# APPENDIX A

Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Comment Letters on the NOP

Distribution List

# APPENDIX A.1

Notice of Preparation (NOP)

# Notice of Preparation

**To:** State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

**From:** Riverside County
4080 Lemon St. 12th Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

**Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Riverside County will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study ( ☐ is ☒ is not ) attached. Per CEQA Guidelines 15060(d) an Initial Study was not prepared.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to José Merlan, Principal Planner at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

**Project Title:** The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (DA2500001, GPA 250010, SP00408, CZ2500012, TTM39179)

**Project Applicant, if any:** Discovery MM Club, LLC c/o John Gamlin. 53035 Meriweather Way, La Quinta, CA 92253

Date August 14, 2025

Signature José Merlan

Title Principal Planner

Telephone (951) 955-0314

**Reference:** California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

## Project Location

The approximately 174-acre Project Site is located in the Eastern Coachella Valley area of unincorporated Riverside County, within the community of Santa Rosa and within the Sphere of Influence of the City of La Quinta, as shown in **Figure 1: Project Location**. The Project Site is generally bounded by 52nd Avenue to the north, Jackson Street to the east, and Avenue 54 to the south, and Monroe Street to the west. Regional access to the site is provided by Interstate 10, located approximately five miles to the north, and Highway 111, located approximately three miles to the north and east. Primary access to the site would be provided from Monroe Street.

## Project Description

The Applicant is proposing the Project to implement the development of the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan, a private, master-planned residential community on approximately 174 acres. The Specific Plan would allow for the development of up to 85 single-family residential units, a private 9-hole golf course, and a range of recreational and community amenities, including an amenity village with active and passive recreational uses.

As shown in **Figure 2: Specific Plan Land Use Plan,** the Project Site would be organized into multiple Planning Areas that include mixed-use, low-density residential, medium-density residential, and open space-recreation uses. Approximately 115 acres of the site would be designated for open space and recreational amenities, including the golf course, trails, and landscaped areas, with the remaining acreage accommodating residential development and circulation improvements.

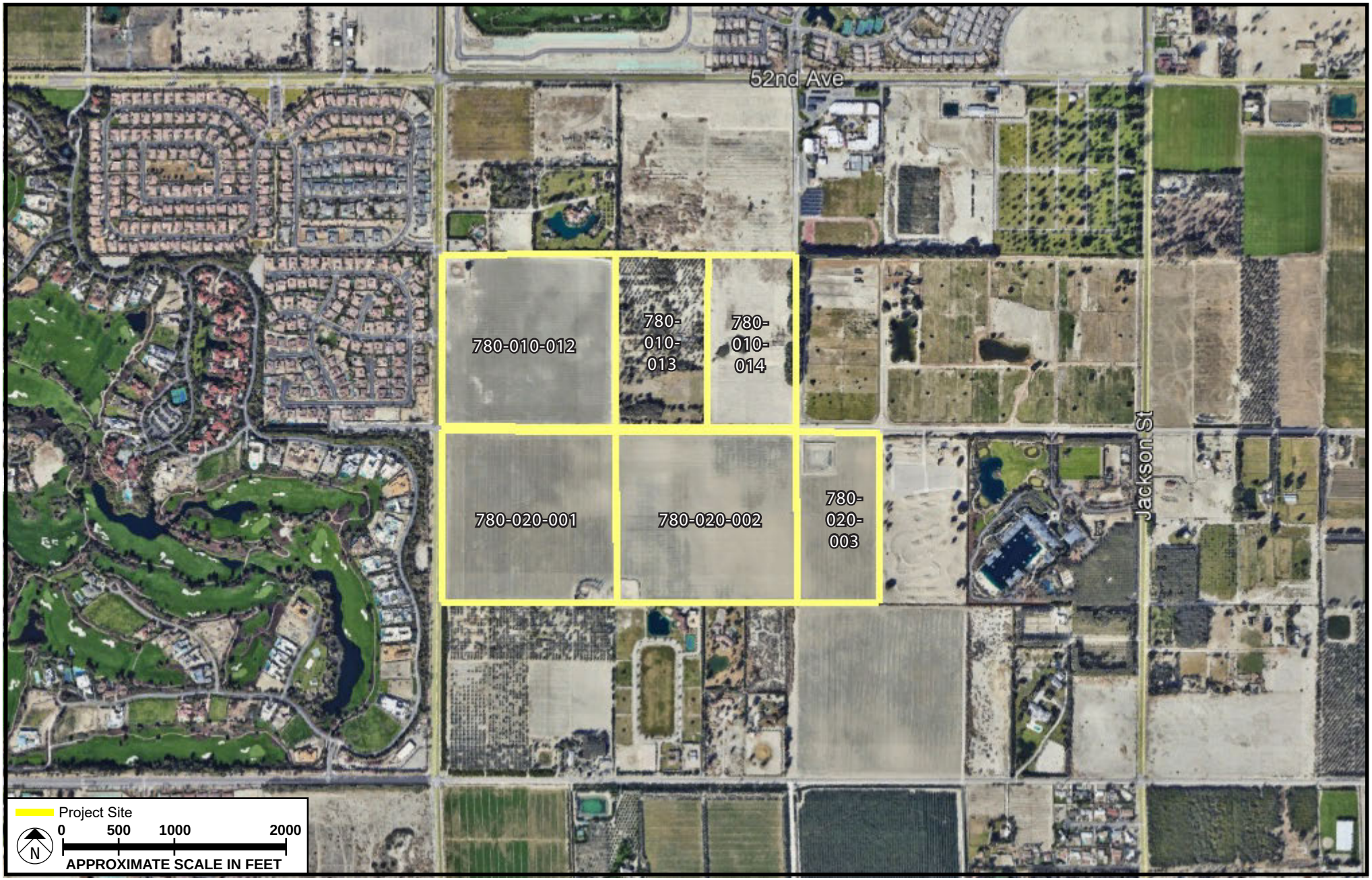
The Project includes internal private streets, pedestrian and trail networks, and associated infrastructure improvements. Off-site improvements would include roadway improvements along Monroe Street, Avenue 53, and Arabia Street to provide safe and adequate access. The Project would also include utility infrastructure to serve the development, including water and wastewater service connections, and an on-site energy system to meet operational demands.

## Potential Environmental Impacts of the Project

The County has prepared an Initial Study as part of the preliminary review of this Project. This Initial Study identifies the potential for significant impacts related to the following topics, which will be evaluated in the EIR:

- Aesthetics and Urban Design
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Transportation and Circulation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

The EIR will also address all other CEQA-mandated topics, including cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and alternatives to the Project.



