

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE



GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director

Central Region
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(559) 243-4005
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July 3, 2026

Jose Lara
City of Delano Planning Division
1015 11th Avenue
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jlara@cityofdelano.org
(661) 721-3340

**Subject: City Of Delano 2045 General Plan Update (Plan)
Notice of Preparation (NOP)
SCH No.: 2026060270**

Dear Jose Lara:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received an NOP to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) from the City of Delano (City) as lead agency, for the above-referenced Plan pursuant to 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 Plan that may affect California fish and wildlife. Likewise, CDFW appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Plan 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 agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on

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.

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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, projects tiered from this Plan may be subject to CDFW's lake and streambed alteration regulatory authority (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 et seq.). Likewise, to the extent implementation of projects tiered from this Plan 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.), related authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code will be required.

Nesting Birds: CDFW has jurisdiction over actions with potential to result in the disturbance or destruction of active nest sites or the unauthorized take of birds. Fish and Game Code sections that protect birds, their eggs and nests include, sections 3503 (regarding unlawful take, possession or needless destruction of the nest or eggs of any bird), 3503.5 (regarding the take, possession or destruction of any birds-of-prey or their nests or eggs), and 3513 (regarding unlawful take of any migratory nongame bird).

Fully Protected Species: CDFW has jurisdiction over fully protected species of birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles, and fish, pursuant to Fish and Game Code sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515. 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)

Unlisted Species: Species of plants and animals need not be officially listed as Endangered, Rare, or Threatened (E, R, or T) on any State or federal list to be considered E, R, or T under CEQA. If a species can be shown to meet the criteria for E, R, or T, as specified in the CEQA Guidelines section 15380, CDFW recommends it be fully considered in the environmental analysis for the Plan.

PLAN DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Proponent: City of Delano

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Objective: The Plan includes policy updates that guide the way land is developed and used in the City. The Plan would establish goals, purposes, land use, major transportation routes, and location and general size of future community facilities and would serve as the blueprint for the City's vision through the year 2045. The Plan would replace the currently adopted City of Delano 2005 General Plan (2005 General Plan). The Plan would update all of the State- required general plan elements: 1) Land Use, 2) Circulation 3) Housing 4) Open Space 5) Conservation, 6) Noise, 7) safety 8) Air Quality, and Environmental Justice. The Plan would also meet California Code requirements to accommodate new housing and employment opportunities within the proposed City limits in anticipation of population and economic growth through 2045.

Location: City of Delano city limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI)

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the following comments and recommendations to assist the City in adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Plan's significant, or potentially significant, direct, and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources. Editorial comments or other suggestions may also be included to improve the PEIR prepared for this Plan.

USA Delano Voice of America Property

Based on a review of the NOP, it appears that the USA Delano Voice of American Property (VOA Property) is located within the Plan area (i.e., City's SOI). CDFW has recently been made aware of the City's approval to designate the majority of the VOA Property as "surplus land" under the California Surplus Land Act (CSLA) and sell it. CDFW is also aware that under the CSLA, affordable housing development is to be prioritized during sale of the Property.

As detailed in CDFW's May 18, 2026, letter to the City (VOA Letter) (Attachment 1), the VOA Property contains relict San Joaquin Desert habitat, which provides suitable habitat for numerous special-status species within the region, including, but not limited to, the State and federally endangered Tipton kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoides nitratoides*); the State and federally endangered and State fully protected blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia sila*); the State threatened and federally endangered San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*); the State threatened San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*); the State threatened and fully protected greater sandhill crane (*Antigone canadensis tabida*); the State threatened Swainson's hawk (*Buteo Swainsonii*) and tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*); the State candidate western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) and Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*); the State fully protected golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*); the State species of special concern and federally endangered Buena Vista Lake ornate shrew

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(*Sorex ornatus relictus*); the State species of special concern American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), Tulare grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus tularensis*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvilli*), northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*); the State species of special concern and State proposed threatened and federally proposed threatened western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*); the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1B.2 and federally endangered San Joaquin woolly-threads (*Monolopia congdonii*), and the State special animal and federally threatened vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*).

The importance of the VOA Property for the recovery of species such as blunt-nosed leopard lizard (BNLL) and Tipton kangaroo rat (TKR) cannot be understated, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley, California (Recovery Plan; USFWS 1998) identifies the alluvial fan and desert scrub habitats within this portion of the San Joaquin Valley as being extremely important for many of the San Joaquin Valley's special-status species. Any development within the VOA Property is likely to further impact these species and result in reduced genetic diversity and gene flow, and less resilient populations over time.

As the Property is located within high quality habitat for a number of special-status species, and is within close proximity to nearby conserved lands such as the Allensworth Ecological Reserve (ER), which were set aside to permanently conserve the habitats for the species referenced above, CDFW recommends the VOA Property be considered for conservation and the City facilitate the transfer or sale to a conservation focused governmental or non-governmental organization (collectively, Conservation Organizations), or perhaps conserved through sale for permittee responsible mitigation (which would result in Conservation Easement recordation or fee title acquisition by Conservation Organizations). . CDFW has made efforts in the past to acquire the VOA Property through the GSA process with support from USFWS and Kern County through their Metro Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan. CDFW's intent through those efforts was to incorporate the VOA Property into CDFW's ER system; designation as an ER which would afford it protections under Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

Allensworth Ecological Reserve and Adjacent Natural Habitats

The Plan area includes parcels that are within close proximity to the Allensworth ER and surrounding San Joaquin desert habitats, which support habitat for the species listed above. These parcels have land use designations of Community Facilities, Low Density Residential, and Agricultural within the Plan NOP. Many of these parcels contain relict San Joaquin desert habitats, and as noted above for the VOA Property, any development within these habitats has the potential to result in significant impacts to many special-status species. These species rely on these habitats for essential movement corridors, foraging areas, denning and burrowing opportunities, reproductive

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habitat, and habitat connectivity (see below for additional wildlife connectivity considerations). As such, CDFW recommends that City consider identifying areas within the western portion of the Plan area (i.e., Plan area parcels adjacent to the Allensworth ER) for conservation as part of the Conservation Element within the Plan. CDFW also recommends the Plan fully evaluate the impacts to special-status species, such as TKR and BNLL, that would occur from Plan implementation within the undeveloped areas located in the Plan area, particularly within the undeveloped areas located within close proximity to the Allensworth ER.

Wildlife Corridors and Habitat Connectivity

California wildlife is losing the ability to move and migrate as habitat conversion and built infrastructure disrupt species habitat and cut off migration corridors. California Senate Bill (SB) 790, Assembly Bill (AB) 2344, and AB 1889 all address wildlife connectivity in California and assert authority and responsibility to CDFW and/or local and State agencies to implement wildlife connectivity actions by identifying where they are needed, coordinating and implementing those actions, and establishing compensatory mitigation credits for actions taken. AB 1889 in particular requires the conservation element of general plans to consider the effect of development on wildlife connectivity. The Bill also requires that lead agencies consider incorporating appropriate standards, policies, and feasible implementation programs; consult with specified entities; and consider relevant best available science on identifying and maintaining essential linkages and corridors that are essential to maintain landscape connectivity.

