Harris & Associates

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 23, 2026

To: Heidi Niggemeyer, Stormwater Program Manager – City of Salinas Public Works Department

From: Kate Elliott, Director – Harris & Associates

RE: Memorandum in Support of a CEQA Exemption for the Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project

CC: Erin McGinty and Justin Davilla, EcoSystems West Consulting Group; Sarah Peelo, Albion Environmental

Att: 1, Figures; 2, Hazardous Waste Sites Database Searches

The purpose of this memorandum is to support a CEQA exemption for the Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project, and it includes the following discussions.

- Project Overview
- Project Description
- CEQA Categorical Exemption
- Conclusion

Project Overview

The **Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project** (project) includes flood control management through sediment removal, bank slope stabilization at one discrete location, concrete channel repair, and limited vegetation management along Santa Rita Creek within the City of Salinas (City), from Russell Road in the northeast to Highway 101 in the west. Refer to **Figure 1**, Regional Location, and **Figure 2**, Project Location and Limits. The locations and means were determined based on the Salinas Creeks Sediment Management Feasibility Study[1] and subsequent field visits to identify critical locations.

The purpose of the project is to reduce sediment accumulation and/or erosion within the creek, thereby reducing flood risk to adjacent residential areas.

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City as lead agency determined that the project falls within the CEQA Guidelines 15301(c), Class 1, Existing Facilities, which provides an exemption from CEQA analysis for maintenance or minor alteration of existing public facilities or topographical features. This class of projects would not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, is declared to be categorically exempt from the requirement for the preparation of an environmental document. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the rationale for this determination.

[1] Salinas Creeks Sediment Management Feasibility Study Report. January 18, 2024. Prepared for City of Salinas. Prepared by Waterways Consulting, Inc.

Project Description

Background

Santa Rita Creek Watershed Overview

The City of Salinas is situated in the natural floodplains of the creeks that drain the Gabilan Range located north, northeast, and east of the City. A belt of highly productive agricultural land fills the Salinas River Valley encompassing the City on all sides. The City is positioned downgradient of the farms and rangeland that lie to the north, northeast, and east. The Santa Rita Creek Watershed is situated within the USGS-designated Monterey Bay HUC8 Watershed, which encompasses the Tembladero Slough HUC10 and Alisal Slough-Tembladero Slough HUC12 Sub-watersheds.

Santa Rita Creek originates in the coastal foothills north of the City, eventually crossing through the unincorporated community of Bolsa Knolls, immediately west of San Juan Grade Road and south of the Salinas Golf and Country Club, and through the northwestern corner of the city limits. As with many streams in the Salinas Valley, Santa Rita Creek has been highly modified through anthropogenic (human) activities. Santa Rita Creek was channelized in the 1970's, following earlier significant modifications that included construction of two large reservoirs: 1) one near the headwaters just north of Hebert Road prior to 1956, which was drained in approximately 2009, and 2) one constructed in 1956, upstream of what is now the golf course, which was permanently drained in the 1990's (UCSB Library GeoSpatial Collection 2026)[2]. No natural unaltered reaches of Santa Rita Creek remain along the extent of the stream between the stream's headwaters and the confluence with the Reclamation Ditch/Main Canal.

Santa Rita Creek from its Headwaters to the City Boundary

Santa Rita Creek (also known as Little Bear Creek north of the city limits) originated as a fan-shaped series of small streams situated in a gently sloped plain at the base of the Gabilan Range, below Crazy Horse Canyon Road and above Hebert Road. Sometime between 1971 and 1985, these streams were channelized into three branches (unvegetated earthen channels) that flow through agricultural fields.

The confluence of these tributaries is situated just above Hebert Road, where Santa Rita Creek transitions to one main channelized stream that flows southwest roughly parallel to and west of San Juan Grade, with some smaller channelized streams entering the main channel through agricultural fields to the west. The western embankment of the stream is at least partially vegetated along this reach. Just downstream, the approximately 0.25-mile-long segment that flows through the site of the now drained 1956 reservoir still exists as a partially vegetated basin, before transitioning back to an unvegetated earthen channel. The creek then flows through the Salinas Golf and Country Club and more agricultural fields with small pockets of naturalized vegetation before entering unincorporated Bolsa Knolls in Monterey County (outside of the city limits).

Within the agricultural lands, light industrial areas, and residential neighborhoods of Bolsa Knolls, the creek follows a highly modified course along backyard fences, making sharp turns and bends. Some creek embankments are vegetated, in some locations with dense weedy vegetation including Himalayan blackberry, mustards, and Bermuda grass, while others are largely unvegetated, stabilized with riprap and other imported fill materials. Repeated flooding has occurred along the stream in Bolsa Knolls in February 2024, February 2025, and February 2026.

Santa Rita Creek within the City Limits (Maintenance Area)

The Salinas city limits are located at Russell Road, the southern boundary of Bolsa Knolls. Within the City, Santa Rita Creek flows from Russell Road to Highway 101. Like elsewhere, the creek is typically highly constrained to a

[2] University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) Library GeoSpatial Collection. 2026. Frame Finder. Archival Photos. Viewed online at: https://mil.library.ucsb.edu/ap_indexes/FrameFinder/

narrow and relatively deep flood conveyance channel. The creek is unvegetated to sparsely vegetated in most locations within the city limits, with individual trees or pockets of vegetation in some locations along or on the top of the embankments. To classify the different channel types within the City limits, the creek has been divided into the following sections, as shown in **Figure 3**: Russell Road to Van Buren Avenue, Van Buren Avenue to Santa Rita Street, Santa Rita Street to Highway 101. Photographs taken along the creek are shown in **Figure 4**.

From Russell Road, Santa Rita Creek continues to flow generally southwest through the neighborhoods of the city before turning sharply west parallel to Van Buren Avenue. The reach of the creek from Russell Road to Van Buren Avenue is channelized with an earthen channel and riprap embankments in many locations (**Figure 4a**, Photo 1; **Figure 4d**, Photo 7; **Figure 4e**, Photo 10; **Figure 4f**, Photo 11; and **Figure 5a**). The stream is largely unvegetated along this reach to reduce flood risk to the surrounding neighborhoods (**Figures 4a-4h**, Photos 1-16). Within this reach, riparian vegetation is limited to isolated arroyo willow thickets in several discrete areas above the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) along the left bank (facing downstream) (**Figures 5d, 5e**).

At Van Buren Avenue, Santa Rita Creek transitions to a channel with a concrete bottom and earthen embankments, as it flows through Santa Rita Park to Santa Rita Street (**Figure 4i**, Photo 17 and **Figure 5b**). The stream along this section has low banks, an unvegetated channel bottom, and an accessible flood plain. The flood plain is planted with mowed non-native sod grass with scattered ornamental trees. Along the southern fenceline of the park, native shrubs and forbs have been planted as an elementary school project in collaboration with the Santa Rita & Bolsa Knolls Watershed Group and the CSUMB Watershed Stewardship Project (formerly Return of the Natives).

Downstream (south) of Santa Rita Street, the creek transitions again to a broad concrete trapezoidal channel for approximately 2,000 feet (**Figure 4i-4k**, Photo 18-22, and **Figure 5c**). The stream flows generally westward before turning sharply north along Highway 101, then northwest through the culvert under the highway, where the creek exits the city limits. Although the channel is unvegetated, some trees line the stream at the top of the embankments. Sediments derived from upstream sources regularly accumulate in this reach, allowing opportunistic vegetation to establish periodically within the channel. However, because these sediments are positioned directly on top of concrete, areas of channel aggradation supporting vegetation are dynamic, and are regularly altered and/or displaced by periodic storm events. Mats of vegetation may slide downstream along the concrete channel bottom under higher flow conditions.

Santa Rita Creek Downstream of the City Limits

Downstream of Highway 101, Santa Rita Creek meanders westward in channelized ditches through agricultural fields to the confluence with the Reclamation Ditch/Main Canal, approximately three miles west of the city limits. The Main Canal eventually reaches the confluence with the Old Salinas River near Salinas River State Beach. The Old Salinas River outlets into the Moss Landing Harbor and the Pacific Ocean and, when outgoing tides and runoff are sufficient to open the Potrero Road Tide Gates, to the Salinas River and the Pacific Ocean.

Existing Channel Sedimentation and Erosional Conditions

From Russell Road to Van Buren Avenue, the channel bed showed more evidence of incision than of aggradation during field visits. Refer to **Figures 4a-4h**, Photos 1-16. Areas of recent aggradation were limited to small accumulations of sediment on channel margins within wider reaches and may have been temporary in response to individual storms. In past years, significant accumulation of sediments were observed from Van Buren Avenue to Highway 101, with up to 2 feet of material observed above the concrete lined segment between Santa Rita Elementary School and Santa Rita Park.

Sediment deposition was observed between Station 65+50 and 72+50, within the concrete-lined trapezoidal channel between Santa Rita Street and Highway 101 (**Figures 4i, 4j**). Several areas of localized bank erosion were noted, including, but not limited to, near station 17+50, 20+00, and 41+00 where RSP along the lower bank has

been undercut or removed by erosive flows and/or channel incision (**Figures 4a, 4b, 4c, 4f**). Areas of degraded and broken concrete were observed near station 82+50 (**Figure 4k**).

Existing Maintenance Activities

The past management of sediment has been focused within the concrete-lined trapezoidal channel below Santa Rita Street. This area is well-suited for sediment removal, due to the large and continuous nature of the deposits, the relative lack of ecological resources, and the easy access points for equipment and vehicles.

Flood/Erosion Control Actions (Project Area Construction)

The proposed flood/erosion control actions include sediment removal, bank stabilization, concrete channel repair, and vegetation management as described below. Refer to the Project Design Plans (Waterways 2026).

Sediment Removal

Sediment removal will take place in locations where sediment accumulation typically occurs, limited to concrete portions of the creek channel between Van Buren Avenue and Highway 101, within a sub-section of the total maintenance area. The concrete trapezoidal channel has been divided into typical and infrequent maintenance areas (Waterways 2026, Sheets C3, C5, C6). It is anticipated that the channel segments will be maintained as follows:

1. The segment through Santa Rita Park, between Van Buren Avenue and Santa Rita Street, will be maintained annually, with the majority of sediment removal occurring in this location.
2. The segment between Santa Rita Street and North Main Street will also be maintained annually, although sediment accumulation along this reach is typically less than what occurs along Santa Rita Park (#1 above).
3. The segment between North Main Street and Highway 101 may require maintenance every 1-3 years, with less frequent maintenance required in the reach extending from North Main Street 410 feet downstream.

It is estimated that annual sediment removal may range between approximately 345 cubic yards and 2,600 cubic yards from approximately 3,400 linear feet of Santa Rita Creek. This volume was estimated based on observations by City staff.

Table 1 summarizes the areas subject to sediment maintenance, hypothetical depths of sediment, and estimated cubic yards of sediment proposed for removal.

Table 1. Sediment Maintenance Areas and Approximate Quantities of Sediment Proposed for Removal, based on Hypothetical Depths of Sediment, Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project, Salinas, CA

	Maintenance Area	Area (square feet)	Depth (feet)	Cubic Yards	
				Min	Max
1	Van Buren Avenue to Santa Rita Street	**17,830**	**0.17-1.5**	**112**	**991**
2	Santa Rita Street to North Main Street	**21,070**	**0.17-1.0**	**133**	**780**
3	North Main Street to Highway 101 North Main Street to near West Lamar Street (infrequent) Near West Lamar Street to Highway 101	**22,360** 8,630 13,730	**0.12-1.0**	**99**	**828**
	TOTAL MAINTENANCE AREA	**61,260 (1.41 acres)**		**344**	**2,599**

On an annual basis within the 5-year Program period, the City of Salinas proposes to identify areas requiring sediment removal and estimate the annual maintenance area and volume of sediment (in cubic yards) to be removed. These estimates will be provided to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) prior to annual maintenance activities, consistent with the agreements outlined in the programmatic permit to be obtained from the RWQCB. The permit application submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will include the total volume of sediment anticipated to be removed over the 5-year permit term. Permitting with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for sediment removal over the five-year period is to be determined.