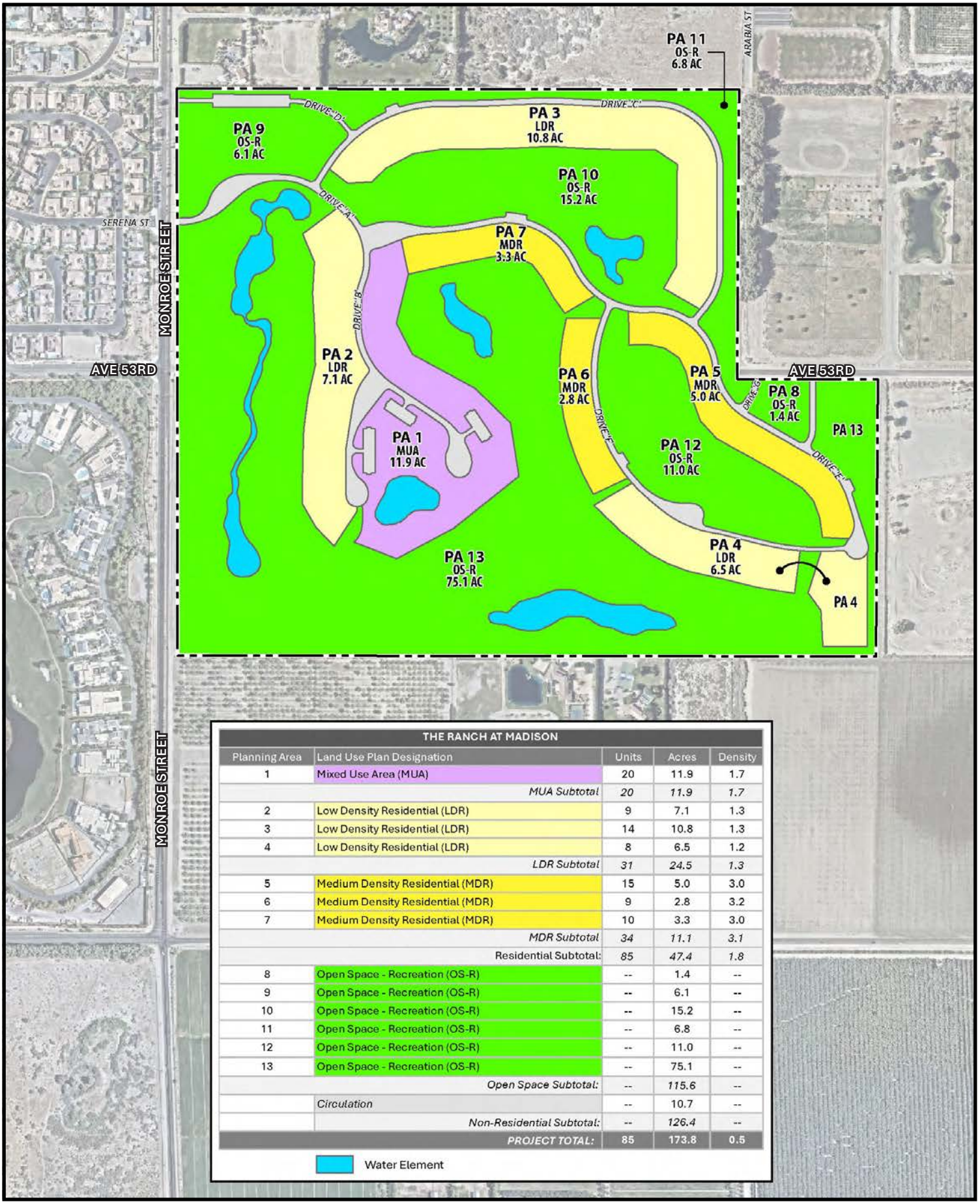

**SOURCE:** Google Earth – 2025.

FIGURE **1**

Meridian Consultants

Project Location

427-001-24




| THE RANCH AT MADISON | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Planning Area | Land Use Plan Designation | Units | Acres | Density |
| 1 | Mixed Use Area (MUA) | 20 | 11.9 | 1.7 |
| | *MUA Subtotal* | *20* | *11.9* | *1.7* |
| 2 | Low Density Residential (LDR) | 9 | 7.1 | 1.3 |
| 3 | Low Density Residential (LDR) | 14 | 10.8 | 1.3 |
| 4 | Low Density Residential (LDR) | 8 | 6.5 | 1.2 |
| | *LDR Subtotal* | *31* | *24.5* | *1.3* |
| 5 | Medium Density Residential (MDR) | 15 | 5.0 | 3.0 |
| 6 | Medium Density Residential (MDR) | 9 | 2.8 | 3.2 |
| 7 | Medium Density Residential (MDR) | 10 | 3.3 | 3.0 |
| | *MDR Subtotal* | *34* | *11.1* | *3.1* |
| | Residential Subtotal: | *85* | *47.4* | *1.8* |
| 8 | Open Space - Recreation (OS-R) | -- | 1.4 | -- |
| 9 | Open Space - Recreation (OS-R) | -- | 6.1 | -- |
| 10 | Open Space - Recreation (OS-R) | -- | 15.2 | -- |
| 11 | Open Space - Recreation (OS-R) | -- | 6.8 | -- |
| 12 | Open Space - Recreation (OS-R) | -- | 11.0 | -- |
| 13 | Open Space - Recreation (OS-R) | -- | 75.1 | -- |
| | *Open Space Subtotal:* | -- | *115.6* | -- |
| | *Circulation* | -- | 10.7 | -- |
| | *Non-Residential Subtotal:* | -- | *126.4* | -- |
| | ***PROJECT TOTAL:*** | **85** | **173.8** | **0.5** |

Water Element

**SOURCE:** t&b planning – December 2025.

FIGURE **2**

Trinity Consultants

Meridian

Specific Plan Land Use Plan

427-001-24

# APPENDIX A.2

Comment Letters

# NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

CHAIRPERSON
Reginald Pagaling
*Chumash*

VICE-CHAIRPERSON
Buffy McQuillen
*Yokayo Pomo, Yuki, Nomlaki*

SECRETARY
Isaac Bojorquez
*Ohlone-Costanoan*

PARLIAMENTARIAN
Wayne Nelson
*Luiseño*

COMMISSIONER
Sara Dutschke
*Miwok*

COMMISSIONER
Stanley Rodriguez
*Kumeyaay*

COMMISSIONER
Bennae Calac
*Pauma-Yuima Band of Luiseño Indians*

COMMISSIONER
Vacant

COMMISSIONER
Vacant

ACTING EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Michelle Carr

NAHC HEADQUARTERS
1550 Harbor Boulevard
Suite 100
West Sacramento,
California 95691
(916) 373-3710
nahc@nahc.ca.gov

August 22, 2025

José Merlan
County of Riverside
4080 Lemon Street
12th Floor
Riverside CA 92501

Re 2025080821 The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (DA2500001, GPA 250010, SP00408, CA 2500012, TTM 39179) Project Riverside County

Dear Mr. Holt:

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) has received the Notice of Preparation (NOP), Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) or Early Consultation for the project referenced above. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code §21000 et seq.), specifically Public Resources Code §21084.1, states that a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code § 21084.1; Cal. Code Regs., tit.14, §15064.5 (b) (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5 (b)). If there is substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before a lead agency, that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) shall be prepared. (Pub. Resources Code §21080 (d); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 5064 subd.(a)(1) (CEQA Guidelines §15064 (a)(1)). In order to determine whether a project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, a lead agency will need to determine whether there are historical resources within the area of potential effect (APE).

CEQA was amended significantly in 2014. Assembly Bill 52 (Gatto, Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014) (AB 52) amended CEQA to create a separate category of cultural resources, "tribal cultural resources" (Pub. Resources Code §21074) and provides that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code §21084.2). Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code §21084.3 (a)). AB 52 applies to any project for which a notice of preparation, a notice of negative declaration, or a mitigated negative declaration is filed on or after July 1, 2015. If your project involves the adoption of or amendment to a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation or proposed designation of open space, on or after March 1, 2005, it may also be subject to Senate Bill 18 (Burton, Chapter 905, Statutes of 2004) (SB 18). Both SB 18 and AB 52 have tribal consultation requirements. If your project is also subject to the federal National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) (NEPA), the tribal consultation requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (154 U.S.C. 300101, 36 C.F.R. §800 et seq.) may also apply.

The NAHC recommends consultation with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of your proposed project as early as possible in order to avoid inadvertent discoveries of Native American human remains and best protect tribal cultural resources. Below is a brief summary of portions of AB 52 and SB 18 as well as the NAHC's recommendations for conducting cultural resources assessments.

Consult your legal counsel about compliance with AB 52 and SB 18 as well as compliance with any other applicable laws.

AB 52

AB 52 has added to CEQA the additional requirements listed below, along with many other requirements:

**1.** Fourteen Day Period to Provide Notice of Completion of an Application/Decision to Undertake a Project: Within fourteen (14) days of determining that an application for a project is complete or of a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, a lead agency shall provide formal notification to a designated contact of, or tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, to be accomplished by at least one written notice that includes:

- **a.** A brief description of the project.
- **b.** The lead agency contact information.
- **c.** Notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (d)).
- **d.** A "California Native American tribe" is defined as a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC for the purposes of Chapter 905 of Statutes of 2004 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code §21073).

**2.** Begin Consultation Within 30 Days of Receiving a Tribe's Request for Consultation and Before Releasing a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report: A lead agency shall begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving a request for consultation from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1, subds. (d) and (e)) and prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration or Environmental Impact Report. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1(b)).

- **a.** For purposes of AB 52, "consultation shall have the same meaning as provided in Gov. Code §65352.4 (SB 18). (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.1 (b)).

**3.** Mandatory Topics of Consultation If Requested by a Tribe: The following topics of consultation, if a tribe requests to discuss them, are mandatory topics of consultation:

- **a.** Alternatives to the project.
- **b.** Recommended mitigation measures.
- **c.** Significant effects. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (a)).

**4.** Discretionary Topics of Consultation: The following topics are discretionary topics of consultation:

- **a.** Type of environmental review necessary.
- **b.** Significance of the tribal cultural resources.
- **c.** Significance of the project's impacts on tribal cultural resources.
- **d.** If necessary, project alternatives or appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation that the tribe may recommend to the lead agency. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (a)).

**5.** Confidentiality of Information Submitted by a Tribe During the Environmental Review Process: With some exceptions, any information, including but not limited to, the location, description, and use of tribal cultural resources submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the lead agency or any other public agency to the public, consistent with Government Code §6254 (r) and §6254.10. Any information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the consultation or environmental review process shall be published in a confidential appendix to the environmental document unless the tribe that provided the information consents, in writing, to the disclosure of some or all of the information to the public. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (c)(1)).

**6.** Discussion of Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources in the Environmental Document: If a project may have a significant impact on a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency's environmental document shall discuss both of the following:

- **a.** Whether the proposed project has a significant impact on an identified tribal cultural resource.
- **b.** Whether feasible alternatives or mitigation measures, including those measures that may be agreed to pursuant to Public Resources Code §21082.3, subdivision (a), avoid or substantially lessen the impact on the identified tribal cultural resource. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (b)).

**7.** Conclusion of Consultation: Consultation with a tribe shall be considered concluded when either of the following occurs:

**a.** The parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists, on a tribal cultural resource; or

**b.** A party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached. (Pub. Resources Code §21080.3.2 (b)).

**8.** Recommending Mitigation Measures Agreed Upon in Consultation in the Environmental Document: Any mitigation measures agreed upon in the consultation conducted pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.2 shall be recommended for inclusion in the environmental document and in an adopted mitigation monitoring and reporting program, if determined to avoid or lessen the impact pursuant to Public Resources Code §21082.3, subdivision (b), paragraph 2, and shall be fully enforceable. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (a)).