As noted above, there are parcels located within the Plan area, including the VOA Property, that support special-status species and facilitate movement between other natural and conserved habitats such as the Allensworth ER. Additionally, as noted in the Recovery Plan, the San Joaquin Desert habitats within the Plan area are extremely important for species such as TKR and BNLL and conservation of these habitats are a key recovery strategy for the species (USFWS 1998). These habitats are also extremely important for wildlife movement between the populations located within the Plan area and nearby conserved lands such as the Allensworth ER. Any development within the Property is likely to further impact these species and result in reduced genetic diversity and gene flow, and less resilient populations over time.

As such, CDFW recommends in-depth studies on wildlife connectivity and movement within the Plan area and surrounding areas in order to evaluate the extent of potential impacts from development on wildlife connectivity and to develop different development alternatives. Data collection methods should enable detection of species that have been found to utilize the existing movement corridors, including species mentioned above. The cumulative impacts of adjacent projects on wildlife corridors should also be considered.

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CDFW also recommends that projects tiered from the Plan that are located adjacent or in the vicinity of the Allensworth ER and adjacent San Joaquin Desert habitats incorporate project-specific wildlife movement studies to evaluate the potential for the project to significantly impact wildlife connectivity and to guide the development of wildlife corridor mitigation measures to mitigate for connectivity impacts. For projects where wildlife corridor improvement is considered, pre-construction study results should be used to develop biologically feasible movement corridor improvements. Post-construction monitoring should also assess the use of wildlife movement corridors. CDFW recommends that monitoring data be analyzed, summarized, and results discussed in reports be posted for interested parties and submitted to CDFW and other agencies or organizations that have a duty or interest in the effectiveness of wildlife movement corridors.

On- or off-site compensatory mitigation should be implemented to completely offset unavoidable impacts from Plan implementation to avoid significant impacts to existing wildlife corridors and movement areas. The PEIR should include an analysis of beneficial and feasible wildlife movement corridors and/or crossings at off-site locations that could be improved or constructed to enhance wildlife connectivity.

Special-Status Species

Based on aerial imagery and species occurrence records from the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (CDFW 2026) and CDFW's familiarity with biological resources in the Plan area, CDFW recommends that special-status species be considered as part of the PEIR that will be prepared for this Plan, including, but not limited to, the species identified in Attachment 2 of this letter. These resources need to be evaluated and addressed as part of the PEIR and prior to any approvals that would allow vegetation or ground-disturbing activities. CDFW also recommends that the PEIR analyze potential impacts to these species and provide measurable mitigation measures that would reduce impacts to less than significant levels as needed for projects tiered (streamlined) from this Plan.

Special-Status Plants

CDFW recommends that the PEIR for this Plan include a measure requiring that projects tiered from this Plan located within natural habitats be surveyed by a qualified biologist for any possible special-status plants following the "Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special-Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities" (CDFW 2018). CDFW recommends that the plant surveys be floristic and, if necessary, utilize a known reference site for any special-status plants in order to provide a high level of confidence in the effort and results. In addition, CDFW recommends that mitigation measures for CESA-listed plant species, Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) plant species, and California Native Plant Society (CNPS)

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California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) plant species be fully addressed in the CEQA document prepared for any future project tiered from this Plan.

If a special-status plant is found, CDFW recommends that the special-status plant species be avoided whenever possible by delineating and observing a no-disturbance buffer of at least 50 feet from the outer edge of the plant population(s) or specific habitat type(s) required by special-status plant species. If buffers cannot be maintained, then consultation with CDFW is warranted to determine appropriate minimization and mitigation measures for impacts to special-status plant species. If a State- or federally listed plant species is identified during botanical surveys, it is recommended that consultation with CDFW and/or USFWS be conducted to determine permitting needs.

California Endangered Species Act and Native Plant Protection Act

Reasonably foreseeable future projects tiered from this Plan may be subject to CDFW's regulatory authority pursuant to CESA and NPPA. In the event that species listed under CESA or NPPA are detected during surveys, consultation with CDFW is warranted to discuss how to implement the project and avoid "take," or if avoidance is not feasible, to acquire a State Incidental Take Permit (ITP), pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 subdivision (b) and/or California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 786.9, subdivision (b), prior to any ground-disturbing activities. In addition, CDFW recommends that mitigation measures for the CESA-listed species be fully addressed in the CEQA document prepared for any future project tiered from this Plan.

California Natural Diversity Database

Please note that the CNDDDB is populated by voluntary submissions of species detections. As a result, species may be present in locations not depicted in the CNDDDB, but where there is suitable habitat and features capable of supporting species. A lack of an occurrence record, or lack of recent occurrence records, in the CNDDDB does not mean that a species is not present. All projects tiered from this Plan should adequately assess any potential project-related impacts to biological resources by ensuring biological surveys are conducted by a qualified wildlife biologist during the appropriate survey period(s) and using the appropriate protocol survey methodology as warranted in order to determine whether or not any special-status species are present at or near the project site.

CEQA Alternatives Analysis

CDFW recommends that the information and results obtained from the cumulative impacts analysis conducted as part of this Plan's PEIR be used to develop and modify the Plan's alternatives to avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources to the maximum extent possible. Please note that when efforts to avoid and minimize impacts have been exhausted for projects tiered from this Plan, remaining impacts to sensitive

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biological resources may need to be mitigated to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, if feasible.

Cumulative Impact Analysis

Given that a Plan serves primarily as a planning tool and that future project-level CEQA documents are expected to be tiered from it, CDFW recommends that a cumulative impact analysis be conducted for all potential biological resources that will either be significantly or potentially significantly impacted by implementation of the Plan, including those whose impacts are determined to be less than significant with mitigation incorporated or for those resources that are rare or in poor or declining health and will be impacted by any future project, even if those impacts are expected to be relatively small (i.e., less than significant). CDFW recommends cumulative impacts be analyzed using an acceptable methodology to evaluate the impacts of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects on resources and be focused specifically on the resource, not the project. An appropriate resource study area identified and utilized for this analysis is advised. CDFW staff is available for consultation in support of cumulative impacts analyses as a trustee and responsible agency under CEQA.

Lake and Streambed Alteration

Reasonably foreseeable future projects tiered from this Plan may be subject to CDFW's regulatory authority pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq. Fish and Game Code section 1602 requires project proponents to notify CDFW prior to commencing any activity that may (a) substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream, or lake; (b) substantially change or use any material from the bed, bank, or channel of any river, stream, or lake; or (c) deposit debris, waste or other materials that could pass into any river, stream, or lake. "Any river, stream, or lake" includes those that are ephemeral or intermittent as well as those that are perennial in nature. For information on notification requirements, please refer to CDFW's website (<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/LSA>) or contact CDFW staff in the Central Region Lake and Streambed Alteration Program at (559) 243-4593 or R4LSA@wildlife.ca.gov.

