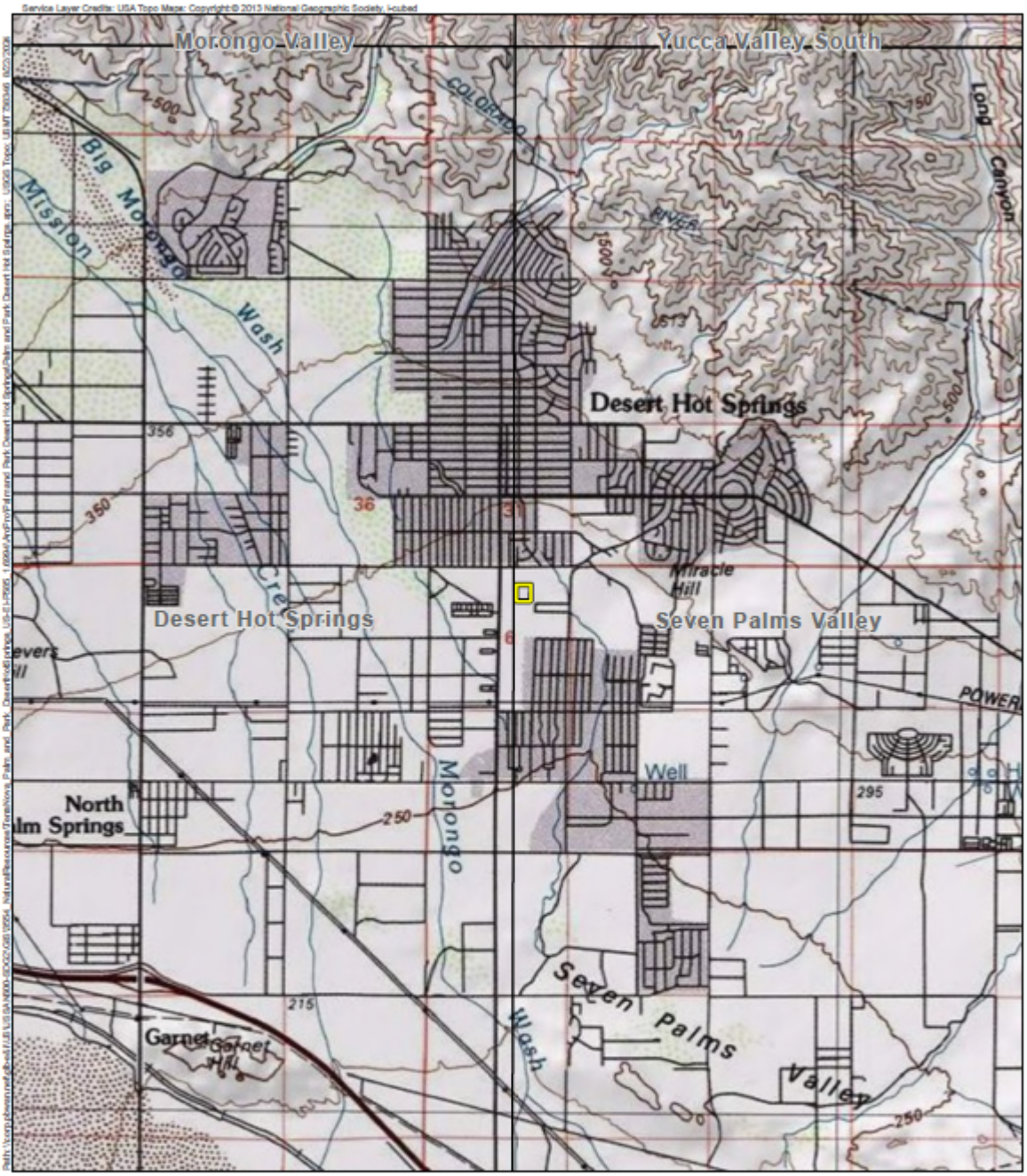
APPENDIX A

FIGURES

Project Location

FIGURE 1
Regional Vicinity and Location
Biological Resources
Palm and Park Project
Riverside County, California



Project Location

FIGURE 2
USGS 7.5' Topo Quad: Desert Hot Springs
Biological Resources
Palm and Park Project
Riverside County, California

