BIOLOGICAL HABITAT ASSESSMENT
DESERT LAWN SLOPE RESTORATION PROJECT
CITY OF BEAUMONT
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ii
1.0 INTRODUCTION 3
1.1 Project Location 3
1.2 Project Description 3
1.3 Environmental Regulations 3
1.4 MSHCP Consistency Analysis 4
2.0 SURVEY METHODOLOGY 10
2.1 General Biological Survey 10
3.0 SURVEY RESULTS 11
3.1 Vegetation 11
3.2 Wildlife 13
3.3 Sensitive Biological Resources 14
3.4 Habitat Suitability Assessment for Special-Status Species 15
4.0 IMPACTS 16
4.1 Biological Resources Impacts 16
4.2 Jurisdictional Waters and Riparian Habitat 17
4.3 Wildlife and Habitat Use 17
4.4 Cumulative and Long-Term Biological Impacts 17
4.5 CEQA Significance Thresholds and Impact Evaluation 18
5.0 SUMMARY 20
6.0 REFERENCES 21

FIGURES
Figure 1 - Project Vicinity 6
Figure 2 - Project Location 7
Figure 3 - Project Site 8
Figure 4 - Vegetation Communities 9

TABLES
Table 1 - Plant Species Observed within the Project Area 11
Table 2 - Vegetation Communities Mapped within the Project Survey Area 13
Table 3 - Wildlife Species Observed within the Project area 14

APPENDICES
A. Survey Photographs

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Geovironment Consulting was contracted to conduct a general biological survey in support of the City of Beaumont Desert Lawn Slope Restoration Project (Project). The Project involves the repair and restoration of a failed storm drain pipeline and associated slope stabilization along a previously developed slope adjacent to Interstate 10 and Desert Lawn Drive in the City of Beaumont, Riverside County, California. The existing 36" CMP drop inlet and 24" corrugated HDPE pipeline have failed, resulting in erosion, slope destabilization, and infrastructure exposure along approximately 145 linear feet of the pipeline corridor. A general biological survey was conducted on February 25, 2026 by Brant Primrose, Staff Biologist. Field observations documented disturbed Riversidean sage scrub and non-native annual grassland with no sensitive biological resources present within the Project impact area. The Project site is located within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) boundary; however, the site is not within a Criteria Area Cell or focused survey area, and no MSHCP-required surveys are triggered. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, project impacts to biological resources are considered less than significant, and no mitigation beyond standard nesting bird avoidance measures is required. This report supports filing of a Notice of Exemption (NOE) under CEQA Guidelines §15301(d) (Class 1 Categorical Exemption) for the restoration/rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged facilities.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Location

The proposed project site is in the City of Beaumont, Riverside County, California. The Project is located adjacent to Interstate 10 and Desert Lawn Drive, approximately 0.3 miles east of the Highland Springs Avenue interchange. The project site is situated on a previously graded slope along the south side of Desert Lawn Drive, directly northwest of the Desert Lawn Cemetery. The project area is situated within the SW¼ of Section 32NWSW, Township 2S, Range 1W, San Bernardino Base and Meridian, as shown on the USGS 7.5-minute Beaumont, California topographic quadrangle. The approximate project centroid coordinates are 33.9521° N latitude, 117.0126° W longitude (NAD83/WGS84). Site elevations range from approximately 2,461 to 2,493 feet above mean sea level (amsl) based on topographic survey data.

1.2 Project Description

The proposed project consists of the repair and restoration of a failed storm drain pipeline and associated slope stabilization along a previously developed slope adjacent to Interstate 10 and Desert Lawn Drive in the City of Beaumont. The existing 36" CMP drop inlet and 24" corrugated HDPE pipeline have failed, resulting in erosion, slope destabilization, and infrastructure exposure along approximately 145 linear feet of the pipeline corridor.

Specific construction activities include: (1) excavation and replacement of approximately 145 linear feet of the failed 24" corrugated HDPE storm drain pipe with new 24" RCP pipeline within the slope; (2) installation of a new 36" CMP drop inlet, headwall, and riprap energy dissipator at the drainage outlet; (3) slope stabilization through slurry application, compaction, and grading; and (4) revegetation of disturbed areas following construction. The Project footprint is limited to the existing pipeline corridor and immediately adjacent disturbed areas and does not expand the capacity or footprint of the existing drainage system. Total ground disturbance is estimated at approximately 0.50 acres, consistent with the mapped survey area.