CDFW therefore recommends that the PEIR for this Plan include information related to these requirements of Fish and Game code and advise that projects tiered from this Plan retain a qualified biologist to determine if potential impacts to streams may require the need to notify pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1602.

Nesting Birds

CDFW encourages that all projects tiered from this Plan occur during the bird non-nesting season; however, if ground-disturbing or vegetation-disturbing activities must occur during the nesting season (February 1st through September 15th), each future project applicant is responsible for ensuring that implementation of their project

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does not result in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act or relevant Fish and Game Code sections as referenced above. CDFW recommends that a qualified biologist conduct pre-activity surveys for active nests no more than 10 days prior to the start of ground or vegetation disturbance to maximize the probability that nests that could potentially be impacted are detected. CDFW also recommends that surveys cover a sufficient area around each future project site to identify nests and determine their status. A sufficient area means any area potentially affected by a project. In addition to direct impacts (i.e., nest destruction), noise, vibration, and movement of workers or equipment could also affect nests. Prior to initiation of construction activities, CDFW recommends that a qualified biologist conduct a survey to establish a behavioral baseline of all identified nests.

Once construction begins, CDFW recommends having a qualified biologist continuously monitor nests to detect behavioral changes resulting from each future project. If behavioral changes occur, CDFW recommends halting the work causing that change and consulting with CDFW for additional avoidance and minimization measures. If continuous monitoring of identified nests by a qualified biologist is not feasible, CDFW recommends a minimum no-disturbance buffer of 250 feet around active nests of non-listed bird species and a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer around active nests of non-listed raptors. These buffers are advised to remain in place until the breeding season has ended or until a qualified biologist has determined the birds have fledged and are no longer reliant upon the nest or on-site parental care for survival. Variance from these no-disturbance buffers is possible when there is a compelling biological or ecological reason to do so, such as when the construction areas would be concealed from a nest site by topography. CDFW recommends that a qualified biologist advise and support any variance from these buffers and notify CDFW in advance of implementing a variance.

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 CNDDDB. The CNDDDB field survey form can be found at the following link: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Submitting-Data>. The completed form can be mailed electronically to CNDDDB at the following email address: CNDDDB@wildlife.ca.gov. The types of information reported to CNDDDB can be found at the following link: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Plants-and-Animals>.

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FILING FEES

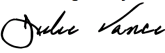
The Plan, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the fee is required in order for 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 to assist the City in identifying and mitigating this Plan's impacts on biological resources.

More information on survey and monitoring protocols for sensitive species can be found at CDFW's website (<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Survey-Protocols>). Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Evelyn Barajas-Perez, Environmental Scientist, at (805) 503-5738 or evelyn.barajas-perez@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Julie A. Vance
Regional Manager

Attachment 1 – VOA Letter

Attachment 2 - Special-Status Species Table

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REFERENCES

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2018. Protocols for surveying and evaluating impacts to special status native plant populations and sensitive natural communities. California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Sacramento, California, USA.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2026. Biogeographic information and observation system (BIOS). <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/BIOS>. Accessed 19 June 2026.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1998. Recovery plan for upland species of the San Joaquin Valley, California. Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon, USA.

Attachment 1



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director

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May 18, 2026

Maribel Reyna, City Manager
City of Delano
1015 Eleventh Avenue
Post Office Box 3010
Delano, California 93216
MReyna@CityofDelano.org

**Subject: USA Delano Voice of America Property
Potential Designation of Surplus Land for Development**

Dear Maribel Reyna:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has recently been made aware of the City of Delano's (City's) approval to designate the majority of the USA Delano Voice of America Property (Property) as "surplus land" under the California Surplus Land Act (CSLA) and sell it. CDFW is also aware that under the CSLA, affordable housing development is to be prioritized during sale of the Property.

The Property is located within the City and identified as Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 520-140-01, 521-090-01, -02, and -03 and is bounded by West Garces Highway, Woollomes Avenue, Melcher Road, and Casey Avenue. CDFW appreciates the opportunity to provide comments to the City and highlight the ecological and biological importance of the Property for the fish and wildlife species and sensitive habitats that CDFW regulates and protects, as well as to inform the City of the potential significant impacts that would occur if the Property was converted for development.

These comments are provided in more detail below.

The Property has been identified by CDFW as containing relict San Joaquin Desert habitat (Germano et al. 2011), an important native habitat within the San Joaquin Valley that has often been ecologically misunderstood and overlooked. CDFW's Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program (VegCAMP) further describes this desert habitat as a mix of Allscale (*Atriplex polycarpa*) scrub and alkali grassland (CDFW 2026a); both of which provide high quality habitat for many plant and animal species. In addition, based on a review of aerial imagery, several stream features are also present within the Property and a large portion of the Property contains flood plain or alluvial-fan features,

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which would likely be subject to CDFW's regulatory authority pursuant Fish and Game Code section 1600 et seq.

Based on CDFW's extensive knowledge of the Property and surrounding area (CDFW 2026b), which includes ongoing surveys and monitoring at the nearby Allensworth Ecological Reserve (ER), several special-status species are likely to utilize the habitat within the Property and be impacted by any future development, including, but not limited to, the State and federally endangered Tipton kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoide nitratoide*); the State and federally endangered and State fully protected blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia sila*); the State threatened and federally endangered San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*); the State threatened San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*); the State threatened and fully protected greater sandhill crane (*Antigone canadensis tabida*); the State threatened Swainson's hawk (*Buteo Swainsonii*) and tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*); the State candidate western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) and Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*); the State fully protected golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*); the State species of special concern and federally endangered Buena Vista Lake ornate shrew (*Sorex ornatus relictus*); the State species of special concern American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), Tulare grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus tularensis*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvilli*), northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*); the State species of special concern and State proposed threatened and federally proposed threatened western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*); the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1B.2 and federally endangered San Joaquin woolly-threads (*Monolopia congdonii*), and State special animals and federally listed fairy shrimp species (*Branchinecta* spp., *Lepidurus* spp.).

The importance of the Property for blunt-nosed leopard lizard (BNLL) and Tipton kangaroo rat (TKR) in particular, cannot be understated. The United States (U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley, California (Recovery Plan) identifies the alluvial fan and desert scrub habitats within this portion of the San Joaquin Valley as being extremely important for species such as TKR and BNLL. Both species have undergone an extensive reduction in their current range due to a loss of habitat from cultivation, modification, and land alteration, and extant populations are highly fragmented across the landscape. The Recovery Plan identifies the conservation of high-quality habitats such as the Property as a key recovery strategy for the species (USFWS 1998). The Property is also important for wildlife movement between the populations located within the Property and nearby conserved lands such as the Allensworth ER. Any development within the Property is likely to further impact these species and result in reduced genetic diversity and gene flow, and less resilient populations over time.

