

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT FOR THE TEMESCAL CANYON SELF STORAGE PROJECT

**21785 TEMESCAL CANYON ROAD,
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

**CUP2400015; CZ2400036; GPA2400087
APN 282-140-020**

Prepared on Behalf of:

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August 7, 2024



BFSA Environmental Services
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Paleontological Database Information

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Report Date: August 7, 2024

Report Title: Paleontological Resource Assessment for the Temescal Canyon
Self Storage Project, 21785 Temescal Canyon Road, Riverside
County, California

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USGS Quadrangle: Section 21, Township 4 South, Range 6 West, *Corona South*,
California USGS Topographic Quadrangle Map

Assessor's Parcel Number: 282-140-020

Study Area: 2.28 acres

Key Words: High paleontological resource sensitivity; Pleistocene alluvial
deposits; vertebrate fossils; monitoring recommended.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND LOCATION

This paleontological resource assessment report has been completed for the Temescal Canyon Self Storage Project, located at 21785 Temescal Canyon Road, south of the city of Corona between Interstate 15 and Temescal Canyon Road, in an unincorporated area of Temescal Valley in Riverside County, California (Figures 1 and 2). The project is situated within Section 21, Township 4 South, Range 6 West on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *Corona South, California* (7.5-minute) topographic quadrangle map (see Figure 2). The project consists of one parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 282-140-020) totaling approximately 2.28 acres. The development of the property will consist of a storage facility comprised of two buildings, along with a storm water detention basin at the southern tip of the parcel. The subject property is currently developed with two buildings used for recreational vehicle rentals and automotive repairs.

As the lead agency, the County of Riverside has required the preparation of a paleontological assessment to evaluate the project's potential to yield paleontological resources. The paleontological assessment of the project included a review of paleontological literature and fossil locality records for a previous project in the area, a review of the underlying geology, and recommendations to mitigate impacts to potential paleontological resources, if necessary.

II. REGULATORY SETTING

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which is patterned after the National Environmental Policy Act, is the overriding environmental regulation that sets the requirement for protecting California's paleontological resources. CEQA mandates that governing permitting agencies (lead agencies) set their own guidelines for the protection of nonrenewable paleontological resources under their jurisdiction.

State of California

Under "Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act," as amended in December 2018 (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000 et seq.), procedures define the types of activities, persons, and public agencies required to comply with CEQA. Section 15063 of the CCR provides a process by which a lead agency may review a project's potential impact to the environment, whether the impacts are significant, and provide recommendations, if necessary.

