ROCKS
BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING

AUTOZONE VICTORVILE
BIOTIC RESOURCES REPORT

Victorville, California

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a biological resources assessment conducted by Rocks Biological Consulting (RBC) for the AutoZone Victorville Project (project or proposed project) in Victorville, California.

This Biological Technical Report (BTR) includes a description of the existing biological resources within and adjacent to the proposed project footprint; details the methods used to assess existing conditions and potential impacts on special-status habitats and species; and presents potential avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to reduce potential project impacts on biological resources.

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

The project is adjacent to the northwest corner of El Evado Road and Mojave Drive in the City of Victorville, San Bernardino County, California (Figures 1 and 2). The proposed project includes the construction of a 7,380-square-foot commercial retail building on approximately 1.3 acres of undeveloped land. In addition to the commercial retail building, the project proposes to include concrete sidewalk, new asphalt pavement, concrete pavement, a trash enclosure, and landscaping.

1.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal, state, and local agencies have established several regulations to protect and conserve biological resources. The descriptions below provide a brief overview of agency regulations that may be applicable to the project. The regulating agencies make the final determination of what types of permits may be required for project approval.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Federal Endangered Species Act

The federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA; 16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.), as amended, provides for listing of endangered and threatened species of plants and animals and designation of critical habitat for listed species. The ESA regulates the “take” of any endangered fish or wildlife species, per Section 9. As development is proposed, the responsible agency or individual landowner is required to consult with the USFWS to assess potential impacts on listed species (including plants) or their critical habitat, pursuant to Sections 7 and 10 of the ESA. USFWS is required to make a determination as to the extent of impact a project would have on a particular species. If it is determined that potential impacts on a species would likely occur, measures to avoid or reduce such impacts must be identified. USFWS may issue an incidental take statement, following consultation and the issuance of a Biological Opinion. This allows for take of the species that is incidental to another authorized activity, provided that the action will not adversely affect the existence of the species. Section 10 of the ESA provides for issuance of incidental take permits to non-federal parties with the development of a habitat conservation plan (HCP); Section 7 provides for permitting of federal projects.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA; 16 U.S.C. § 703 et seq.) is a federal statute that implements treaties with several countries on the conservation and protection of migratory birds. The number of bird species covered by the MBTA is extensive and listed at 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 10.13. The USFWS enforces the MBTA, which prohibits "by any means or in any manner, to pursue, hunt, take, capture, [or] kill" any migratory bird, or attempt such actions, except as permitted by regulation.

Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899

The Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. § 401 et seq.) prohibits discharge of any material into navigable waters, or tributaries thereof, of the United States without a permit. The act also makes it a misdemeanor to excavate, fill, or alter the course, condition, or capacity of any port, harbor, or channel; or to dam navigable streams without a permit.

Many activities originally covered by the Rivers and Harbors Act are now regulated under the Clean Water Act of 1972 (CWA; 33 U.S.C. § 1251 et seq.), discussed below. However, the 1899 act retains relevance and created the structure under which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) oversees CWA Section 404 permitting.

Clean Water Act

Pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA (33 U.S. Code § 1344), the Corps is authorized to regulate any activity that would result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. (including wetlands), which include those waters listed in 33 CFR 328.3 (51 Federal Register [FR] 41217, November 13, 1983; 53 FR 20764, June 6, 1988) and further defined by the 2001 *Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (SWANCC; 531 U.S. 159) decision and the 2006 *Rapanos v. United States* (547 U.S. 715) decision. The Corps, with oversight from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), has the principal authority to issue CWA Section 404 permits. Substantial impacts on waters of the U.S. may require an Individual Permit. Projects that only minimally affect waters of the U.S. may meet the conditions of one of the existing Nationwide Permits.

A water quality certification or waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA (33 U.S. Code § 1341) is required for all Section 404 permitted actions. The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), a division of the State Water Resources Control Board, provides oversight of the 401 permit process in California. The RWQCB is required to provide "certification that there is reasonable assurance that an activity that may result in the discharge to waters of the United States will not violate water quality standards." A Section 401 water quality certification must be based on the finding that a proposed discharge will comply with applicable water quality standards.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) is the permitting program for discharge of pollutants into surface waters of the U.S. under Section 402 of the CWA (33 U.S. Code § 1342).

STATE REGULATIONS

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; California Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.) was established in 1970 as California's counterpart to NEPA. CEQA requires state and local agencies to identify significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, where feasible.

CEQA applies to certain activities of state and local public agencies. A public agency must comply with CEQA when it undertakes an activity defined by CEQA as a "project." A project is an activity undertaken by a public agency or a private activity, which must receive some discretionary approval (meaning that the agency has the authority to deny the requested permit or approval) from a government agency that may cause either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment.

California Endangered Species Act

The California Endangered Species Act of 1984 (CESA; California Fish and Game Code [CFGC] § 2050 et seq.), in combination with the California Native Plant Protection Act of 1977 (CFGC § 1900 et seq.), regulates the listing and take of plant and animal species designated as endangered, threatened, or rare within the state. California also lists species of special concern based on limited distribution; declining populations; diminishing habitat; or unusual scientific, recreational, or educational value. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is responsible for assessing development projects for their potential to impact listed species and their habitats. State-listed special-status species are addressed through the issuance of a 2081 incidental take permit (Memorandum of Understanding).

On September 28, 2020, the California Fish and Game Commission ("Commission") voted to make the Western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*) a candidate species for listing as a threatened or endangered species under CESA. During this candidacy period, the Western Joshua tree is projected under CESA during the remainder of the listing process. Any take (e.g., removal, injury, pruning, etc.) of Western Joshua tree is prohibited unless authorized by the CDFW under a CESA 2081 incidental take permit. The final decision to list Western Joshua tree under CESA shall be determined by the Commission after further review and public input.

Natural Community Conservation Planning Act

In 1991, the California Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act (CFGC § 2800 et seq.) was approved and the NCCP Coastal Sage Scrub program was initiated in Southern California. The NCCP program was established "to provide for regional protection and perpetuation of natural wildlife diversity while allowing compatible land use and appropriate development and growth." The NCCP Act encourages preparation of plans that address habitat conservation and management on an ecosystem basis rather than one species or habitat at a time.

California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600-1602

Pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 6, Section 1602 of the CFGC, CDFW 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. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement Application must be submitted to CDFW for "any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake" (CFGC § 1602). CDFW has jurisdiction over riparian habitats associated with watercourses. Jurisdictional waters are delineated by the outer edge of riparian vegetation or at the top of the bank of streams or lakes, whichever is wider. CDFW jurisdiction does not include tidal areas or isolated resources. CDFW reviews the proposed actions and, if necessary, submits (to the applicant) a proposal that includes measures to protect affected fish and wildlife resources. The final proposal that is mutually agreed upon by CDFW and the applicant is the Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement.

California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3511, 3513, 3801, 4700, 5050, and 5515

CDFW protects and manages fish, wildlife, and native plant resources within California. The California Fish and Game Commission and/or CDFW are responsible for issuing permits for the take or possession of protected species. The following sections of the CFGC address protected species: Section 3511 (birds), Section 4700 (mammals), Section 5050 (reptiles and amphibians), and Section 5515 (fish). In addition, the protection of birds of prey is provided for in Sections 3503, 3513, and 3800 of the CFGC.

California Desert Native Plant Act

The California Desert Native Plants Act prohibits the removal of certain species of California desert native plants on public and privately owned lands without a valid permit from the sheriff or commissioner of the county where collecting would occur. This act applies within the boundaries of Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code § 13000 et seq.) provides for statewide coordination of water quality regulations. The State Water Resources Control Board was established as the statewide authority and nine separate RWQCBs were developed to oversee water quality on a day-to-day basis.

The RWQCBs have primary responsibility for protecting water quality in California. As discussed above, the RWQCBs regulate discharges to surface waters under the CWA. In addition, the RWQCBs are responsible for administering the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

Pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the state is given authority to regulate waters of the state, which are defined as any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters. As such, any person proposing to discharge waste into a water body that could affect its water quality must first file a Report of Waste Discharge if a Section 404 permit is not required for the activity. "Waste" is partially defined as any waste substance associated with human habitation, including fill material discharged into water bodies.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS

County of San Bernardino Land Use Services, Planning Division

According to the County's Biotic Resources Overlay Map, the project site is located within the Burrowing Owl Overlay Zone (County of San Bernardino 2012). The burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; BUOW) is listed as a species of special concern by CDFW.

Victorville Municipal Code Title 13 Chapter 13.33 – Preservation and Removal of Joshua Trees

The City of Victorville Municipal Code Title 13 Chapter 13.33 provides protection of Joshua trees, specifically the Western Joshua tree, and states "It is unlawful for any person to cut, damage, destroy, dig up, or harvest any Joshua tree without the prior written consent of the director of parks and recreation or his designee. A violation of this section is a misdemeanor punishable by up to six months in jail and/or five-hundred-dollar fine (13.33.040 – Prohibition of removal and enforcement)." As stated previously, Western Joshua tree is also protected under CESA during its candidacy period for listing.

2 METHODS

RBC conducted vegetation mapping, a general biological survey, and habitat assessments for special-status species, including BUOW, desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*; DETO), and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*; MGS). Additionally, RBC assessed the project site for potential to support aquatic resources that may be considered jurisdictional under the Corps pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA, under the RWQCB pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and under the CDFW pursuant to Section 1602 of the CFGC. RBC also assessed the site for its functionality as a regional and local wildlife corridor.

The vegetation mapping, general biological survey, habitat assessments, and aquatic resources assessment were conducted within a 4.3-acre survey area, which included the approximately 1.3-acre project site and a surrounding 100-foot survey buffer. However, only the project site information is included in report impact calculations and tables, while the buffer is illustrated within the figures for informational purposes and edge effects analysis only. In particular, survey buffer areas are included in this analysis to assess the potential for special-status species or resources in areas immediately adjacent the project site that could be impacted by the proposed project analyzed herein. Such information should not be considered comprehensive for all biological resources or aquatic resources that may occur in buffer areas, and buffer mapping is intended only for the project analysis outlined herein; such information is not intended for impact analysis of any future projects within or adjacent to project buffer areas.