**9.** Required Consideration of Feasible Mitigation: If mitigation measures recommended by the staff of the lead agency as a result of the consultation process are not included in the environmental document or if there are no agreed upon mitigation measures at the conclusion of consultation, or if consultation does not occur, and if substantial evidence demonstrates that a project will cause a significant effect to a tribal cultural resource, the lead agency shall consider feasible mitigation pursuant to Public Resources Code §21084.3 (b). (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (e)).

**10.** Examples of Mitigation Measures That, If Feasible, May Be Considered to Avoid or Minimize Significant Adverse Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources:

**a.** Avoidance and preservation of the resources in place, including, but not limited to:

**i.** Planning and construction to avoid the resources and protect the cultural and natural context.

**ii.** Planning greenspace, parks, or other open space, to incorporate the resources with culturally appropriate protection and management criteria.

**b.** Treating the resource with culturally appropriate dignity, taking into account the tribal cultural values and meaning of the resource, including, but not limited to, the following:

**i.** Protecting the cultural character and integrity of the resource.

**ii.** Protecting the traditional use of the resource.

**iii.** Protecting the confidentiality of the resource.

**c.** Permanent conservation easements or other interests in real property, with culturally appropriate management criteria for the purposes of preserving or utilizing the resources or places.

**d.** Protecting the resource. (Pub. Resource Code §21084.3 (b)).

**e.** Please note that a federally recognized California Native American tribe or a non-federally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC to protect a California prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, or ceremonial place may acquire and hold conservation easements if the conservation easement is voluntarily conveyed. (Civ. Code §815.3 (c)).

**f.** Please note that it is the policy of the state that Native American remains and associated grave artifacts shall be repatriated. (Pub. Resources Code §5097.991).

**11.** Prerequisites for Certifying an Environmental Impact Report or Adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration or Negative Declaration with a Significant Impact on an Identified Tribal Cultural Resource: An Environmental Impact Report may not be certified, nor may a mitigated negative declaration or a negative declaration be adopted unless one of the following occurs:

**a.** The consultation process between the tribes and the lead agency has occurred as provided in Public Resources Code §21080.3.1 and §21080.3.2 and concluded pursuant to Public Resources Code §21080.3.2.

**b.** The tribe that requested consultation failed to provide comments to the lead agency or otherwise failed to engage in the consultation process.

**c.** The lead agency provided notice of the project to the tribe in compliance with Public Resources Code §21080.3.1 (d) and the tribe failed to request consultation within 30 days. (Pub. Resources Code §21082.3 (d)).

The NAHC's PowerPoint presentation titled, "Tribal Consultation Under AB 52: Requirements and Best Practices" may be found online at: http://nahc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AB52TribalConsultation_CalEPAPDF.pdf

SB 18

SB 18 applies to local governments and requires local governments to contact, provide notice to, refer plans to, and consult with tribes prior to the adoption or amendment of a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation of open space. (Gov. Code §65352.3). Local governments should consult the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's "Tribal Consultation Guidelines," which can be found online at: https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/09_14_05_Updated_Guidelines_922.pdf.

Some of SB 18's provisions include:

**1.** Tribal Consultation: If a local government considers a proposal to adopt or amend a general plan or a specific plan, or to designate open space it is required to contact the appropriate tribes identified by the NAHC by requesting a "Tribal Consultation List." If a tribe, once contacted, requests consultation the local government must consult with the tribe on the plan proposal. A tribe has 90 days from the date of receipt of notification to request consultation unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed to by the tribe. (Gov. Code §65352.3 (a)(2)).

**2.** No Statutory Time Limit on SB 18 Tribal Consultation. There is no statutory time limit on SB 18 tribal consultation.

**3.** Confidentiality: Consistent with the guidelines developed and adopted by the Office of Planning and Research pursuant to Gov. Code §65040.2, the city or county shall protect the confidentiality of the information concerning the specific identity, location, character, and use of places, features and objects described in Public Resources Code §5097.9 and §5097.993 that are within the city's or county's jurisdiction. (Gov. Code §65352.3 (b)).

**4.** Conclusion of SB 18 Tribal Consultation: Consultation should be concluded at the point in which:

- **a.** The parties to the consultation come to a mutual agreement concerning the appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation; or
- **b.** Either the local government or the tribe, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached concerning the appropriate measures of preservation or mitigation. (Tribal Consultation Guidelines, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (2005) at p. 18).

Agencies should be aware that neither AB 52 nor SB 18 precludes agencies from initiating tribal consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with their jurisdictions before the timeframes provided in AB 52 and SB 18. For that reason, we urge you to continue to request Native American Tribal Contact Lists and "Sacred Lands File" searches from the NAHC. The request forms can be found online at: http://nahc.ca.gov/resources/forms/.

NAHC Recommendations for Cultural Resources Assessments

To adequately assess the existence and significance of tribal cultural resources and plan for avoidance, preservation in place, or barring both, mitigation of project-related impacts to tribal cultural resources, the NAHC recommends the following actions:

**1.** Contact the appropriate regional California Historical Research Information System (CHRIS) Center (https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30331) for an archaeological records search. The records search will determine:

- **a.** If part or all of the APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources.
- **b.** If any known cultural resources have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE.
- **c.** If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
- **d.** If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.

**2.** If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey.

- **a.** The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum and not be made available for public disclosure.

**b.** The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional CHRIS center.

**3.** Contact the NAHC for:

**a.** A Sacred Lands File search. Remember that tribes do not always record their sacred sites in the Sacred Lands File, nor are they required to do so. A Sacred Lands File search is not a substitute for consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project's APE.

**b.** A Native American Tribal Consultation List of appropriate tribes for consultation concerning the project site and to assist in planning for avoidance, preservation in place, or, failing both, mitigation measures.

**4.** Remember that the lack of surface evidence of archaeological resources (including tribal cultural resources) does not preclude their subsurface existence.

**a.** Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of inadvertently discovered archaeological resources per Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15064.5(f) (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5(f)). In areas of identified archaeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American with knowledge of cultural resources should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.

**b.** Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the disposition of recovered cultural items that are not burial associated in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.

**c.** Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains. Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98, and Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15064.5, subdivisions (d) and (e) (CEQA Guidelines §15064.5, subds. (d) and (e)) address the processes to be followed in the event of an inadvertent discovery of any Native American human remains and associated grave goods in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address: Andrew.Green@NAHC.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Andrew Green

Andrew Green
Cultural Resources Analyst

cc: State Clearinghouse

SEPTEMBER 2, 2025

VIA EMAIL: JMERLAN@RIVCO.ORG
RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
ATTN: JOSE MERLAN
44933 FERN AVENUE
P.O. BOX 1409
RIVERSIDE, CA 92502-1409

Dear Mr. Merlan:

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENATL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE RANCH AT MADISON SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT, SCH# 2025080821

The Department of Conservation's (Department) Division of Land Resource Protection (Division) has reviewed the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project (Project).

The Division monitors and maps farmland conversion on a statewide basis, provides technical assistance regarding the Williamson Act, and administers various agricultural land conservation programs. Public Resources Code, section 614, subdivision (b) authorizes the Department to provide soil conservation advisory services to local governments, including review of CEQA documents.

Protection of the state's agricultural land resources is part of the Department's mission and central to many of its programs. The CEQA process gives the Department an opportunity to acknowledge the value of the resource, identify areas of Department interest, and offer information on how to assess potential impacts or mitigation opportunities.

The Department respects local decision-making by informing the CEQA process and is not taking a position or providing legal or policy interpretation.

We offer the following comments for consideration with respect to the project's potential impacts on agricultural land and resources within the Department's purview.

PROJECT ATTRIBUTES

The Project proposes to develop a master-planned golf course community up to a maximum of 85 dwelling units, a multi-use community center, a private, 9-hole golf course, and short-game practice area private access roads, and a 2.5-acre substation site on 174 gross acres. The Project also includes proposed new utility infrastructure, with

underground lines. The Project site contains Prime Farmland as designated by DOC's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

The conversion of agricultural land represents a permanent reduction and impact to California's agricultural land resources. The Department generally advises discussion of the following in any environmental review for the loss or conversion of agricultural land:

- Type, amount, and location of farmland conversion resulting directly and indirectly from implementation of the proposed project.
- Impacts on any current and future agricultural operations in the vicinity; e.g., land-use conflicts, increases in land values and taxes, loss of agricultural support infrastructure such as processing facilities, etc.
- Incremental impacts leading to cumulative impacts on agricultural land. This would include impacts from the proposed project, as well as impacts from past, current, and likely future projects.
- Implementation of any City or County Agricultural Mitigation Plans, Programs, or Policies.
- Proposed mitigation measures for impacted agricultural lands within the proposed project area.

MITIGATING AGRICULTURAL LAND LOSS OR CONVERSION

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines, the Department advises that the environmental review address mitigation for the loss or conversion of agricultural land. An agricultural conservation easement is one potential method for mitigating loss or conversion of agricultural land. (*See* Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15370 [mitigation includes "compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments, including through permanent protection of such resources in the form of conservation easements."]; *see also King and Gardiner Farms, LLC v. County of Kern* (2020) 45 Cal.App.5th 814.)