Bank Stabilization

Bank stabilization will occur in one discrete location of the creek, approximately 370 feet south of Russell Road on the left bank (facing downstream) (Waterways 2026, Sheets C7, C8). Bank stabilization will consist of vegetated rock slope protection (RSP) placed along the creek bank, starting at the estimated scour depth and extending up to the approximate 10-year flood elevation. California blackberry, wild rose, and fuchsia-flowered gooseberry will be planted in the rock slope.

Concrete Channel Repair

Concrete repairs will occur at discrete locations where the concrete channel has been damaged (Waterways 2026, Sheets C4, C5). Deteriorated sections in the concrete channel will be removed and patched with new concrete.

Vegetation Management

Vegetation management could include removal of herbaceous grasses and forbs (e.g., growing in the aggraded sediments) in the creek bed between Russell Road and Highway 101. It may also include the removal of willow tree sprouts below the ordinary highwater mark (OHWM) of Santa Rita Creek, if necessary, to reduce flood risk both in Bolsa Knolls and within the City limits.

Season/Timing

Construction will occur during the dry season (typically, from April 1 to October 15) and during daylight hours, generally between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Construction is planned to begin in 2026 or 2027 with sediment removal, bank stabilization, and concrete repair. Sediment removal and vegetation management will continue on an annual basis as needed throughout the 5-year permit period.

Equipment and Access

It is anticipated that typical construction equipment will be used, such as an excavator, dump truck, loader, bulldozer, smooth or sheep's foot compactor, angle grinder, walk-behind concrete saw or hand-held concrete saw with diamond blade, shop vacuum, skid steer breaker attachment (thumb), jackhammer, air operated chipping hammer, concrete mixer, sandblaster, air compressor, watering truck, and/or hand tools.

All staging and access will occur in existing disturbed locations. Access will occur via existing access roads and paths, and staging areas will be positioned within developed and ruderal areas where no sensitive resources are present (**Figure 3**).

All work will be conducted in compliance with existing regulatory requirements and guidance documents (e.g., NPDES programs, relevant City planning documents).

Maintenance Plan

The maintenance plan will include monitoring of sediment volumes, geomorphic stability, and vegetation within the creek channel that could impede creek flow. The City or their contractor will monitor the creek generally one

to three times annually, as needed (e.g., after large storm events), and determine the appropriate maintenance activities to be implemented.

If cross-section monitoring or visual inspections of Santa Rita Creek indicate that sediment volumes are approaching undesirable levels, additional sediment removal will be required. The determination of when removal is necessary will be at the City's discretion and will be based on factors such as observed barriers to flow, potential flooding concerns, and overall channel capacity.

Adaptive management will be employed by evaluating monitoring results and adjusting future maintenance as needed to achieve the project's long-term goals to restore sediment transport capacity and maintain long-term channel form conditions consistent with permit conditions. Elements that may guide adaptive management decisions include sediment accumulation, vegetation recruitment (particularly of willow sprouts), and channel or bank stability.

Monitoring results will be documented annually through field memoranda, sediment elevation profiles, and photographic documentation. Vegetation management recommendations and sediment removal needs will be evaluated based on these results. Maintenance areas and recommended actions will be summarized in brief field reports and delineated on the original project design drawings to guide implementation. This reporting framework will ensure that management decisions remain aligned with restoration objectives and adaptive performance standards over time.

The City of Salinas lacks the ability to formally manage fugitive sediment at the source on privately owned and managed agricultural fields within the County of Monterey, including Bolsa Knolls and lands to the north.

Best Management Practices

The following best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented during project construction.

Air Quality and Water Quality Protection

1. Limit site access and parking, equipment storage, and stationary construction activities to the designated staging areas to the maximum extent feasible.
2. Store, maintain, and refuel all equipment and materials in designated portions of the staging areas in accordance with permit requirements. As such, no staging will occur in areas with sensitive biological resources or adjacent to creeks and drainages.
3. Refueling and/or maintenance of vehicles and equipment will be performed in designated staging areas. Workers will be informed of the importance of preventing spills and of the appropriate measures to take should a spill occur. Follow all state and federal laws pertaining to hazardous material handling and management.
4. Position all stationary equipment such as motors, pumps, generators, and/or compressors over drip pans. Store vehicles and equipment in designated staging area. Position parked equipment over drip pans or absorbent material.
5. Limit grading activities during periods of high wind (over 15 miles per hour) or water for dust suppression.
6. Water active construction areas as needed based on the activity, soil, and wind exposure.

7. Maintain at least 2-foot freeboard in haul trucks and cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand, or other loose materials.

8. Stabilize all exposed or disturbed areas within the construction area. Install erosion control measures such as silt fences, plywood, wattles, erosion control blankets and/or water check bars wherever silt laden water has the potential to leave the work site and enter the nearby drainages. If applicable, install project storm drain catch basin and inlet protection (e.g., inlet filters, fiber rolls, gravel bags). Cover inactive storage piles. Modify, repair, and/or replace erosion control measures as needed.

9. Apply native plant seed and sterile grass seed (e.g., Regreen© hybrid wheat) via hydroseed and non-toxic binders or broadcast seed on exposed areas.

Biological Resources Protection

10. Follow the conservation regulations, policies, and principles in Conservation and Open Space Element of the City of Salinas General Plan (2002). For wildlife habitats and sensitive communities, including wetlands, follow applicable goals and policies outlined in the Ecological and Biological Resources section of the General Plan (COS-5).

    - Goal COS-5: Protect and enhance the remaining identified and significant ecological and biological resources within the community.

    - Policy COS-5.1: Protect and enhance creek corridors, river corridors, the reclamation ditch, sloughs, wetlands, hillsides and other potentially significant biological resources for their value in providing visual amenity, flood protection, habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities.

11. Prior to the initiation of construction activities, an agency-approved biologist (approved biologist) will identify areas to be protected with silt fencing, the fencing type and requirements, and areas requiring monitoring if determined to be needed. The construction contractor will install silt fencing, inspect the fence daily, and maintain the fence in working order for the duration of construction activities.

12. Prior to the initiation of construction activities, the approved biologist will conduct environmental training for all personnel, including training to protect sensitive wildlife species if present or if identified during pre-construction surveys.

13. During construction, the approved biologist or construction monitor will check under all equipment for wildlife before use. If any sensitive wildlife are observed under equipment or in the work area, the approved biologist will handle and relocate it.

14. During construction, smoking will be prohibited.

15. During construction, all food trash that may attract predators into the work area will be properly contained and removed from the work site on a daily basis. Construction debris and trash will also be properly contained in containers with lids and removed from the work site on a regular basis.

16. Construction activities in and adjacent to the stream beds will take place after April 1 or when no stream flow is present. Avoid working at night or during rain events when amphibians and mammals are generally

more active. Consult weather forecasts from the National Weather Service at least 72 hours prior to performing work.

17. Because construction activities are planned to occur during the bird breeding season (which is between February 1 and September 1), a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction breeding bird survey for nesting birds, including raptors.

    Surveys will be conducted no more than 1 week prior to the start of construction to determine if active bird nests are present in the construction activity area. If active nests are observed, a qualified biologist will monitor active nests for construction-related disturbances and adjust protective buffers as necessary to prevent disruption.

Cultural Resources Protection

18. If precolonial or historic-era deposits or features are discovered at any time during construction or maintenance activities, work in the area will cease, and the City will enlist a qualified archaeologist to inspect and evaluate the discovery and prepare a recommendation for a further course of action.

CEQA Categorical Exemption

Qualifications for a Categorical Exemption

The CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300, includes a list of classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment and are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. The project described above falls within Class 1, Existing Facilities (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301).

Class 1, Existing Facilities, consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing of former use. The types of "existing facilities" itemized below are not intended to be all inclusive of the types of projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use.

Examples include but are not limited to:

(b) Existing facilities of both investor and publicly owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewerage, or other public utility services;

(i) Maintenance of fish screens, fish ladders, wildlife habitat areas, artificial wildlife waterway devices, streamflows, springs and waterholes, and stream channels (clearing of debris) to protect fish and wildlife resources;

The project falls within the Class 1 category because it involves the maintenance of an existing creek channel facility (Santa Rita Creek), approximately half of which is lined with concrete. Maintenance activities include sediment removal, bank stabilization, and vegetation management to control flooding and erosion. By implementing these maintenance activities and the ongoing maintenance plan, the creek channel would be restored to the original design capacity, convey stormwater flows more effectively, and reduce flood risks to adjacent residential areas. There would be no expansion of capacity or function beyond the original design, and the project would result in a net benefit by providing erosion control, maintaining creek flow, and controlling floods into adjacent residential areas.

Exceptions to Using a Categorical Exemption

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2, Exceptions, identifies the following six exceptions to using a Categorical Exemption. Based on an examination of the project and supporting information, the project would not result in any impacts to the environment that would cause an exception to applying the Class 1, Existing Facilities, Categorical Exemption.

(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant.

Exception (a) does not apply to the use of the Class 1 exemption. Nonetheless, based on the Biological Resources Report[3], there would be no adverse effects to sensitive resources, including endangered, rare, or threatened species or their habitat.

(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time, is significant.

Exception (b) does not apply because the project includes an ongoing annual maintenance plan to monitor the creek and maintain the original design capacity through prescriptive sediment, vegetation, and debris removal. so successive projects of the same type in the same place are not necessary. Further, as described above, project construction specifications and maintenance activities will include environmental protection measures or BMPs that will be implemented to protect air quality, water quality, and biological resources. Once constructed, the project will result in a net benefit by providing ongoing erosion control, maintaining creek flow, and controlling floods into adjacent residential areas. Thus, there would be no adverse cumulative impacts.

(c) Significance Effects. A categorical exemption shall not be used for any activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

Exception (c) does not apply because there is no reasonable possibility that the project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Project effects would be typical construction-related effects (e.g., dust, noise) and would be temporary. The project construction specifications and maintenance plan will include environmental protection measures or BMPs that will be implemented to protect air quality, water quality, and biological resources. There would be no adverse effects to biological resources or cultural resources associated with the creeks, as documented in the Biological Resources Assessment and Aquatic Resources Delineation[3] and the Cultural Resources Report[4] prepared for the project. The project would result in an overall net benefit by providing ongoing erosion control, maintaining creek flow, and controlling floods into adjacent residential areas

(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

Exception (d) does not apply because the project would not affect any scenic highways or result in damage to scenic resources within a state scenic highway. The nearest designated state scenic highways are California Route 156, located approximately 7 miles northwest of the project area, and California Route 68, located approximately 6 miles southwest of the project area.

[3] Biological Resources Report. March 2026. Prepared for the City of Salinas. Prepared by EcoSystems West Consulting Group.

[4] Phase I Cultural Resources Inventory for the Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project. February 2026. Prepared for the City of Salinas. Prepared by Albion.