2.1 DATABASE SEARCH

Prior to conducting the field survey, existing information regarding biological resources present or potentially present within the survey area was obtained through a review of pertinent literature and databases, including, but not limited to:

- CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; CDFW 2025a; Figure 3a)
- California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Electronic Inventory (CNPS 2022)
- USFWS IPaC Database (USFWS 2022a)
- USFWS Special-Status Species Database (USFWS 2025; Figure 3b)
- USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Database (USFWS 2022b; Figure 4)
- USGS National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) Database (USGS 2022; Figure 4)
- CDFW Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS) Database (CDFW 2022a)

The CNDDB (CDFW 2025a) and USFWS (USFWS 2025) queries were conducted for the project site plus a 3-mile radius. The CNPS Electronic Inventory (CNPS 2022) search was conducted for the Victorville USGS 7.5' quadrangle containing the project site and the surrounding USGS 7.5' quadrangles, within the project site's elevation range of 2,800 to 3,000 feet above mean sea level (amsl).

The potential for special-status species to occur within the survey area was refined by considering the habitat affinities of each species, field habitat assessments, vegetation mapping, and knowledge of local biological resources. Additionally, the potential for occurrence tables created for the project (see Section 3) include all federally and state-listed species, federally and state candidate species for listing, and other state-designated special-status species that have been reported within three miles of the project site (CNDDB and USFWS special-status species databases), federally listed species identified as having potential to occur based on their known or expected ranges (IPaC), as well as all California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) listed species that occur within the nine quadrangle search (CNPS 2022).

2.2 VEGETATION MAPPING AND GENERAL BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS

On June 17, 2022, RBC senior biologist Ian Hirschler conducted vegetation mapping in the field to provide a baseline of the biological resources that occur or have the potential to occur within the survey area. RBC conducted vegetation mapping by walking throughout the survey area and mapping vegetation communities on aerial photographs at a 1:2400 scale (1 inch = 200 feet).

The extent of each habitat type (delineated as a habitat polygon on the vegetation maps) was calculated using the ArcGIS Geographic Information System (GIS). Habitats were classified based on the dominant and characteristic plant species in accordance with vegetation community classifications outlined in Holland's *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California* (Holland 1986). The vegetation communities were also cross walked with *The Manual of California Vegetation, 2nd Edition* (MCV2; Sawyer et al. 2009), and the equivalent classification is provided in Table 1 below.

RBC conducted a general biological survey for plants and wildlife concurrently with vegetation mapping. Photos taken during the general biological survey are provided in Appendix A. Plant species encountered during the field survey were identified and recorded in a field notebook. Plant species that could not be identified were brought to the laboratory for identification using the dichotomous keys in the *Jepson Manual* (Baldwin et al. 2012). A list of the vascular plant species observed in the survey area is presented in Appendix B.

Wildlife species were documented during the field survey by sight, calls, tracks, scat, or other signs, and were recorded in a field notebook. Binoculars (8X42 magnification) were used to aid in the identification of wildlife. A list of the wildlife species observed in the survey area is presented in Appendix B; scientific and common names of wildlife follow CDFW Special Animals List (2022c).

The location of any observed biological resources designated as special-status by the USFWS, CDFW, and/or CNPS, were recorded in a field notebook, on aerial maps, and/or a handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) device. RBC also assessed the survey area for habitat with the potential to support special-status plant and wildlife species. Expected wildlife use of the project site was assessed based on the results of the species database queries (Section 2.1), known habitat preferences of local species, and knowledge of their biogeographic distribution in the region.

2.3 INITITAL AQUATIC RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

RBC assessed the project site to identify areas that may be considered potentially jurisdictional under the Corps pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA; the RWQCB pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Act; or CDFW pursuant to CFGC §1602. Areas with depressions, drainage patterns, wetland vegetation, or riparian vegetation within the project site were assessed for potential jurisdictional status, with focus on the presence of defined channels, soils, and hydrology. No formal jurisdictional delineation was conducted as part of this effort.

2.4 WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

RBC assessed the project site for its potential to serve as a wildlife corridor. A wildlife corridor can be defined as a physical feature that links wildlife habitat, often consisting of native vegetation that joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat. Corridors enable migration, colonization, and genetic diversity through interbreeding and are therefore critical for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations. Corridors can consist of large, linear stretches of connected habitat (such as riparian vegetation) or as a sequence of stepping-stones across the landscape (discontinuous areas of habitat such as wetlands and ornamental vegetation), or corridors can be larger habitat areas with known or likely importance to local fauna.

Regional corridors are defined as those linking two or more large patches of habitat, and local corridors are defined as those allowing resident animals to access critical resources (food, cover, and water) in a smaller area that might otherwise be isolated by urban development. A viable wildlife migration corridor consists of more than an unobstructed path between habitat areas. Appropriate vegetation communities must be present to provide food and cover for both transient species and resident populations of less mobile animals. There must also be a sufficient lack of stressors and threats within and adjacent to the corridor for species to use it successfully.

RBC also reviewed the CDFW BIOS database to determine if the project site is located within an Essential Connectivity Area, as mapped through the California Essential Habitat Connectivity (CEHC) Project (CDFW 2022a).

2.5 FOLLOW-UP SITE VISIT

RBC conducted a follow-up site visit on April 11, 2025, to determine if site conditions had changed since the initial 2022 surveys.

3 RESULTS

This section discusses the results of the literature review, vegetation mapping, general biological survey, special-status species habitat assessments, initial aquatic resource assessment, and the wildlife corridor assessment. Special-status biological resources are also discussed in this section and are defined as follows: 1) species that have been given special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations due to limited, declining, or threatened/endangered population sizes; 2) species and their associated habitat types recognized by local and regional resource agencies as sensitive; 3) habitat areas or vegetation communities that are unique, are of relatively limited distribution, or are of particular value to wildlife; 4) wildlife corridors and habitat linkages; and/or 5) biological resources that may or may not be considered sensitive, but are regulated under local, state, and/or federal laws.

The results reported below are consistent with the conditions and assessments as conducted in April 2025.

3.1 PHYSICAL SETTING

The survey area is relatively flat at approximately 2,950 feet amsl. Surrounding land uses include a mix of vacant land and residential development.

3.2 VEGETATION COMMUNITIES AND LAND COVERS

The survey area supports two vegetation communities and one land use that are generally defined here in accordance with *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California* (Holland 1986).

Table 1. Summary of Vegetation within the Survey Area

Vegetation (Holland)[1]	MCV2 Classification System[1]	Global/ State Rank	Survey Area (acres)
Creosote Bush Scrub - Disturbed	*Larrea tridentata* Shrubland Alliance – Disturbed	S5/G5	3.5
Developed	Developed/Disturbed	No Rank	0.5
Disturbed Habitat	Developed/Disturbed	No Rank	0.3
		Total	**4.3**

[1] *Vegetation cross walked to The Manual of California Vegetation (Sawyer et al. 2009)*

Creosote Bush Scrub – Disturbed (Larrea tridentata Shrubland Alliance – Disturbed)

Creosote bush scrub – disturbed is a form of creosote bush scrub characterized by heavy disturbance. Creosote bush scrub – disturbed within the survey area supports species characteristic to creosote bush scrub, such as creosote bush, Anderson thornbush (*Lycium andersonii*), four-wing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*) and ephedra (*Ephedra* sp.) but has a marked disturbance that makes the vegetation community atypical. Creosote bush scrub – disturbed

makes up the entirety of the project site and a majority of the 100-foot buffer and contains large amounts of debris in the form of trash and demolished asphalt (Figure 2).

This vegetation community is ranked as G5/S5, meaning it is globally secure and "common, widespread, and abundant" in California (CNPS 2022). Due to its CNPS ranking, CDFW does not consider creosote bush scrub – disturbed habitat as a sensitive natural community under CEQA (CDFW 2022c).

Developed

The survey area includes developed land devoid of natural vegetation, consisting of the paved Mojave Road (Figure 2). Developed habitat is not a sensitive natural community.

Disturbed Habitat

Disturbed land supports little to no native vegetation and is typified by human-made disturbances (vegetation clearing, mowing, vehicle disturbance, etc.). Disturbed habitat occurs within the southern portion of the survey area and is associated with the road shoulder adjacent to Mojave Drive (Figure 2).

Disturbed habitat is not recognized by CDFW (CDFW 2022c); therefore, it is not considered a sensitive natural community under CEQA.

3.3 JURISDICTIONAL AQUATIC RESOURCES

Based on the initial aquatic resources assessment, the survey area does not support any features that may be considered potentially jurisdictional under the Corps pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA; the RWQCB pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Act; or CDFW pursuant to CFGC §1602. Additionally, the USFWS NWI and USGS NHD databases do not map any features within the project site (Figure 4; USFWS 2022b; USGS 2022).

3.4 PLANTS AND WILDLIFE

The survey area supports a very low diversity of vegetation communities and plant species. A total of six plant species were observed during project biological surveys (Appendix B). One reptile species, four bird species, and two mammal species were observed during the general biological survey (Appendix B). Twilight/nighttime surveys were not conducted, therefore crepuscular and nocturnal animals are likely under-represented in the project species list; however, habitat assessments were performed for all special-status species to ensure that any potentially present rare species are adequately addressed herein.

For the purposes of this report, species are considered to have special-status if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Listed or considered for listing or proposed for listing under the ESA or CESA (CDFW 2025b; USFWS 2025)
- CDFW Species of Special Concern (CDFW 2025b)
- CDFW Fully Protected Species (CDFW 2025b)

- CDFW Watch List Species (CDFW 2025b)
- Listed as having a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR; formerly CNPS List, CNPS 2022)

3.4.1 SPECIAL-STATUS PLANT SPECIES

As mentioned above and clarified in this section, special-status plant species include those that are: 1) listed or proposed for listing by federal or state agencies as threatened or endangered; 2) CRPR List 1 or 2 species (CNPS 2022); or 3) considered rare, endangered, or threatened by the CDFW (CDFW 2025a) or other local conservation organizations or specialists.