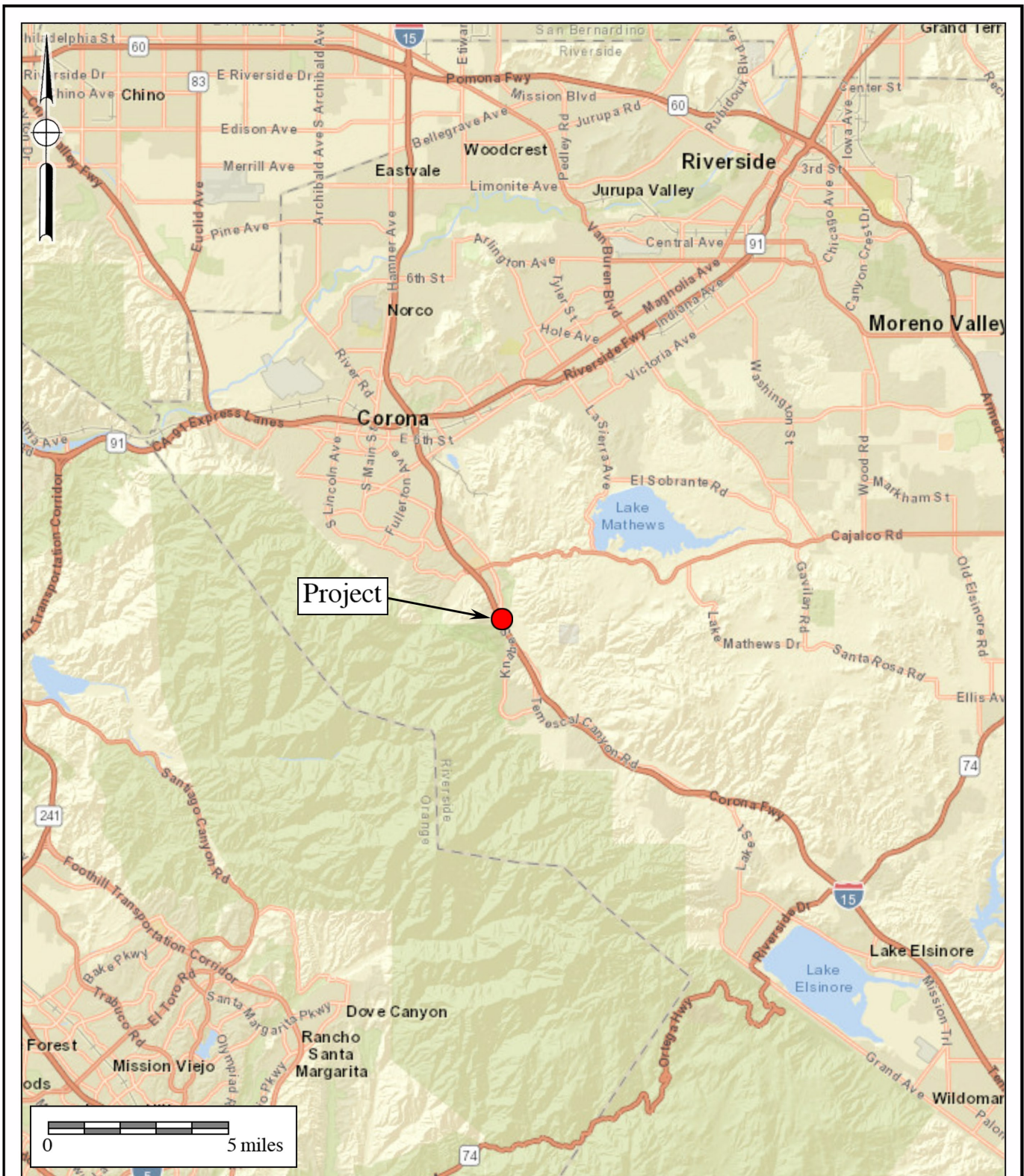


Figure 1
General Location Map
The Temescal Canyon Self Storage Project
ESRI Street Map