(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

Exception (e) does not apply because the project area is not on any list compiled pursuant to California Government Code, Section 65962.5 (Cortese List). A database search was conducted for hazardous waste sites on the California State Water Resources Board's GeoTracker database and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control database, and there are no active hazardous waste sites located within 1,000 feet of the project area. There is one former leaking underground storage tank (LUST) cleanup site identified at the Santa Rita Elementary School, located under the school parking lot approximately 120 feet south of Santa Rita Creek, where historical records show a potential release of gasoline. However, cleanup activities were completed in 2012, and the case is now closed. Refer to **Attachment 2**.

(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Exception (f) does not apply because the project area does not include any historical resources and is not part of a historic district, based on the Cultural Resources Report prepared for the project[4] and a review of the City's General Plan Figure COS-3, Historic and Architectural Resources. Further, project implementation would not affect any structures. Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource.

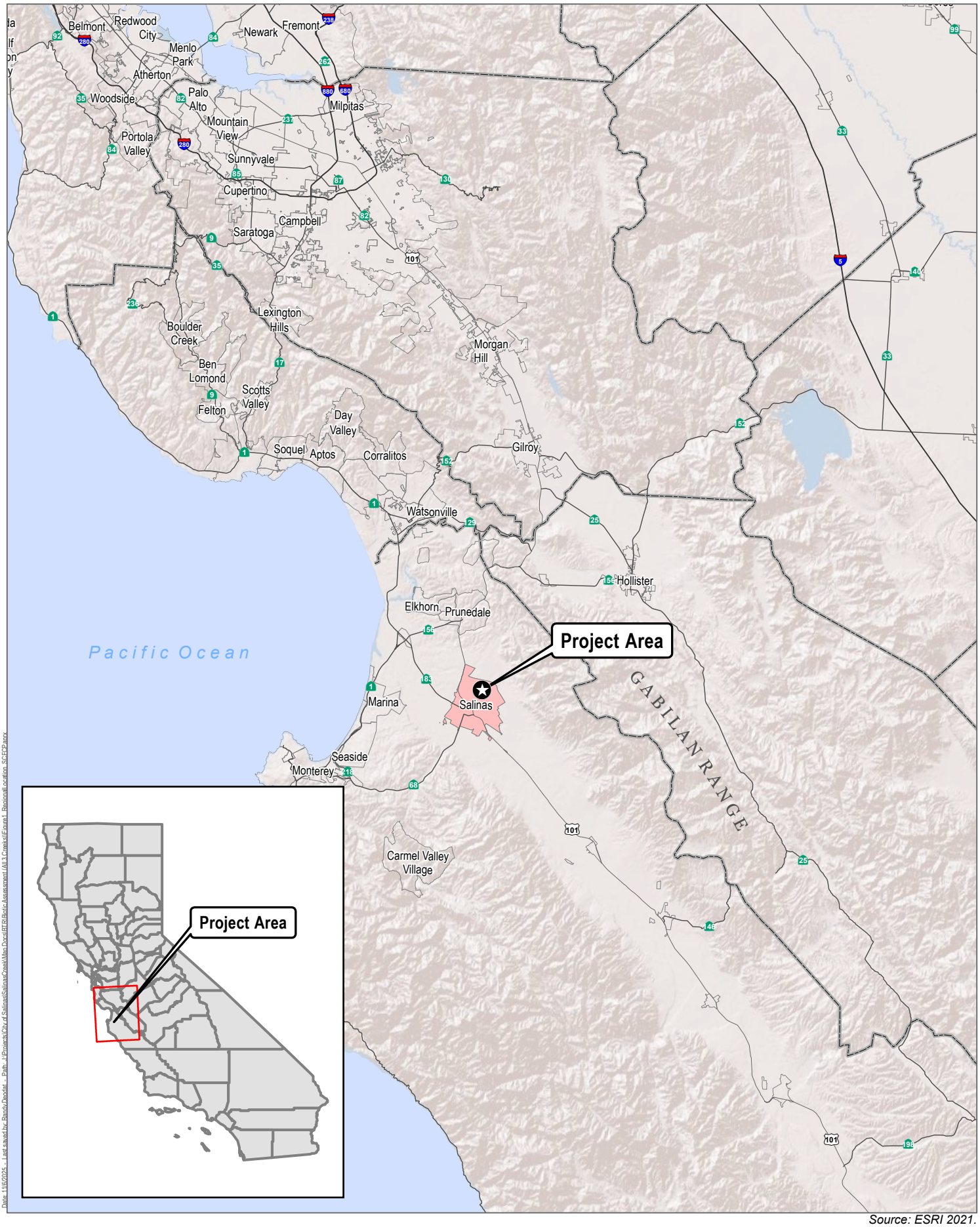
Conclusion

The Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project will maintain the existing creek channel and control flooding and erosion through sediment removal on concrete portions of the channel, bank stabilization, and vegetation management. There would be no expansion of capacity or function beyond the original design. There would be no significant impact to biological resources or cultural resources as documented in the project reports[3,4]. The project would result in a net benefit by restoring the creek to original design capacity, conveying stormwater flows more effectively, providing erosion control, and reducing flood risks to adjacent residential areas

For the reasons stated above, this project is categorically exempt from CEQA, based on CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, Existing Facilities (Class 1).

Attachment 1

Figures



Source: ESRI 2021.

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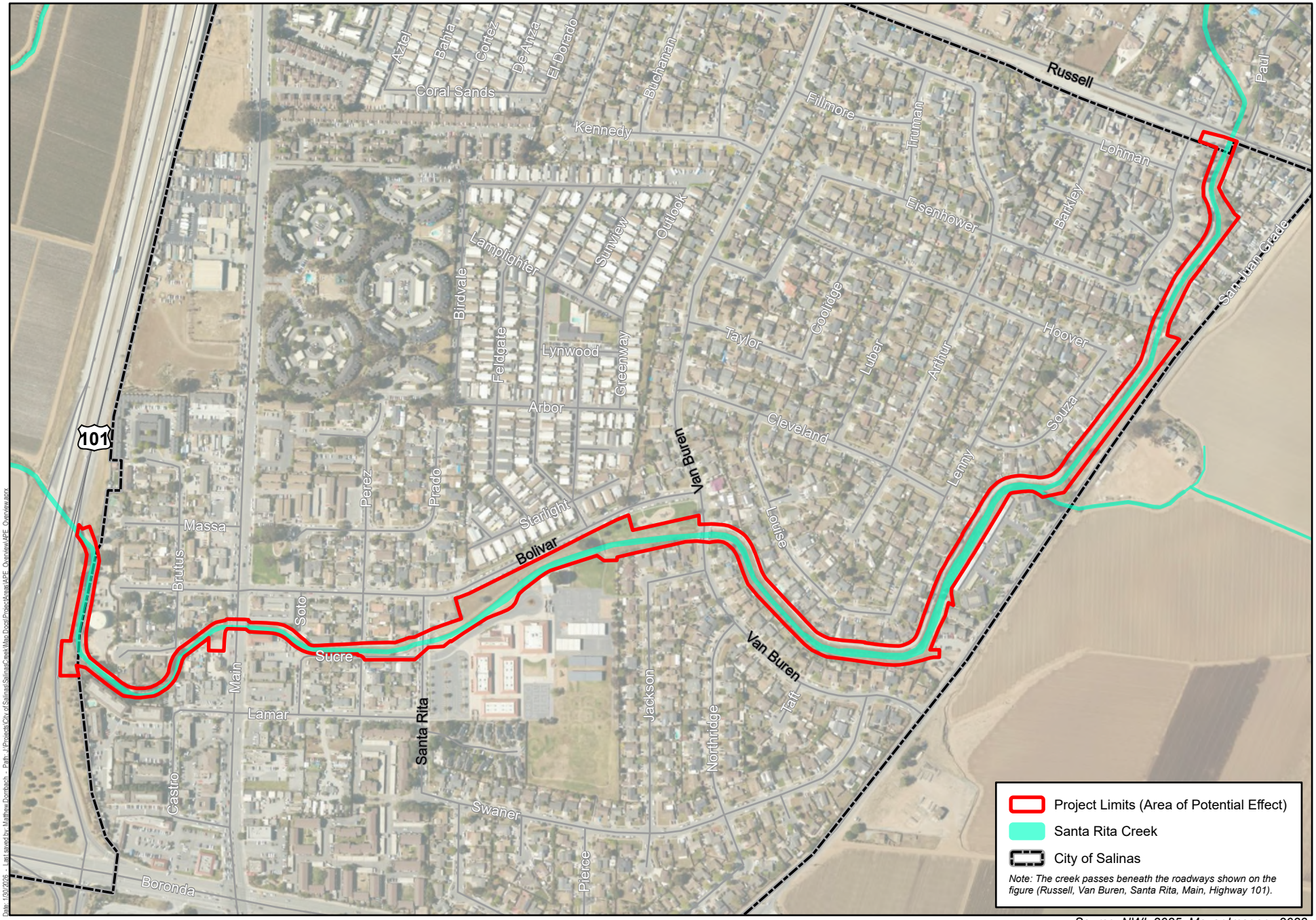
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Miles

Figure 1

Regional Location

Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project



Source: NWI, 2025; Maxar Imagery, 2023.

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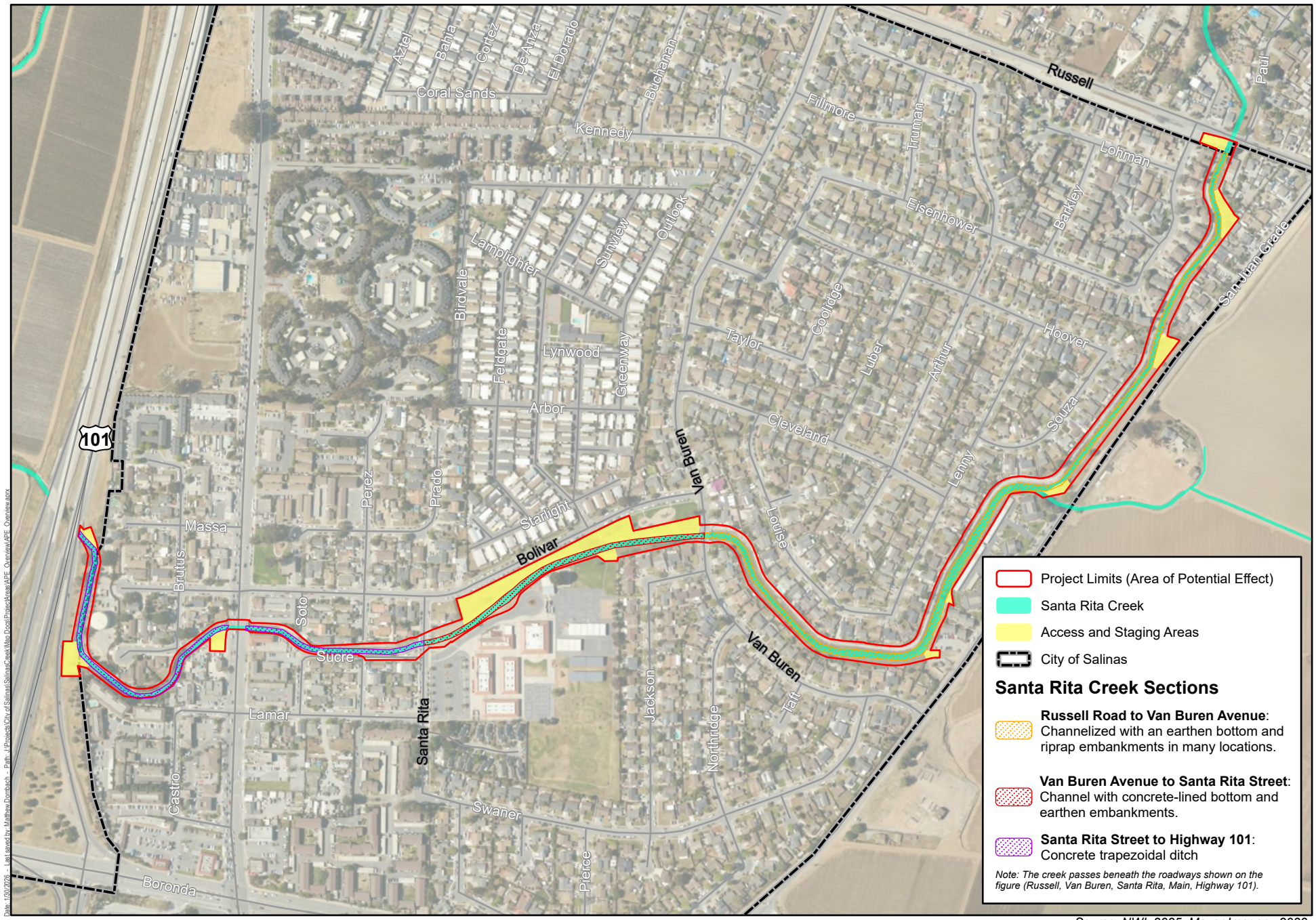
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Feet