In the state of California, CNPS is a statewide resource conservation organization that has developed an inventory of California's sensitive plant species. The CRPR system is recognized by the CDFW and essentially serves as an early warning list of potential candidate species for threatened or endangered status. The CRPR system is categorized as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. CRPR Definitions

CRPR	1A	presumed extirpated in California and rare or extinct elsewhere
	1B	rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
	2A	presumed extirpated in California but more common elsewhere
	2B	rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere
	3	plants for which more information needed
	4	plants of limited distribution
CRPR Threat Ranks	0.1	Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)
	0.2	Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
	0.3	Not very threatened in California (<20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

Special-status plants and their potential to occur within the survey area are assessed in Table 3. Please note that species with low potential to occur or not expected to occur are not addressed further in this report; because these species have low or no potential for occurrence, no impacts are anticipated on these species.

Table 3. Special-Status Plant Species with Potential to Occur Within the AutoZone Victorville Project Survey Area

Species	Status	Habitat Description	Potential to Occur
Beaver Dam breadroot (*Pediomelum castoreum*)	CRPR 1B.2	Perennial herb. Blooms April-June. Creosote bush scrub and Joshua tree woodland. Elevation 2,000-5,000 feet.	Low. Suitable habitat highly disturbed.
Western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*)	SCL, WJTCA	Tree. Blooms May-July. Joshua tree woodland. Elevation 1,575-7,350 feet.	Present. Two Western Joshua trees occur within the survey area, including one tree in the middle of the project site.
Latimer's woodland-gilia (*Saltugilia latimeri*)	CRPR 1B.2	Annual herb. Blooms May-July. Desert canyons. Elevation 2,135-5,645 feet.	None. Suitable habitat not present.
Mojave monkeyflower (*Diplacus mohavensis*)	CRPR 1B.2	Annual herb. Blooms April-July. Creosote bush scrub and Joshua tree woodland. Elevation 2,920-4,005 feet.	Low. Suitable habitat highly disturbed.
Pinyon rock cress (*Boechera dispar*)	CRPR 2B.3	Annual herb. Blooms March-July. Creosote bush scrub, pinyon-juniper woodland, and Joshua tree woodland. Elevation 3,410-7,970 feet.	None. Suitable habitat highly disturbed and project site is outside the elevation range.
San Bernardino aster (*Symphyotrichum defoliatum*)	CRPR 1B.2	Perennial rhizomatous herb. Blooms July-November. Cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, lower montane coniferous forest, marshes and swamps, meadows and seeps, and valley and foothill grassland. Elevation 7-6,690 feet.	None. Suitable habitat not present.
Southern mountains skullcap (*Scutellaria bolanderi* ssp. *austromontana*)	CRPR 1B.2	Perennial rhizomatous herb. Blooms June-September. Yellow pine forest, foothill woodland, chaparral, and wetland-riparian. Elevation1,705-4,920 feet.	None. Suitable habitat not present.

SCL = Candidate Species for Listing under the California Endangered Species Act
WJTCA = Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act

3.4.1.1 Threatened and Endangered Plant Species

No federally- or state-listed as threatened or endangered plant species were observed during the general field survey, and none have a moderate or high potential to occur based on the disturbed nature of the site and lack of suitable habitats (Table 3). Two Western Joshua trees, a candidate species for listing under the CESA, were observed within the survey area; one in the center of the project site and one on the northwestern boundary of the 100-foot buffer (Figure 2). Western Joshua tree is also protected under the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA).

3.4.1.2 Other Special-Status Plant Species

No other special-status plant species was observed during the general biological survey and no non-federal/state listed special-status species has a moderate or high potential to occur on site based on the disturbed nature of the site and lack of suitable habitats (Table 3).

3.4.2 SPECIAL-STATUS WILDLIFE SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITATS

No federally or state-listed endangered or threatened species were observed during the general biological survey. One CDFW Watch List (WL) species, California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*) was observed on the project site during the general biological survey.

Although not observed on site during the general biological survey, five federally and/or state-listed endangered or threatened species have been documented within three miles of the project site including arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*), California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), desert tortoise, Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), and Mohave ground squirrel, along with numerous non-listed special-status wildlife species (Figures 3a and 3b). An analysis of the potential for special-status wildlife to occur in the survey area is provided in Table 4. Please note that wildlife species with low potential to occur or not expected to occur are not addressed further in this report; because these species have low or no potential for occurrence, impacts on these species are not anticipated.

Table 4. Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur Within the AutoZone Victorville Project Survey Area

Species	Status	Habitat Description	Potential to Occur
AMPHIBIANS			
Arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*)	FE, SSC	Alluvial washes and slow-moving streams with shallow ponds. Find sand is required for burrowing.	None. Suitable streambed habitat not present.
California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*)	FT, SSC	Found mainly near water sources in humid forests, woodlands, grasslands, coastal scrub, and streamsides with plant cover.	None. No suitable aquatic features present.

Species	Status	Habitat Description	Potential to Occur
REPTILES			
Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*)	SSC	A variety of habitats including sage scrub, chaparral, and coniferous and broadleaf woodlands. Found on sandy or friable soils with open scrub. Requires open areas, bushes, and fine loose soil.	Low. Suitable habitat is highly disturbed; this species is more common near the coast.
Desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*)	FT, ST	Burrows in firm sandy or gravelly soils along creosote bush flats, riverbanks, washes, dunes, alluvial fans, hillsides, and canyons, often containing rocky areas.	None. Suitable habitat not present.
BIRDS			
Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)	SCL	Found in grasslands and open scrub from the coast to foothills. Strongly associated with California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*) and other fossorial mammal burrows.	Low to Moderate. California ground squirrel activity on site and suitable foraging habitat available.
California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*)	WL	Found from coastal deserts and grasslands to alpine dwarf-shrub habitat above tree line. Also seen in coniferous or chaparral habitats.	Present. Flock observed foraging on site.
Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)	WL (when nesting)	Usually found in oak woodlands but occasionally in willow or eucalyptus woodlands.	None. No suitable habitat present.
Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)	FP, WL (Nesting and wintering)	Mountainous canyonlands, deserts, agricultural fields, and semi-open habitats.	None. No suitable foraging or nesting habitat present.
Le Conte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*)	SSC	Saltbush scrub, creosote bush scrub, and other lightly vegetated desert scrub. Permanent resident within California range.	Low. Creosote bush scrub on site is highly disturbed.
Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)	SSC (when nesting)	Found within grassland, chaparral, desert, and desert edge scrub, particularly near dense vegetation used for nesting.	Low. Suitable foraging habitat is present, but dense nesting habitat is not present.
Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)	ST (when nesting)	Forages in open habitats including grasslands and agricultural fields	None. No suitable nesting habitat present.

Species	Status	Habitat Description	Potential to Occur
MAMMALS			
Pallid San Diego pocket mouse *(Chaetodipus fallax pallidus)*	SSC	Inhabits coastal sage scrub, sage scrub/grassland ecotones, and chaparral communities.	None. No suitable habitat present.
Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*)	ST	Desert areas containing creosote bush scrub, shadscale scrub, alkali sinks, and Joshua tree woodlands. Sandy or friable soils are required to burrow.	None. No suitable habitat present.
Hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*)	SSC	Solitary roosts in trees including maple, oak, ash, elder and redwood.	None. No suitable habitat present.

FE: Federally Endangered
SE: State Endangered
ST: State Threatened
SCL: State Candidate for Listing
FT: Federally Threatened
SSC: CDFW Species of Special Concern
WL: CDFW Watch List Species

3.4.2.1 Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species

No federally or state-listed as threatened or endangered wildlife species were observed during the general field survey, and none have a moderate or high potential to occur based on the disturbed nature of the site, lack of suitable habitats, and surrounding land uses.

3.4.2.2 Non-Listed Special-Status Wildlife Species

Burrowing Owl

BUOW is a state candidate for listing and is federally protected by the MBTA. The western subspecies of BUOW (*A. c. hypugaea*) breeds from southern Canada to the western half of the United States and into Baja California and central Mexico. In California, suitable habitat for BUOW is generally characterized by short, sparse vegetation with few shrubs, level to gentle topography, and well-drained soils, such as naturally occurring grassland, shrub steppe, and desert habitats (Haug et al. 1993). BUOW may also occur in agricultural areas, ruderal grassy fields, vacant lots, and pastures containing suitable vegetation structure and useable burrows with foraging habitat in proximity (Gervais et al. 2008). BUOW usually use burrows dug by California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*) and round-tailed ground squirrel (*Citellus tereticaudus*) and dens or holes dug by other fossorial species including badger (*Taxidea taxus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), and fox (e.g., San Joaquin kit fox [*Vulpes macrotis mutica*]) (Ronan 2002). BUOW also frequently use natural rock cavities, debris piles, culverts, and pipes for nesting and roosting (Rosenberg et al. 2004) and have been documented using artificial burrows for nesting and cover (Smith and Belthoff 2001).

BUOW have declined throughout much of their range because of habitat loss due to urbanization, agricultural conversion, and destruction of ground squirrel colonies (Remsen 1978). The incidental poisoning of BUOW and the destruction of their burrows during eradication programs aimed at

rodent colonies have also caused their decline (Collins 1979; Remsen 1978). Although BUOW are relatively tolerant of lower levels of human activity, human-related impacts such as shooting and introduction of non-native predators have negative population impacts. BUOW often nest and perch near roads where they are vulnerable to roadside shooting, fatal car strikes, and general harassment (Remsen 1978).

BUOW were not documented during the general biological survey (or during the follow-up site visit in April 2025); however, BUOW have been documented within less than one mile to the west of the project site (Figure 3a), California ground squirrel were observed on site, and suitable foraging habitat is present on site. As such, BUOW has a low to moderate potential to occur in the survey area.