1.3 Environmental Regulations

The following environmental regulatory frameworks are applicable to biological resources for the Project:

Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) / Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

The Project site was surveyed for federally listed threatened and endangered species. No listed species were detected and habitat conditions are considered low quality. The MBTA (16 U.S.C. §§ 703–712) and California Fish and Game Code §§ 3503 and 3503.5 prohibit

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the take of migratory birds, active nests, and eggs. If construction occurs during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31), a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted within 72 hours of ground disturbance.

California Endangered Species Act (CESA)

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) administers CESA protections for state-listed species. No CESA-listed species were observed during the survey, and the disturbed nature of the site substantially reduces the likelihood of occurrence.

California Fish and Game Code § 1600 — Streambed Alteration Agreement

No jurisdictional waters, wetlands, or riparian habitat were identified within the Project area. No ephemeral features on-site meet the threshold for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement. Therefore, no Section 1600 permit is required.

Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)

The Project site is located within the MSHCP plan boundary. As documented in Section 1.4, the site is not within a Criteria Area Cell or focused survey area, no MSHCP-required surveys are triggered, and the Project is consistent with the Plan's provisions.

1.4 MSHCP Consistency Analysis

The project site is located within the boundaries of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), and compliance with the MSHCP is required. A review of the MSHCP Conservation Area maps and Criteria Area Cell overlays indicates that the project site is not located within a Criteria Area Cell, Public/Quasi-Public Conservation Land, or a Habitat Linkage. Therefore, Section 6.1.1 (Protection of Existing Public Lands and EHP Lands) does not apply.

MSHCP Survey Requirements

- The site is **not located within a Criteria Area Species Survey Area** or **Narrow Endemic Plant Species Survey Area**, based on review of MSHCP survey requirements maps (Appendices C and D).
- The site is also **not located within any Additional Survey Needs and Procedures Area** identified in Section 6.3.2 of the MSHCP.
- Based on this determination, **no focused surveys for MSHCP-covered species** are required under the Plan.

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MSHCP Section 6.1.4 – Urban/Wildlands Interface (UWUI)

Although the project is located in a largely urbanized area, the site design incorporates standard drainage infrastructure and landscaping buffers that will prevent edge effects and is therefore consistent with the Urban/Wildlands Interface guidelines under Section 6.1.4.

Conclusion

The project is consistent with the provisions of the MSHCP and is not subject to focused survey requirements. No further action under the MSHCP is required at this time.