Figure 2

Project Location and Limits

Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project



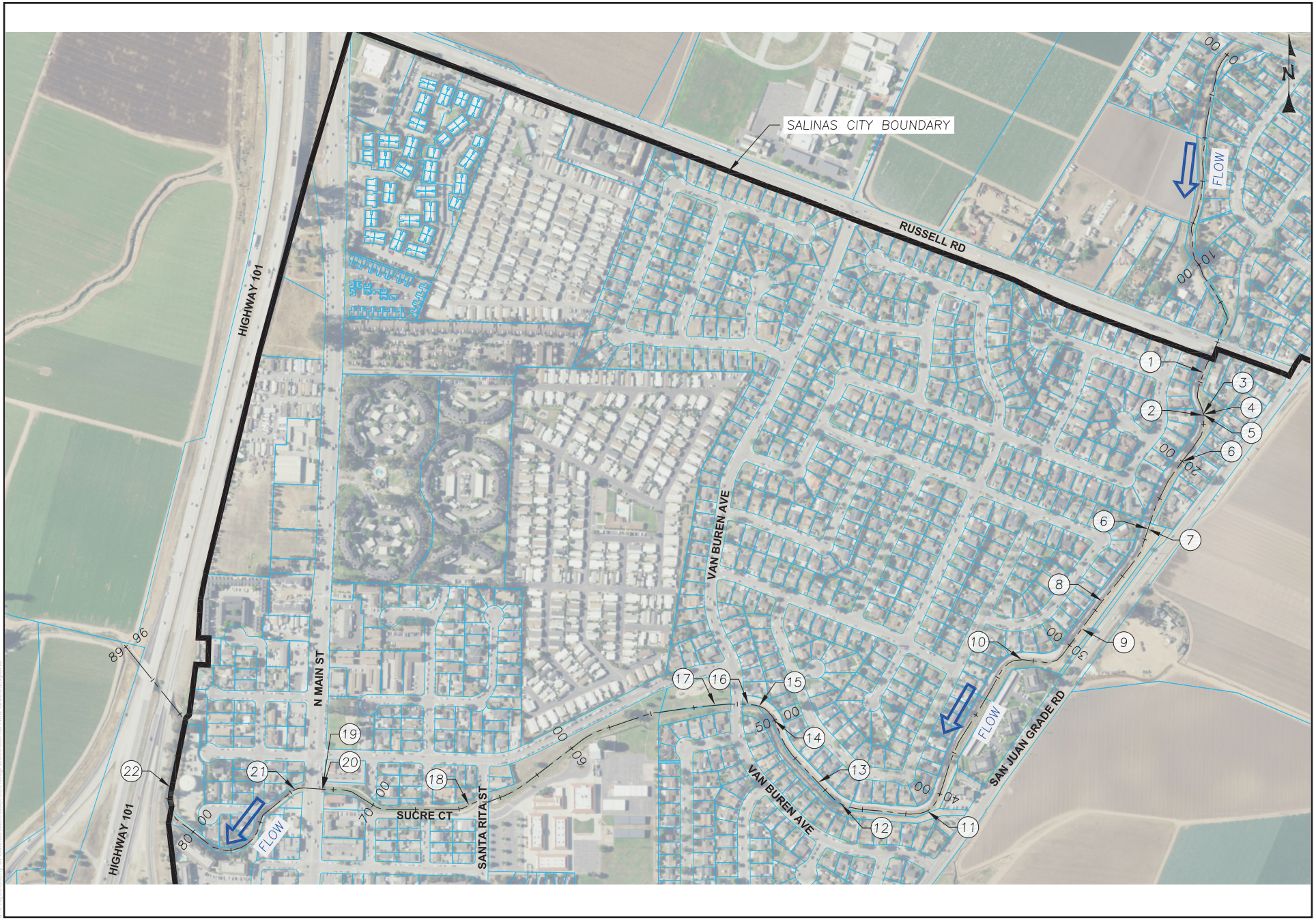
Source: NWI, 2025; Maxar Imagery, 2023.

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Figure 3

Santa Rita Creek Sections

Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project



Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

N

0 400 800

Feet

Figure 4

Stations and Photo Locations for Field Work

Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project





PHOTO 1: STATION 15+50: RSP at outer bend. Small sediment bench forming on inside.
PHOTO 2: STATION 17+51: Bank erosion on outer left bend, below private residences and opposite RSP on the right.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4a

Photos 1 and 2

C:\Projects\City of Salinas\Santa Rita Creek\Mxds\Proj\Santa Rita Creek Exports





PHOTO 3: STATION 17+50: Arrundo on bench at river-left.

PHOTO 4: STATION 17+50: Bank erosion below private residences on river-left. Concrete debris on bank. Poorly vegetated with vertical toe.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4b

Photos 3 and 4

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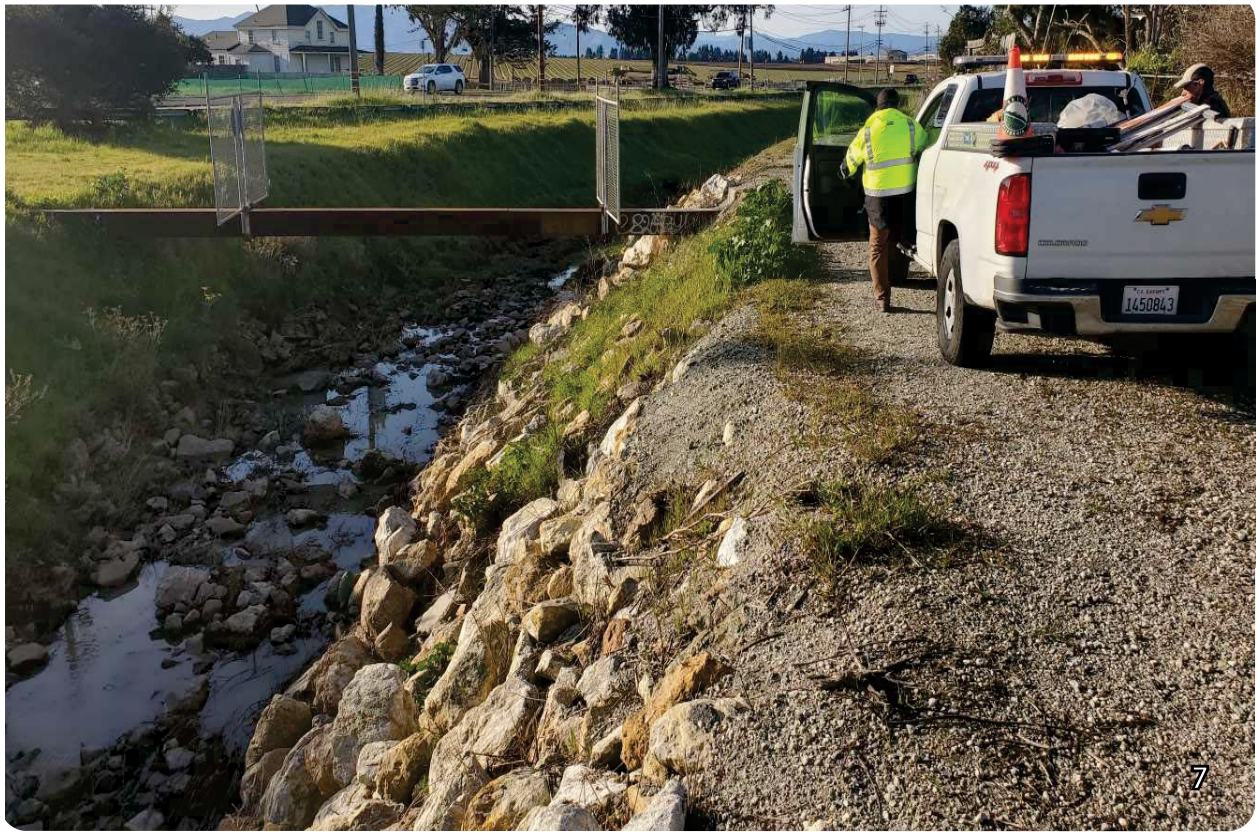
PHOTO 5: STATION 20+00: Stable bank below homes with small bench. Some erosion of outer bank, below road. Apparent incision or scour of low flow channel.

PHOTO 6: STATION 23+50: Concrete drop structure shows some incision at downstream face.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4c

Photos 5 and 6



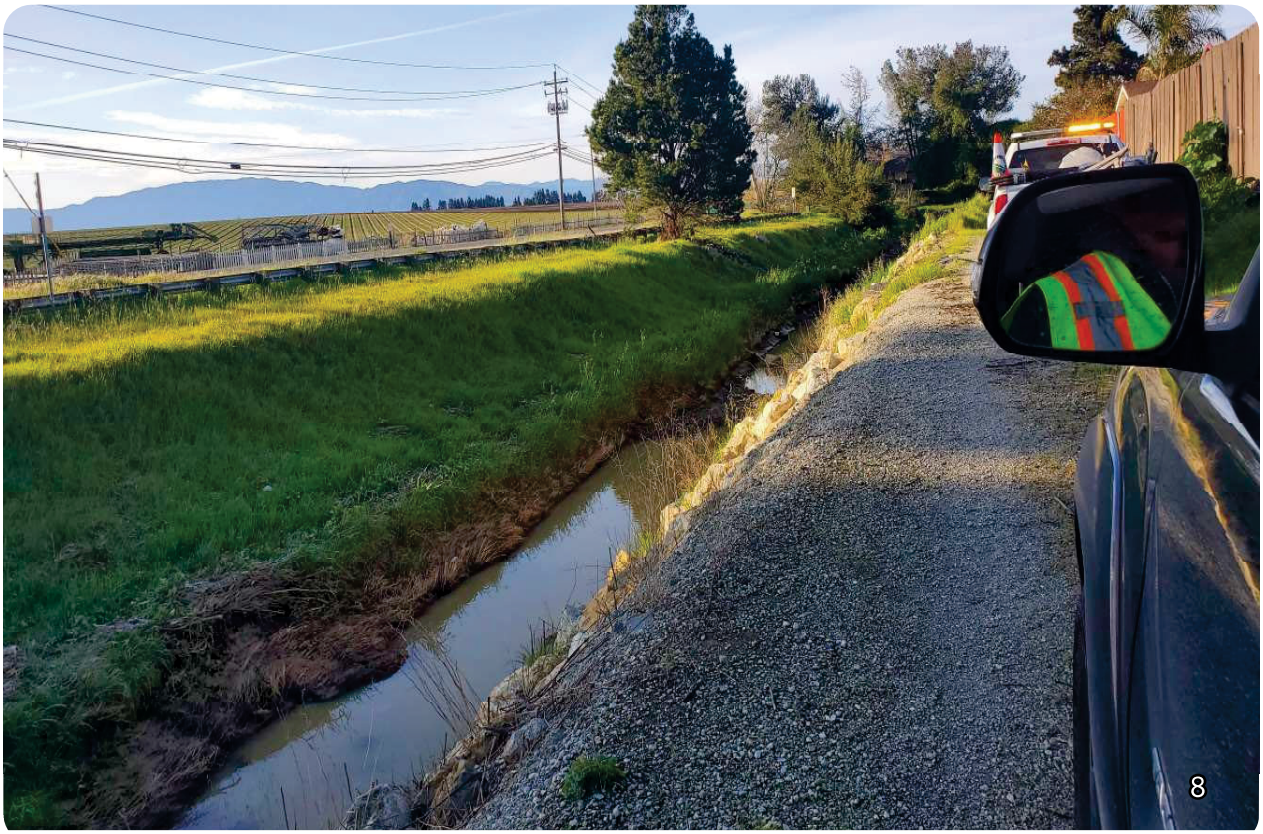


PHOTO 7: STATION 23+50: Stable conditions at pipeline crossing.