California Horned Lark

California horned lark is a CDFW Watch List species found from coastal deserts and grasslands to alpine dwarf-shrub habitat above the tree line, and in coniferous or chaparral habitats. It is a common to abundant resident in a variety of open habitats, usually found in habitats where trees and large shrubs are absent. Within southern California, California horned lark nest on the ground in open fields, grasslands, and rangelands. Horned larks forage in areas with low-growing vegetation and feed primarily on grains and other seeds, shifting to mostly insects in the summer months. California horned lark breeds from March through July, with a peak in activity in May. Pairs do not maintain territories outside of the breeding season and instead form large gregarious, somewhat nomadic flocks.

Threats to California horned lark include habitat destruction and fragmentation. Habitats preferred by California horned lark are easily converted to other landscapes and human uses such as farmland and development. Pesticides have also been shown to poison and kill horned larks (Beason 1995). As a ground nester, California horned lark is vulnerable to mowing in a variety of habitats and pesticide use in agricultural fields.

A flock of California horned lark was observed foraging on the project site during the general biological survey (Figure 2).

3.4.2.3 Critical Habitat

The ESA defines critical habitat as a specific geographic area, or areas, that contains features essential for the survival and recovery of endangered and threatened species. USFWS designates critical habitat for endangered and threatened species and may include sites for breeding and rearing, movement or migration, feeding, roosting, cover, and shelter. Critical habitat may also include areas that are not currently occupied by the species, but that will be needed for its recovery. Special management of critical habitat, including measures for water quality and quantity, host animals and plants, food availability, pollinators, sunlight, and specific soil types is required to ensure the long-term survival and recovery of the identified species.

No USFWS-designated critical habitat or proposed critical habitat occurs within three miles of the project site (USFWS 2022a; Figure 4).

3.5 WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

Based on the review of aerial photography and site conditions, the project site does not function as part of a regional or local wildlife corridor. The site is immediately surrounded by multi-lane paved roads to the east and south and developed land to the north. While there are undeveloped tracts of land immediately west of the project site, those areas also contain minimal native vegetation, are isolated from larger landscapes of natural habitat, and receive frequent disturbance from surrounding land uses. Cumulatively, the project site and other isolated undeveloped parcels in the project vicinity are unlikely to be used by wildlife species as refuge between larger areas of naturally occurring habitat. Additionally, review of the CDFW BIOS database reveals that the project site does not occur within any areas mapped as Essential Connectivity Areas from the CEHC project (Figure 5; CDFW 2022a).

4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Direct impacts are caused by the project and occur at the same time and place as the project. Any alteration, disturbance, or destruction of biological resources that would result from project-related activities is considered a direct impact. Direct impacts would include direct losses to native habitats, potential jurisdictional waters, wetlands, and special-status species; and diverting natural surface water flows. Direct impacts could include injury, death, and/or harassment of listed and/or special-status species. Direct impacts could also include the destruction of habitats necessary for species breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Direct impacts on plants can include crushing of adult plants, bulbs, or seeds.

Indirect impacts can result from project-related activities where biological resources are affected in a manner that is not direct. Indirect impacts may occur later in time or at a place that is farther removed in distance from the project than direct impacts, but indirect impacts are still reasonably foreseeable and attributable to project-related activities. Examples include habitat fragmentation; elevated noise, dust, and lighting levels; changes in hydrology, runoff, and sedimentation; decreased water quality; soil compaction; increased human activity; and the introduction of invasive wildlife (domestic cats and dogs) and plants. As noted in Section 2, the project survey area included a 100-foot buffer to identify nearby biological resources and to aid in assessment of potential indirect impacts on protected resources, if present.

Cumulative impacts refer to incremental individual environmental effects of two or more projects when considered together. Such impacts taken individually may be minor but are collectively significant in light of regional impacts.

CEQA Guidelines provide thresholds of significance which are used to determine whether project implementation would result in a significant direct, indirect, and/or cumulative impact. These thresholds are based on Appendix G of the state CEQA Guidelines (CCR Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000–15387). A significant biological resources impact would occur if the project would:

- Have a substantial adverse 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 or USFWS;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by CDFW or USFWS;
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federal protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the CWA (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites;

- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy, or ordinance;
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan; Natural Community Conservation Plan; or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

4.1 VEGETATION COMMUNITY AND LAND COVER IMPACTS

The proposed project will result in approximately less than 0.1 acre of permanent impacts on disturbed habitat and 1.3 acres of permanent impacts on creosote bush scrub – disturbed (Figure 6; Table 5). Disturbed habitat and creosote bush scrub – disturbed are not considered sensitive vegetation communities by CDFW, and impacts do not require mitigation.

Table 5. AutoZone Victorville Project Vegetation Communities/Land Cover Impacts

Vegetation (Holland)[1]	MCV2 Classification System[1]	Global/State Rank	Project Site (acres)
Creosote Bush Scrub - Disturbed	*Larrea tridentata* Shrubland Alliance – Disturbed	S5/G5	1.3
Disturbed Habitat	Developed/Disturbed	No Rank	>0.1
		Total	**1.3**

[1] *Vegetation communities from Holland (1986) cross walked to The Manual of California Vegetation (Sawyer et al. 2009)*

Although not a sensitive vegetation community, the creosote bush scrub – disturbed habitat on site has potential to support ground-nesting bird species, such as California horned lark; however, potential impacts on nesting birds are addressed separately in Section 4.4 and the associated mitigation measures are discussed in Section 5.3. Western Joshua tree also occurs within creosote bush scrub – disturbed habitat, however, impacts on the candidate species for listing are addressed in Section 4.3 and mitigation is addressed in Section 5.1. Therefore, impacts on sensitive habitat resulting from the project would be less than significant.

4.2 POTENTIAL JURISDICTIONAL AQUATIC RESOURCES IMPACTS

As discussed in Section 3.3, evidence of potentially jurisdictional aquatic resources was not observed on site. As such, the proposed project is not expected to impact jurisdictional aquatic resources. Therefore, permitting through the Corps, RWQCB, and CDFW is not anticipated for the proposed project. A formal, project-specific aquatic resources delineation and reporting per Corps, SWRCB/RWQCB, and CDFW standards and guidelines and/or further coordination with the Corps, SWRCB/RWQCB, and CDFW would be required to receive a determination from the regulatory agencies of their concurrence with the findings related to potential aquatic resources on site (i.e., that the project site does not support jurisdictional aquatic resources).

4.3 SPECIAL-STATUS PLANTS AND WILDLIFE IMPACTS

Special-Status Plant Species

No federally or state-listed as endangered or threatened plant species were observed on the project site during the general biological field survey. However, Western Joshua tree, a candidate species for listing under CESA, was observed in the center of the project site and on the boundary of the survey area (Figure 2). Due to its candidate status, any take of the species, including the destruction or removal of individual trees, is prohibited unless authorized under a CESA Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) or a WJTCA ITP. Because a Western Joshua tree individual occurs within the middle of the project site, take of the candidate species for listing under CESA is anticipated if impacts on the tree are unavoidable. Any take of Western Joshua tree would be considered a significant impact under CEQA. Mitigation, avoidance, and minimization of impacts on Western Joshua tree is proposed in Section 5.1.

No other special-status plant species, including federally or state-listed species and CRPR List 1 and List 2 species, were observed on the project site, and none have moderate to high potential to occur based on the lack of suitable habitat. As such, it is anticipated the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts on special-status plant species other than Western Joshua tree.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

No federally or state-listed as threatened or endangered wildlife species were observed during the general field survey, and none have a moderate or high potential to occur based on the disturbed nature of the site, lack of suitable habitats, and surrounding land use.

The project has low to moderate potential to support BUOW, a state candidate for listing. With project implementation, direct impacts on BUOW could occur in the form of habitat destruction, and potentially death, injury, or harassment of nesting birds, their eggs, and their young. Injury or mortality occurs most frequently during the vegetation clearing stage of construction and affects eggs, nestlings, and recently fledged young that cannot safely avoid equipment. Pre-construction surveys would be required to avoid potential impacts on this species and are discussed in Section 5.2. If take of BUOW cannot be avoided, an ITP for BUOW would be required.

California horned larks were observed foraging on site during the general biological survey. Impacts on California horned lark could occur in the form of habitat removal and ground disturbing activities within the project site. However, California horned lark would likely flush during initial project activities. Additionally, the implementation of nesting bird protections to avoid impacts on nesting birds, including California horned lark, are discussed in Section 5.3.

Although special-status wildlife species either occur or have low to moderate potential to occur on site, mitigation, minimization, and avoidance of impacts on special-status wildlife species are detailed in Section 5 of this report. With adherence to the mitigation measures provided in this report, impacts on special-status wildlife species resulting from the project would be less than significant.

4.4 NESTING BIRD IMPACTS

The project site has potential to support avian nests, especially ground-nesting species, which would be protected under the MBTA and/or CFGC §3503, which states that it is unlawful to "take, possess, or needlessly destroy" avian nests or eggs. Thus, potential impacts could occur if vegetation clearing is undertaken during the breeding season. Please refer to Section 5.3 for full nest protection requirements. With the adherence of mitigation measures proposed in Section 5.3, impacts on nesting birds resulting from the project would be less than significant.

4.5 WILDLIFE CORRIDOR IMPACTS

The project site does not function as a wildlife corridor. Additionally, the project site does not occur within any areas mapped as Essential Connectivity Areas from the CEHC project (Figure 5; CDFW 2022a). Thus, the project would not result in significant impacts on wildlife corridors.

4.6 LOCAL POLICIES & ORDINANCES IMPACTS

4.6.1 COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO BURROWING OWL OVERLAY ZONE

As previously discussed, the project site is within the Burrowing Owl Overlay Zone. As such, pre-construction surveys for BUOW should be conducted to determine presence/absence within the project site, as detailed in Section 5.2. With the adherence of mitigation measures proposed, impacts on burrowing owl would be avoided and/or minimized and the project would be in accordance with the guidelines of the County of San Bernardino Burrowing Owl Overlay Zone.