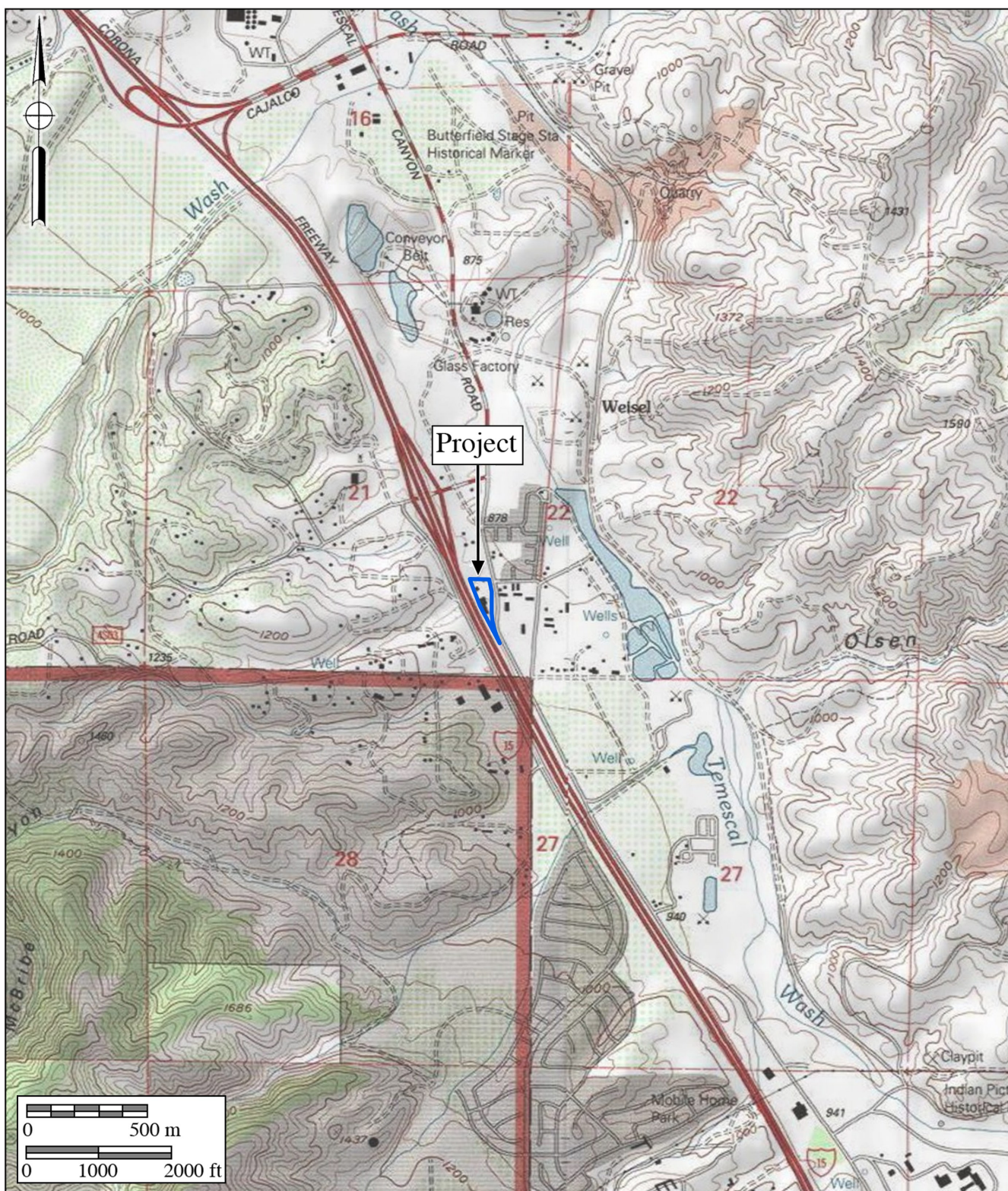


Figure 2
Project Location Map

The Temescal Canyon Self Storage Project

USGS Corona South and Lake Mathews Quadrangles (7.5-minute series)

In CEQA's Environmental Checklist Form, a question to respond to is, "Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?" (Appendix G, Section VII, Part f). This is to ensure compliance with California Public Resources Code Section 5097.5, the law that protects nonrenewable resources including fossils, which is shown below:

- a) A person shall not knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure, or deface, any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, rock art, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands.
- b) As used in this section, "public lands" means lands owned by, or under the jurisdiction of, the state, or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof.
- c) A violation of this section is a misdemeanor...

County of Riverside Guidelines

For Riverside County, policies concerning paleontological resources are addressed under the 2015 Multipurpose Open Space Element of the Riverside County General Plan, and are as follows:

- OS 19.6 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has high paleontological sensitivity as shown on Figure OS-8, a paleontological resource impact mitigation program (PRIMP) shall be filed with the County Geologist prior to site grading. The PRIMP shall specify the steps to be taken to mitigate impacts to paleontological resources.
- OS 19.7 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has low paleontological sensitivity as shown on Figure OS-8, no direct mitigation is required unless a fossil is encountered during site development. Should a fossil be encountered, the County Geologist shall be notified and a paleontologist shall be retained by the project proponent. The paleontologist shall document the extent and potential significance of the paleontological resources on the site and establish appropriate mitigation measures for further site development.

- OS 19.8 Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development has undetermined paleontological sensitivity as shown on Figure OS-8, a report shall be filed with the County Geologist documenting the extent and potential significance of the paleontological resources on site and identifying mitigation measures for the fossil and for impacts to significant paleontological resources prior to approval of that department.
- OS 19.9 Whenever paleontological resources are found, the County Geologist shall direct them to a facility within Riverside County for their curation, including the Western Science Center in the City of Hemet. (County of Riverside 2015a)

A comprehensive review of paleontological resources, including regulatory background, permitting conditions, significance thresholds, and procedures for the treatment of discovered resources, can be found in the County's draft environmental impact report (County of Riverside 2015b).