PHOTO 8: STATION 27+50: Stable conditions with small bench at toe.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4d

Photos 7 and 8





PHOTO 9: STATION 29+00: Low bench on left bank. Intermittent RSP on outer bends. Minimal vegetation. No immeadiate erosion or deposition concern.
PHOTO 10: STATION 32+50: Low bench (3 ft by 10 ft) on left bank opposite RSP at road. Minimal vegetation.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4e

Photos 9 and 10





PHOTO 11: STATION 41+00: Bank has lost toe RSP. May indicate incision since placement.
PHOTO 12: STATION 45+00: Photograph shows more incision than erosion, with low flow notch of 5 ft by 8 ft between scoured hardpan benches. No vegetation in channel. No significant bank erosion

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4f

Photos 11 and 12





PHOTO 13: STATION 46+50: Evidence of recent incision into past sediment deposits.

PHOTO 14: STATION 50+00: Moderate erosion of left bank into sandy deposits..

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4g

Photos 13 and 14



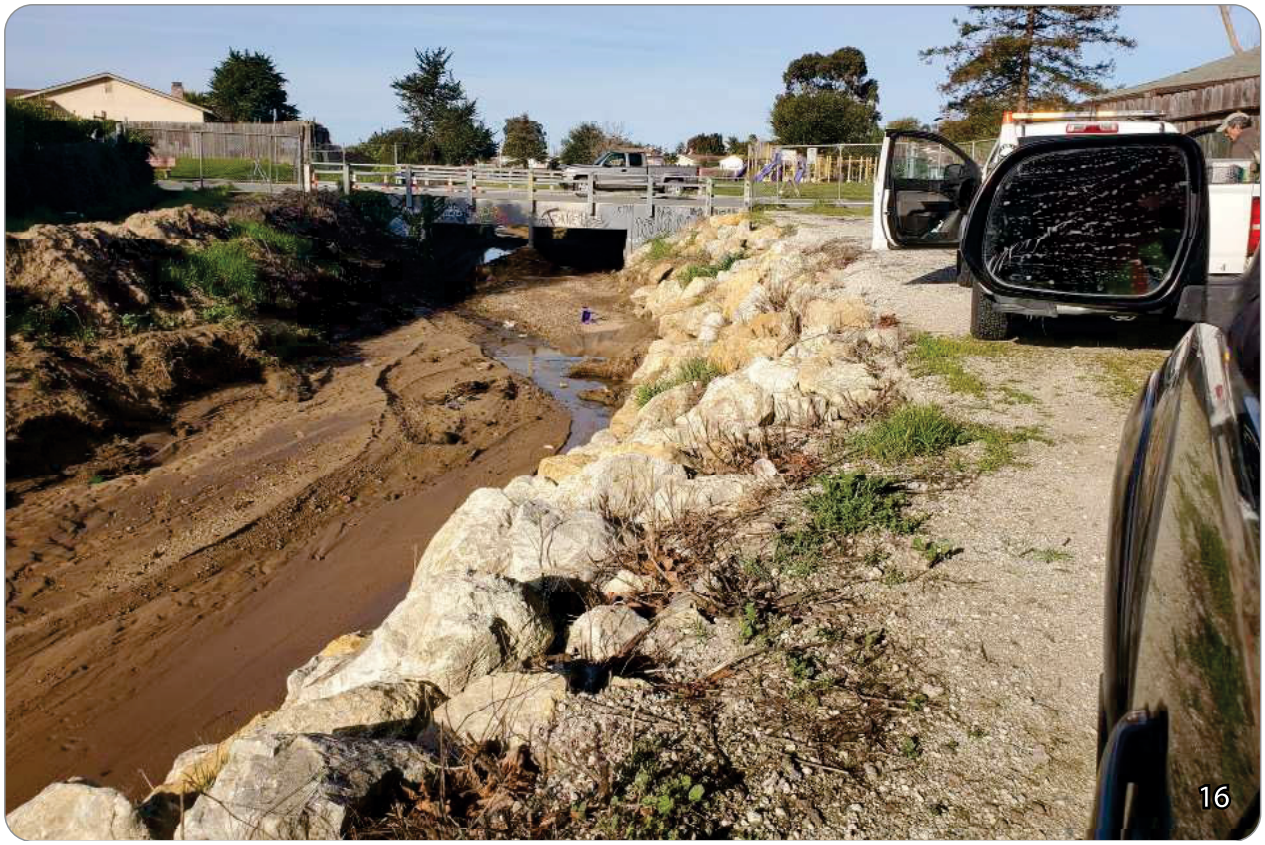


PHOTO 15: STATION 51+00: RSP on Outerbend. Signficant room to remove sediment on left bank.

PHOTO 16: STATION 51+50: View of double box culvert from upstream side. Access gate left.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4h

Photos 15 and 16

L:\Projects\City of Salinas\Santa Rita Creek\Misc Docs\Santa Rita Creek Exhibits





PHOTO 17: STATION 53+00: Looking downstream at park area with established grass.
PHOTO 18: STATION 65+50: Looking downstream within concrete lined channel. No vegetation present.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4i

Photos 17 and 18





PHOTO 19: STATION 72+50: Lokking upstream from N Main St at sediment accumulations.
PHOTO 20: STATION 72+50: Various pipe outfalls and concrete joints exposed in channel indicate sediment accumulations may be shallow.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4j

Photos 19 and 20





PHOTO 21: STATION 72+75: View downstream at N Main St. Base of concrete channel is clean with no sediment visible.
PHOTO 22: STATION 82+50: View downstream at Hwy 101. Shallow sediment on fractured concrete. Access possible from gate at right.

Source: Waterways Consulting Inc, Salinas Creeks Sediment Management and Feasibility Study Report, January 18, 2024.

Figure 4k

Photos 21 and 22



Photograph of Santa Rita Creek between Russell Road and Van Buren Avenue depicting earthen channel and riprap embankments in some locations.

Source: EcoSystems West Consulting Group

Figure 5a

Photographs of Santa Rita Creek

Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project



Photograph of Santa Rita Creek between Van Buren Avenue and Santa Rita Street depicting a concrete channel bottom and earthen embankments.

Source: EcoSystems West Consulting Group

Figure 5b
Photographs of Santa Rita Creek
Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project



Photograph of Santa Rita Creek between Santa Rita Street and Highway 101, with concrete trapezoidal channel.

Source: EcoSystems West Consulting Group

Figure 5c
Photographs of Santa Rita Creek
Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project



Photograph facing south of an arroyo willow thicket adjacent to an apron in Santa Rita Creek, located between Russell Road and Van Buren Avenue.

Source: EcoSystems West Consulting Group

Figure 5d
Photographs of Santa Rita Creek
Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project



Photograph of an arroyo willow thicket adjacent to Santa Rita Creek located between Russell Road and Van Buren Avenue.

Source: EcoSystems West Consulting Group

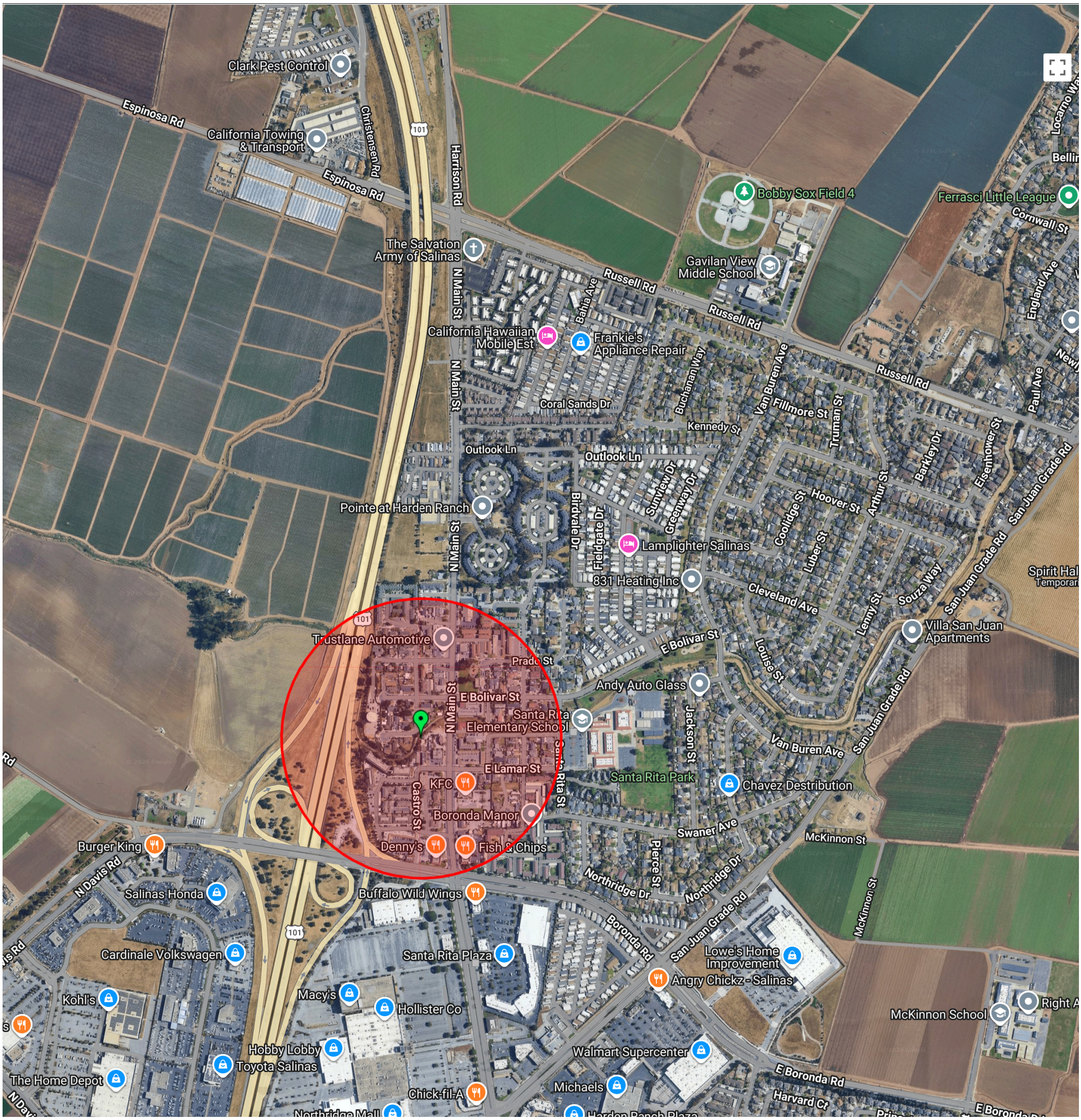
Figure 5e

Photographs of Santa Rita Creek

Santa Rita Creek Flood/Erosion Control Project

Attachment 2

Hazardous Waste Sites Database Searches GeoTracker and EnviroStor



LEGEND - CHOOSE MORE SITES

- LUST Cleanup Sites - REMOVE
- Cleanup Program Sites - REMOVE
- Military Cleanup Sites - REMOVE
- Military Privatized Sites - REMOVE
- Military UST Sites - REMOVE
- Military UST Privatized Sites - REMOVE