4.6.2 VICTORVILLE MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 13 CHAPTER 13.33 – PRESERVATION AND REMOVAL OF JOSHUA TREES

The City of Victorville Municipal Code Title 13 Chapter 13.33 provides protection of Western Joshua trees, and states "It is unlawful for any person to cut, damage, destroy, dig up, or harvest any Joshua tree without the prior written consent of the director of parks and recreation or his designee." Although any impacts on Western Joshua tree would require a CESA Section 2081 Incidental Take Permit while the species is a candidate for listing under CESA, the applicant shall coordinate with the Director of the City of Victorville Department of Parks and Recreation (or his designee) to get written approval authorizing impacts on Western Joshua tree should they occur as a result of the proposed project. Through coordination with the City of Victorville, the proposed project would not conflict with Victorville Municipal Code Title 13 Chapter 13.33.

4.7 HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN/NATURAL COMMUNITIES CONSERVATION PLAN

The project site does not occur within a plan area for a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) or a Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts on existing HCPs or NCCPs.

4.8 INDIRECT IMPACTS ON BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

In the context of biological resources, indirect impacts are those effects associated with developing areas adjacent to native open space. Potential indirect effects associated with development include water quality impacts from site drainage into adjacent open space/downstream aquatic resources; lighting effects; noise effects; invasive plant species from landscaping; and effects from human access into adjacent open space, such as recreational activities (including off-road vehicles and hiking), pets, dumping, etc. Temporary, indirect effects may also occur as a result of construction-related activities.

Portions of creosote bush scrub surrounding the project site, may be subject to indirect impacts resulting from the proposed project. However, this habitat is already subject to indirect impacts resulting from vehicle traffic on the adjacent Mojave Drive and other nearby land uses. Additionally, although this habitat may be suitable for nesting birds, pre-construction nesting bird surveys detailed in Section 5 of this report would cover habitat in buffer areas surrounding the impact footprint so that impacts on nesting birds would be avoided. Therefore, indirect impacts would be less than significant.

4.9 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ON BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Cumulative impacts are defined as the direct and indirect effects of a proposed project which, when considered alone, would not be deemed a substantial impact, but when considered in addition to the impacts of related projects in the area, would be considered potentially significant. ‘Related projects’ refers to past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects, which would have similar impacts to the proposed project. The project site is highly disturbed and occurs within a patchwork of vacant lots that will be developed as this area of Victorville is built out. The development of the 1.3 -acre project site would not result in significant, growth inducing cumulative impacts. Additionally, the proposed project will not result in significant cumulative effects on biological resources. The project would result in potential impacts on Western Joshua tree, and special-status wildlife species such as California horned lark and burrowing owl, if present. However, with the implementation of mitigation measures discussed in Section 5, below, the proposed project will not result in significant cumulative impacts on biological resources.

5 AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The following discussion provides project-specific mitigation/avoidance measures (MM) for potential impacts on sensitive biological resources.

5.1 JOSHUA TREE AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION

MM-1: Take of Western Joshua tree within the project site shall be avoided with the implementation of avoidance buffers; the size of the avoidance buffers shall be determined by a qualified biologist in conjunction with the City of Victorville and CDFW. If take of Western Joshua tree individuals cannot be avoided, take authorization in the form of an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) shall be obtained from CDFW under CESA Section 2081 or the WJTCA prior to potentially impacting the species. Consultation with CDFW shall determine the appropriate compensatory mitigation for impacts on Western Joshua tree. Compensatory mitigation for Western Joshua trees could include: (1) Joshua tree replacement, (2) purchase of habitat conservation areas to protect existing Joshua tree habitats, or (3) payment to an existing in-lieu fee program, if available.

5.2 BURROWING OWL AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION

It was determined that the project site has low to moderate potential to support burrowing owl. Additionally, the project site is within the County of San Bernardino Overlay Zone. As such, adherence with the following mitigation measure for burrowing owl is required:

MM-2: Fourteen days prior to the onset of construction activities, a qualified biologist shall survey the construction limits of the project area and a 500-foot buffer for the presence of burrowing owls and occupied nest burrows. The survey shall be conducted in accordance with the most current CDFW survey methods. Another survey shall be conducted no less than 24 hours prior to the start of construction. If burrowing owls are not observed during the clearance surveys, no additional conditions may be required to avoid impacts on burrowing owl.

If burrowing owl is documented on site, either during pre-construction clearance surveys or during construction, a CESA 2081 ITP will be required if take of BUOW cannot be avoided.

5.3 NESTING BIRD AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION

The project site supports suitable habitat for nesting birds. As such, adherence with the following mitigation measure is required to reduce potential impacts on nesting birds:

MM-3: To ensure compliance with CFGC sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 and to avoid potential impacts to nesting birds, vegetation clearing, and ground-disturbing activities shall be conducted outside of the bird nesting season (generally February through August). If avoidance of the nesting season is not feasible, then a qualified biologist will conduct a nesting bird survey within three days prior to any disturbance of

the site, including but not limited to vegetation clearing, disking, demolition activities, and grading. If active nests are identified, the biologist shall establish suitable buffers around the nests depending on the level of activity within the buffer and species observed, and the buffer areas shall be avoided until the nests are no longer occupied, and the juvenile birds can survive independently from the nests. During construction activities, the qualified biologist shall continue biological monitoring activities at a frequency recommended by the qualified biologist using their best professional judgment. If nesting birds are documented, avoidance and minimization measures may be adjusted, and construction activities stopped or redirected by the qualified biologist using their best professional judgement to avoid take of nesting birds.

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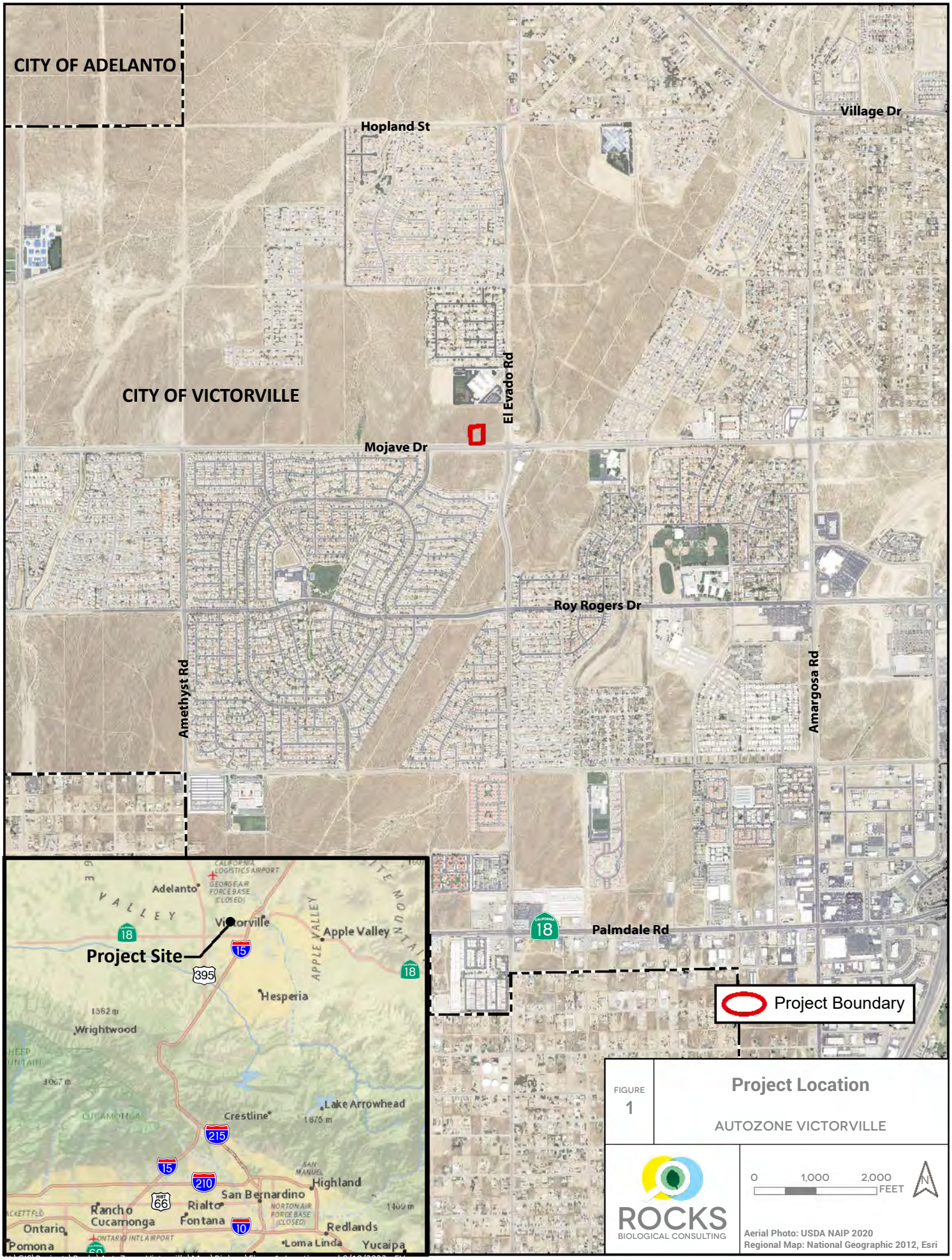