III. GEOLOGY

Regionally, the project lies on the western edge of the Perris Block, a structural block bounded on the west by the Elsinore Fault Zone and on the east by the San Jacinto Fault Zone (Gray et al. 2002; Morton and Weber 2001). The project is located within Temescal Valley, the erosional expression of the path of the tectonically active Elsinore Fault Zone. Within the fault zone, in the vicinity of the project, are various deposits of Pleistocene-aged (less than 1.8 million years) surficial alluvial deposits bordered by much older outcrops of several Mesozoic rock units to the northeast and southwest that compose the local mountains (Figure 3, after Gray et al. 2002; Morton and Weber 2001). Also present within the fault zone and near the project are discontinuous outcrops of the Tertiary-aged, marine to nonmarine, undifferentiated Vaqueros-Sespe Formation (grayish blue areas labeled "Tvs" on Figure 3), the Paleocene-aged Silverado Formation (olive brown areas labeled "Tsl"), and artificial fill deposits related to mining activities, sand and gravel operations, and highway construction (dark brown areas labeled "Qaf").

Geologically, most of the project is mapped as Pleistocene old (late to middle Pleistocene) alluvial fan deposits (yellow areas labeled "Qof_g" on Figure 3), composed of moderately indurated sands and gravels (Gray et al. 2002). At the north and south corners of the project are early Pleistocene-aged very old alluvial fan deposits (brown areas labeled "Qvof_g" on Figure 3), mostly composed of well dissected, well-indurated, reddish-brown deposits of cobbles and gravels that commonly contain duripans and locally silcretes (cemented zones).