Signifies a Closed Site

ACTIVE MAP COVERAGES:

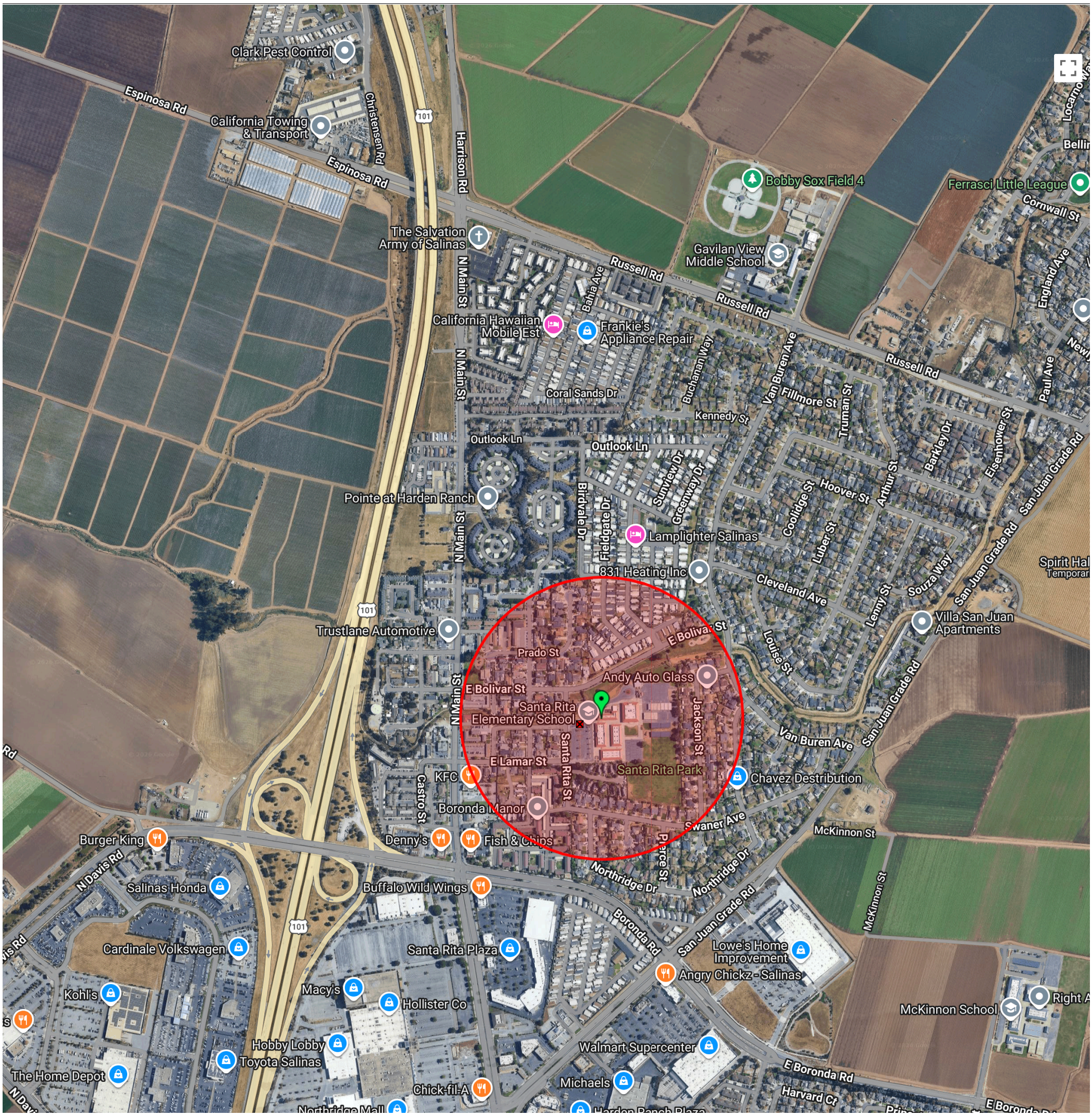
- Military Bases - REMOVE

LIST SITES VISIBLE ON MAP

Map data ©2026 Imagery ©2026 Airbus, Maxar Technologies 100 m Report a map error

Sites Shown on Map: 6 Total Sites 0 Open Sites 6 Closed Sites 0 Sites w/Water Quality Data

GeoTracker Search for a Project San Juan Grade Rd, Salinas, CA 93906, USA Home Download Data Tools Contact Us



LEGEND - CHOOSE MORE SITES

- LUST Cleanup Sites - REMOVE
- Cleanup Program Sites - REMOVE
- Military Cleanup Sites - REMOVE
- Military Privatized Sites - REMOVE
- Military UST Sites - REMOVE
- Military UST Privatized Sites - REMOVE

Signifies a Closed Site

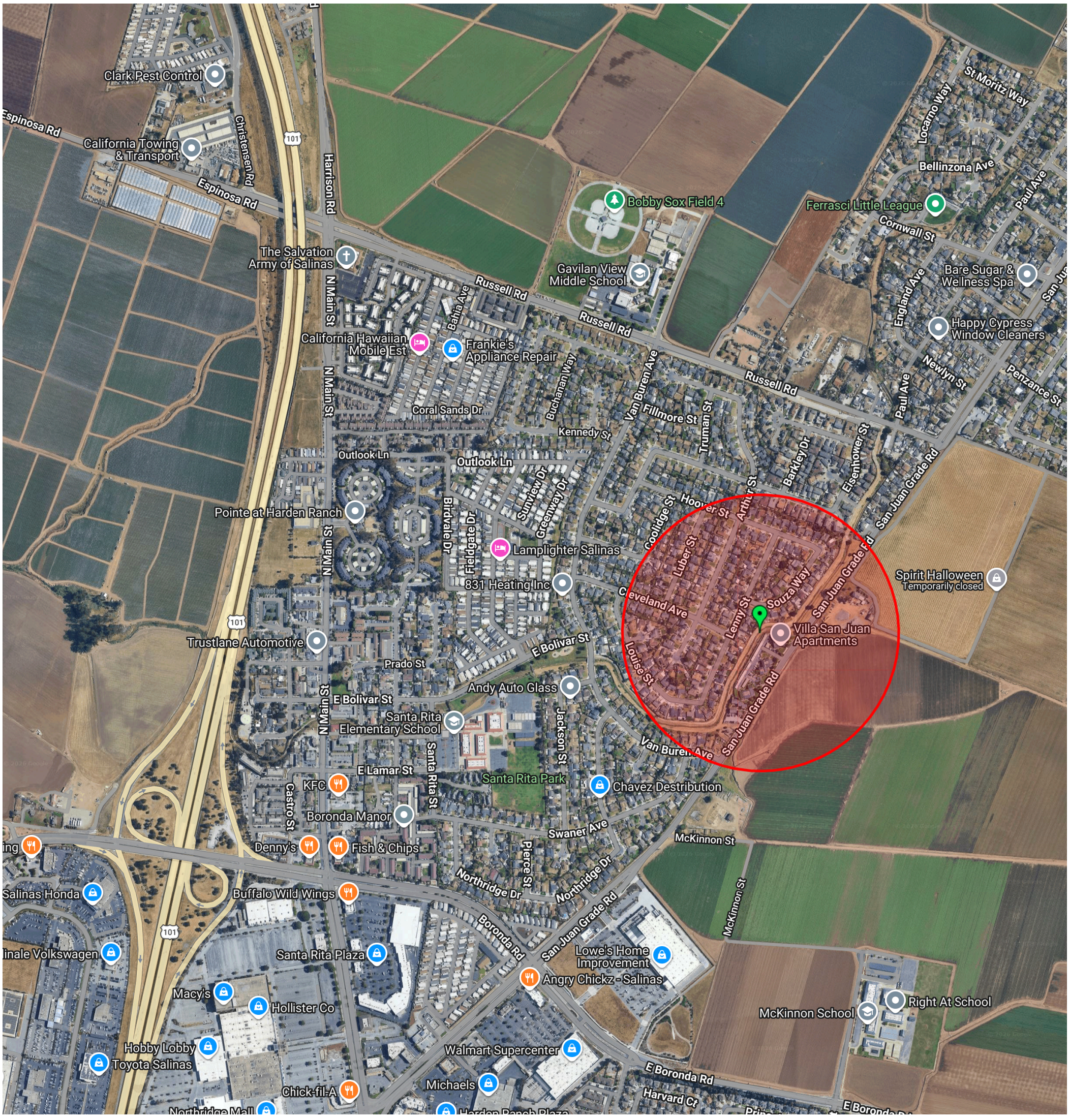
ACTIVE MAP COVERAGES:

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Map data ©2026 Imagery ©2026 Airbus, Maxar Technologies 100 m Report a map error