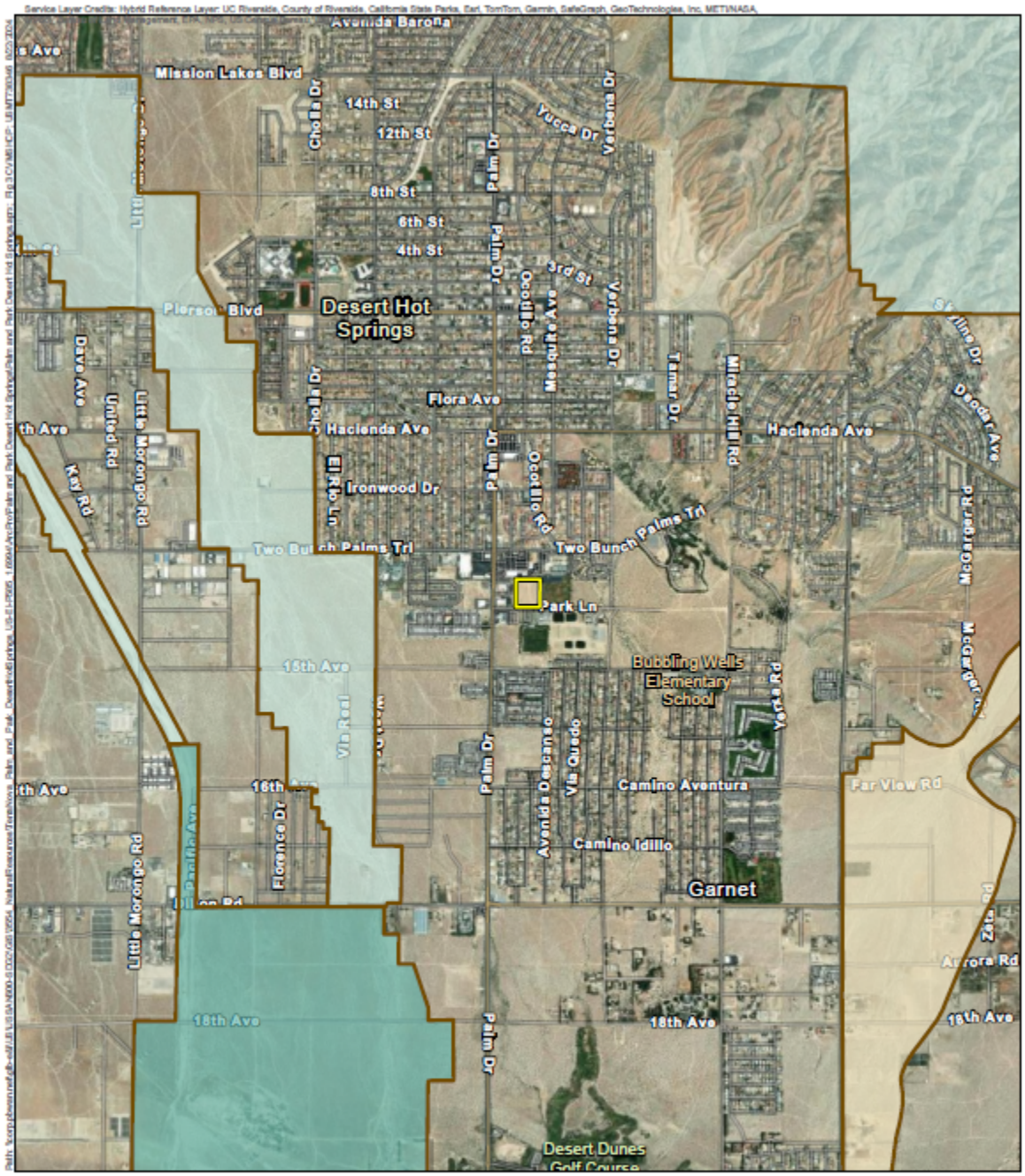


FIGURE 3
Proximity to CVMSHCP
Biological Resources
Palm and Park Project
Riverside County, California

Project Boundary

Soil Type

Carsitas fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes

Myoma fine sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes

FIGURE 4

Soils

Biological Resources

Palm and Park Project

Riverside County, California

Project Boundary

Sonoran creosote bush scrub

FIGURE 5

Vegetation Communities
Biological Resources
Palm and Park Project
Riverside County, California