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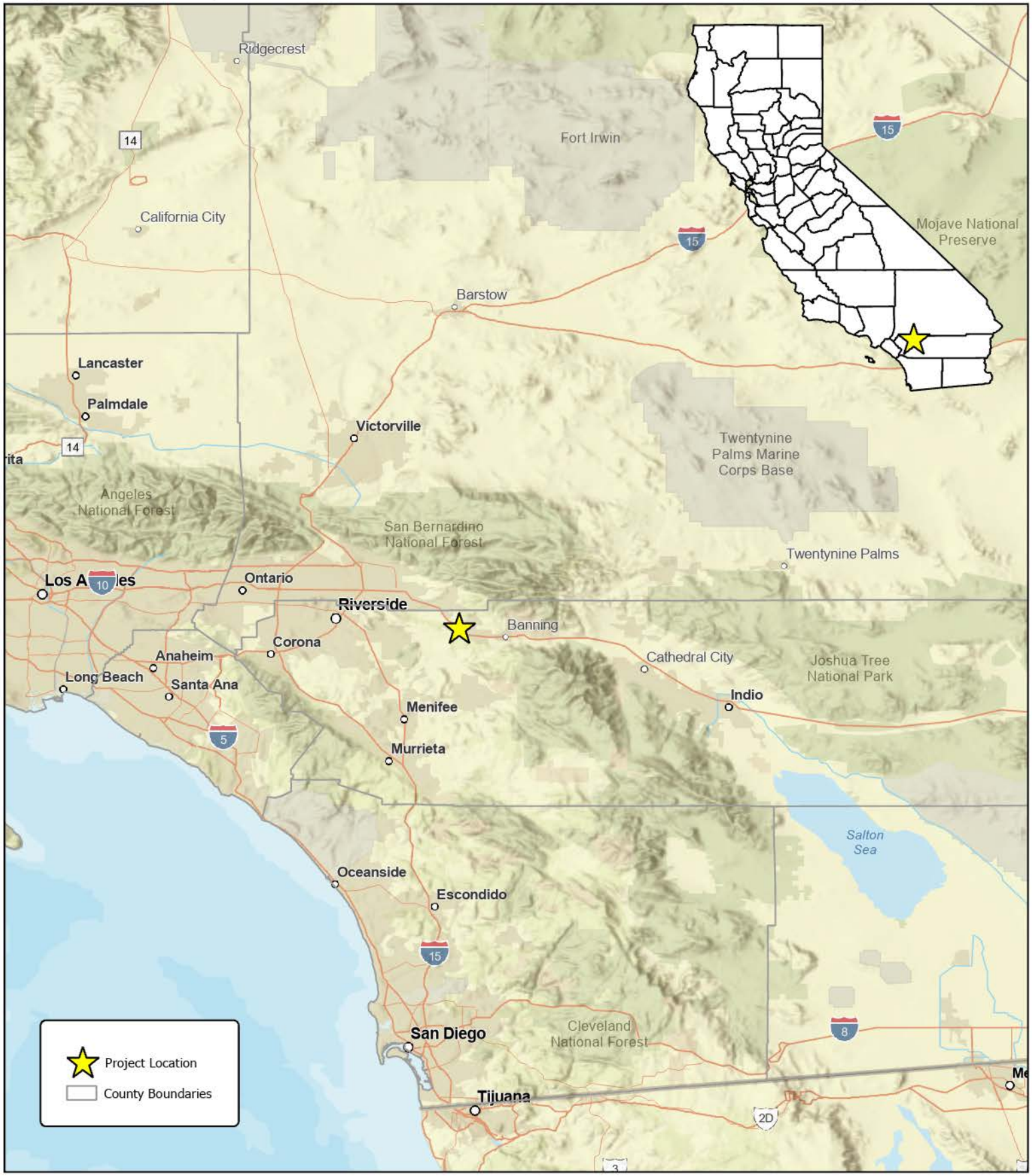
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esri Partner Network Bronze

Miles

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Desert Lawn Slope Restoration Project
Figure 1: Regional Location