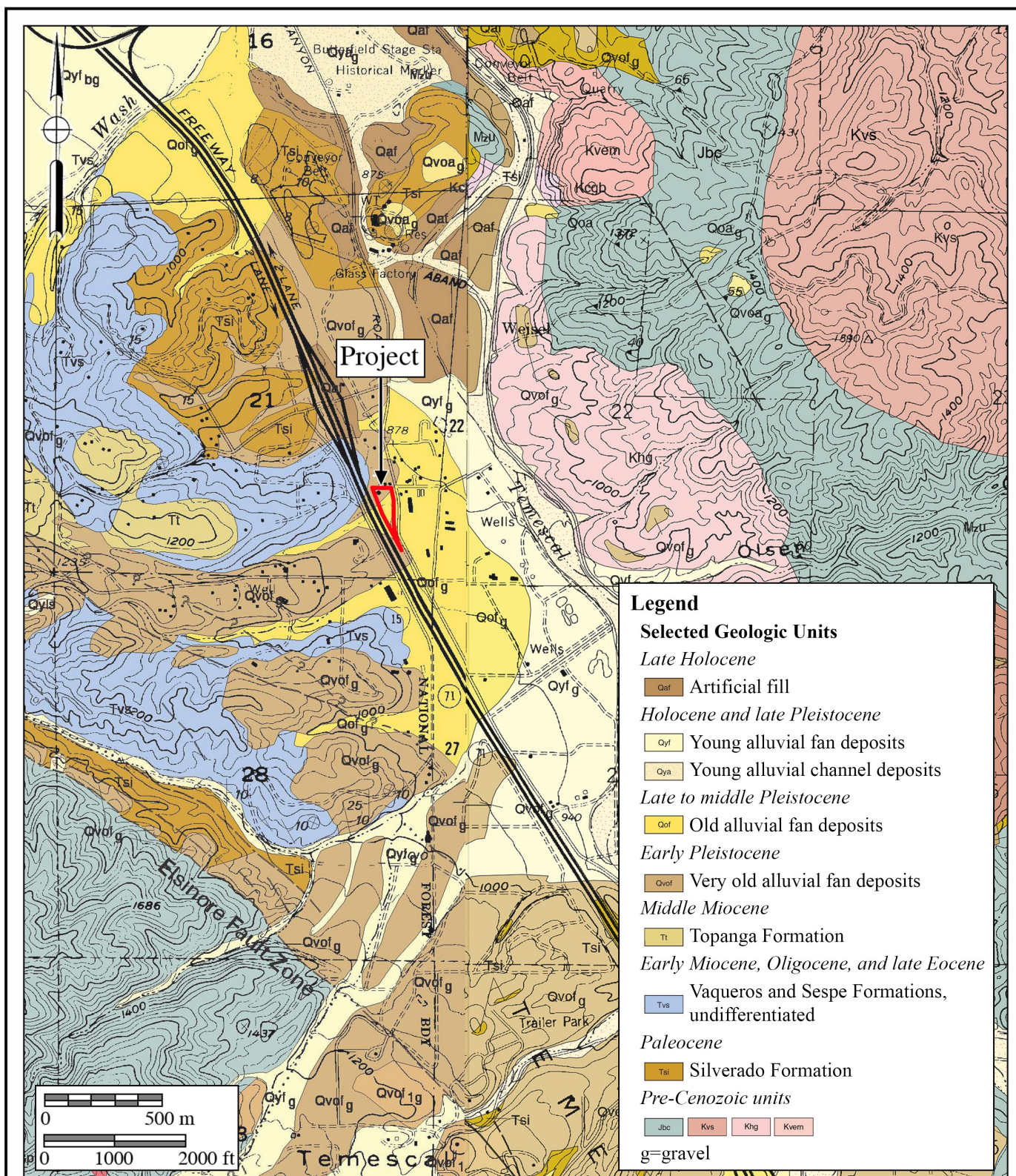


Figure 3
Geologic Map

The Temescal Canyon Self Storage Project
Geology after Gray et al. (2002) and Morton and Weber (2001)

A geotechnical investigation was recently completed for the project by LGC Geotechnical, Inc. (Douglas et al. 2024). Based on soil samples collected during borehole drilling, the northern portion of the parcel consisted of undocumented fill as much as 25 feet thick; the southern portion was found to have three feet of fill or less at the surface. The authors indicated that the northern portion of the site is comprised of an infilled valley that was filled between 1980 and 1985. Undisturbed alluvial fan deposits below the artificial fill deposits consisted of interbedded layers of sand and gravel with varying amounts of silt, cobbles, and minor amounts of clay. The Vaqueros-Sespe Formation was not encountered during drilling.

Douglas et al. (2024) recommended that all undocumented artificial fill within the influence of the proposed buildings be removed, to as much as 25 feet deep in the northern portion of the parcel. Otherwise, excavation was recommended to a minimum depth of five feet below existing grade or three feet below the bottom of foundations, whichever is deeper. In addition, to compensate for potential differential settlement across the transition between the deep undocumented fill removal in the northern portion of the building footprint and the anticipated shallower removal to the south, additional over-excavation was recommended to accommodate the transition.

IV. PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Definition

Paleontological resources are the remains of prehistoric life that have been preserved in geologic strata. These remains are called fossils and include bones, shells, teeth, and plant remains (including their impressions, casts, and molds) in the sedimentary matrix, as well as trace fossils such as footprints and burrows. Fossils are considered older than 5,000 years of age (Society of Vertebrate Paleontology 2010) but may include younger remains (subfossils) when viewed in the context of local extinction of the organism or habitat, for example. Fossils are considered a nonrenewable resource under state and local guidelines (Section II of this report).

Fossil Locality Search

A paleontological literature review and collections and locality records search was conducted for the project using records from prior BFSA Environmental Services, a Perennial Company (BFSA) projects, data provided by the Division of Geological Sciences at the San Bernardino County Museum (SBCM) and the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History (LACM), and data from published and unpublished paleontological literature (Jefferson 1991, 2009). The resulting locality records search did not identify any previously recorded fossil localities from within the boundaries of the project.

The closest known fossils from surficial alluvial deposits are located between two and three miles northwest of the current project in the Chase Ranch neighborhood of Corona, consisting of a large collection of over 1,000 fossil leaves from about 16 species of plants and trees (Fisk and Peck 2004; Jefferson 2009). These fossil leaf localities occur in deposits mapped by Gray et al.

(2002) as early Pleistocene-aged very old alluvial fan deposits, the same as the project. Approximately three miles southeast of the current project, the SBCM reported a locality (SBCM loc. 5.5.1) consisting of a fossil horse tooth of the Pleistocene genus *Plesippus* sp. (Hoover et al. 2004). The source suggested the horse tooth was collected from coarse arkosic sandstones observed in the locality area, also mapped as early Pleistocene very old alluvial fan deposits by Gray et al. (2002).

Gray (1961) recovered Miocene-aged fossil oysters from the Vaqueros-Sespe Formation from a locality approximately one mile southwest of the project. About two miles west-northwest, fossils of crabs were discovered from marine sediments of the late to middle Miocene-aged Puente Formation (LACM locs. 17582-84; Feldmann 2003).

Project Survey

On May 22, 2024, BFSa staff, under the supervision of Principal Investigator Todd A. Wirths, conducted an intuitive review of the property to determine if any paleontological resources were visible. The field methodology employed for the project consisted of a series of parallel transects spaced at approximately 10-meter intervals that covered most areas of the project. Approximately 90 percent of the property was developed, with two buildings and associated paving and hardscape. The remaining 10 percent, at the northwest corner of the parcel, was composed of what appeared to be soil pushed over from the construction of Interstate 15. No paleontological resources, or evidence of the presence of paleontological resources, were observed.

V. PALEONTOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

Overview

The degree of paleontological sensitivity of any particular area is based upon a number of factors which include: the documented presence of fossiliferous resources on a site or in nearby areas, the presence of documented fossils within a particular geologic formation or lithostratigraphic unit, and whether or not the original depositional environment of the sediments may have been conducive to the accumulation and fossilization of organic remains over time. Holocene alluvium is generally considered to be geologically too young to contain significant nonrenewable paleontological resources (*i.e.*, fossils) and is, therefore, typically assigned a low paleontological sensitivity. Pleistocene (greater than 11,700 years old) alluvial and alluvial fan deposits in western Riverside County and the Inland Empire can yield important Ice Age terrestrial vertebrate fossils, such as extinct mammoths, mastodons, giant ground sloths, extinct species of horse, bison, and camel, saber-toothed cats, and others (Jefferson 1991). Therefore, these Pleistocene sediments are accorded a high paleontological resource sensitivity.

Professional Standards

The Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP 2010) has drafted guidelines that include four categories of paleontological sensitivity for geologic units (formations) that might be impacted by a proposed project, as listed below:

- High Potential: Rock units from which vertebrate or significant invertebrate, plant, or trace fossils have been recovered.
- Undetermined Potential: Rock units for which little information is available concerning their paleontological content, geologic age, and depositional environment, and that further study is needed to determine the potential of the rock unit.
- Low Potential: Rock units that are poorly represented by fossil specimens in institutional collections or based upon a general scientific consensus that only preserve fossils in rare circumstances.
- No Potential: Rock units that have no potential to contain significant paleontological resources, such as high-grade metamorphic rocks and plutonic igneous rocks.

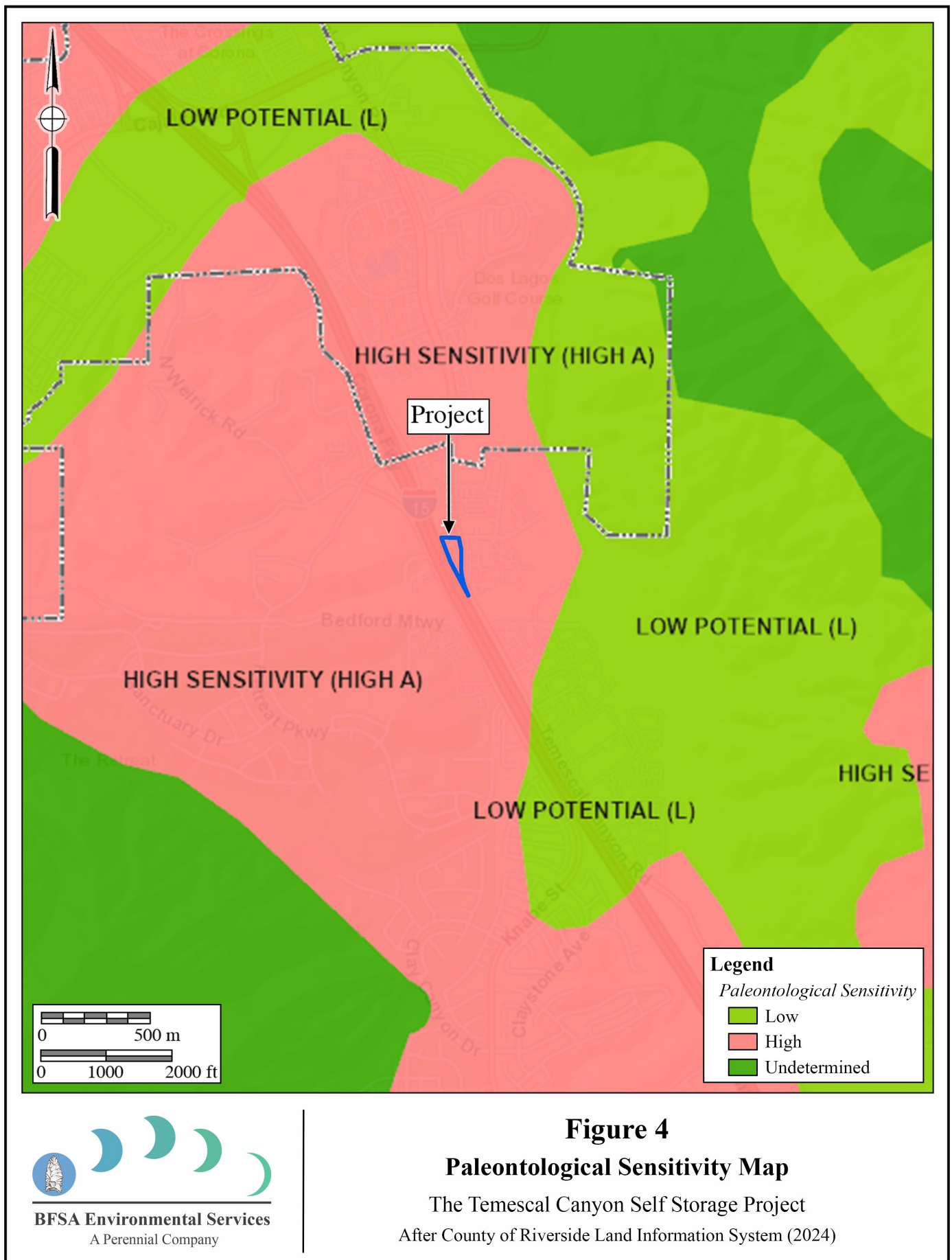
Using these criteria, based upon the fossil record of the geologic formations mapped at the project and the distribution of nearby fossil localities, the project has a high potential to yield significant paleontological resources.