Mitigation through agricultural conservation easements can take at least two forms: the outright purchase of easements or the donation of mitigation fees to a local, regional, or statewide organization or agency whose purpose includes the acquisition and stewardship of agricultural easements. The conversion of agricultural land may be viewed as an impact of at least regional significance. Hence, the search for replacement lands may not need to be limited strictly to lands within the project's surrounding area. A helpful source for regional and statewide agricultural mitigation banks is the California Council of Land Trusts. They provide helpful insight into farmland mitigation policies and implementation strategies, including a guidebook with model policies and a model local ordinance. The guidebook can be found at:

California Council of Land Trusts

Of course, the use of conservation easements is only one form of mitigation, and the Department urges consideration of any other feasible measures necessary to mitigate project impacts.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan Project. Please provide the Department with notices of any future hearing dates as well as any staff reports pertaining to this project. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Farl Grundy, Associate Environmental Planner via email at Farl.Grundy@conservation.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Monique Wilber

Monique Wilber

Conservation Program Support Supervisor

Department of Toxic Substances Control

**Yana Garcia**
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

Katherine M. Butler, MPH, Director
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento, California 95826-3200
dtsc.ca.gov

**Gavin Newsom**
Governor

**SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

August 22, 2025

Jose Merlan
Principal Planner
County of Riverside
4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor
Riverside, CA 92501
jmerlan@RIVCO.ORG

RE: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE RANCH AT MADISON SPECIFIC PLAN DATED AUGUST 19, 2025, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER 2025080821

Dear Jose Merlan,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (Project). The Project proposes to develop a master-planned golf course community up to a maximum of 85 dwelling units, a multi-use community center, a private, 9-hole golf course and short-game practice area, private access roads, and a 2.5-acre substation site on 174 acres. The Project entitlements include a Foundation General Plan Amendment, a Development Agreement, a Specific Plan, a Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment, a Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment, and a Tentative Tract Map. These amendments would address the present land use of agriculture and rezone to residential use.

The proposed Specific Plan would establish 13 Planning Areas on the Project Site to regulate land use. Planning Areas 2, 3, 4, & 5 would be designated Low-Density Residential (LDR) and Planning Areas 6, 7, & 8 as Medium Density Residential (MDR). The Project would include LDR single-family homes in four neighborhoods in Planning Areas 2, 3, 4, & 5. The Project includes MDR single-family homes in three

neighborhoods in Planning Areas 6, 7, & 8. Planning Area 1 would accommodate mixed-use development.

DTSC recommends and requests consideration of the following comments:

1. When agricultural crops and/or land uses are proposed or rezoned for residential use, several contaminants of concern (COCs) can be present. The Lead Agency shall identify the amounts of Pesticides and Organochlorine Pesticides (OCPs) historically used on the property. If present, OCPs requiring further analysis are dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane, toxaphene, and dieldrin. Additionally, any level of arsenic present would require further analysis and sampling and must meet approved local area baselines or thresholds. If they do not, remedial action must take place to mitigate them below those thresholds. Additional COCs may be found in mixing/loading/storage areas, drainage ditches, farmhouses, or any other outbuildings and should be sampled and analyzed. If smudge pots had been routinely utilized, additional sampling for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons and/or Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons may be required. These recommendations should be adhered to and become part of the environmental document. Please refer to the DTSC's Human and Ecological Risk Office (HERO) webpage for the most recent guidance and screening levels.
2. All imported soil/fill material should be tested to assess any contaminants of concern meet screening levels as outlined in DTSC's Preliminary Endangerment Assessment Guidance Manual. Additionally, DTSC advises referencing the DTSC Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material Fact Sheet if importing fill is necessary. To minimize the possibility of introducing contaminated soil/fill material, there should be documentation of the origins of the soil/fill material and, if applicable, sampling be conducted to ensure that the imported soil/fill material are suitable for the intended land use. The soil sampling should include analysis based on the source of the soil/fill and knowledge of prior land use.

DTSC would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NOP of a DEIR for The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan. Thank you for your assistance in protecting California's people and environment from the harmful effects of toxic substances. If you have any questions or would like clarification on DTSC's comments, please respond to this letter or via our CEQA Review email for additional guidance.

Sincerely,

Dave Kereazis

Dave Kereazis
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HWMP-Permitting Division – CEQA Unit
Department of Toxic Substances Control
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cc: (via email)

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State of California – Natural Resources Agency
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***GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor***
***CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director***

September 17, 2025
*Sent via email*

Jose Merlan
Principal Planner
County of Riverside
4080 Lemon St., 12th Floor
Riverside, CA 92501
jmerlan@rivco.org

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report
The Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (DA2500001, GPA 250010, SP00408, CZ2500012, TTM39179) Project
State Clearinghouse No. 2025080821

Dear Jose Merlan:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) from the County of Riverside for the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (DA2500001, GPA 250010, SP00408, CZ2500012, TTM39179) Project (Project) pursuant the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.[1]

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish and wildlife. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

**CDFW ROLE**

CDFW is California's Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources, and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State. (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a).) CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species. (*Id.*, § 1802.) Similarly, for purposes of CEQA, CDFW is charged by law to provide, as available, biological expertise during public

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

agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

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

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The proposed Project is located in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area of western Riverside County, east of the City of La Quinta, south of the City of Indio, and west of the City of Coachella, in the unincorporated community of Vista Santa Rosa. The Project area is surrounded by agricultural land, residential developments and golf courses with landscaping, and vacant areas containing a mix of native and non-native vegetation. The Project encompasses Accessor's Parcel Numbers 780-010-012, 780-010-013, 780-010-014, 780-020-001, 780-020-002, and 780-020-003. The Project site is located within the boundaries of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP).

The Project proposes to develop a master-planned golf course community up to a maximum of 85 dwelling units, a multi-use community center, a private 9-hole golf course and short-game practice area, private access roads, and a 2.5-acre substation site on 174 acres. The Project entitlements include a Foundation General Plan Amendment, a Development Agreement, a Specific Plan, a Specific Plan Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment, a Zoning Ordinance Map Amendment, and a Tentative Tract Map.

The Specific Plan site consists of vacant agricultural land, flat desert terrain, existing date palm grove, several Mexican fan palms (*Washingtonia robusta*) with untrimmed frond skirts, and scattered structures. The Project includes a proposed crossing for golf carts across Monroe Street to the Madison Club. A tunnel under Monroe Street or a bridge over Monroe Street are under consideration, with the tunnel being the preferred option.

## COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the County of Riverside in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Project's significant, or

potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources. The comments and recommendations are also offered to enable the CDFW to adequately review and comment on the proposed Project with respect to the Project's consistency with the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP).

CDFW recommends that the forthcoming DEIR address the following:

**Assessment of Biological Resources**

Section 15125(c) of the CEQA Guidelines states that knowledge of the regional setting of a project is critical to the assessment of environmental impacts and that special emphasis should be placed on environmental resources that are rare or unique to the region. To enable CDFW staff to adequately review and comment on the project, the DEIR should include a complete assessment of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the Project footprint, with particular emphasis on identifying rare, threatened, endangered, and other sensitive species and their associated habitats.

The CDFW recommends that the DEIR specifically include:

1. An assessment of the various habitat types located within the project footprint, and a map that identifies the location of each habitat type. CDFW recommends that floristic, alliance- and/or association-based mapping and assessment be completed following *The Manual of California Vegetation*, second edition (Sawyer et al. 2009[2]). Adjoining habitat areas should also be included in this assessment where site activities could lead to direct or indirect impacts offsite. Habitat mapping at the alliance level will help establish baseline vegetation conditions.

2. A general biological inventory of the fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal species that are present or have the potential to be present within each habitat type onsite and within adjacent areas that could be affected by the project. CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) in Sacramento should be contacted at (916) 322-2493 or CNDDB@wildlife.ca.gov or https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Maps-and-Data to obtain current information on any previously reported sensitive species and habitat, including Significant Natural Areas identified under Chapter 12 of the Fish and Game Code, in the vicinity of the proposed Project.

   CDFW's CNDDB is not exhaustive in terms of the data it houses, nor is it an absence database. CDFW recommends that it be used as a starting point in

[2] Sawyer, J. O., T. Keeler-Wolf, and J. M. Evens. 2009. A manual of California Vegetation, 2nd ed. California Native Plant Society Press, Sacramento, California. http://vegetation.cnps.org/

gathering information about the *potential presence* of species within the general area of the project site.

3. A complete, *recent* inventory of rare, threatened, endangered, and other sensitive species located within the Project footprint and within offsite areas with the potential to be affected, including California Species of Special Concern (CSSC) and California Fully Protected Species (Fish & G. Code, § 3511). Species to be addressed should include all those which meet the CEQA definition (CEQA Guidelines § 15380). The inventory should address seasonal variations in use of the Project area and should not be limited to resident species. CVMSHCP surveys, completed by a CVMSHCP Acceptable Biologist and conducted at the appropriate time of year and time of day when the sensitive species are active or otherwise identifiable, are required. Acceptable species-specific survey procedures should be developed in consultation with CDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, where necessary. Note that CDFW generally considers biological field assessments for wildlife to be valid for a one-year period, and assessments for rare plants may be considered valid for a period of up to three years. Some aspects of the proposed Project may warrant periodic updated surveys for certain sensitive taxa, particularly if the Project is proposed to occur over a protracted time frame, or in phases, or if surveys are completed during periods of drought.