FIGURE 1

Project Location

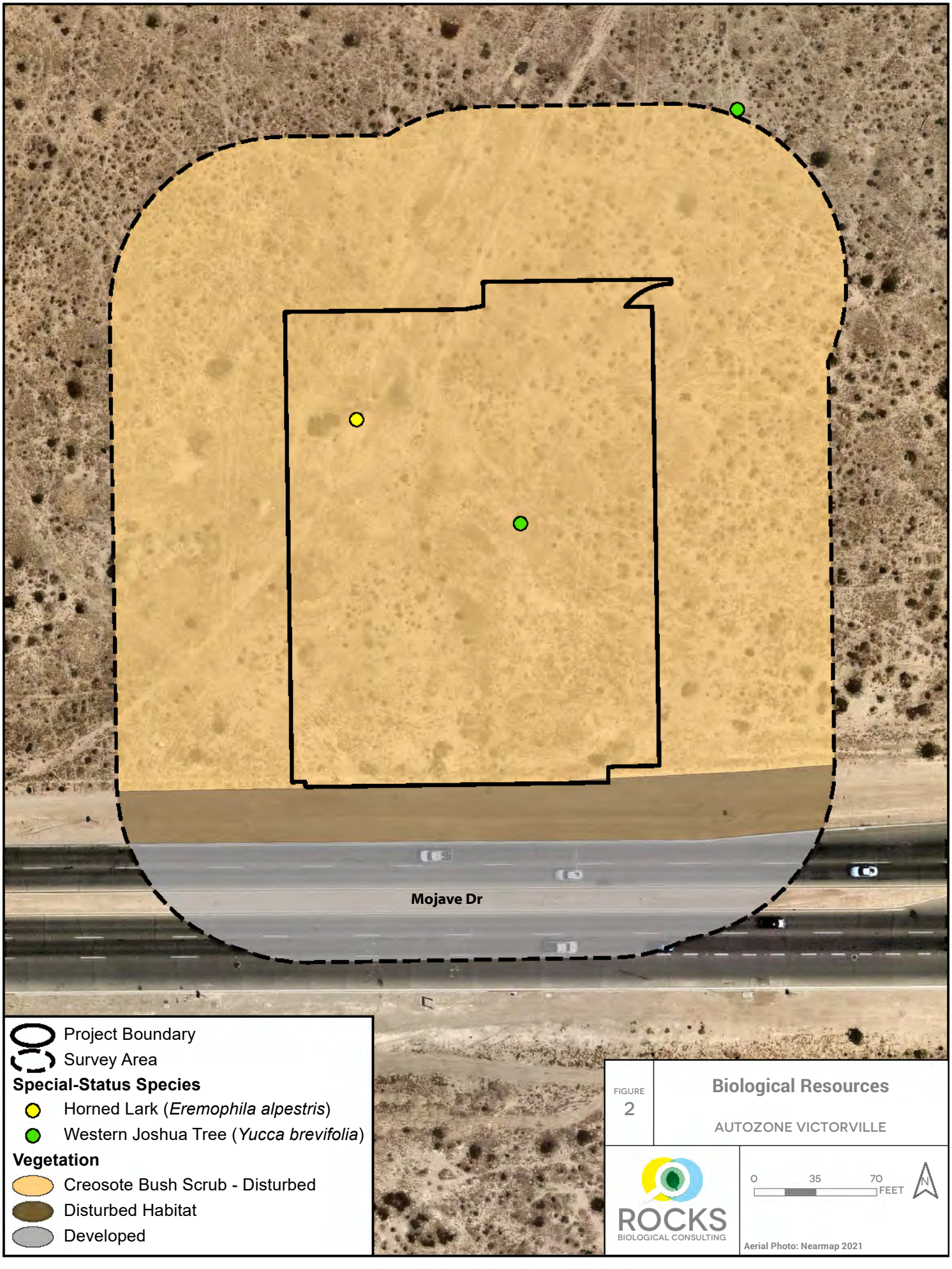
AUTOZONE VICTORVILLE

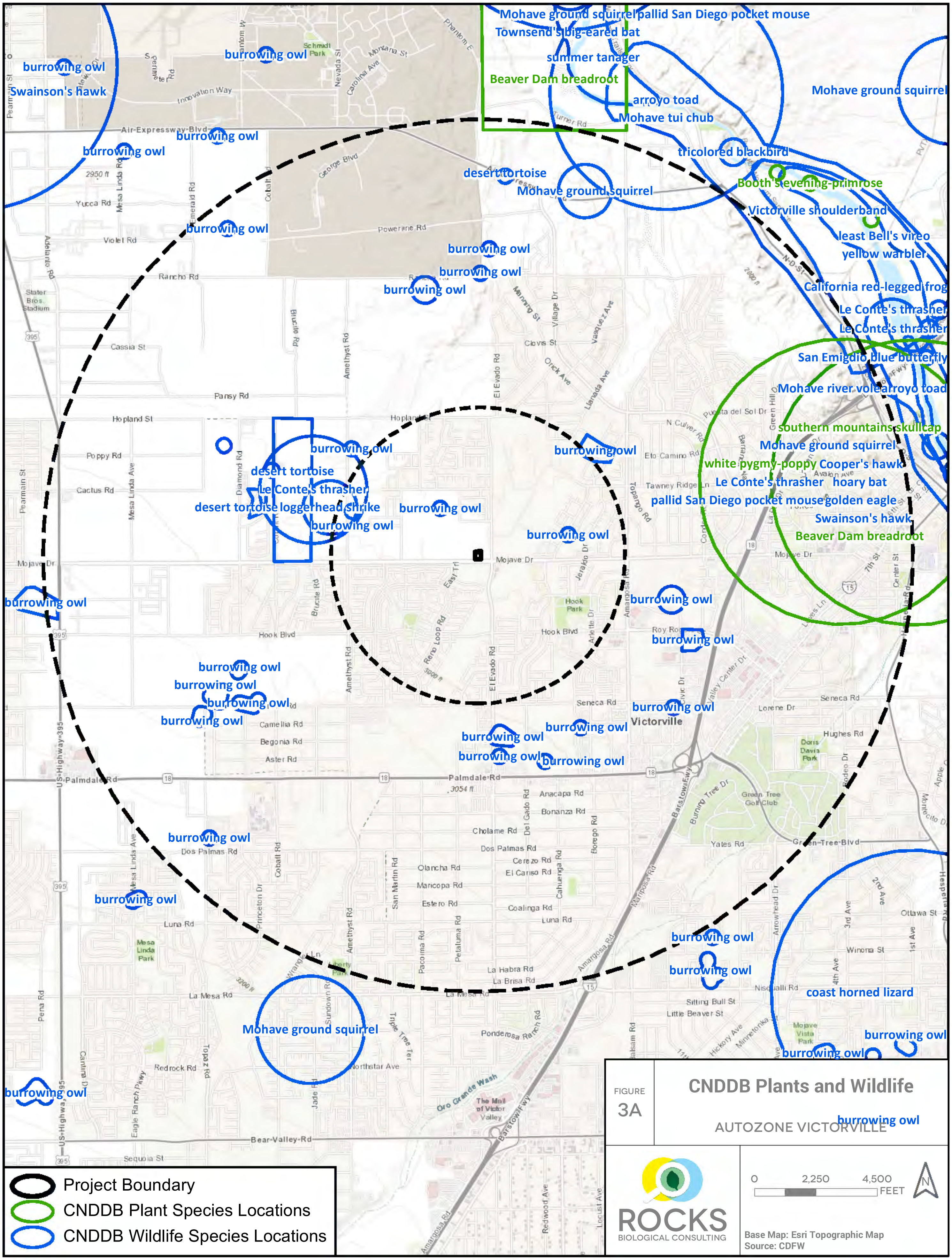
ROCKS BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING