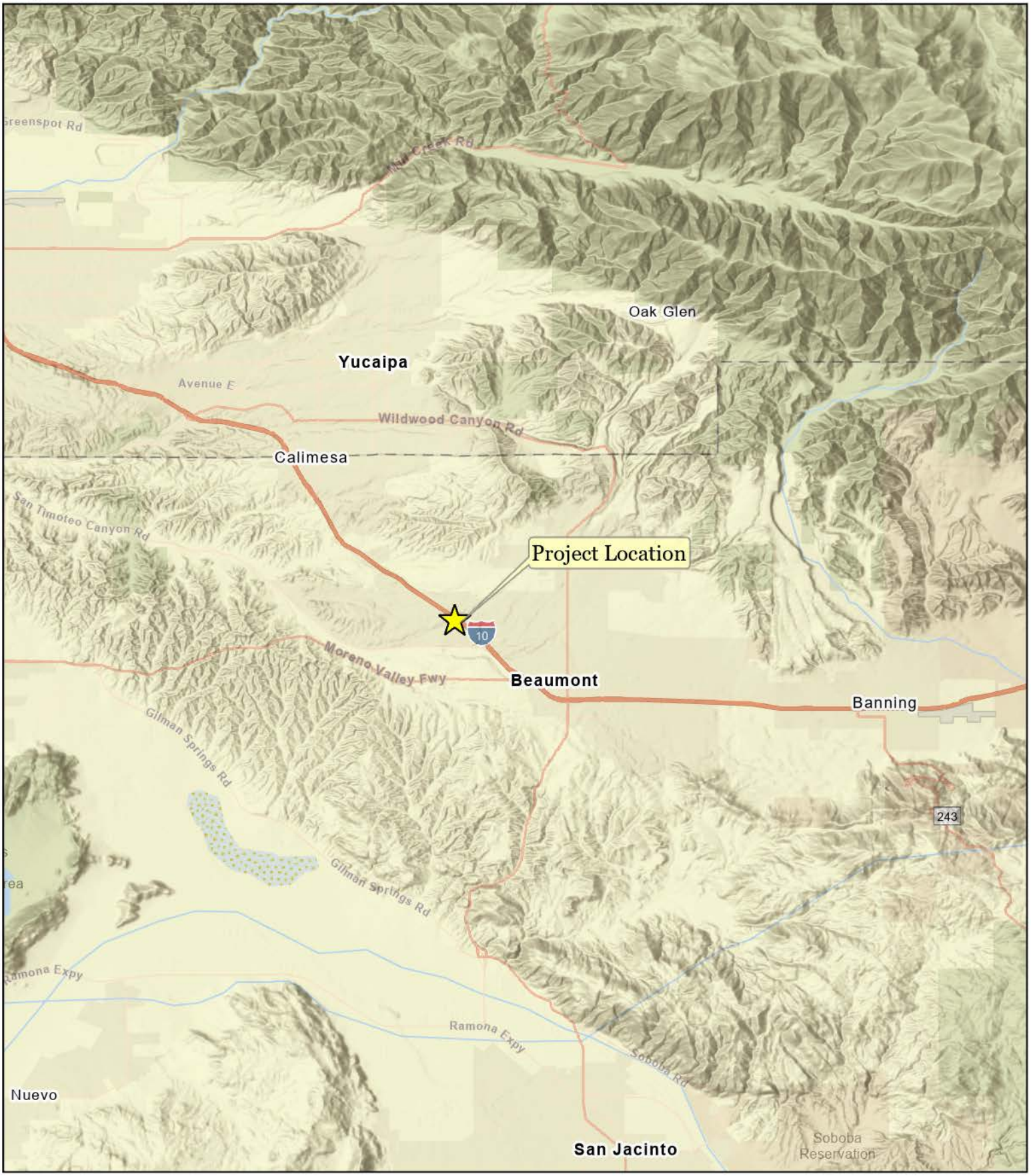


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Desert Lawn Slope Restoration Project
Figure 2: Project Location



US Feet
0 50 100

Desert Lawn Slope Restoration Project
Figure 3: Project Site



US Feet
0 50 100

Desert Lawn Slope Restoration Project
Figure 4: Vegetation Communities



2.0 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

2.1 General Biological Survey

A biological survey of the Project area was conducted to document species of plant and animals present at the time of the survey; and if possible, ascertain the potential for occurrence of sensitive, endangered or threatened species within the Project area and vicinity. To meet the above outlined goal, all sign (including track, scat, and others), direct observation, and auditory inputs (such as songs and calls) were utilized to identify the species present. Equipment used for the survey included Garmin GPS, Arrow GNSS, binoculars, thermometer, anemometer, and digital cameras.

A biological resource survey was conducted on February 25th, 2026. Biologist Brant Primrose started survey at 10 a.m. and ended at 12 p.m. Weather conditions were clear skies and 75 degrees with winds at 1 to 2 mph.

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3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Vegetation

The Project area encompasses approximately 0.50 acres of mapped survey area. Five vegetation communities and land cover types were identified and mapped within the Project footprint during the February 25, 2026 biological survey (Table 1; Figure 4). Vegetation communities and their respective acreages are summarized in Table 1a below. The site is dominated by Non-Native Grassland, which comprises the majority of the survey area at 0.335 acres (67.3%). This community is characterized by a dense, continuous cover of invasive annual grasses including red brome (*Bromus madritensis*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), wild oat (*Avena barbata*), and red-stem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), with scattered ruderal forbs. Non-native grassland dominates the pipeline alignment and adjacent access areas where prior grading and maintenance activities have suppressed native vegetation recruitment.

Table 1 - Plant Species Observed within the Project Area

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
PLANTS	
Acmispon glaber	Deerweed
Ambrosia psilostachya	Ragweed
Amsinckia menziesii	Common fiddleneck
Artemisia californica	Sagebrush
Artemisia douglasiana	Douglas mugwort
Avena barbata	Wild Oat
Brassica nigra	Black mustard
Bromus diandrus	Ripgut brome
Bromus madritensis	Red Brome
Conyza canadensis	Horseweed
Cynodon dactylon	Bermuda grass
Corethrogyne filaginifolia	California Sand-Aster
Crassula connata	Pygmyweed
Croton californicus	Croton
Croton setigerus	Doveweed
Cryptantha intermedia	Popcorn flower
Encelia farinosa	Brittlebrush
Eriogonum fasciculatum	Buckwheat
Erodium cicutarium	Red Stem Filaree
Eucalyptus gunnii	Cider gum