As the Property is located within high quality habitat for a number of special-status species, and is within close proximity to nearby conserved lands such as the Allensworth ER, which were set aside to permanently conserve the habitats for the

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species referenced above, CDFW recommends the Property be considered for conservation and/or project-related mitigation, and that development be a restricted use within the Property after sale. If development were to occur, it is very likely that construction-related activities would result in significant impacts to the species referenced above. Additionally, in order to comply with the California Endangered Species Act, future development within the Property would likely require acquisition of an Incidental Take Permit (ITP), pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 2081 subdivision (b) necessary to comply with the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). As CDFW must determine that take of State-listed species is "fully mitigated" under CESA, mitigation required by an ITP could be cost-prohibitive for affordable housing and associated developments. For fully protected species such as BNLL, take must be fully avoided and permits are unable to be issued unless it is determined take is necessary for scientific research, it is part of greater efforts to recover a fully protected species, 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).

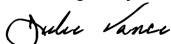
CDFW's mission is to manage California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public. For the reasons discussed above, CDFW recommends the City facilitate the transfer or sale of this Property to a conservation focused entity or perhaps sold for permittee responsible mitigation to allow conservation of the Property. CDFW has made efforts in the past to acquire the Property through the GSA process with support from USFWS and Kern County through their Metro Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan (see Attachment 1). CDFW's intent through those efforts was to incorporate the Property into CDFW's Ecological Reserve system to allow for designation of the Property as an Ecological Reserve which would afford it protections under Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

Further, the property may have historical and cultural significance to the Yokut people. Historical topographic mapping shows that this property has a U.S. Government Reservation, and as such that designation should be explored further to better understand the intent of this U.S. Government Reservation. Finally, CDFW would like the City to ensure that the property's species and habitat values are preserved in perpetuity. In addition to CDFW, there are multiple entities that would be interested in conserving this Property. If this land indeed has a tribal connection, CDFW recommends that the City seek to return the land back into tribal ownership so they can steward, protect and conserve the land.

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May 18, 2026
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CDFW would like to discuss this Property further with the City of Delano and appropriate representatives from the City. A meeting can be coordinated with Krista Tomlinson, Environmental Program Manager I, at krista.tomlinson@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

FA83F09FE08945A...

Julie A. Vance
Regional Manager

Attachment

1. Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan Implementation Trust
Group letter, dated April 9, 2014

ec: See Page Five

Maribel Reyna, City Manager
City of Delano
May 18, 2026
Page 5

cc: **City of Delano**

Roman Dowling, Interim Community Development Director
RDowling@CityofDelano.org

Mark Hensley, City Attorney
mhensley@hensleylawgroup.com

Rosa Rios, Finance Director
RRios@CityofDelano.org

Pedro Nunez, Public Works Director
PNunez@CityofDelano.org

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Krista Tomlinson, Environmental Program Manager I
Krista.Tomlinson@wildlife.ca.gov

Dave Hacker, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor)
David.Hacker@wildlife.ca.gov

Reagen O'Leary, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor)
Reagen.OLeary@wildlife.ca.gov

Sarah Fonseca, Tribal Liaison
Tribal.Liaison@wildlife.ca.gov

Kitanemuk & Yowlumne Tejon Indians

Delia Dominguez, Chairperson
deedominguez@gmail.com

Santa Rosa Indian Community of the Santa Rosa Rancheria

Leo Sisco, Chairman
lsisco@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov

Tule River Indian Tribe

Felix Christman, THPO
felix.christman@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov

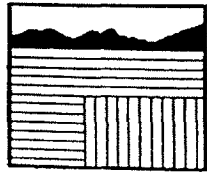
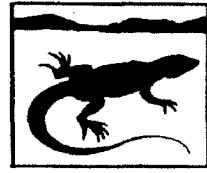
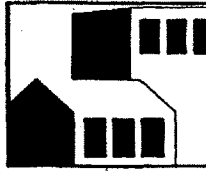
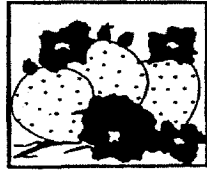
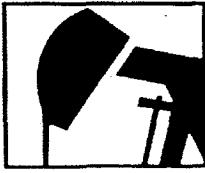
Maribel Reyna, City Manager
City of Delano
May 18, 2026
Page 6

REFERENCES

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2026a. Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program (VegCAMP). <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP>. Accessed 27 April 2026.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2026b. Biogeographic information and observation system (BIOS). <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/BIOS>. Accessed 27 April 2026.
- Germano, D. G Rathbun, L. Saslaw, B. Cypher, E. Cypher, L. Vredenburg. 2011. The San Joaquin Desert of California: Ecologically misunderstood and overlooked. Natural Areas Journal 31: 138 -147.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1998. Recovery plan for upland species of the San Joaquin Valley, California. Region 1, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon, USA.

Attachment 1

Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan
Implementation Trust Group letter, dated April 9, 2014



METROPOLITAN BAKERSFIELD HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN

April 9, 2014

U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)
Public Buildings Service, Real Property Utilization
and Disposal Division (9PZ),
Attn: Chelsey Gross
50 United Nations Plaza, Fourth Floor
NW Room 4341,
San Francisco, CA 94102

SUBJECT: USA Delano Voice of America Site (The California Department of Fish and Wildlife desires to acquire the Voice of America Site in Delano, California)

The purpose of this letter is to formally advise the General Services Administration (GSA) the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is interested in acquiring the vacant land on the USA Delano Voice of America (VOA) site for habitat purposes. The Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan Implementation Trust Group (the Trust Group) assists the DFW in acquiring land in pre-approved habitat areas in northern Kern County, California. The Trust Group is a quasi-governmental agency operating under a Joint Powers Agreement with the County of Kern and City of Bakersfield. Also, please find attached a letter of support from the DFW to acquire the VOA site by the Trust Group.

The Delano VOA site contains approximately 800 acres as described on the March 27, 2014 GSA Notice of Surplus Determination-Government Real Property (Delano Transmitting Station, 11015 Melcher Road, Delano, California 93215, GSA CONTROL NUMBER: 9-X-CA-1671, HUD ASSIGNED PROPERTY NUMBER: 54201330005). The Delano VOA site is also identified and delineated on the attached Metroscan Profile and Maps identified as APNs 520-140-01 containing 632.72 acres, 521-090-01 containing 40 acres, 521-090-02 containing 40 acres and 521-090-03 containing 80 acres. These properties are located in Sections 16 and 21, Township 2525.

The Delano VOA property has been identified by the DFW as relic San Joaquin Valley natural habitat. The DFW describes the sensitive habitat, and threatened and endangered species occurrences on the property on the attached "Delano VOA Habitat Description." Also, the existing zoning on the property is described as A (Exclusive Agriculture) with large portions of the property lying within the primary flood plain.