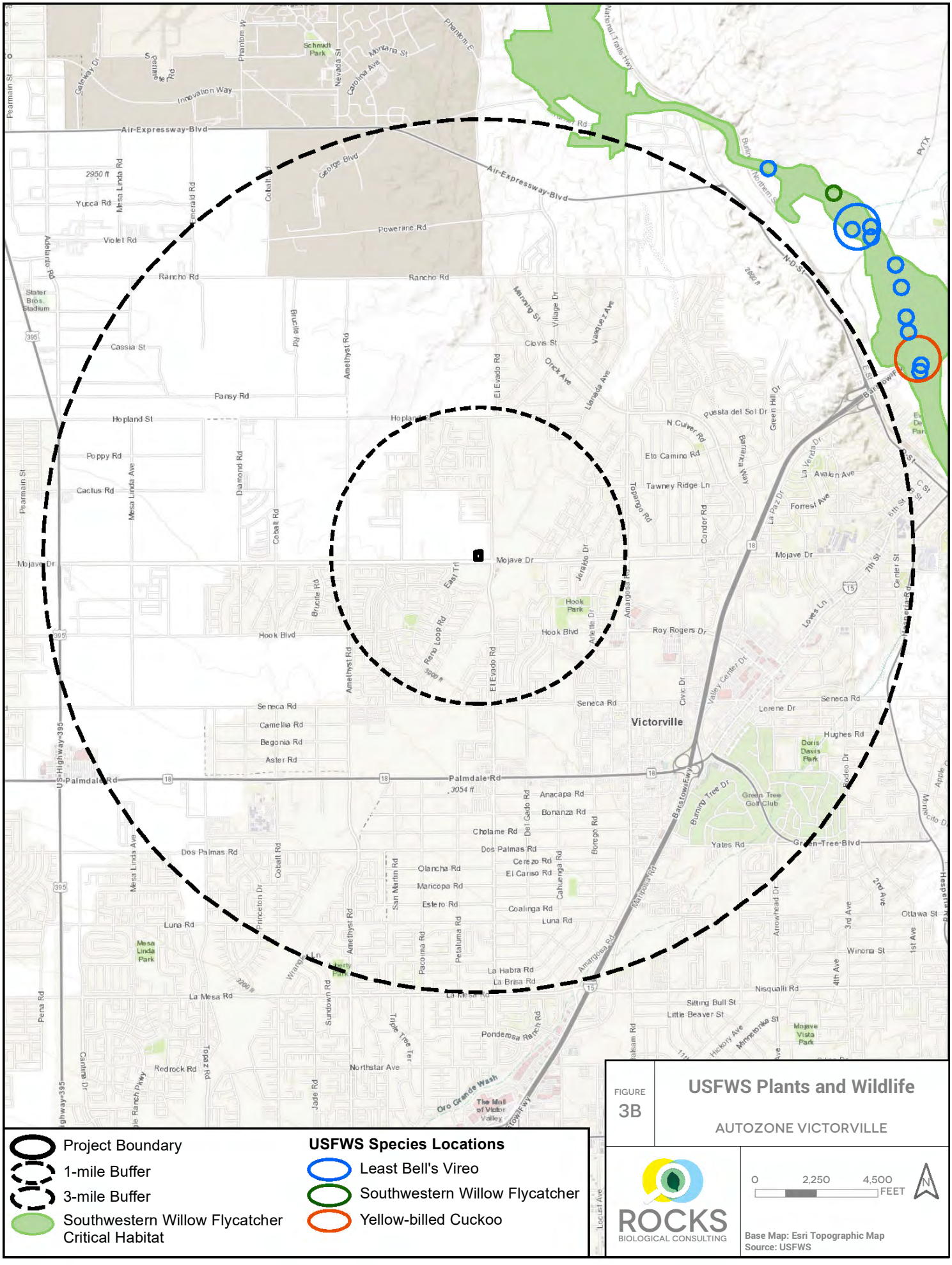
0 1,000 2,000 FEET

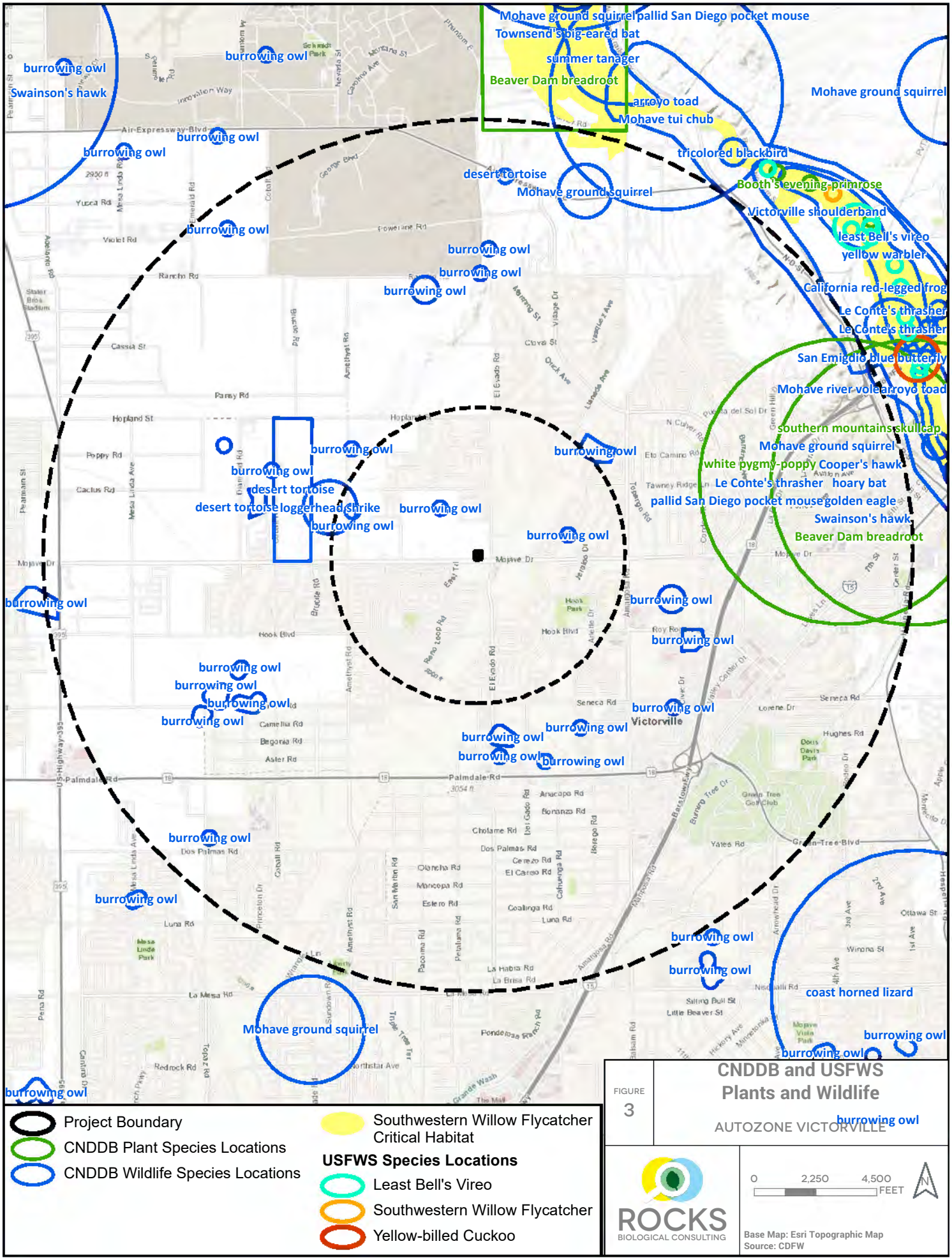
N

Aerial Photo: USDA NAIP 2020
Regional Map: National Geographic 2012, Esri


Mojave Dr
Project Boundary
Survey Area
Special-Status Species
Horned Lark (Eremophila alpestris)
Western Joshua Tree (Yucca brevifolia)
Vegetation
Creosote Bush Scrub - Disturbed
Disturbed Habitat
Developed
FIGURE
2
Biological Resources
AUTOZONE VICTORVILLE
ROCKS
BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING
0
35
70
FEET
N
Aerial Photo: Nearmap 2021


Mohave ground squirrel
pallid San Diego pocket mouse
Townsend's big-eared bat
summer tanager
Beaver Dam breadroot
arroyo toad
Mohave tui chub
burrowing owl
Swainson's hawk
Mohave ground squirrel
tricolored blackbird
desert tortoise
Booth's evening-primrose
Victorville shoulderband
least Bell's vireo
yellow warbler
California red-legged frog
Le Conte's thrasher
Le Conte's thrasher
San Emigdio blue butterfly
Mohave river vole
arroyo toad
southern mountains skullcap
Mohave ground squirrel
white pygmy-poppy
Cooper's hawk
Le Conte's thrasher
hoary bat
pallid San Diego pocket mouse
golden eagle
Swainson's hawk
Beaver Dam breadroot
desert tortoise
Le Conte's thrasher
desert tortoise
loggerhead shrike
coast horned lizard
Mohave ground squirrel
Victorville
Palmdale Rd
Mojave Dr
Air-Expressway-Blvd
Bear-Valley-Rd
Green-Tree-Blvd
US-Highway-395
Barstow Fwy
Oro Grande Wash
The Mall of Victor Valley
FIGURE
3A
CNDDB Plants and Wildlife
AUTOZONE VICTORVILLE
ROCKS
BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING
0
2,250
4,500
FEET
N
Base Map: Esri Topographic Map
Source: CDFW
Project Boundary
CNDDB Plant Species Locations
CNDDB Wildlife Species Locations


Project Boundary
1-mile Buffer
3-mile Buffer
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Critical Habitat
USFWS Species Locations
Least Bell's Vireo
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
FIGURE 3B
USFWS Plants and Wildlife
AUTOZONE VICTORVILLE
ROCKS BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING
0 2,250 4,500 FEET
Base Map: Esri Topographic Map
Source: USFWS