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SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Helianthus annus	Annual sunflower
Hirschfeldia incana	Shortleaf pod
Heterotheca grandiflora	Telegraph weed
Lactuca serriola	Prickly Lettuce
Lupinus bicolor	Lupine
Matricaria discoidea	Pineappleweed
Malva parviflora	Cheeseweed
Marrubium vulgare	Horehound
Melilotus alba	Clover
Nicotiana glauca	Tree tobacco
Pectocarya linearis	Combseed
Phacelia cicutaria	Cicutaria
Pseudognaphalium californicum	California everlasting
Salvia mellifera	Black Sage
Sambucus mexicanus	Elderberry
Schinus terebinthifolia	Brazilian pepper tree
Sisybrium irio	London Rocket
Sonchus asper	Spiny sowthistle
Vulpia myuros	Rat's tail Fescue

Riversidean sage scrub occurs as a discontinuous patch along the upper slope margin at 0.055 acres (11.1%). This community is characterized by common native shrubs including California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), brittlebrush (*Encelia farinosa*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), and deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*). Native shrub cover is interspersed with a high cover of invasive annual grasses and ruderal species, reflecting long-term edge effects from adjacent roadways and the pipeline corridor. The integrity of this community is considered low due to fragmentation and invasive species dominance.

Disturbed habitat occurs as a 0.043-acre patch (8.6%) within and immediately adjacent to the pipeline corridor, reflecting prior ground disturbance associated with pipeline installation and maintenance activities. Vegetation within this type is sparse and composed primarily of ruderal annual species with little to no native shrub cover.

Disturbed Coastal Sage Scrub is present in a small 0.012-acre area (2.4%) within the transitional zone between the scrub and grassland communities. This type represents a highly degraded expression of native coastal sage scrub in which native shrubs persist at low cover amid a matrix of invasive annuals and disturbance-adapted species.

Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.) is present in three patches totaling 0.052 acres (10.5%),

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concentrated near the upper slope margin and drainage outlet areas. These non-native trees occur as isolated individuals and small stands and contribute to reduced native habitat continuity and increased fire risk potential within the Project area.

Overall, the vegetation within the Project area is best characterized as disturbed Riversidean sage scrub transitioning to non-native annual grassland, with low habitat integrity and limited native plant community structure.

Table 2 - Vegetation Communities Mapped within the Project Survey Area

Vegetation Community	Acres	% of Total
Non-Native Grassland	0.335	67.3%
Riversidean Scrub	0.055	11.1%
Eucalyptus	0.052	10.5%
Disturbed	0.043	8.6%
Disturbed Coastal Sage Scrub	0.012	2.4%
Total	**0.498**	**100%**

3.2 Wildlife

A total of eight (8) wildlife species were observed or detected during the February 25, 2026 biological survey, including seven (7) bird species and one (1) mammal species. No amphibians or reptiles were observed, likely reflecting the winter survey conditions and disturbed nature of the site. Observed bird species included common raven (Corvus corax), red-tailed hawk (Buteo jamaicensis), lesser goldfinch (Spinus psaltria), black phoebe (Sayornis nigricans), song sparrow (Melospiza melodia), northern mockingbird (Mimus polyglottos), and house finch (Haemorhous mexicanus). Cottontail rabbit (Sylvilagus sp.) was the only mammal species detected. All species observed are common and widely distributed in disturbed habitats throughout southern California. No sensitive, threatened, or endangered wildlife species were detected, and no evidence of sensitive species use (e.g., burrows, nests, sign) was observed within or adjacent to the Project footprint. The disturbed and fragmented condition of the site, combined with proximity to Interstate 10 and ongoing human activity, substantially limits habitat suitability for sensitive wildlife.

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Table 3 - Wildlife Species Observed within the Project area

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Birds	
Corvus corax	Common Raven
Buteo jamaicensis	Red tail hawk
Spinus psaltria	Lesser goldfinch
Sayornis nigricans	Black phoebe
Melospiza melodia	Song Sparrow
Mimus polyglottos	Northern Mockingbird
Haemorhous mexicanus	House Finch
Mammals	
Sylvilagus sp.	Cottontail

3.3 Sensitive Biological Resources

No sensitive natural communities as defined by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) were identified within the Project footprint. The vegetation present — disturbed Riversidean sage scrub transitioning to non-native annual grassland — does not meet criteria for a sensitive natural community due to low native species cover, fragmented structure, and high invasive annual grass cover. Although Disturbed Coastal Sage Scrub is present on-site at 0.012 acres, this community does not meet CDFW's definition of a sensitive natural community under the MSHCP, nor does it trigger MSHCP Section 6.3.1 survey requirements, due to its highly degraded character, low native shrub cover, and lack of structural and compositional integrity consistent with a functional coastal sage scrub community.