APPENDIX B

SPECIES LIST: VASCULAR PLANTS

APPENDIX B
Species List: Vascular Plants

This list reports only plants observed on the site by this study. Other species may have been overlooked or undetectable due to their growing season. Unless noted otherwise, nomenclature and systematics follows Jepson Flora Project (2023) = non-native species, sp. = identified only to genus, *cf*= compares favorably with]. Common names not provided by Jepson Flora Project follows those provided by USDA, NRCS (2023b). [†= *special status species,* * = non-native species, sp. = identified only to genus, *cf*= compares favorably with]

Asteraceae	**Sunflower family**
Ambrosia acanthicarpa	annual bursage
Ambrosia dumosa	white bursage
Ambrosia salsola	cheesebush
Dicoria canescens	desert twinbugs
Encelia farinosa	brittlebush
Palafoxia arida	desert palafox
Boraginaceae	**Borage family**
Johnstonella angustifolia	narrow-leaved johnstonella
Tiquilia plicata	fanleaf crinklemat
Brassicaceae	**Mustard family**
*Brassica tournefortii**	Sahara mustard*
Hirschfeldia incana	short-pod mustard
Chenopodiaceae	**Goosefoot Family**
Atriplex canescens	four-wing saltbush
Salsola tragus	Russian thistle
Euphorbiaceae	**Spurge family**
Croton californicus	California croton
Euphorbia albomarginata	rattlesnake weed
Fabaceae	**Pea family**
Parkinsonia aculeata	Mexican palo verde
Psorothamnus arborescens	Mojave indigo-bush
Psorothamnus sp.	unidentified (annual) indigo bush
Geraniaceae	**Geranium Family**
*Erodium cicutarium**	redstem filaree*
Onagraceae	**Evening Primrose Family**
Camissonia sp.	unidentified sun cup
Poaceae	**Grass family**
*Schismus barbatus**	common Mediterranean grass*
Zygophyllaceae	**Caltrop family**
Larrea tridentata	creosote bush
*Tribulus terrestris**	puncture vine*

APPENDIX C

SPECIES LIST: VERTEBRATE ANIMALS

APPENDIX C

Species List: Vertebrate Animals

This list reports only the vertebrate animals observed or detected by WSP during the field assessment. Other species may have been overlooked or undetectable due to their activity patterns or weather conditions. High winds made species detection difficult and especially low at the time of the field assessment. [†= *special status species,* * = non-native species, sp. = identified only to genus, *cf* = compares favorably with]

VERTEBRATES	
Phrynosomatidae	**Lizards**
Uta stansburiana	side-blotched lizard
Teiidae	**Whiptails**
Aspidoscelis tigris	western whiptail
Columbidae	**Pigeons/Doves**
Columba livia	rock pigeon
Zenaida macroura	mourning dove
Strigidae	**True Owls**
Athene cunicularia	burrowing owl†
Laniidae	**Shrikes**
Lanius ludovicianus	loggerhead shrike†
Corvidae	**Jays/Crows**
Corvus corax	common raven
Alaudidae	**Larks**
Eremophila alpestris	horned lark†
Leporidae	**Hares and Rabbits**
Sylvilagus audubonii	desert cottontail
Sciuridae	**Squirrels**
Otospermophilus beecheyi	California ground squirrel
Geomyidae	**Pocket Gophers**
Thomomys bottae	Botta's pocket gopher

APPENDIX D

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITS

Photo 1. Representative condition of the site. View facing northeast from the southwest corner of the site. An existing drainage structure can be seen in the foreground.

Photo 2. Representative condition of the site. View facing north/northeast from the southwest corner of the site. An existing drainage structure can be seen in the foreground.

Photo 3. Representative condition of the site. View facing north/northwest from the southeast corner of the site.

Photo 4. Representative condition of the site. View facing west/northwest from the southeast corner of the site.

Photo 5. Representative condition of the site. View facing south/southeast from the northeast corner of the site.

Photo 6. Representative condition of the site. View facing south/southwest from the northeast corner of the site.

Photo 7. View facing north, offsite, exhibiting the entry point of the indistinct drainage present at the northeast corner of the site.