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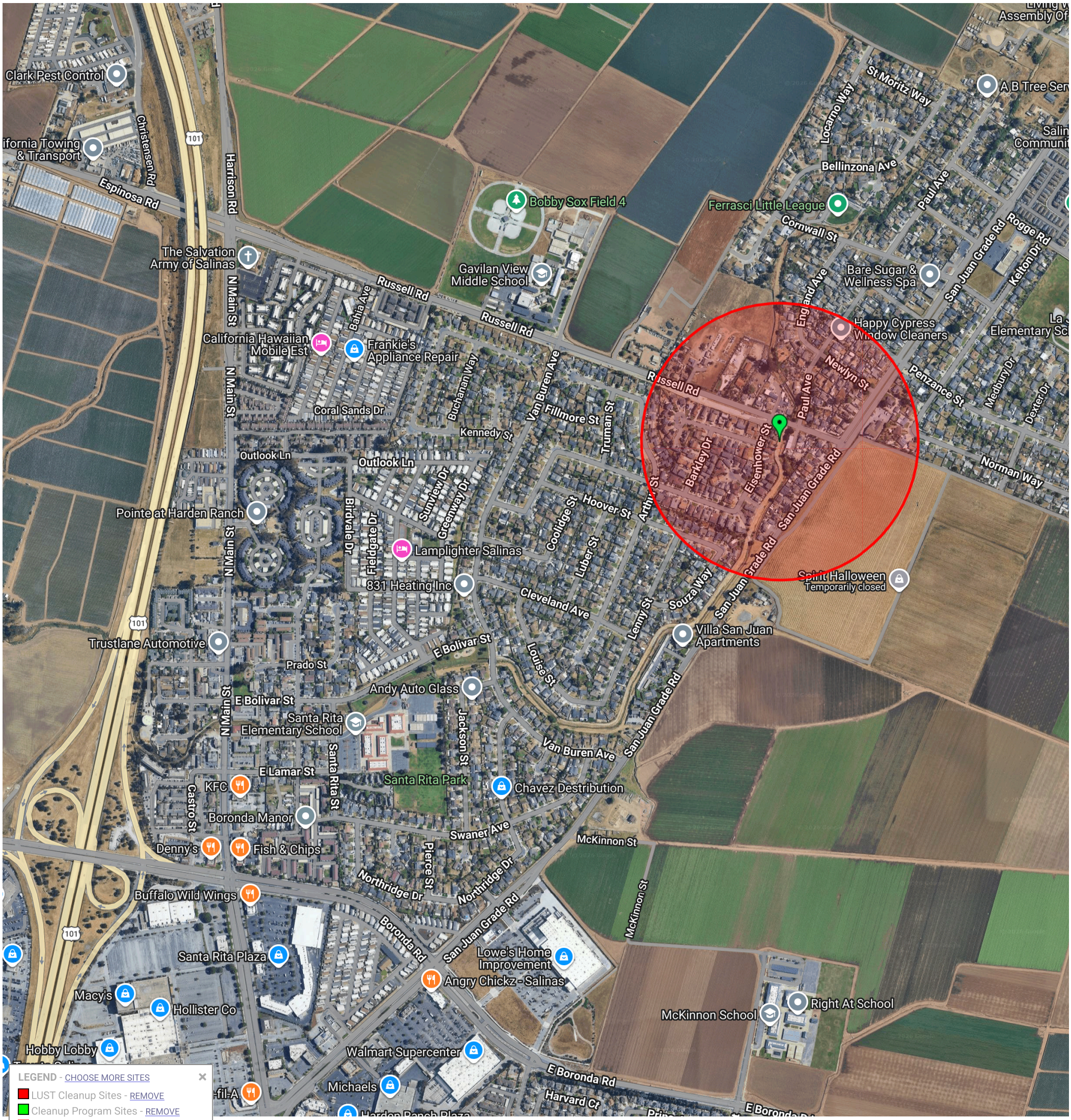
ACTIVE MAP COVERAGES:

- Military Bases - REMOVE

LIST SITES VISIBLE ON MAP

Map data ©2026 Imagery ©2026 Airbus, Maxar Technologies 100 m Report a map error

Sites Shown on Map: 4 Total Sites 0 Open Sites 4 Closed Sites 0 Sites w/Water Quality Data



LEGEND - CHOOSE MORE SITES

- LUST Cleanup Sites - REMOVE
- Cleanup Program Sites - REMOVE
- Military Cleanup Sites - REMOVE
- Military Privatized Sites - REMOVE
- Military UST Sites - REMOVE
- Military UST Privatized Sites - REMOVE

☒ *Signifies a Closed Site*

ACTIVE MAP COVERAGES:

- Military Bases - ⓘ 🕮 - REMOVE

LIST SITES VISIBLE ON MAP

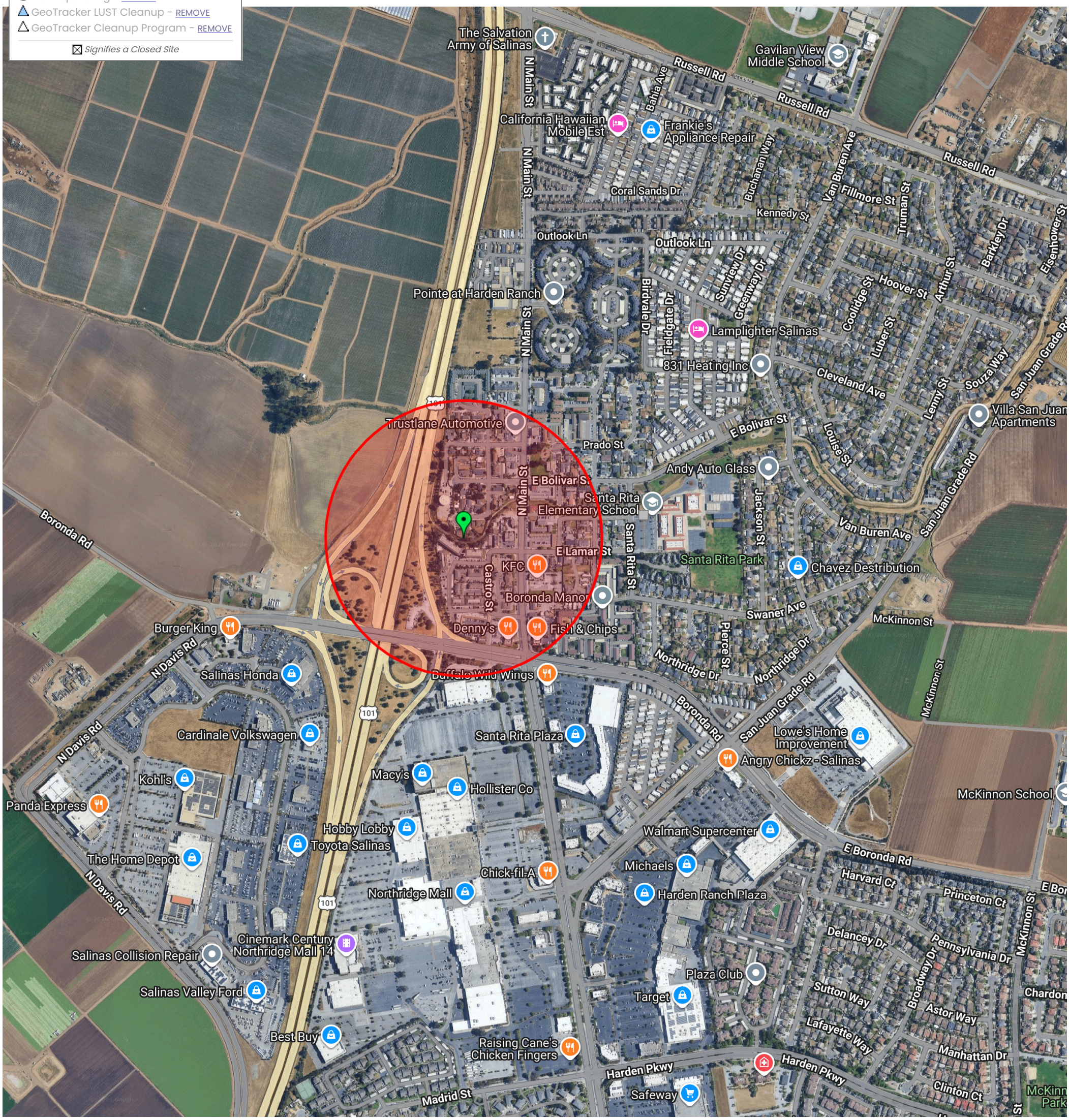
Map data ©2026 Imagery ©2026 Airbus, Maxar Technologies 100 m Report a map error

Sites Shown on Map: 2 Total Sites 0 Open Sites 2 Closed Sites 0 Sites w/Water Quality Data

LEGEND - CHOOSE MORE SITES

- Federal Superfund - REMOVE
- State Response - REMOVE
- Voluntary Cleanup - REMOVE
- School Cleanup - REMOVE
- Evaluation - REMOVE
- School Investigation - REMOVE
- Military Evaluation - REMOVE
- Tiered Permit - REMOVE
- Corrective Action - REMOVE
- Historical - REMOVE
- Field Points - REMOVE
- Operating - REMOVE
- Post-Closure - REMOVE
- Non-Operating - REMOVE
- GeoTracker LUST Cleanup - REMOVE
- GeoTracker Cleanup Program - REMOVE

☒ *Signifies a Closed Site*



LIST SITES VISIBLE ON MAP

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Sites Shown on Map: 3 Total Sites

EnviroStor

Search for a Project

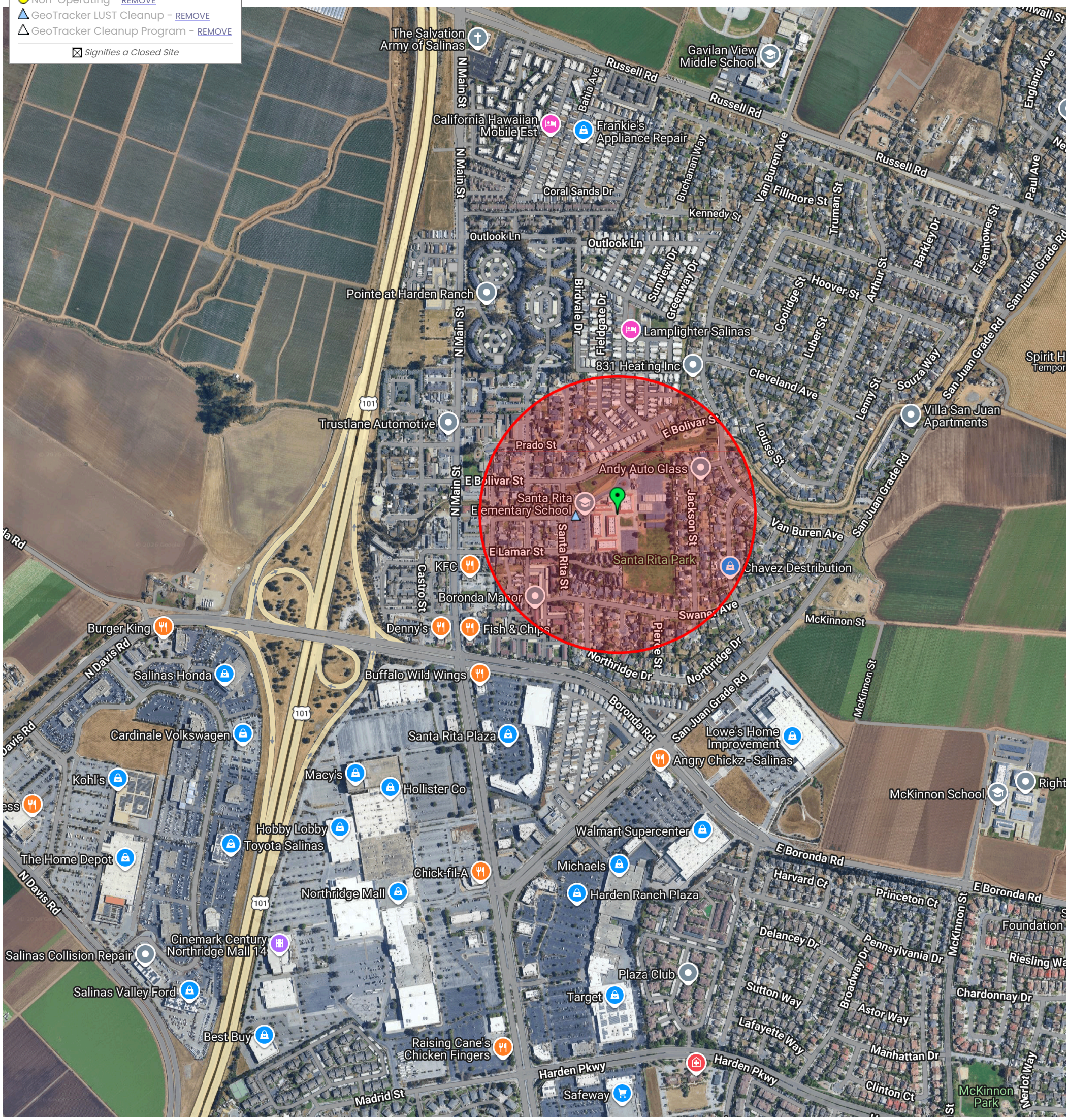
2014 Santa Rita St, Salinas, CA 93...