   <u>Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*)</u>

   On October 10, 2024, the Fish and Game Commission determined that western burrowing owl warrants protection as a candidate species under the California Endangered Species Act (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.). During the candidacy period, western burrowing owl will be afforded the same protection as threatened and endangered species under CESA. If Project activities, including relocation, could result in take, appropriate CESA authorization (i.e., Incidental Take Permit under Fish and Game Code section 2081) should be obtained prior to commencement of Project activities.

   The Project site has the potential to provide suitable foraging and/or nesting habitat for burrowing owl. Take of individual burrowing owls and their nests or eggs is defined by Fish and Game Code section 86, and prohibited by sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Take is defined in Fish and Game Code section 86 as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill.” Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 afford protective measures as follows: section 3503 states that it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3503.5 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any

such bird except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 703 et seq.).

With regard to the CVMSHCP, the CDFW Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) Permit #2835-2008-001-06 does not provide Take Authorization for burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs. To the contrary, section 3.5.6 of the NCCP Permit states burrowing owl "pairs or individuals will not be Taken" and reiterates that the "HCP/NCCP does not authorize Take of [burrowing owl] nests [or] eggs[.]" Therefore, throughout the CVMSHCP area—both within and without Conservation Areas—Permittees must ensure that activities occurring within their jurisdictions do not result in the take, possession, or destruction of burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs. Any activity occurring within the CVMSHCP area that results in the take of burrowing owl individuals, nests, or eggs would be unlawful and would not be a Covered Activity under the CVMSHCP.

The Project site has the potential to provide suitable foraging and/or nesting habitat for burrowing owl. Take of individual burrowing owls and their nests is defined by Fish and Game Code section 86, and prohibited by sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513. Take is defined in Fish and Game Code section 86 as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture or kill."

CDFW recommends that the County of Riverside follow the recommendations and guidelines provided in the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (Department of Fish and Game, March 2012); available for download from CDFW's website: https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/survey-protocols. The Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, specifies three steps for project impact evaluations:

a. A habitat assessment;
b. Surveys; and
c. An impact assessment

As stated in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, the three progressive steps are effective in evaluating whether a project will result in impacts to burrowing owls, and the information gained from the steps will inform any subsequent avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures. Habitat assessments are conducted to evaluate the likelihood that a site supports burrowing owl. Burrowing owl surveys provide information needed to determine the potential effects of proposed projects and activities on burrowing owls, and to avoid take in accordance with Fish and Game Code sections 86, 3503, and 3503.5. Impact assessments evaluate the extent to which burrowing owls and their habitat may be impacted,

directly or indirectly, on and within a reasonable distance of a proposed CEQA project activity or non-CEQA project.

Within the 2012 Staff Report, the minimum habitat replacement recommendation was purposely excluded as it was shown to serve as a default, replacing any site-specific analysis and discounting the wide variation in natal area, home range, foraging area, and other factors influencing burrowing owls and burrowing owl population persistence in a particular area. It hypothesized that mitigation for permanent impacts to nesting, occupied, and satellite burrows and burrowing owl habitat should be on, adjacent or proximate to the impact site where possible and where habitat is sufficient to support burrowing owls present. If mitigation occurs offsite, it should include (a) permanent conservation of similar vegetation communities (grassland, scrublands, desert, urban, and agriculture) to provide for burrowing owl nesting, foraging, wintering, and dispersal (i.e., during breeding and non-breeding seasons) comparable to or better than that of the impact area, and (b) be sufficiently large acreage with the presence of fossorial mammals. Furthermore, the report noted that suitable mitigation lands should be based on a comparison of the habitat attributes of the impacted and conserved lands, including but not limited to: type and structure of habitat being impacted or conserved; density of burrowing owls in impacted and conserved habitat; and significance of impacted or conserved habitat to the species range-wide.

4. A thorough, recent, floristic-based assessment of special status plants and natural communities, following CDFW's *Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities* (CDFW 2018[3])

5. Information on the regional setting that is critical to an assessment of environmental impacts, with special emphasis on resources that are rare or unique to the region (CEQA Guidelines § 15125[c]).

6. A full accounting of all open space and mitigation/conservation lands within and adjacent to the Project.

**Analysis of Direct, Indirect, and Cumulative Impacts to Biological Resources**

The DEIR should provide a thorough discussion of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts expected to adversely affect biological resources as a result of the Project. To

[3] CDFW, 2018. Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Sensitive Natural Communities, State of California, California Natural Resources Agency, Department of Fish and Wildlife: March 20, 2018 (https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=18959&inline)

ensure that Project impacts to biological resources are fully analyzed, the following information should be included in the DEIR:

1. A discussion of potential impacts from lighting, noise, human activity (e.g., recreation), defensible space, and wildlife-human interactions created by zoning of development projects or other project activities adjacent to natural areas, exotic and/or invasive species, and drainage. The latter subject should address Project-related changes on drainage patterns and water quality within, upstream, and downstream of the Project site, including: volume, velocity, and frequency of existing and post-Project surface flows; polluted runoff; soil erosion and/or sedimentation in streams and water bodies; and post-Project fate of runoff from the Project site.

2. A discussion of potential indirect Project impacts on biological resources, including resources in areas adjacent to the project footprint, such as nearby public lands (e.g., National Forests, State Parks, etc.), open space, adjacent natural habitats, riparian ecosystems, wildlife corridors, and any designated and/or proposed reserve or mitigation lands (e.g., preserved lands associated with a Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other conserved lands).

3. An evaluation of impacts to adjacent open space lands from both the construction of the Project and any long-term operational and maintenance needs.

4. A cumulative effects analysis developed as described under CEQA Guidelines section 15130. Please include all potential direct and indirect Project related impacts to riparian areas, wetlands, vernal pools, alluvial fan habitats, wildlife corridors or wildlife movement areas, aquatic habitats, sensitive species and other sensitive habitats, open lands, open space, and adjacent natural habitats in the cumulative effects analysis. General and specific plans, as well as past, present, and anticipated future projects, should be analyzed relative to their impacts on similar plant communities and wildlife habitats.

**Alternatives Analysis**

CDFW recommends the DEIR describe and analyze a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project that are potentially feasible, would “feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the Project,” and would avoid or substantially lessen any of the Project’s significant effects (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6[a]). The alternatives analysis should also evaluate a “no project” alternative (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6[e]).

**Mitigation Measures for Project Impacts to Biological Resources**

The DEIR should identify mitigation measures and alternatives that are appropriate and adequate to avoid or minimize potential impacts, to the extent feasible. The County of

Riverside should assess all direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts that are expected to occur as a result of the implementation of the Project and its long-term operation and maintenance. When proposing measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts, CDFW recommends consideration of the following:

1. *Fully Protected Species*: Fully protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except as follows:

    - Take is for necessary scientific research,
    - Efforts to recover a fully protected, endangered, or threatened species,
    - Live capture and relocation of a bird species for the protection of livestock, or
    - They are a covered species whose conservation and management is provided for in a Natural Community Conservation Plan (Fish & G. Code, §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, & 5515).

    Specified types of infrastructure projects may be eligible for an incidental take permit for unavoidable impacts to fully protected species if certain conditions are met (see Fish & G. Code §2081.15). Project proponents should consult with CDFW early in the project planning process.

    Project activities described in the DEIR should generally be designed to completely avoid any fully protected species that have the potential to be present within or adjacent to the Project area. CDFW also recommends that the DEIR fully analyze potential adverse impacts to fully protected species due to habitat modification, loss of foraging habitat, and/or interruption of migratory and breeding behaviors. CDFW recommends that County of Riverside include in the analysis how appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will reduce indirect impacts to fully protected species.

2. *Sensitive Plant Communities*: CDFW considers sensitive plant communities to be imperiled habitats having both local and regional significance. Plant communities, alliances, and associations with a statewide ranking of S-1, S-2, S-3, and S-4 should be considered sensitive and declining at the local and regional level. These ranks can be obtained by querying the CNDDB and are included in *The Manual of California Vegetation* (Sawyer et al. 2009). The DEIR should include measures to fully avoid and otherwise protect sensitive plant communities from project-related direct and indirect impacts.

3. *California Species of Special Concern* (CSSC): CSSC status applies to animals generally not listed under the federal Endangered Species Act or the CESA, but which nonetheless are declining at a rate that could result in listing, or historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist.

CSSCs should be considered during the environmental review process. CSSC have the potential or have been documented to occur within or adjacent to the Project area, including, but not limited to: western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*). Based on review of Google street view imagery, the Project site contains several Mexican fan palms with untrimmed frond skirts, which can provide suitable roosting habitat for western yellow bat.

4. *Mitigation*: CDFW considers adverse project-related impacts to sensitive species and habitats to be significant to both local and regional ecosystems, and the DEIR should include mitigation measures for adverse project-related impacts to these resources. Mitigation measures should emphasize avoidance and reduction of project impacts. For unavoidable impacts, onsite habitat restoration and/or enhancement, and preservation should be evaluated and discussed in detail. Where habitat preservation is not available onsite, offsite land acquisition, management, and preservation should be evaluated and discussed in detail.