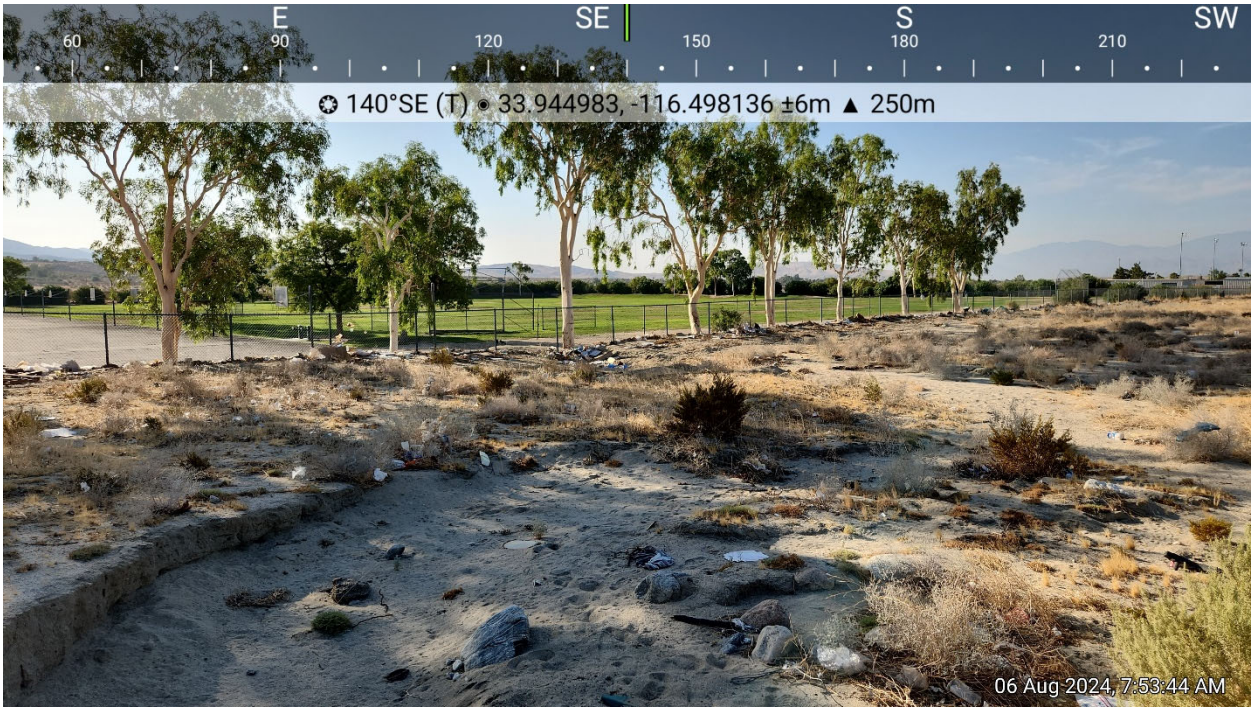


Photo 8. View facing southeast, from the entry point drainage, exhibiting the pathway of the indistinct drainage at the northeast corner of the site.

Photo 9. View facing east, exhibiting the pathway of the indistinct drainage and the exit point into the adjacent eastern property.

Photo 10. Exhibiting an example of illegally dumped trash and debris on site, at the northern boundary.

Photo 11. Exhibiting an example of illegally dumped and wind-blown trash and debris on site, at the southeast corner. Two large holes/damage in the fence can also be seen.

Photo 12. Exhibiting an example of a suitable burrowing owl burrow found on site. Many other suitable burrows were present on site. Several were confirmed to be active.

Photo 13. Exhibiting an example of a suitable burrowing owl burrow found on site. Many other suitable burrows were present on site. Several were confirmed to be active. A burrowing owl feather can be seen at the mouth of this burrow, suggesting it was potentially active or recently active.

Photo 14. Exhibiting one of the families of burrowing owls that was observed on and off-site at an active burrow. Multiple families of burrowing owls were observed both on and directly off-site.
Photo 15. Exhibiting one burrowing owl individual perched on the chain-link fence at the site perimeter. This individual flew up from an active burrow on-site below.