No special-status plant or wildlife species were observed during the February 25, 2026 biological survey. A review of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants identified several species with potential to occur in the broader region; however, suitable habitat is not present within the Project footprint due to the highly disturbed condition of the site, dominance of non-native vegetation, and ongoing edge effects from adjacent roadways and infrastructure.

No jurisdictional waters, wetlands, or riparian habitat were identified within the Project area. Ephemeral surface features observed on-site do not exhibit hydrologic or vegetative characteristics consistent with Waters of the United States or State, and are not expected to fall under federal (USACE Section 404) or state (CDFW Section 1600) jurisdiction.

Based on site conditions, surrounding land use context, and database review, the potential for occurrence of special-status species is considered low to absent. No further focused surveys are required.

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3.4 Habitat Suitability Assessment for Special-Status Species

A review of site conditions, field observations, and available biological databases indicate that no sensitive biological resources occur within the Project impact area. The disturbed nature of the pipeline corridor, combined with a lack of native habitat continuity and ongoing anthropogenic influence, substantially reduces the potential for special-status plant or wildlife species to occur.

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4.0 IMPACTS

4.1 Biological Resources Impacts

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in minor, localized impacts to biological resources primarily associated with temporary ground disturbance and limited vegetation removal within an already degraded pipeline corridor. The total Project survey area encompasses approximately 0.498 acres across five vegetation communities and land cover types.

The Project footprint is largely confined to previously disturbed areas dominated by Non-Native Grassland (0.335 acres, 67.3%), which is of low ecological value. Up to approximately 0.055 acres of Riversidean sage scrub and 0.012 acres of Disturbed Coastal Sage Scrub, totaling approximately 0.067 acres of native or semi-native shrubland, may be temporarily disturbed during construction activities. Given the fragmented and degraded condition of these communities, their low habitat integrity, and the confined nature of the pipeline corridor, ecological impacts are considered minor and limited in spatial extent. Eucalyptus stands totaling 0.052 acres may also be disturbed; removal of these non-native trees would not constitute an adverse biological impact.

No special-status plants or wildlife species were observed during field surveys, and the Project site provides low potential for occupancy due to habitat degradation, invasive species dominance, and proximity to ongoing human disturbance. Therefore, impacts to special-status species are expected to be less than significant.

Construction activities may result in short-term disturbance to common wildlife species that utilize the site opportunistically for foraging or movement, including cottontail rabbit, common raven, and passerine birds. These impacts are expected to be temporary and localized, with wildlife expected to relocate to adjacent undisturbed areas during construction.

No jurisdictional waters, wetlands, or riparian habitat will be directly impacted by Project implementation. Ephemeral drainage features observed on-site do not exhibit hydric vegetation or persistent hydrologic function and are not expected to fall under federal or state jurisdiction.

With implementation of standard avoidance measures, including nesting bird protection protocols described in Section 4.5, impacts to biological resources are considered less than significant under CEQA.

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4.2 Jurisdictional Waters and Riparian Habitat

No riparian habitat or federally protected wetlands exist within the Project area. Although minor ephemeral washes were observed, they do not meet the criteria for jurisdictional waters as defined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. These features are non-functional, do not support wetland vegetation or hydrology, and have been significantly disturbed by adjacent land uses and prior site activities.

As a result, the proposed development will not impact any waters of the U.S., wetlands, or riparian habitat. No federal Clean Water Act Section 404 or California Fish and Game Code Section 1600 permitting will be required for the project.

4.3 Wildlife and Habitat Use

The site offers limited habitat value due to its high level of disturbance and dominance by non-native plant species. While a limited number of common wildlife species (e.g., cottontail rabbits, common raven, house finch) were observed, no sensitive wildlife species were detected, and the likelihood of presence is low due to the lack of appropriate habitat. The project will result in the removal of marginally functional habitat and is not expected to adversely affect local or regional wildlife populations.