Riverside County Sensitivity

A paleontological sensitivity map generated by the Riverside County Land Information System in May of 2024 (Figure 4), ranks the Pleistocene alluvial deposits at the subject property as having a high (High A) paleontological sensitivity (red areas on Figure 4). A “High A” ranking is:

High sensitivity (High A): Based on geologic formations or mappable rock units that are rocks that contain fossilized body elements, and trace fossils such as tracks, nests and eggs. These fossils occur on or below the surface. (County of Riverside Land Information System 2024)

The category “High A” indicates that fossils are likely to be encountered from the surface and subsurface and may be impacted during excavation by construction activities. Geologic formations with a High Potential/Sensitivity (High A) to yield nonrenewable paleontological resources (*i.e.*, fossils) are shown in red tint on Figure 4.



VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The presence of potentially fossiliferous, Pleistocene-aged alluvial deposits mapped across the project, the known occurrence of significant fossil localities nearby, and the “High” paleontological sensitivity rating assigned to Pleistocene alluvial deposits for yielding paleontological resources all support the recommendation that full-time paleontological monitoring be required during mass grading and excavation activities in undisturbed sediments in order to mitigate any adverse impacts (loss or destruction) to potential, nonrenewable paleontological resources. Monitoring of artificial fill or disturbed soils is not warranted.

The submittal and approval of a Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) is required prior to the issuance of grading permits when requested by the Riverside County Planning Department. The recommendation of a PRIMP is based upon the conclusions stated above. The specific guidelines contained within a PRIMP are listed below, which are consistent with the provisions of CEQA, the County of Riverside, and the guidelines of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (2010) for any mass grading and excavation-related activities, including utility trenching, during construction within the project. Paleontological monitoring may be reduced based upon the observations and recommendations of the County-approved project paleontologist. The following list provides the required items typically expanded upon in PRIMPs submitted to the County of Riverside:

1. Description of the proposed site and planned grading operations.
2. Description of the level of monitoring required for all earthmoving activities in the project area.
3. Identifications and qualifications of the qualified paleontological monitor to be employed for grading operations monitoring.
4. Identification of personnel with authority and responsibility to temporarily halt or divert grading equipment to allow for the recovery of large specimens.
5. Direction for any fossil discoveries to be immediately reported to the property owner who, in turn, will immediately notify the County of Riverside of the discovery.
6. Means and methods to be employed by the paleontological monitor to quickly salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays.
7. Sampling of sediments that are likely to contain the remains of small fossil invertebrates and vertebrates.
8. Procedures and protocol for collecting and processing samples and specimens.
9. Fossil identification and curation procedures to be employed.
10. Identification of the permanent repository to receive any recovered fossil material.
11. All pertinent exhibits, maps, and references.
12. Procedures for reporting findings.