   The DEIR should include measures to perpetually protect the targeted habitat values within mitigation areas from direct and indirect adverse impacts in order to meet mitigation objectives to offset project-induced qualitative and quantitative losses of biological values. Specific issues that should be addressed include restrictions on access, proposed land dedications, long-term monitoring and management programs, control of illegal dumping, water pollution, increased human intrusion, etc.

   If sensitive species and/or their habitat may be impacted from the Project, CDFW recommends the inclusion of specific mitigation in the DEIR. CEQA Guidelines section 15126.4, subdivision (a)(1)(8) states that formulation of feasible mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future date. The Court of Appeal in *San Joaquin Raptor Rescue Center* v. *County* of *Merced* (2007) 149 Cal.App.4th 645 struck down mitigation measures which required formulating management plans developed in consultation with State and Federal wildlife agencies after Project approval. Courts have also repeatedly not supported conclusions that impacts are mitigable when essential studies, and therefore impact assessments, are incomplete *(Sundstrom* v. *County* of *Mendocino* (1988) 202 Cal. App. 3d. 296; *Gentry* v. *City* of *Murrieta (1995)* 36 Cal. App. 4th 1359; *Endangered Habitat League, Inc.* v. *County* of *Orange* (2005) 131 Cal. App. 4th 777).

   CDFW recommends that the DEIR specify mitigation that is roughly proportional to the level of impacts, in accordance with the provisions of CEQA (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4(a)(4)(B), 15064, 15065, and 16355). The mitigation should provide long-term conservation value for the suite of species and habitat being impacted by the Project. Furthermore, in order for mitigation measures to be effective, they need to be specific, enforceable, and feasible actions that will improve environmental conditions.

5. *Habitat Revegetation/Restoration Plans*: Plans for restoration and revegetation should be prepared by persons with expertise in southern California ecosystems and native plant restoration techniques. Plans should identify the assumptions used to develop the proposed restoration strategy. Each plan should include, at a minimum: (a) the location of restoration sites and assessment of appropriate reference sites; (b) the plant species to be used, sources of local propagules, container sizes, and seeding rates; (c) a schematic depicting the mitigation area; (d) a local seed and cuttings and planting schedule; (e) a description of the irrigation methodology; (f) measures to control exotic vegetation on site; (g) specific success criteria; (h) a detailed monitoring program; (i) contingency measures should the success criteria not be met; and (j) identification of the party responsible for meeting the success criteria and providing for conservation of the mitigation site in perpetuity. Monitoring of restoration areas should extend across a sufficient time frame to ensure that the new habitat is established, self-sustaining, and capable of surviving drought.

   CDFW recommends that local onsite propagules from the Project area and nearby vicinity be collected and used for restoration purposes. Onsite seed collection should be initiated in advance of project impacts in order to accumulate sufficient propagule material for subsequent use in future years. Onsite vegetation mapping at the alliance and/or association level should be used to develop appropriate restoration goals and local plant palettes. Reference areas should be identified to help guide restoration efforts. Specific restoration plans should be developed for various project components as appropriate.

   Restoration objectives should include protecting special habitat elements or re-creating them in areas affected by the Project; examples could include retention of woody material, logs, snags, rocks, and brush piles.

6. *Nesting Birds and Migratory Bird Treaty Act:* Please note that it is the Project proponent's responsibility to comply with all applicable laws related to nesting birds and birds of prey. Fish and Game Code sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 afford protective measures as follows: Fish and Game Code section 3503 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3503.5 makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by Fish and Game Code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto. Fish and Game Code section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird except as provided by the rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 703 et seq.).

CDFW recommends that the DEIR include the results of avian surveys, as well as specific avoidance and minimization measures to ensure that impacts to nesting birds do not occur. Project-specific avoidance and minimization measures may include, but not be limited to: project phasing and timing (e.g., conducting work outside the peak nesting season), monitoring of project-related noise (where applicable), sound walls, and buffers, where appropriate. The DEIR should also include specific avoidance and minimization measures that will be implemented should a nest be located within the project site. If pre-construction surveys are proposed in the DEIR, the CDFW recommends that they be required no more than three (3) days prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbance activities, as instances of nesting could be missed if surveys are conducted sooner. CDFW recommends that disturbance of occupied nests of migratory birds and raptors within the Project site and surrounding area be avoided any time birds are nesting on-site. CDFW therefore recommends the completion of nesting bird surveys *regardless of the time of year* to ensure compliance with all applicable laws pertaining to nesting and migratory birds.

7. *Moving out of Harm's Way:* To avoid direct mortality to any non-listed terrestrial wildlife, CDFW recommends that the lead agency condition the DEIR to require that a CDFW-approved qualified biologist be retained to be onsite prior to and during all ground- and habitat-disturbing activities to inspect the Project area prior to any Project activities. Any individuals found shall not be harassed and shall be allowed to leave the Project area unharmed. If needed, a qualified biologist may guide, handle, or capture an individual non-listed, non–fully protected wildlife species to move it to a nearby safe location within nearby refugium, or it shall be allowed to leave the Project site of its own volition. Capture methods may include hand, dip net, lizard lasso, snake tongs and snake hook. If the wildlife species is discovered or is caught in any pits, ditches, or other types of excavations, the qualified biologist shall release it into the most suitable habitat near the site of capture. Movement of wildlife out of harm's way should be limited to only those individuals that would otherwise by injured or killed, and individuals should be moved only as far a necessary to ensure their safety (i.e., CDFW does not recommend relocation to other areas). Only biologists with appropriate authorization by CDFW shall move CESA-listed species. Furthermore, it should be noted that the temporary relocation of onsite wildlife does not constitute effective mitigation for the purposes of offsetting Project impacts associated with habitat loss.

8. *Translocation of Species*: CDFW generally does not support the use of relocation, salvage, and/or transplantation as mitigation for impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species as studies have shown that these efforts are experimental in nature and largely unsuccessful.

**California Endangered Species Act**

CDFW is responsible for ensuring appropriate conservation of fish and wildlife resources including threatened, endangered, and/or candidate plant and animal species, pursuant to CESA. CDFW recommends that a CESA Incidental Take Permit (ITP) be obtained if the Project has the potential to result in "take" (California Fish and Game Code Section 86 defines "take" as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill") of State-listed CESA species, either through construction or over the life of the project. It is the policy of CESA to conserve, protect, enhance, and restore State-listed CESA species and their habitats.

CDFW encourages early consultation, as significant modification to the proposed Project and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures may be necessary to obtain a CESA ITP. CDFW must comply with CEQA for issuance of a CESA ITP. CDFW therefore recommends that the DEIR addresses all Project impacts to listed species and specify a mitigation monitoring and reporting program that will meet the requirements of CESA.

**Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan**

Within the Inland Deserts Region, CDFW issued Natural Community Conservation Plan Approval and Take Authorization for the CVMSHCP per Section 2800, *et seq*., of the California Fish and Game Code on September 9, 2008. The CVMSHCP establishes a multiple species conservation program to minimize and mitigate habitat loss and provides for the incidental take of covered species in association with activities covered under the permit.

Compliance with approved habitat plans, such as the CVMSHCP, is discussed in CEQA. Specifically, Section 15125(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that the CEQA document discuss any inconsistencies between a proposed Project and applicable general plans and regional plans, including habitat conservation plans and natural community conservation plans. An assessment of the impacts to the CVMSHCP as a result of this Project is necessary to address CEQA requirements. To obtain additional information regarding the CVMSHCP please go to: http://www.cvmshcp.org/.

The proposed Project occurs within the CVMSHCP area and is subject to the provisions and policies of the CVMSHCP. In order to be considered a covered activity, Permittees should demonstrate that proposed actions are consistent with the CVMSHCP and its associated Implementing Agreement.

Regardless of whether take of threatened and/or endangered species is obtained through the CVMSHCP or through a CESA ITP, the DEIR needs to address how the proposed Project will affect the conservation objectives of the CVMSHCP. Therefore, all surveys required by the CVMSHCP to determine consistency should be conducted and results included in the DEIR so that CDFW can adequately assess whether the Project will impact the CVMSHCP.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Landscaping

To ameliorate the water demands of this Project, CDFW recommends incorporation of water-wise concepts in any Project landscape design plans. In particular, CDFW recommends xeriscaping with locally native California species and installing water-efficient and targeted irrigation systems (such as drip irrigation). Native plants support butterflies, birds, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals, bees, and other pollinators that evolved with those plants, more information on native plants suitable for the Project location and nearby nurseries is available at CALSCAPE: https://calscape.org/. Local water agencies/districts and resource conservation districts in your area may be able to provide information on plant nurseries that carry locally native species, and some facilities display drought-tolerant locally native species demonstration gardens. Information on drought-tolerant landscaping and water-efficient irrigation systems is available on California's Save our Water website: https://saveourwater.com/. CDFW also recommends that the DEIR include recommendations regarding landscaping from Section 4.0 of the CVMSHCP "Table 4-112: Coachella Valley Native Plants Recommended for Landscaping" (pp. 4-180 to 4-182; https://cvmshcp.org/plan-documents/).

### Construction Noise

Project-related construction has the potential to generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project. CDFW recommends that the DEIR include an analysis of impacts to wildlife from Project-related construction noise, and appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures that will reduce impacts to less than significant.