4.4 Cumulative and Long-Term Biological Impacts

Cumulative biological impacts in the Project vicinity are primarily associated with ongoing urban expansion, infrastructure maintenance activities, and continued fragmentation of Riversidean sage scrub habitats within western Riverside County.

Although the Project contributes to a minor incremental impact through the disturbance of previously degraded habitat, the surrounding landscape is already heavily influenced by development, roads, and utility corridors. As a result, the Project does not represent a substantial contribution to regional habitat loss or fragmentation.

The long-term biological condition of the Project area is expected to remain dominated by non-native annual grasses and disturbed scrub unless active habitat restoration or management is implemented. In the absence of restoration, invasive species are likely to persist and continue to suppress native vegetation recruitment.

When considered in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, the incremental impact of the proposed Project is not expected to be cumulatively considerable. The Project does not conflict with regional conservation objectives, including the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), and does not affect core habitat linkages or conservation

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area lands.

Therefore, cumulative and long-term biological impacts are considered less than significant.

4.5 CEQA Significance Thresholds and Impact Evaluation

In accordance with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the project would have a significant impact on biological resources if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species.
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community.
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands.
- Interfere substantially with the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species.
- Conflict with the provisions of any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Impact Analysis

- **Special-Status Species:** No special-status species were observed and suitable habitat is not present within the Project footprint. The project would have **less-than-significant impacts** on special-status species.
- **Sensitive Habitats:** The site supports disturbed non-native grassland, degraded Riversidean sage scrub, and Disturbed Coastal Sage Scrub. None of the vegetation communities present meet CDFW criteria for a sensitive natural community. **No impacts to sensitive vegetation communities are expected.**
- **Jurisdictional Waters:** No waters, wetlands, or riparian habitat exist on the site. No Section 404 or Section 1600 permits are required. **No impact.**
- **Wildlife Movement:** The site is located within a developed corridor bounded by Interstate 10 and Desert Lawn Drive and does not provide functional wildlife movement corridors. **Less-than-significant impact.**
- **MSHCP Compliance:** The project is consistent with the MSHCP. The site is not within a Criteria Area Cell or focused survey area, no MSHCP-required surveys are triggered, and the Disturbed Coastal Sage Scrub present on-site does not trigger Section 6.3.1 survey requirements. **No impact.**

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

The following standard avoidance measure is required to reduce potential impacts to

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nesting birds to less than significant:

- **Nesting Bird Survey:** If ground disturbance or vegetation removal occurs during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31), a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 72 hours prior to the start of construction. If an active nest is identified within or adjacent to the Project footprint, a no-disturbance buffer shall be established around the nest and maintained until the young have fledged, as determined by the project biologist.

Conclusion: With implementation of the nesting bird avoidance measure above, the Project would not result in significant impacts to biological resources. No mitigation beyond this standard avoidance measure is required. This report supports filing of a Notice of Exemption (NOE) under CEQA Guidelines §15301(d) (Class 1 Categorical Exemption).

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5.0 SUMMARY

Geovironment Consulting was contracted to conduct a general biological survey in support of the City of Beaumont Desert Lawn Slope Restoration Project. The project involves the repair and restoration of a failed 36" CMP drop inlet and 24" corrugated HDPE storm drain pipeline, along with associated slope stabilization, on a previously developed slope adjacent to Interstate 10 and Desert Lawn Drive in the City of Beaumont, Riverside County, California.

A biological survey conducted on February 25, 2026 by Staff Biologist Brant Primrose documented approximately 0.50 acres of disturbed habitat within the Project area. The site is dominated by Non-Native Grassland (0.335 acres) with smaller amounts of Riversidean sage scrub, Disturbed Coastal Sage Scrub, Disturbed habitat, and Eucalyptus woodland. No sensitive biological resources, special-status plant or wildlife species, or jurisdictional waters/wetlands were identified. The Project site lies within the Western Riverside County MSHCP boundary but is not located in a Criteria Area Cell or focused survey area, and no MSHCP-required surveys are triggered.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, impacts to biological resources are less than significant. No mitigation is required beyond standard nesting bird avoidance measures if ground disturbance occurs during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31). This report supports filing of a Notice of Exemption (NOE) under CEQA Guidelines §15301(d) (Class 1 Categorical Exemption) for the restoration/rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged facilities.

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APPENDIX A - SITE PHOTOS

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1. Looking Northwest at project overview with Eucalyptus trees adjacent to the pipeline project.