The DFW is interested in acquiring all of the undisturbed habitat on the Delano VOA property reasonably possible except those areas with building improvements including towers and pads. The estimated improved area ranges from 20 to 60 acre depending on how much land needs to be retained as a viable economic unit for the acquiring

entity. The Trust Group, as any governmental agency, is exempt from the Parcel Map Act requirements and would be willing to divide the property to reflect the separation of vacant land from improved site area.

The Trust Group desires to acquire the Delano VOA site for the DFW herein this letter of intent for (1) wildlife conservation purposes at little or no cost to the DFW; (2) under statutes 40 U.S.C. 545 (Negotiated Sales to Public bodies), (b)(8) (for public purposes generally); (3) interest would be fee title acquisition of the natural lands; (4) an approximate 45 days would be needed to develop and submit a formal application for the property, if it is determined that a level of compensation is needed for fee title acquisition funds would be available; and (5) additional time to develop a required proposal and circulate it with both the Trust Group and DFW staff. The Trust Group and the DFW are willing to work with any other acquiring entity who is interested only in the buildings and tower areas. The Trust Group believes any acquiring entity would have to comply with existing zoning regulations, but most importantly would have to comply with mitigation impacts on any kind of perceived development under the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts. All questions relating to the DFW's interest or compliance with the State Endangered Species Act are to be directed to Krista Tomlinson, Senior Environmental Scientist, Lands Unit, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 4-Central, 1234 E. Shaw Avenue, Fresno, CA 93710 (Phone: 559 243-4014 ext. 223 and Email: krista.tomlinson@wildlife.ca.gov).

If there are any questions related to this notice of intention, please advise preferably by calling directly or by email. Your consideration in moving this request forward is appreciated. Thanks.



Mitch Van Wyk
Trust Group Property Agent
Cell phone: 661/428-2998
Fax: (661) 885-4255
Email: vanwykm@gmail.com
Address: 1601 Maidstore Place, Bakersfield, CA 93311-4937

Attachments: DFW Letter of Support, Metroscan Profile and Maps of Delano VOA site, and Delano VOA Site Habitat Description

cc: Trust Group Administrator and Staff, Martin Ortiz (mortiz@bakersfieldcity.us), Cecelia Griego (cgriego@bakersfieldcity.com), Kate Shea (kshea@Bakersfieldcity.us) and Pamela Elisheva (pelishev@bakersfieldcity.us)
Krista Tomlinson, California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Thomas Leeman, United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Clark Van Epps, Director, General Services Administration, Pacific Rim Region, 50 United Nations Plaza, Fourth Floor, San Francisco, CA 94102
David Haase, Branch Chief, Utilization & Realty Services Branch, General Services Administration, Pacific Rim Region, 50 United Nations Plaza, Fourth Floor, San Francisco, CA 94102



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Region 4-Central
1234 E. Shaw Ave.
Fresno, CA 93710
www.wildlife.ca.gov

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



April 7, 2014

U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)
Public Buildings Service, Real Property Utilization and Disposal Division (9PZ)
Attn: Chelsey Gross
50 United Nations Plaza
Fourth Floor NW Room 4341
San Francisco, CA
94102

Subject: Voice of America Site in Delano CA (The California Department of Fish and Wildlife letter of support for site acquisition under the Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan Implementation Trust Group)

Dear Ms. Gross:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has a great interest in the 800 acre Voice of America Site in Delano CA. The path we seek for acquisition is through the Metropolitan Bakersfield Habitat Conservation Plan Implementation Trust Group (Trust Group). A letter of intent has been sent from the Trust group for General Services Administration (GSA) review and includes the required aspects for a complete letter of intent. Together with the Trust Group a proposal will be developed with the necessary criteria.

Acquisition of this property through the Trust Group will allow for conveyance of fee title acquisition to the Department. Because of the endangered species documented on the parcel and sensitive species associated with the habitat on the site, upon conveyance of the property to the Department the property will become a part of the State's Ecological Reserve System and protected through the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 11 Section 630.

If you have any questions regarding our interest please contact Ms. Krista Tomlinson, Senior Environmental Scientist, at (559) 243-4014, extension 223 or krista.tomlinson@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Please note the original DFW Letter has been signed and sent to GSA. A scanned copy is available upon request.

Jeffrey R. Single, Ph.D.
Regional Manager

ec: Palmisano, Tomlinson, Lands files (O'Connor)

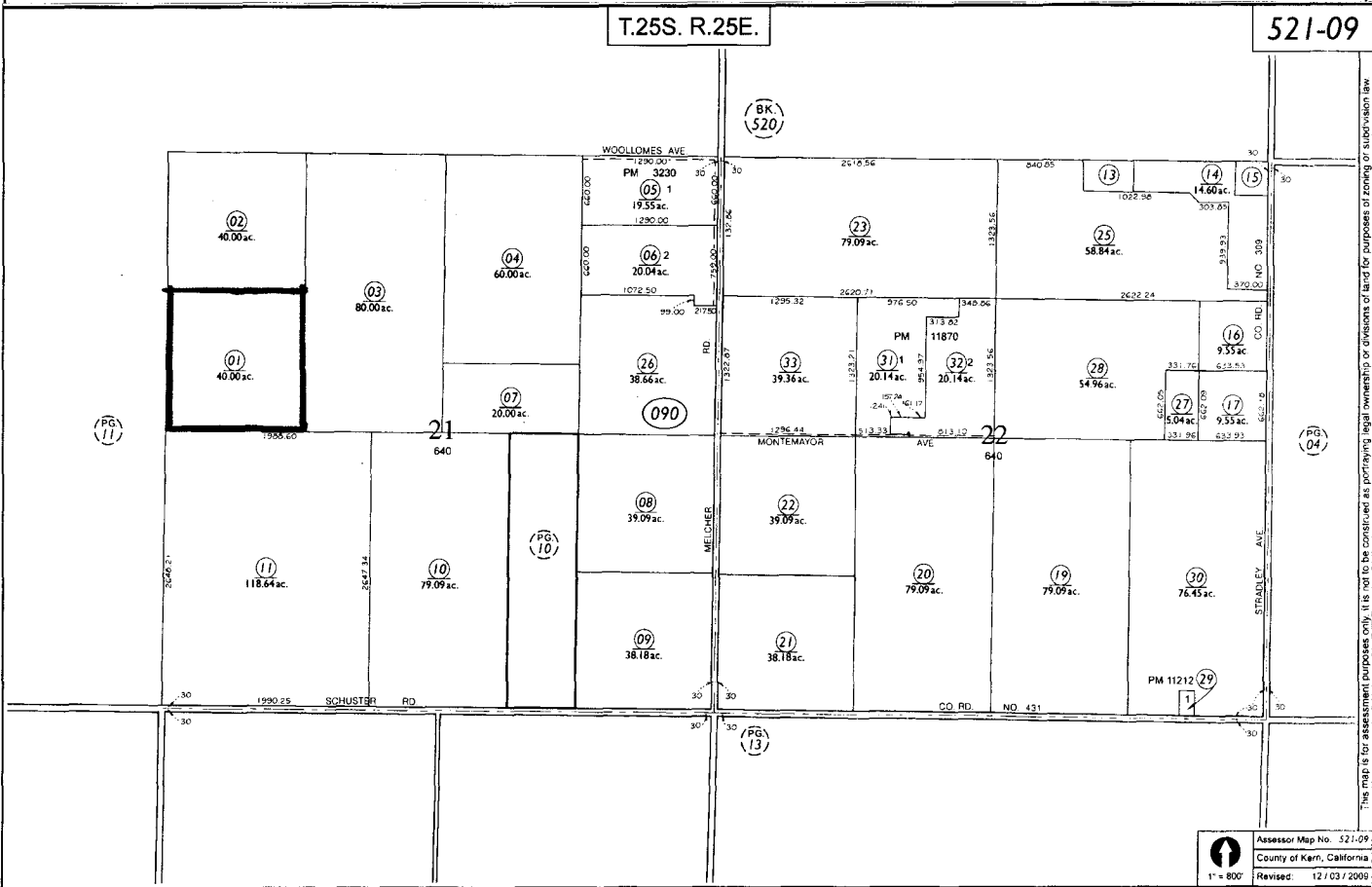
Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