Mohave ground squirrel pallid San Diego pocket mouse
Townsend's big-eared bat
summer tanager
Beaver Dam breadroot
arroyo toad
Mohave tui chub
Mohave ground squirrel
tricolored blackbird
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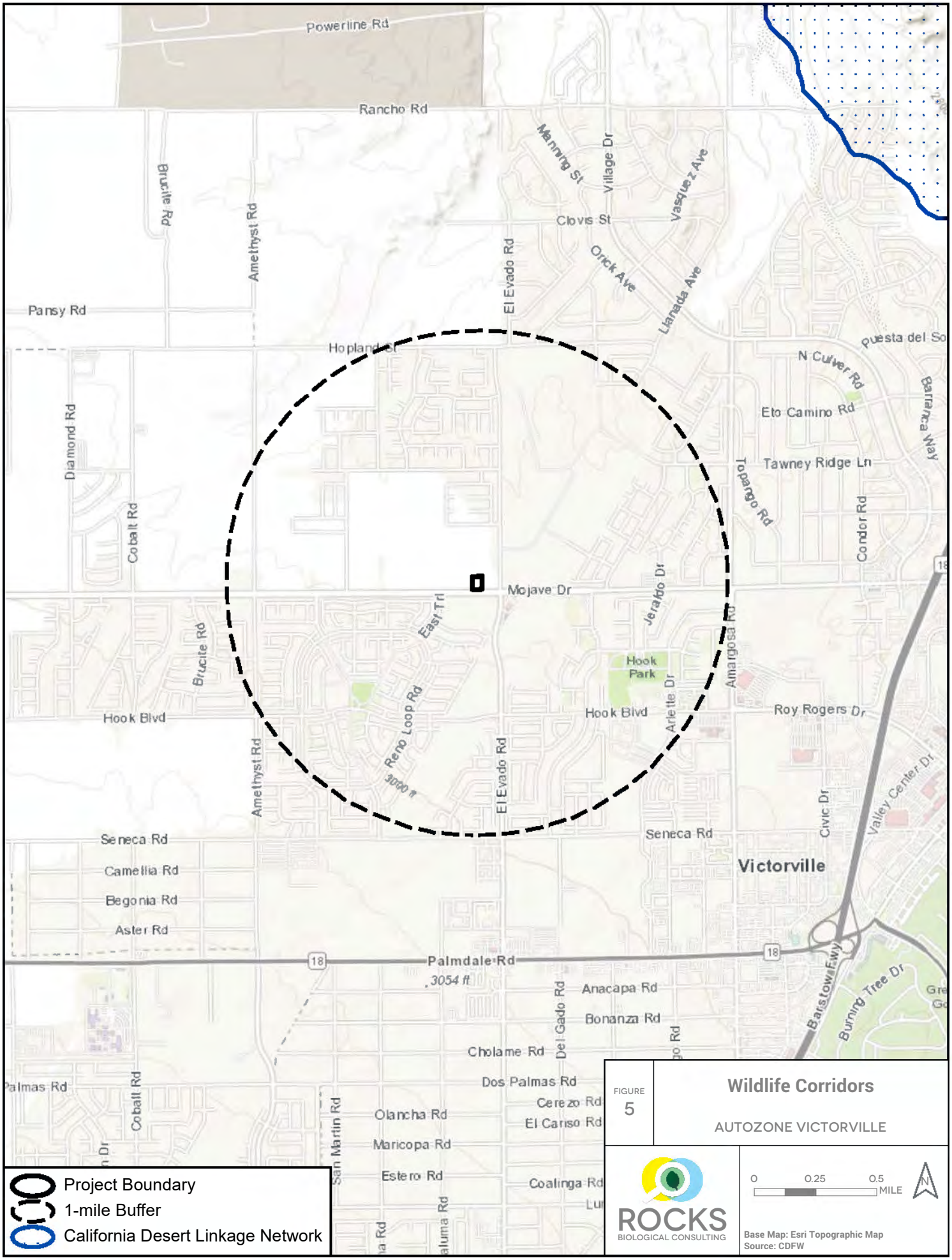
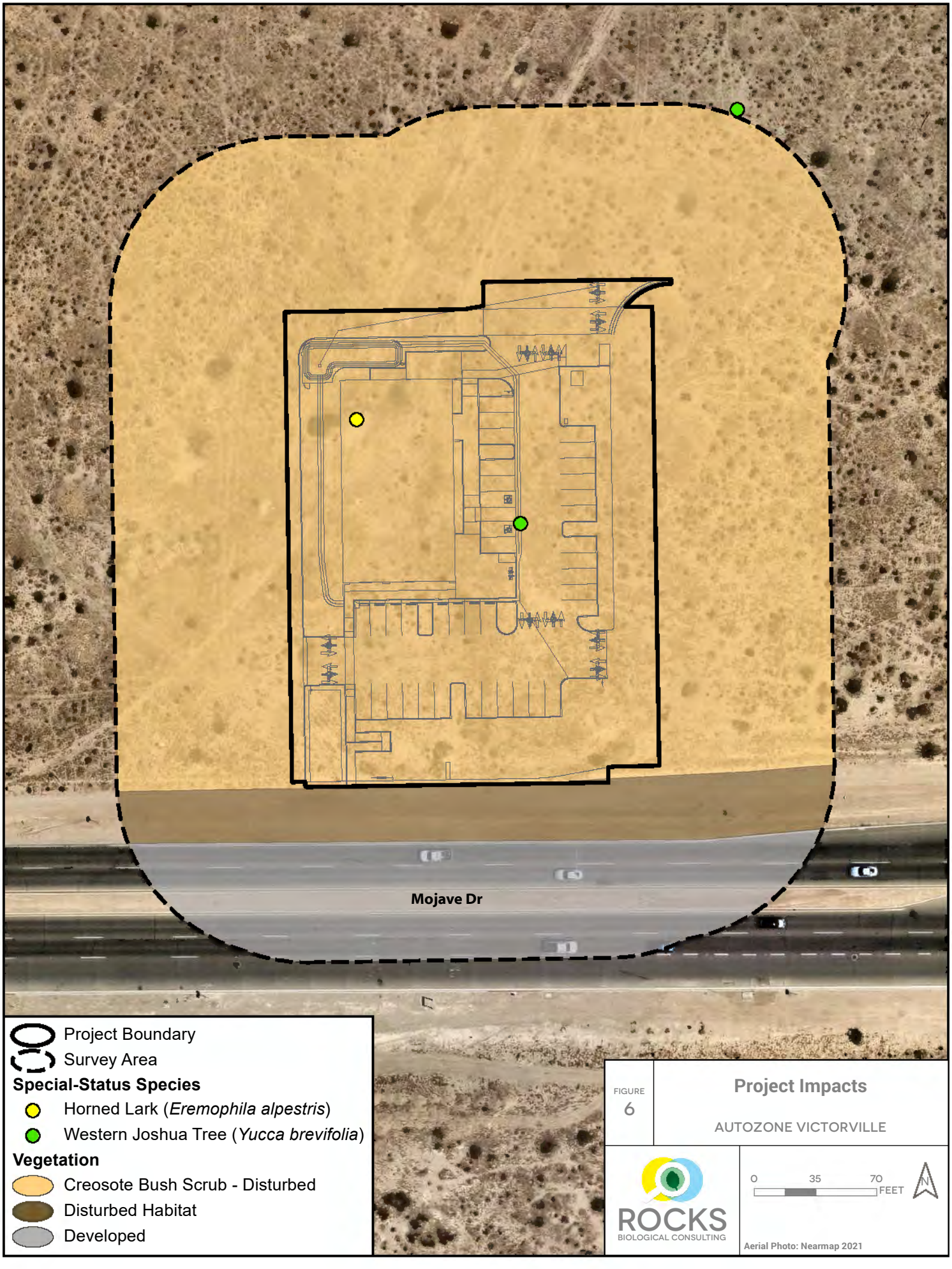
Le Conte's thrasher
Le Conte's thrasher
San Emigdio blue butterfly
Mohave river vole arroyo toad
southern mountains skullcap
Mohave ground squirrel
white pygmy-poppy Cooper's hawk
Le Conte's thrasher hoary bat
pallid San Diego pocket mouse golden eagle
Swainson's hawk
Beaver Dam breadroot
burrowing owl
Swainson's hawk
desert tortoise
Mohave ground squirrel
desert tortoise loggerhead shrike
coast horned lizard
Victorville
Project Boundary
CNDDB Plant Species Locations
CNDDB Wildlife Species Locations
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Critical Habitat
USFWS Species Locations
Least Bell's Vireo
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
FIGURE 3
CNDDB and USFWS Plants and Wildlife
AUTOZONE VICTORVILLE
ROCKS BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING
0 2,250 4,500 FEET
Base Map: Esri Topographic Map
Source: CDFW


Tawney Ridge Ln
Rocky Knoll Way
El Evado Rd
Mojave Dr
Hook Blvd
Project Boundary
NWI
Riverine
NHD
Stream/River
FIGURE
4
NWI & NHD
AUTOZONE VICTORVILLE
ROCKS
BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING
0
400
800
FEET
N
Source: USFWS; USGS
Aerial Photo: NAIP 2020


Powerline Rd
Rancho Rd
Manning St
Village Dr
Vasquez Ave
Clovis St
Orick Ave
Llanada Ave
El Evado Rd
Amethyst Rd
Brucite Rd
Pansy Rd
Hoplandor
Puesta del So
N Culver Rd
Barranca Way
Eto Camino Rd
Tawney Ridge Ln
Topango Rd
Condor Rd
Diamond Rd
Cobalt Rd
Mojave Dr
East Trl
Jeraldo Dr
Amargosa Rd
Hook Park
Hook Blvd
Arlette Dr
Roy Rogers Dr
Reno Loop Rd
3000 ft
Civic Dr
Valley Center Dr
Seneca Rd
Victorville
Camellia Rd
Begonia Rd
Aster Rd
18
Palmdale Rd
3054 ft
Anacapa Rd
Bonanza Rd
Barstow Fwy
Burning Tree Dr
Del Gado Rd
Cholame Rd
Dos Palmas Rd
Cerezo Rd
El Cariso Rd
Olancha Rd
Maricopa Rd
Estero Rd
Coalinga Rd
San Martin Rd
Project Boundary
1-mile Buffer
California Desert Linkage Network
FIGURE
5
Wildlife Corridors
AUTOZONE VICTORVILLE
ROCKS
BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING
0
0.25
0.5
MILE
N
Base Map: Esri Topographic Map
Source: CDFW


Mojave Dr
Project Boundary
Survey Area
Special-Status Species
Horned Lark (Eremophila alpestris)
Western Joshua Tree (Yucca brevifolia)
Vegetation
Creosote Bush Scrub - Disturbed
Disturbed Habitat
Developed
FIGURE
6
Project Impacts
AUTOZONE VICTORVILLE
ROCKS
BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING
0
35
70
FEET
N
Aerial Photo: Nearmap 2021

Appendix A

Site Photographs – June 17, 2022

Photo 1. View of the project site facing north from the southwestern corner.

Photo 2. View facing west of disturbed creosote bush scrub habitat on the project site supporting creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), rubber rabbitbush (*Ericameria nauseosa*), and four-wing saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*) facing west.

Photo 3. View of disturbed asphalt substrate on the project site.

Photo 4. View of disturbed creosote bush scrub habitat with Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*), facing northeast from the center of the project site.

Photo 5. View facing east of disturbed habitat along the southern boundary of the project site and developed habitat in the southern buffer area.

Photo 6. View of the project site facing east from the northwest corner.

Appendix B
Plants and Wildlife Species Observed

Family	Common Name	Scientific Name
Plants		
Agavaceae	Joshua tree (CSL)	*Yucca brevifolia*
Asteraceae	rubber rabbitbrush	*Ericameria nauseosa*
Chenopodiaceae	four-wing saltbush	*Atriplex canescens*
Ephedraceae	Nevada Mormon tea	*Ephedra nevadensis*
Solanaceae	Anderson's wolfberry	*Lycium andersonii*
Zygophyllaceae	creosote bush	*Larrea tridentada*
Reptiles		
Teiidae	western whiptail	*Aspidoscelis tigris*
Birds		
Alaudidae	California horned lark (WL)	*Eremophila alpestris*
Columbidae	rock pigeon*	*Columba livia*
Fringillidae	house finch	*Haemorhous mexicanus*
Remizidae	verdin	*Auriparus flaviceps*
Mammals		
Leporidae	Audubon's cottontail	*Sylvilagus audubonii*
Sciuridae	California ground squirrel	*Otospermophilus beecheyi*

CSL: Candidate for listing under CDFW
WL: CDFW Watch List
* Introduced Species