APPENDIX E

CNDDB CALIFORNIA NATIVE SPECIES FIELD SURVEY FORM

Mail to:
California Natural Diversity Database
California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090
CNDDB@wildlife.ca.gov

For Office Use Only
Source Code: _____ Quad Code: _____
Elm Code: _____ Occ No.: _____
EO Index: _____ Map Index: _____

Date of Field Work (mm/dd/yyyy): 08/06/2024

Clear Form

California Native Species Field Survey Form

Print Form

Scientific Name: *Athene cunicularia*

Common Name: Burrowing Owl

Species Found? (●) Yes ( ) No — If not found, why?

Total No. Individuals: 10+ Subsequent Visit? ( ) Yes (●) No

Is this an existing NDDB occurrence? _____ Yes, Occ. # ☐ No ☒ Unk.

Collection? If yes: _____ Number _____ Museum / Herbarium

Reporter: Melanie Bukovac
Address: 11870 Pierce Street, Suite 160
Riverside, CA 92505
E-mail Address: melanie.bukovac@wsp.com
Phone: 1 951-905-5058

Plant Information

Phenology:

_____ % vegetative _____ % flowering _____ % fruiting

Animal Information

_____ # adults _____ # juveniles _____ # larvae _____ # egg masses 10 # unknown

☐ wintering ☒ breeding ☒ nesting ☐ rookery ☒ burrow site ☐ lek ☐ other

Location Description (please attach map AND/OR fill out your choice of coordinates, below)

An approximate 7-acre site located on a 13-acre parcel at the northeast junction of Palm Drive and Park Lane in Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California. The site is currently undeveloped natural open space.

County: Riverside Landowner / Mgr: unk.

Quad Name: USGS 7.5' Seven Palms Valley, Calif. Elevation: 905-917 ft

T___ R___ Sec___, ___¼ of ___¼, Meridian: H ( ) M ( ) S ( ) Source of Coordinates (GPS, topo. map & type): Field Maps

T___ R___ Sec___, ___¼ of ___¼, Meridian: H ( ) M ( ) S ( ) GPS Make & Model: _____

DATUM: NAD27 ( ) NAD83 ( ) WGS84 (●) Horizontal Accuracy: 7.7 ft - 9.3 ft meters/feet

Coordinate System: UTM Zone 10 ( ) UTM Zone 11 ( ) *OR* Geographic (Latitude & Longitude) (●)

Coordinates: on-site burrow sites: 33.944836N, -116.499604W ; 33.944458N, -116.499601W ; 33.944321N, -116.499581W ; 33.944108N, -116.499278W / off-site burrow sites: 33.944161N, -116.499763W

Habitat Description (plants & animals) *plant communities, dominants, associates, substrates/soils, aspects/slope:*
Animal Behavior *(Describe observed behavior, such as territoriality, foraging, singing, calling, copulating, perching, roosting, etc., especially for avifauna):*

Two types of soil occur on the project site, classified as Carsitas fine sand, 0-5% slopes and Myoma fine sand, 0-5% slopes. The on-site vegetation community is Sonoran mixed woody and succulent scrub / Sonoran creosote bush scrub. Dominants: creosote bush, white bursage, Mojave indigo bush, Saharan mustard, short-pod mustard, Mediterranean grass. Burrowing owls were observed on and directly off-site, roosting at burrows, perched at the mouths of burrows and directly outside of burrows, digging out burrows, flying from burrows, and perching on fencing.

Please fill out separate form for other rare taxa seen at this site.

Site Information

Overall site/occurrence quality/viability (site + population): ( ) Excellent (●) Good ( ) Fair ( ) Poor

Immediate AND surrounding land use: civic/public land use, commercial - Public Library, Shopping Center, Middle School, City Park

Visible disturbances: illegally dumped trash, vehicles passing nearby

Threats: surrounding public, vehicle usage, homeless presence

Comments: homeless presence in adjacent public library parking lot at the time of site survey, lots of wind-blown and illegally dumped trash on and around the survey site.

Determination: *(check one or more, and fill in blanks)*

☐ Keyed (cite reference): _____
☐ Compared with specimen housed at: _____
☐ Compared with photo / drawing in: _____
☒ By another person (name): Mike Wilcox, Senior Biologist, WSP
☒ Other: personal survey/ID experience

Photographs: *(check one or more)*

	Slide	Print	Digital
Plant / animal	☐	☐	☒
Habitat	☐	☐	☒
Diagnostic feature	☐	☐	☒

May we obtain duplicates at our expense? ( ) yes ( ) no