Construction may result in substantial noise through road use, equipment, and other Project-related activities. This may adversely affect wildlife species in several ways as wildlife responses to noise can occur at exposure levels of only 55 to 60 dB[4]. Anthropogenic noise can disrupt the communication of many wildlife species including

[4] Barber, J. R., K. R. Crooks, and K. M. Fristrup. 2009. The costs of chronic noise exposure for terrestrial organisms. Trends in Ecology and Evolution 25:180-189.

frogs, birds, and bats[5,6,7,8]. Noise can also affect predator-prey relationships as many nocturnal animals such as bats and owls primarily use auditory cures (i.e., hearing) to hunt. Additionally, many prey species increase their vigilance behavior when exposed to noise because they need to rely more on visual detection of predators when auditory cues may be masked by noise[9,10]. Noise has also been shown to reduce the density of nesting birds[11] and cause increased stress that results in decreased immune responses[12]. The County of Riverside should include measures in the DEIR to ensure the following: restricting the use of equipment to hours least likely to disrupt wildlife (e.g., not at night or in early morning); restricting the use of generators except for temporary use in emergencies; provide power to sites by solar PV (photovoltaic) systems, cogeneration systems (natural gas generator), small micro-hydroelectric systems, or small wind turbine systems; ensure the use of noise suppression devices such as mufflers or enclosure for generators; and sounds generated from any means must be below the 55-60 dB range within 50-feet from the source.

**Artificial Nighttime Lighting**

The Project will introduce new sources of artificial lighting. CDFW recommends that the DEIR include lighting design specifications for all artificial nighttime lighting that will be used by the Project, an analysis of the direct and indirect impacts of artificial nighttime lighting on biological resources, and appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures that will reduce impacts to less than significant. The direct and indirect impacts of artificial nighttime lighting on biological resources including migratory birds that fly at night, bats, and other nocturnal and crepuscular wildlife should be analyzed, and appropriate avoidance and minimization measures should be included in the DEIR.

Artificial nighttime lighting often results in light pollution, which has the potential to significantly and adversely affect fish and wildlife. Artificial lighting alters ecological

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[5] Sun, J. W. C., and P. M. Narins. 2005. Anthropogenic sounds differentially affect amphibian call rate. Biological Conservation 121:419–427.
[6] Patricelli, G., and J. J. L. Blickley. 2006. Avian communication in urban noise: causes and consequences of vocal adjustment. Auk 123:639–649.
[7] Gillam, E. H., and G. F. McCracken. 2007. Variability in the echolocation of *Tadarida brasiliensis*: effects of geography and local acoustic environment. Animal Behaviour 74:277–286.
[8] Slabbekoorn, H., and E. A. P. Ripmeester. 2008. Birdsong and anthropogenic noise: Implications and applications for conservation. Molecular Ecology 17:72–83.
[9] Rabin, L. A., R. G. Coss, and D. H. Owings. 2006. The effects of wind turbines on antipredator behavior in California ground squirrels (*Spermophilus beecheyi*). Biological Conservation 131:410–420.
[10] Quinn, J. L., M. J. Whittingham, S. J. Butler, W. Cresswell, J. L. Quinn, M. J. Whittingham, S. J. Butler, W. Cresswell, and W. Noise. 2017. Noise, predation risk compensation and vigilance in the chaffinch Fringilla coelebs. Journal of Avian Biology 37:601–608.
[11] Francis, C. D., C. P. Ortega, and A. Cruz. 2009. Noise pollution changes avian communities and species interactions. Current Biology 19:1415–1419.
[12] Kight, C. R., and J. P. Swaddle. 2011. How and why environmental noise impacts animals: An integrative, mechanistic review. Ecology Letters 14:1052–1061.

processes including, but not limited to, the temporal niches of species; the repair and recovery of physiological function; the measurement of time through interference with the detection of circadian and lunar and seasonal cycles; the detection of resources and natural enemies; and navigation[13]. Many species use photoperiod cues for communication (e.g., bird song[14]), determining when to begin foraging[15], behavioral thermoregulation[16], and migration[17]. Phototaxis, a phenomenon that results in attraction and movement towards light, can disorient, entrap, and temporarily blind wildlife species that experience it[8]. The County of Riverside should include measures in the DEIR to ensure the following: eliminate all nonessential lighting throughout the Project area; avoid or limit the use of artificial light during the hours of dawn and dusk when many wildlife species are most active; lighting for Project activities is fully shielded, cast downward, reduced in intensity to the greatest extent, and does not result in spill over onto other properties or upward into the night sky (see the International Dark-Sky Association standards at http://darksky.org/); the use of LED lighting with a correlated color temperature of 3,000 Kelvins or less; proper disposal of hazardous waste; and recycling of lighting that contains toxic compounds with a qualified recycler.

## ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e).) Accordingly, please report any special status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). Information can be submitted online or via completion of the CNDDB field survey form at the following link: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Submitting-Data. The types of information reported to CNDDB can be found at the following link: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Plants-and-Animals.

## FILING FEES

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

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[13] Gatson, K. J., Bennie, J., Davies, T., Hopkins, J. 2013. The ecological impacts of nighttime light pollution: a mechanistic appraisal. Biological Reviews, 88.4: 912-927.
[14] Miller, M. W. 2006. Apparent effects of light pollution on singing behavior of American robins. The Condor 108:130–139.
[15] Stone, E. L., G. Jones, and S. Harris. 2009. Street lighting disturbs commuting bats. Current Biology 19:1123–1127.
[16] Beiswenger, R. E. 1977. Diet patterns of aggregative behavior in tadpoles of *Bufo americanus*, in relation to light and temperature. Ecology 58:98–108.
[17] Longcore, T., and C. Rich. 2004. Ecological light pollution - Review. Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment 2:191–198.

CDFW. Payment of the fee is required in order for the underlying project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.).

**CONCLUSION**

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NOP of a DEIR for the Ranch at Madison Specific Plan (DA2500001, GPA 250010, SP00408, CZ2500012, TTM39179) Project (SCH No. 2025080821) and recommends that the County of Riverside address CDFW's comments and concerns in the forthcoming DEIR. Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Jacob Skaggs, Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist, at jacob.skaggs@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
Kim Freeburn
84F92FFEEFD24C8...

Kim Freeburn
Environmental Program Manager

ec: Heather Brashear, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor), CDFW
Heather.Brashear@wildlife.ca.gov

Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, Sacramento
state.clearinghouse@lci.ca.gov

September 17, 2025 **VIA EMAIL TO: JMERLAN@RIVCO.ORG**

Jose Merlan
4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor
Riverside, CA 92502-1409

**SUBJECT: Scoping Comments for The Ranch at Madison Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) – DA2500001, GPA240010, SP00408, CZ2500012, TTM39179**

Dear Jose Merlan:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed The Ranch at Madison, as described in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and discussed during the CEQA Scoping Meeting held on September 15, 2025.

The City of La Quinta offers the following comments and recommendations to help guide the preparation of a comprehensive EIR:

1. Environmental Topics of Concern

Please include thorough analysis of the following environmental issues:

a. Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Evaluate both construction and operational impacts.

Include a cumulative impact analysis and discuss compliance with applicable regional air quality plans.

b. Traffic and Transportation

Analyze impacts on local and regional traffic circulation, including potential congestion at nearby intersections considering the vacation of Avenue 53 through the project site.

c. Noise and Vibration

Evaluate noise impacts from both construction activities and project operations, especially near sensitive receptors such as Cahuilla Desert Academy and nearby residences, including those across Monroe Street within the City of La Quinta.

September 17, 2025 **VIA EMAIL TO: JMERLAN@RIVCO.ORG**

Jose Merlan
4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor
Riverside, CA 92502-1409

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c. Noise and Vibration

Evaluate noise impacts from both construction activities and project operations, especially near sensitive receptors such as Cahuilla Desert Academy and nearby residences, including those across Monroe Street within the City of La Quinta.

d. Biological Resources

Assess potential impacts on local wildlife including migratory birds and burrowing owls.

e. Water Supply and Hydrology

Evaluate the project's demand on local water supplies and infrastructure.

Consider the projects scope with regards to potential impacts to site drainage, runoff, and flood risk.

f. Aesthetics

Please provide an adequate assessment of the aesthetics of the project. The analysis should consider the potential impact on the viewshed of nearby residences of the proposed project's alternative of a golf cart bridge over Monroe Street.

g. Cumulative Impacts

Analyze cumulative impacts in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the area.

The City appreciates your consideration of these comments and looks forward to reviewing the Draft EIR when it is available. Please add the City of La Quinta (planning@laquintaca.gov and City of La Quinta Planning Division, 78495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, CA 92253) to the project's mailing list and ensure the City receives all future notices and documentation related to the EIR.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at (760) 777-7069, or via email at snespor@laquintaca.gov

Sincerely,

Scott Nespor
Design and Development
Senior Planner

d. Biological Resources

Assess potential impacts on local wildlife including migratory birds and burrowing owls.