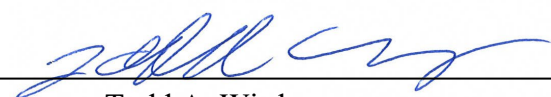
13. Identification and acknowledgement of the developer for the content of the PRIMP, as well as acceptance of financial responsibility for monitoring, reporting, and curation fees.

14. All reports shall be signed by the project paleontologist.

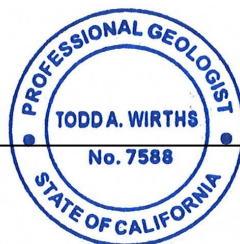
All mitigation programs should be performed by a qualified professional (project) paleontologist, defined as an individual with an M.S. or Ph.D. in paleontology or geology who has proven experience in paleontology and who is knowledgeable in professional paleontological procedures and techniques. Fieldwork may be conducted by a qualified paleontological monitor, defined as an individual who has experience in the collection and salvage of fossil materials. The paleontological monitor shall always work under the direction of a qualified paleontologist.

VII. CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present the data and information required for this paleontological report, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and have been compiled in accordance with CEQA criteria.



Todd A. Wirths
Senior Paleontologist
California Professional Geologist No. 7588



August 7, 2024

Date

VIII. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A

Qualifications of Key Personnel

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E ducation

Master of Science, Geological Sciences, San Diego State University, California 1995

Bachelor of Arts, Earth Sciences, University of California, Santa Cruz 1992

P rofessional C ertifications

California Professional Geologist #7588, 2003

Riverside County Approved Paleontologist

San Diego County Qualified Paleontologist

Orange County Certified Paleontologist

OSHA HAZWOPER 40-hour trained; current 8-hour annual refresher

P rofessional M emberships

Board member, San Diego Geological Society

San Diego Association of Geologists; past President (2012) and Vice President (2011)

South Coast Geological Society

Southern California Paleontological Society

E xperience

Mr. Wirths has more than a dozen years of professional experience as a senior-level paleontologist throughout southern California. He is also a certified California Professional Geologist. At BFSAE nvironmental Services, Mr. Wirths conducts on-site paleontological monitoring, trains and supervises junior staff, and performs all research and reporting duties for locations throughout Los Angeles, Ventura, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, San Diego, and Imperial Counties. Mr. Wirths was formerly a senior project manager conducting environmental investigations and remediation projects for petroleum hydrocarbon-impacted sites across southern California.

S elected R ecent R eports

2019 *Paleontological Assessment for the 10575 Foothill Boulevard Project, City of Rancho Cucamonga, San Bernardino County, California.* Prepared for T&B Planning, Inc. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.

2019 *Paleontological Assessment for the MorningStar Marguerite Project, Mission Viejo, Orange County, California.* Prepared for T&B Planning. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.

- 2019 *Paleontological Monitoring Report for the Nimitz Crossing Project, City of San Diego.* Prepared for Voltaire 24, LP. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.
- 2019 *Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) for the Jack Rabbit Trail Logistics Center Project, City of Beaumont, Riverside County, California.* Prepared for JRT BP 1, LLC. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.
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- 2020 *Paleontological Resource Record Search Update for the Green River Ranch III Project, Green River Ranch Specific Plan SP00-001, City of Corona, California.* Prepared for Western Realco. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.
- 2020 *Paleontological Assessment for the Cypress/Slover Industrial Center Project, City of Fontana, San Bernardino County, California.* Prepared for T&B Planning, Inc. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.
- 2020 *Paleontological Monitoring Report for the Imperial Landfill Expansion Project (Phase VI, Segment C-2), Imperial County, California.* Prepared for Republic Services, Inc. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.
- 2021 *Paleontological Assessment for the Manitou Court Logistics Center Project, City of Jurupa Valley, Riverside County, California.* Prepared for Link Industrial. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.
- 2021 *Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program for the Del Oro (Tract 36852) Project, Menifee, Riverside County.* Prepared for D.R. Horton. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.
- 2021 *Paleontological Assessment for the Alessandro Corporate Center Project (Planning Case PR-2020-000519), City of Riverside, Riverside County, California.* Prepared for OZI Alessandro, LLC. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.
- 2021 *Paleontological Monitoring Report for the Boardwalk Project, La Jolla, City of San Diego.* Prepared for Project Management Advisors, Inc. Report on file at Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc., Poway, California.