Home Download Data Tools Contact Us

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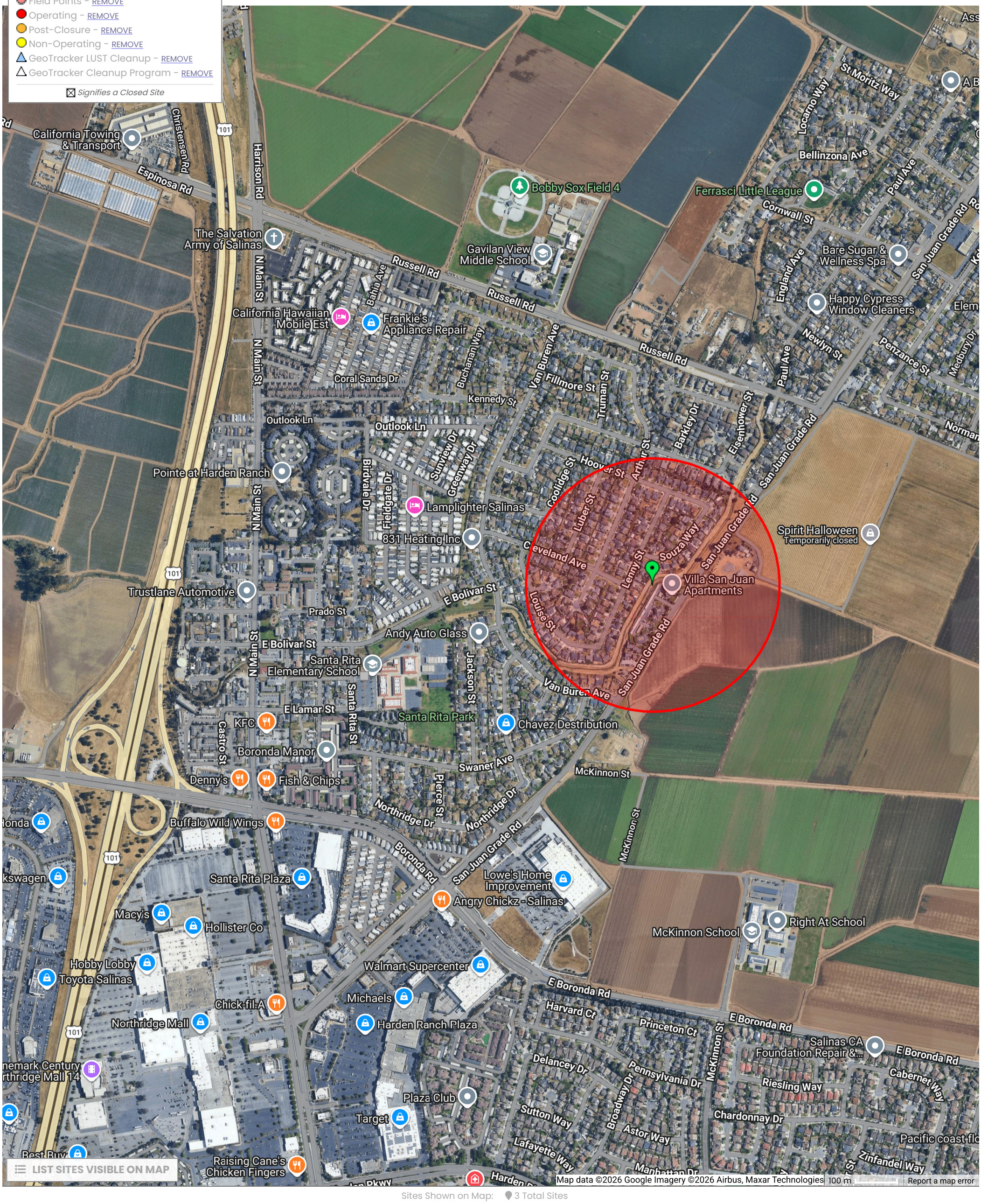
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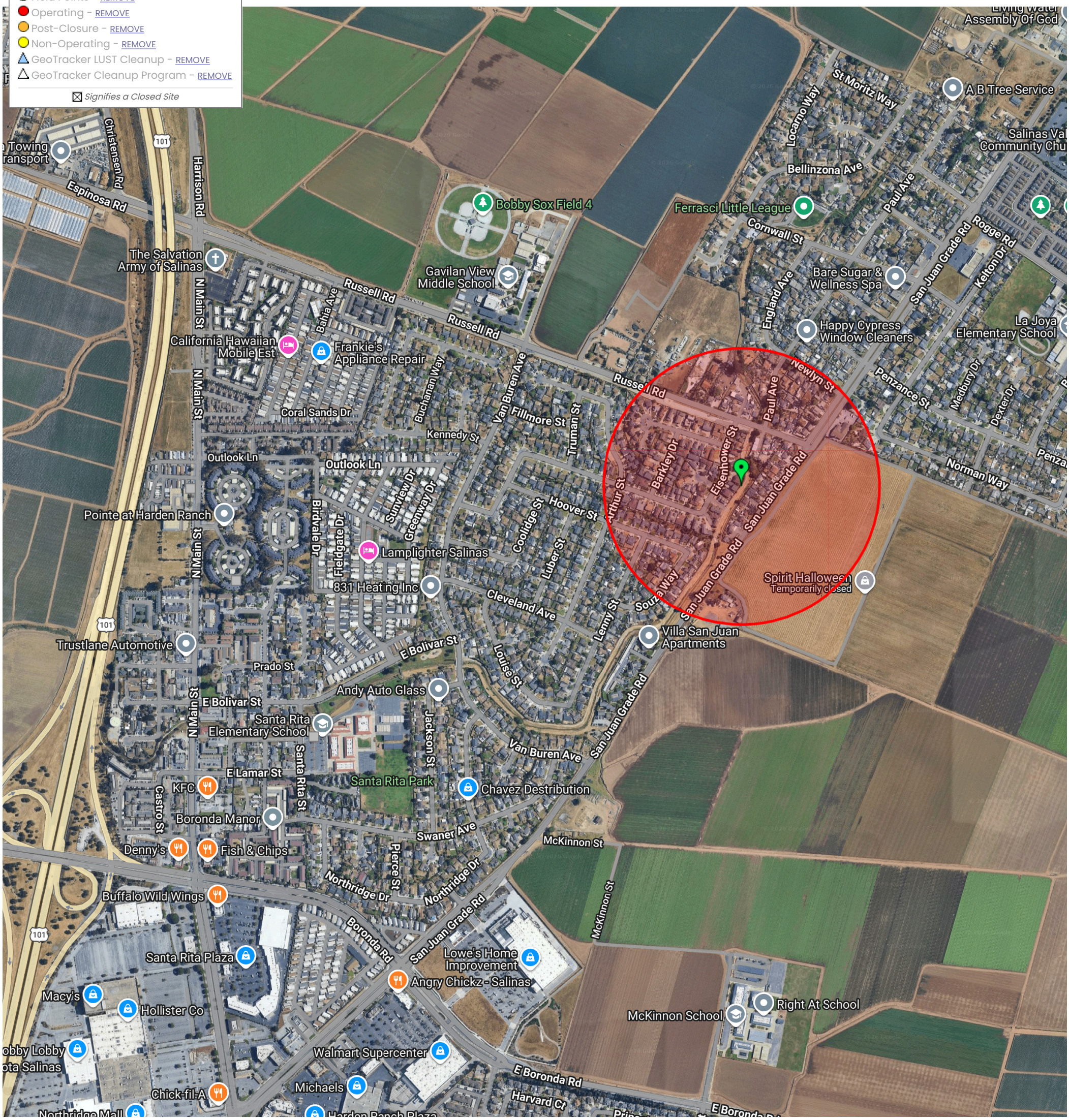
Sites Shown on Map: 3 Total Sites

EnviroStor | Search for a Project | 2014 Santa Rita St, Salinas, CA 93... | Home | Download Data | Tools | Contact Us

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LIST SITES VISIBLE ON MAP

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Sites Shown on Map: 3 Total Sites

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
GEOTRACKER

Tools Reports UST Case Closures How to Use GeoTracker ESI Information

SANTA RITA SCHOOL DISTRICT (T0605300114) - (MAP)

SIGN UP FOR EMAIL ALERTS

2014 SANTA RITA ST
SALINAS, CA 93907
MONTEREY COUNTY
LUST CLEANUP SITE (INFO)
COMPLETED - CASE CLOSED AS OF 12/14/2012 -
DEFINITION
PRINTABLE CASE SUMMARY / CSM REPORT

CUF Claim #: 18233 **CUF Priority Assigned:** C **CUF Amount Paid:** $129,160 **CLEANUP OVERSI AGENCIES**
CENTRAL COAST RWQCB (REGION 3
(LEAD) - *CASE #: 2*
MONTEREY COUNT
CASE MANAGE
CORY WELCH

Summary Case Reviews Cleanup Action Report Regulatory Activities Environmental Data (ESI) Site Maps / Documents Community Involvement *Related Cases* LUST CUF Data

Regulatory Profile

PRINTABLE CASE SUMMARY

CLEANUP STATUS - DEFINITIONS
COMPLETED - CASE CLOSED AS OF 12/14/2012 - CLEANUP STATUS HISTORY

POTENTIAL CONTAMINANTS OF CONCERN
GASOLINE

POTENTIAL MEDIA OF CONCERN
OTHER GROUNDWATER (USES OTHER THAN DRINKING WATER)

FILE LOCATION
REGIONAL BOARD

DESIGNATED GROUNDWATER BENEFICIAL USE(S) - DEFINITIONS
MUN, AGR, IND, PROC

DWR GROUNDWATER SUB-BASIN NAME
Salinas Valley - East Side Aquifer (3-004.02)

CALWATER WATERSHED NAME
Salinas - Chualar (309.20)

GROUNDWATER MONITORING FREQUENCY
OF WELLS MONITORED - OTHER : 6

Site History

Based on the soil investigation, groundwater monitoring, and cleanup results, Central Coast Water Board staff believes there is no significant threat to groundwater resources, human health or the environment from this site. Petroleum

hydrocarbon concentration trends are downward, and remaining residual soil and groundwater contamination are well characterized and contracting or declining in size and concentration. The contaminant mass has been removed from the site to the maximum extent practicable, and historical monitoring data indicate contaminant concentrations in groundwater will likely decrease to below cleanup goals in a reasonable time. The Monterey County Health Department (MCHD) agrees with our proposed closure of the case.

Residual soil and groundwater contamination still underlies the site that could pose an unacceptable risk under certain site redevelopment activities such as site grading, excavation, or de-watering. The Central Coast Water Board, MCHD and the appropriate local planning and building departments must be notified prior to any changes in land use, grading activities, excavation, or dewatering. This notification should include a statement that residual soil and groundwater contamination underlie the property and may underlie nearby properties, and a description of the mitigation actions necessary (if any) to ensure that any possibly contaminated soil or groundwater brought to the surface by these activities are managed appropriately. Future site disturbance could require worker health and safety protection, and restrictions on the disposal of soil and groundwater. The levels of residual contamination and any associated risks are expected to diminish with time. The MCHD may require additional site assessment if the property is proposed to be redeveloped. Additional actions required by MCHD may include, but not limited to, a case review, further remedial action, soil gas analysis, and a human health risk assessment.

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