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Sincerely,

Scott Nespor
Design and Development
Senior Planner

# APPENDIX A.3

Distribution List

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office<br>agdept@rivco.org | | Sup. Jose Medina<br>Riverside County, 1st District<br>district1@rivco.org | | Sup. Karen Spiegel<br>Riverside County, 2nd District<br>district2@rivco.org |
| Sup. Chuck Washington<br>Riverside County, 3rd District<br>RBrock@RIVCO.ORG | | Sup. V. Manuel Perez<br>Riverside County, 4th District<br>district4@rivco.org | | Sup. Yxstian Gutierrez<br>Riverside County, 5th District<br>County of Riverside Office<br>district5@rivco.org |
| City of Moreno Valley Community Development Director<br>Attn: Angelica Frausto-Lupo<br>PlanningEmail@moval.org | | City of San Jacinto Community Development Department<br>Attn: Travis Randel, Community Development and Planning Director<br>trandel@sanjacintoca.gov | | City of Perris Planning Division<br>Attn. Kenneth Phung, Planning Manager<br>kphung@cityofperris.org |
| City of Menifee Community Development Department<br>Attn: Orlando Hernandez<br>ohernandez@cityofmenifee.us | | City of Riverside Community and Economic Development Department<br>Attn: Community and Economic Development Director<br>cddInfo@riversideca.gov | | City of Wildomar<br>Attn: Community Development Director<br>rflores@mnsengineers.com |
| City of Lake Elsinore<br>Attn: Demaris Abraham<br>dabraham@lake-elsinore.org | | City of Beaumont Planning Department<br>Attn: Melody Arechiga<br>marechiga@beaumontca.gov | | City of Canyon Lake<br>Attn: Jim Morrissey, City Planner<br>jmorrissey@cityofcanyonlake.com |
| City of Corona Community Development Department<br>Attn: Joanne Coletta, Community Development Director<br>Joanne.Coletta@CoronaCA.gov | | San Bernardino County Planning Dept.<br>luscustomerservice@lus.sbcounty.gov | | City of Hemet Planning Division<br>planstaff@cityofhemet.org |
| Orange County Community Development<br>Brian.bauer@ocgov.com | | San Diego County, Planning and Development Services<br>Mark.wardlaw@sdcounty.ca.gov | | Morongo Band of Mission Indians<br>Attn: Karen Woodward<br>KWoodward@morongo-nsn.gov |
| South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University<br>Attn: Dr. Seth Mallios<br>smallios@sdsu.edu | | Cultural Resources Committee Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians<br>contact@pechanga-nsn.gov<br>eozdil@pechanga-nsn.gov | | Native American Heritage Commission<br>nahc@nahc.ca.gov<br>Andrew.Green@nahc.ca.gov |
| Ramona Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians<br>Attn: Susan Reckker, Tribal Administrator<br>sreckker@ramona-nsn.gov<br>AdminAssist@santarosacahuilla- | | Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians<br>adminassist@santarosacahuilla-nsn.gov | | Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians<br>environmental@soboba-nsn.gov<br>jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov |
| Rincon Band of Mission Indians<br>Attn: Bo Mazzetti, Chairman<br>bomazzetti@aol.com | | Pauma & Yuima Reservation<br>Attn: Chairperson<br>paumareservation@aol.com | | Pala Band of Mission Indians<br>Tribal Historic Preservation Office<br>sgaughen@palatribe.com |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| California State Water Resources Control Board<br>Attn: Jayne Joy<br>Jayne.Joy@waterboards.ca.gov | CALTRANS District #8 - Planning<br>IGR/Local Development Review<br>christian.bushong@dot.ca.gov | Riverside County Regional Park & Open-Space District<br>d3email@rivco.org |
| Audubon Society, San Bernardino Valley<br>bcsinger@gmail.com | Building Industry Association<br>eo@riversidebia.org | Southern California Assoc of Governments<br>Attn: Sarah Jepson<br>jepson@scag.ca.gov |
| Endangered Habitats League<br>Attn: Dan Silver<br>dsilverla@me.com | Farm Bureau, Riverside County<br>president@riversidecfb.com | Department of Conservation<br>dlrp@consrv.ca.gov<br>dmr@conservation.ca.gov<br>cgshq@conservation.ca.gov<br>smgb@consrv.ca.gov<br>Farl.Grundy@conservation.ca.gov |
| Riverside Transit Agency<br>Attn: Gordon Robinson, Director of Planning<br>grobinson@riversidetransit.com | Sierra Club San Gorgonio<br>Attn: Mary Ann Ruiz, Chair<br>chair@sangorgonio.sierraclub.org | Regional Water Quality Control Board<br>Santa Ana Region, CEQA Review<br>santaana@waterboards.ca.gov |
| South Coast Air Quality Management District<br>ceqa_admin@aqmd.gov | Metropolitan Water District of Southern California<br>EP@mwdh2o.com | CEQA Review<br>California Air Resources Board<br>stanley.armstrong@arb.ca.gov |
| US Army Corps of Engineers<br>Los Angeles District - Regulatory Branch<br>splregorcs@usace.army.mil | San Bernardino County Museum<br>museum@sbcounty.gov | SAWPA<br>onewateronewatershed@sawpa.org |
| CA Department of Fish & Wildlife<br>Inland Desert/Eastern Sierra Region<br>R6CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov<br>Heather.Pert@wildlife.ca.gov<br>carly.beck@wildlife.ca.gov | Riverside County Fire Department<br>Attn: Captain Richard Tovar<br>Richard.Tovar@fire.ca.gov<br>RRUPIO@fire.ca.gov | Riverside County Department of Waste Resources<br>khesterl@rivco.org<br>WastePlanning@rivco.org |
| US Fish and Wildlife Service<br>Pacific Southwest Region<br>Paul Souza, Regional Director<br>paul_souza@fws.gov | Riverside Co. Habitat Conservation Agency<br>bshomo@wrcog.us | Menifee Union School District'<br>Jennifer Root, Superintendent<br>Jennifer.root@menifeeusd.org |
| Perris Union High School District<br>Jose Araux, Superintendent<br>jose.araux@puhsd.org | Western Riverside Council of Governments<br>dramirez-cornejo@wrcog.us<br>jleonard@wrcog.us | Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice<br>admin@ccaej.org<br>Ana.G@ccaej.org<br>Stacey.R@ccaej.org<br>Shane.Y@ccaej.org<br>Joaquin.C@ccaej.org<br>Luis.C@ccaej.org |
| County of Riverside, Sheriff's Department<br>kreichle@riversidesheriff.org<br>Cbianco@riversidesheriff.org | Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority<br>Attn: Anne Mayer, Executive Director<br>amayer@rctc.org | Riverside Co. Transportation Commission<br>info@rctc.org |

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|---|---|---|
| City of Temecula<br>Community Development<br>Attn: Matt Peters<br>matt.peters@temeculaca.gov | City of Jurupa Valley<br>Planning Department<br>Attn: Joe Perez, Planning Director<br>jperez@jurupavalley.org | City of Murrieta<br>Development Services<br>Attn: David Chantarangsu<br>DChantarangsu@MurrietaCA.gov |
| City of Norco<br>Planning<br>Attn: Alma Robles<br>planning@ci.norco.ca.us | City of Eastvale<br>Community Development Department<br>Attn: Gustavo Gonzalez<br>planningdept@eastvaleca.gov | City of Indio Community Development Department<br>Attn: Brian Halvorson<br>planning@indio.org |
| Eastern Municipal Water District<br>customerservice@emwd.org | City of Coachella Community Development Department<br>Attn: Luis Lopez<br>llopez@coachella.org | City of La Quinta Community Development Department<br>Attn: Planning Director<br>planning@laquintaca.gov |
| City of Rancho Mirage Community Development Department<br>Attn: Majna Dukic<br>Planning@ranchomirageca.gov | City of Palm Springs Director of Planning Services<br>Attn: Christopher Hadwin<br>planning@palmspringsca.gov | City of Palm Desert Community Development Department<br>Attn: Carlos Flores, AICP<br>planning@palmdesert.gov |
| City of Cathedral City Community Development Department<br>Attn: Planning Director<br>planning@cathedralcity.gov | City of Desert Hot Springs Community Development Department<br>Attn: Travis Clark c/o Kathlyn Palmer<br>kpalmer@cityofdhs.org | City of Indian Wells Community Development Department<br>Attn: Jon Berg<br>jberg@indianwells.com |
| City of Calimesa Community Development Department<br>Attn: Kely Lucia<br>klucia@calimesa.gov | Imperial Irrigation District<br>Attn: Development Services<br>customerservice@iid.com | City of Blythe Community Development Department<br>Attn: Michelle Van Dyke<br>mvandyke@cityofblythe.ca.gov |
| County of Imperial Planning Department<br>Attn: Jim Minnick<br>jimminnick@co.imperial.ca.us | City of Banning Community Development Department<br>Attn: David Newell<br>dnewell@banningca.gov | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| Riverside County Clerk<br>Attn: CEQA Filings<br>2724 Gateway Drive<br>Riverside, CA  92502-0751 | | Electronic Submittal | | Posted 8/18/25 |
| State Clearinghouse Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI)<br>1400 Tenth Street<br>Sacramento, CA  95814 | | Electronic Submittal | | Posting pending 8/18/25 |
| Riverside County Planning Department<br>Attn: Jose Merlan<br>4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor<br>Riverside, CA 92502-1409 | | Electronic Submittal | | sent 8/18/25 |