Prior Detail & Parcel Map

Owner	: U S A	Parcel	: 521 090 01 00
CoOwner	:	Land	:
Site	: *no Site Address*	Struct	:
Mail	: Ca	Other	:
Xfered	:	Total	:
Price	: Doc # :	Exempt	:
LoanAmt	: Deed :	Type	:
Lender	: Loan :	% Imprv	:
Legal	:SECTION 21 TOWNSHIP 25 RANGE 25	% Owned	:
MapGrid	:	Vesting	:
LandUse	: 6000 Gov,USA	12-13 Tax	:
Census	: Tract : 46.04 Block : 2	Phone	:

Bedrooms	:	Bldg SqFt	:	Lot Acres	: 40.00
Bathrooms	:	1st Flr SqFt	:	Lot SqFt	: 1,742,400
Fireplace	:	2nd Flr SqFt	:	Lot Dimen	:
Air Cond	:	BasementSF	:	Year Built	:
Units	:	Garage Type	:	Bldg Matl	:
Stories	:	Garage SqFt	:	Bldg Shape	: A
Pool	:	AddlRm SqFt	:	Bldg Class	:

Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :
Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :
Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :

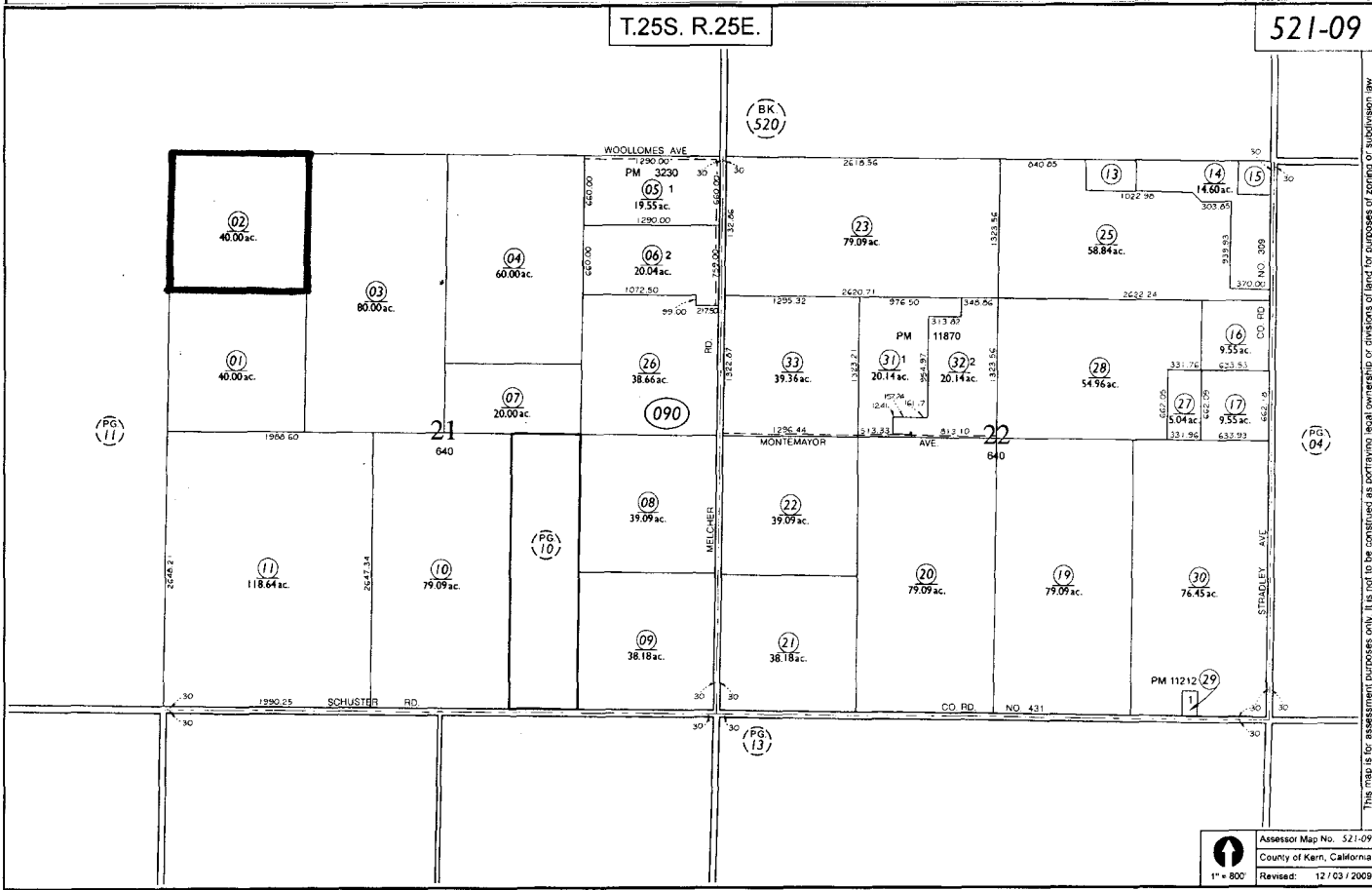


Prior Detail & Parcel Map

Owner : U S A	Parcel : 521 090 02 00
CoOwner :	Land :
Site : *no Site Address*	Struct :
Mail : Ca	Other :
Xfered :	Total :
Price :	Exempt :
LoanAmt :	Type :
Lender :	% Imprv :
Legal : SECTION 21 TOWNSHIP 25 RANGE 25	% Owned :
MapGrid :	Vesting :
LandUse : 6000 Gov,USA	12-13 Tax :
Census : Tract : 46.04 Block : 2	Phone :