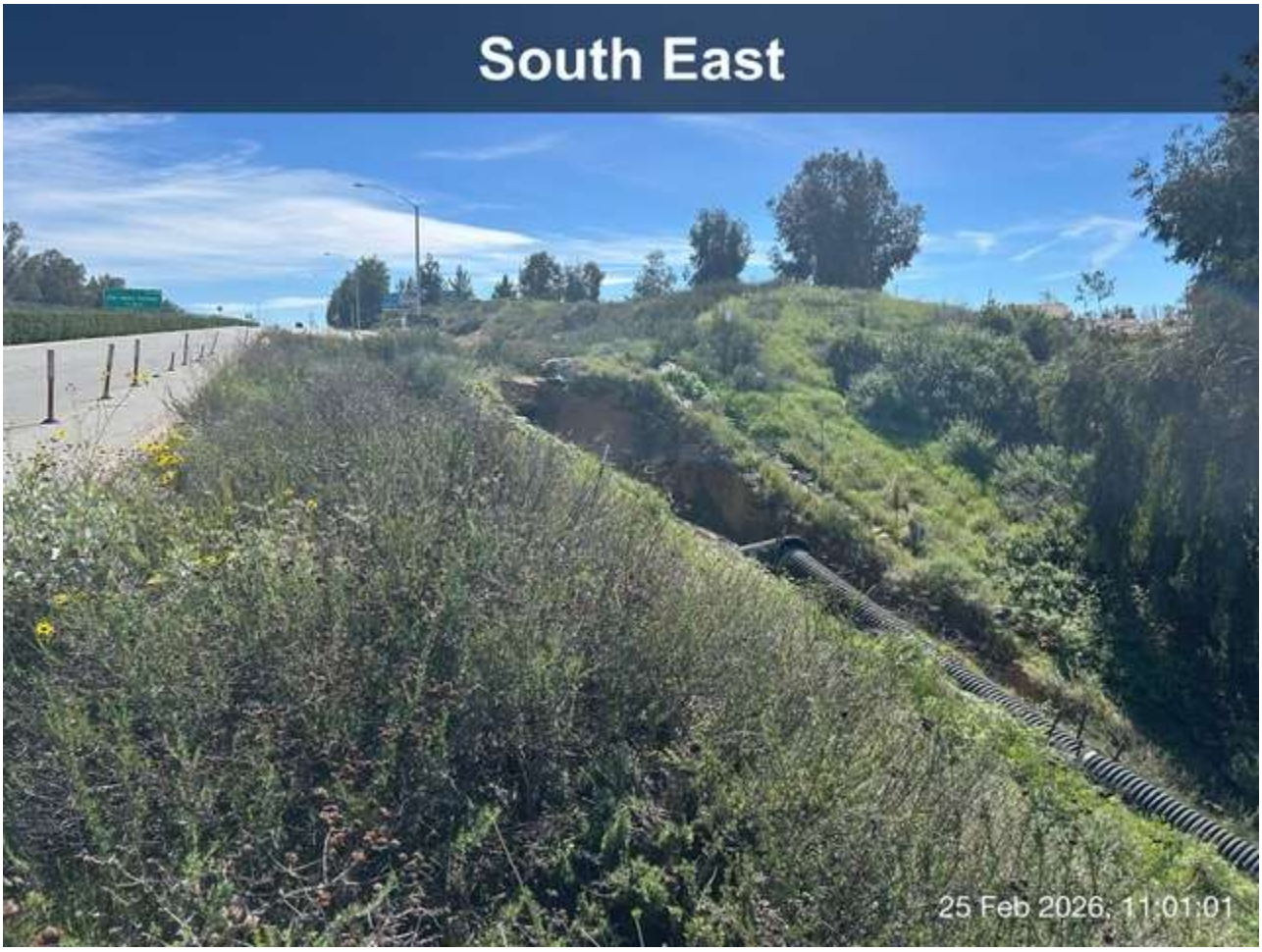


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2. Looking North at drainage pipeline damage .



3. Looking Southeast at pipeline damage within Riversidean sage scrub.



4. Looking West at adjacent property site of Riversidean scrub.



5. Looking Southeast at Riversidean sage scrub adjacent to road.



6. Looking Northwest adjacent to Eucalyptus looking up slope through disturbed habitat.



7. Looking West through Riversidean sage scrub at pipeline project.