Bedrooms :	Bldg SqFt :	Lot Acres : 40.00
Bathrooms :	1st Flr SqFt :	Lot SqFt : 1,742,400
Fireplace :	2nd Flr SqFt :	Lot Dimen :
Air Cond :	BasementSF :	Year Built :
Units :	Garage Type :	Bldg Matl :
Stories :	Garage SqFt :	Bldg Shape : A
Pool :	AddlRm SqFt :	Bldg Class :

Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :
Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :
Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :

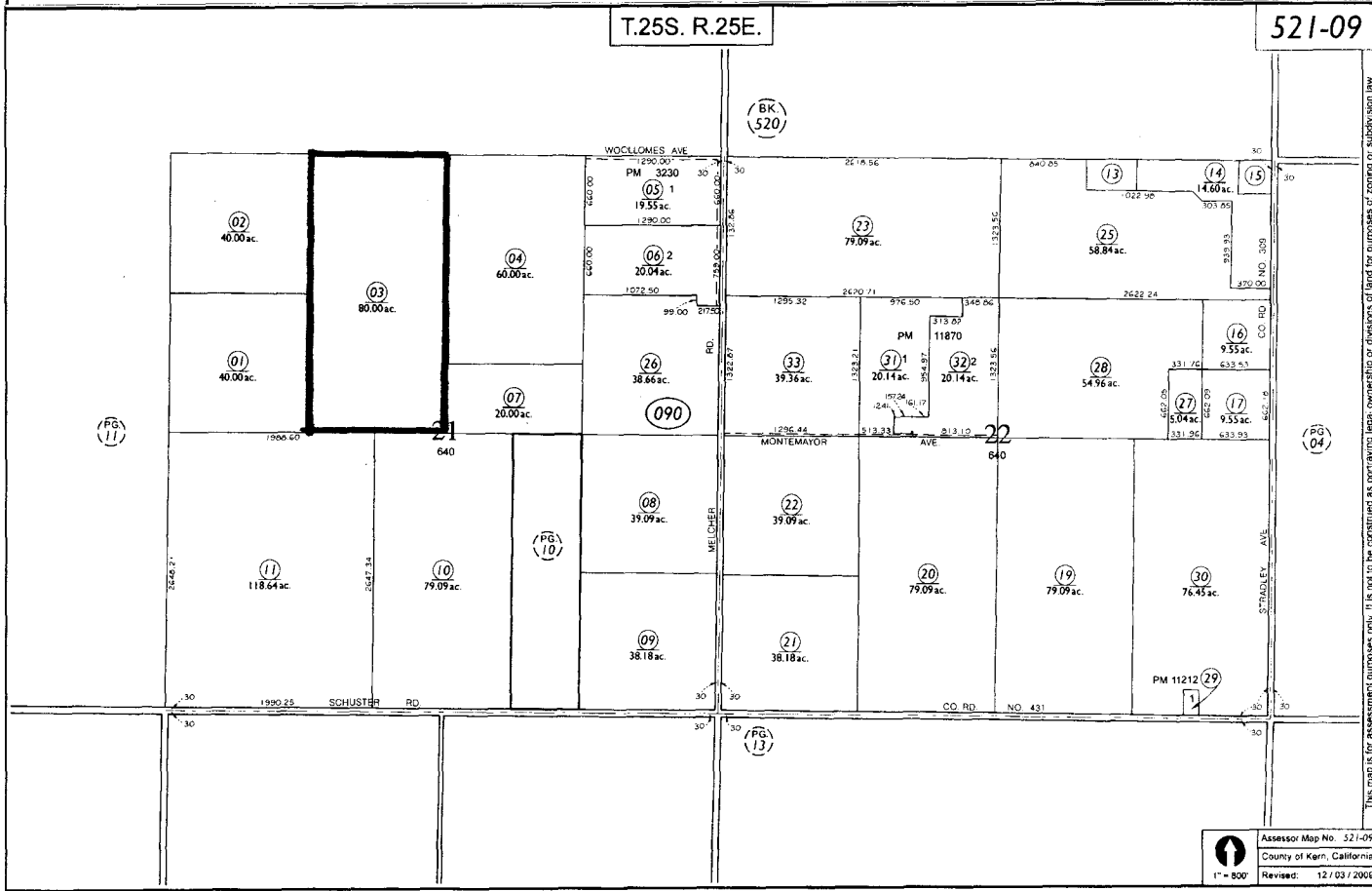


Prior Detail & Parcel Map

Owner	: U S A	Parcel	: 521 090 03 00
CoOwner	:	Land	:
Site	: *no Site Address*	Struct	:
Mail	: Ca	Other	:
Xfered	:	Total	:
Price	:	Exempt	:
LoanAmt	:	Type	:
Lender	:	% Imprv	:
Legal	: SECTION 21 TOWNSHIP 25 RANGE 25	% Owned	:
MapGrid	:	Vesting	:
LandUse	: 6000 Gov,USA	12-13 Tax	:
Census	: Tract : 46.04 Block : 2	Phone	:

Bedrooms	:	Bldg SqFt	:	Lot Acres	: 80.00
Bathrooms	:	1st Flr SqFt	:	Lot SqFt	: 3,484,800
Fireplace	:	2nd Flr SqFt	:	Lot Dimen	:
Air Cond	:	BasementSF	:	Year Built	:
Units	:	Garage Type	:	Bldg Matl	:
Stories	:	Garage SqFt	:	Bldg Shape	: A
Pool	:	AddlRm SqFt	:	Bldg Class	:

Prior Owner	:	Pr. \$/Date/Doc	:
Prior Owner	:	Pr. \$/Date/Doc	:
Prior Owner	:	Pr. \$/Date/Doc	:

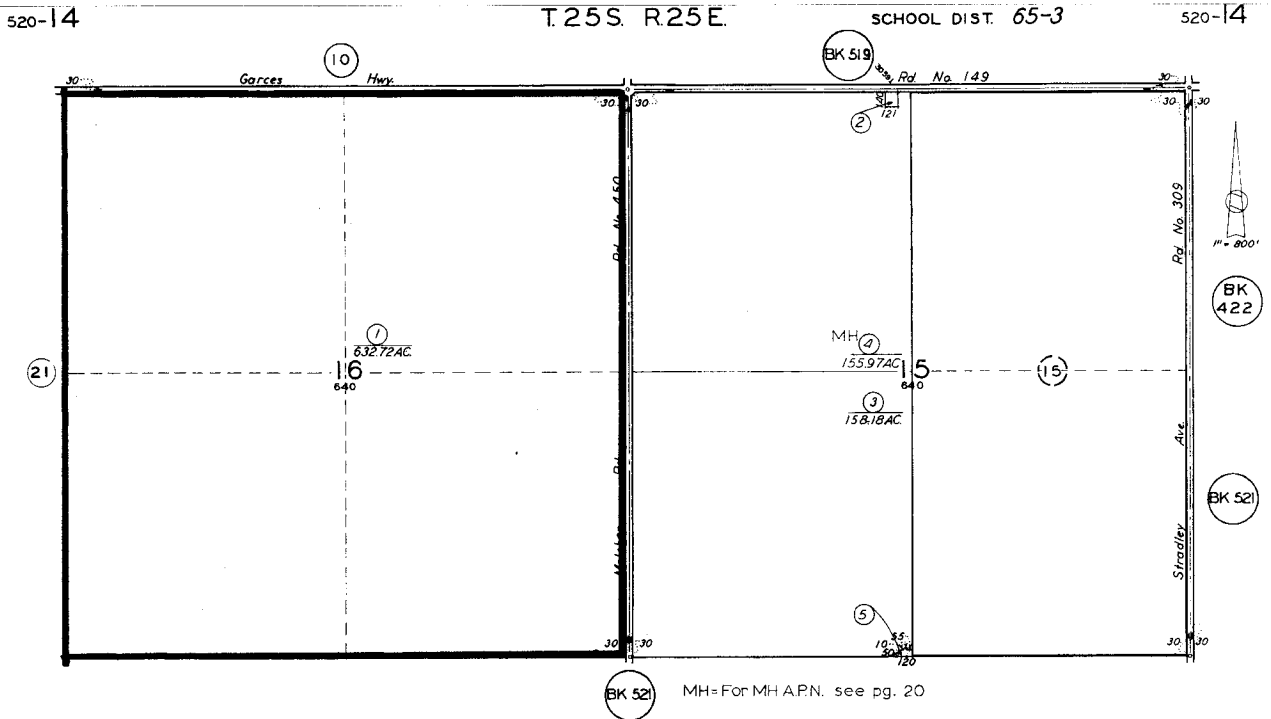


Prior Detail & Parcel Map

Owner	: U S A	Parcel	: 520 140 01 00
CoOwner	:	Land	:
Site	: *no Site Address*	Struct	:
Mail	:	Other	:
Xfered	:	Total	:
Price	:	Exempt	:
LoanAmt	:	Type	:
Lender	:	% Imprv	:
Legal	:SECTION 16 TOWNSHIP 25 RANGE 25	% Owned	:
MapGrid	:	Vesting	:
LandUse	: 6000 Gov,USA	12-13 Tax	:
Census	: Tract : 46.04 Block : 3	Phone	:

Bedrooms	:	Bldg SqFt	:	Lot Acres	: 632.72
Bathrooms	:	1st Flr SqFt	:	Lot SqFt	: 27,561,283
Fireplace	:	2nd Flr SqFt	:	Lot Dimen	:
Air Cond	:	BasementSF	:	Year Built	:
Units	:	Garage Type	:	Bldg Matl	:
Stories	:	Garage SqFt	:	Bldg Shape	: A
Pool	:	AddlRm SqFt	:	Bldg Class	:

Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :
Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :
Prior Owner :	Pr. \$/Date/Doc :



Note: This map is for assessment purposes only. It is not to be construed as portraying legal ownership or divisions of land for purposes of zoning or subdivision law.

ASSESSORS MAP NO. 520-14
COUNTY OF KERN

Delano VOA Habitat

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife describes both survey occurrences from this parcel and the potential for listed wildlife occupying the alkali desert scrub habitat and San Joaquin Valley grassland that occurs on the Delano Voice of America Site as follows:

At the last survey conducted on the property, at least two known endangered species were detected on the property. This included the State and Federal endangered blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia silus*) which is also a State Fully Protected Species, and the State and Federal endangered Tipton kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoide nitratoide*).

Similarly, the following sensitive species likely occur on the property: Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*, ST), San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*, ST,FE), San Joaquin antelope squirrel (*Ammospermophilus nelsoni*, ST), Buena Vista Lake Ornate Shrew (*Sorex ornatus relictus*, FE), (greater sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*, ST), American badger (*Taxidea taxus*, SSC), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*, SSC), western spadefoot toad (*Spea hammondi*, SSC), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*, SSC), Tulare grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus tularensis*, SSC), California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*, SSC) goldeneagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*, SFPS), San Joaquin wooly-threads (*Monolopia congdonii*, FE), and numerous other sensitive plant and bird species.

Acronym legend: SE-State Endangered, ST-State Threatened, SFPP-State Fully-Protected; Species, SSC-State Species of Special Concern, FE-Federal Endangered, FT-Federal Threatened.

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Issue PVI:			\$6.70
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94102 Zone-8 First-Class Mail Letter 1.20 oz.			\$0.70
Expected Delivery: Sat 04/12/14			
=====			
Issue PVI:			\$0.70
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94102 Zone-8 First-Class Mail Letter 1.20 oz.			\$0.70
Expected Delivery: Sat 04/12/14			
=====			
Issue PVI:			\$0.70
=====			
Total:			\$8.10

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PS Form 3800, August 2006 See Reverse for Instructions

APR 09 2014
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TN 37129-9988
APR 09 2014
MURFREESBORO
TN 37129-9988

Attachment 2

Attachment 1

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES TABLE**

**PROJECT: City of Delano 2045 General Plan Update SCH No. 2026060270 (Plan)
Notice of Preparation (NOP)**

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	
		State	Federal
Tipton kangaroo rat	<i>Dipodomys nitratoides nitratoides</i>	E	E
Blunt-nosed leopard lizard	<i>Gambelia sila</i>	E/ FP	E
San Joaquin antelope squirrel	<i>Ammospermophilus nelsoni</i>	T	T
San Joaquin kit fox	<i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i>	T	E
Greater sandhill crane	<i>Antigone canadensis tabida</i>	T/FP	-
Swainson's hawk	<i>Buteo swainsonii</i>	T	-
Tricolored blackbird	<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	T	-
Golden eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	FP	-
Western burrowing owl	<i>Athene cunicularia hypugaea</i>	C	-
Crotch's bumble bee	<i>Bombus crotchii</i>	C	-
American badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	SSC	-
Buena Vista Lake ornate shrew	<i>Sorex ornatus relictus</i>	SSC	E
Tulare grasshopper mouse	<i>Onychomys torridus tularensis</i>	SSC	-
Loggerhead shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	SSC	-
Coast horned lizard	<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	SSC	-
Northern California legless lizard	<i>Anniella pulchra</i>	SSC	-
San Joaquin coachwhip	<i>Masticophis flagellum ruddocki</i>	SSC	-
Western spadefoot	<i>Spea hammondi</i>	SSC	PT
Vernal pool fairy shrimp	<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	SA	T
California jewelflower	<i>Caulanthus californicus</i>	E/1B.1	E
San Joaquin woolly-threads	<i>Monolopia congdonii</i>	1B.2	E
E= Endangered, T= Threatened, C= Candidate for listing as Threatened and/or Endangered, SSC= Species of Special Concern, FP= Fully Protected, PT= Proposed Threatened, SA = Special Animal, (-)= None 1B.1/1B.2 = California Rare Plant Rankings			