

**WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN
CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS REPORT**

FOR THE

SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 205, AMENDMENT NO. 2 PROJECT

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site is located in the city of Moreno Valley, Riverside County, California. The proposed project consists of the development of approximately 10 acres of light industrial uses.

There is no Cell(s) or Cell Group within the project site and no part of the project site is required for conservation or reserve assembly under the MSHCP.

The only MSHCP survey requirements were for burrowing owl. Focused burrowing owl surveys were conducted in 2015 and no burrowing owl was detected.

Historically, an ephemeral channel crossed the northern portion of the site. Because the remnant channel no longer conveys water and is isolated from both upstream and downstream aquatic resources, the channel is not considered to comprise an MSHCP jurisdictional Riparian/riverine area.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site is located just north of the 60 Freeway in the city of Moreno Valley, Riverside County, California (Figure 1). The entire project area is within the western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) area and therefore requires compliance with the plan. The purpose of this Consistency Analysis (Analysis) report is to summarize the biological data for the proposed [Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project] and to document project's consistency with the goals and objectives of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. The proposed project consists of the development of approximately 10 acres of light industrial uses. The Project is anticipated to be constructed and occupied by 2023.

2.1 Project Area

The Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site is located in Riverside County, California (Figure 1). The site is at the intersection of Ironwood Avenue and Heacock Street; south of Ironwood Avenue, east of Heacock Street and north and west of existing light industrial developments (Figures 2 and 3). The site is within NW Section 6 of Township 2 South and Range 3 West of the Sunnymead, California, United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (Figure 1).

Project Area information:

- Site APNs –
 - 481-020-013, 481-020-029, 481-020-030, 481-020-034, 481-020-035 and 481-020-038
- Permeant impact acres –
 - all 10 acres of the site will be permanently impacted
- Temporary impact acres –
 - There are no onsite temporary impact areas
- Off-site impacts acres –
 - There are no off-site impact areas
- Avoidance or conservation areas –
 - There are no project avoidance or conservation areas

The entire Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site consists of approximately 10 acres of undeveloped land, located within the city limits. The project site has been significantly impacted due to years of disking, grading, disturbance, trash, off-road trails and footpaths. The site is almost flat, topography varies from an elevation of approximately 1,656 feet above msl at the southwestern corner to 1,646 feet above msl at the southeastern corner of the site (Figure 3).

The site has a Mediterranean type climate, with hot dry summers, relatively cool winters and sparse rains. Annual precipitation for the region averages 13.4 inches, and average annual temperature ranges from 49.5⁰ to 78.2⁰ F. Rainfall during the 2020/2021 season was below normal throughout southern California.

2.2 Project Description

The Moreno Valley Festival Specific Plan (Specific Plan No. 205) was adopted by the City of Moreno Valley circa 1987. The 1987 Specific Plan No. 205 (Original Specific Plan) encompassed approximately 73.74 acres located generally at the southeasterly corner of Ironwood Avenue (E – W) and Heacock Street (N – S). The Original Specific Plan was amended in 2018 (Specific Plan No. 205, Amendment No. 1). Specific Plan No. 205, Amendment No. 1 specifically excluded properties located at the southeast corner of Ironwood Avenue at Heacock Street.

Specific Plan No. 205, Amendment No. 2 Project amends the Specific Plan No. 205 Land Use Plan for those properties that were excluded under Specific Plan No. 205, Amendment No. 1. The Project would re-designate the Specific Plan Land Use for the project site from “Retail Commercial” to “Mix of Uses,” and would allow for implementation of up to 220,390 square feet of light industrial uses. The proposed Specific Plan No. 205, Amendment No. 2 responds to evolving community and market demands within the City and region.

The primary goal of the Project is the development of the subject site with light industrial uses. The Project site would be developed with 220,390 square feet light industrial uses, currently configured as one building. Additionally, site access would be provided by two driveways onto Heacock Street, the site's westerly boundary; and one driveway onto Ironwood Avenue, the site's northerly boundary. The proposed project consists of the development of approximately the entire 9.98-acre site. There are no proposed off-site development areas.

Landscaping/streetscaping would occur around the project boundary and internally to enhance perception of the site, and to screen views of the site interior from off-site vantages. All landscaping/streetscaping would comply with applicable provisions of the City Municipal Code.

All Project stormwater management systems would be subject to review and approval by the City. The implemented stormwater management system(s) would comprehensively include proposed drainage improvements, and facilities and programs which act to control and treat stormwater pollutants.

The Project would implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) consistent with City requirements. In this manner, the Project would also comply with requirements of the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and other water quality requirements or storm water management programs specified by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). In combination, implementation of the Project SWPPP, WQMP, and compliance with NPDES Permit and RWQCB requirements acts to protect City and regional water quality by preventing or minimizing potential pollutant discharges to the watershed.

For the purposes of this analysis, the Project Opening Year is defined as 2023, by which time all proposed uses are assumed to be complete, occupied, and operational. For the purposes of this analysis, the Project uses are assumed to be open and operational 7 days per week, 24 hours per day.

2.3 Covered Roads

No MSHCP Covered Roads are involved in this project.

2.4 General Setting

The Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site is located in Riverside County. The area is primarily development, the project site is surrounded by residential developments and light commercial.

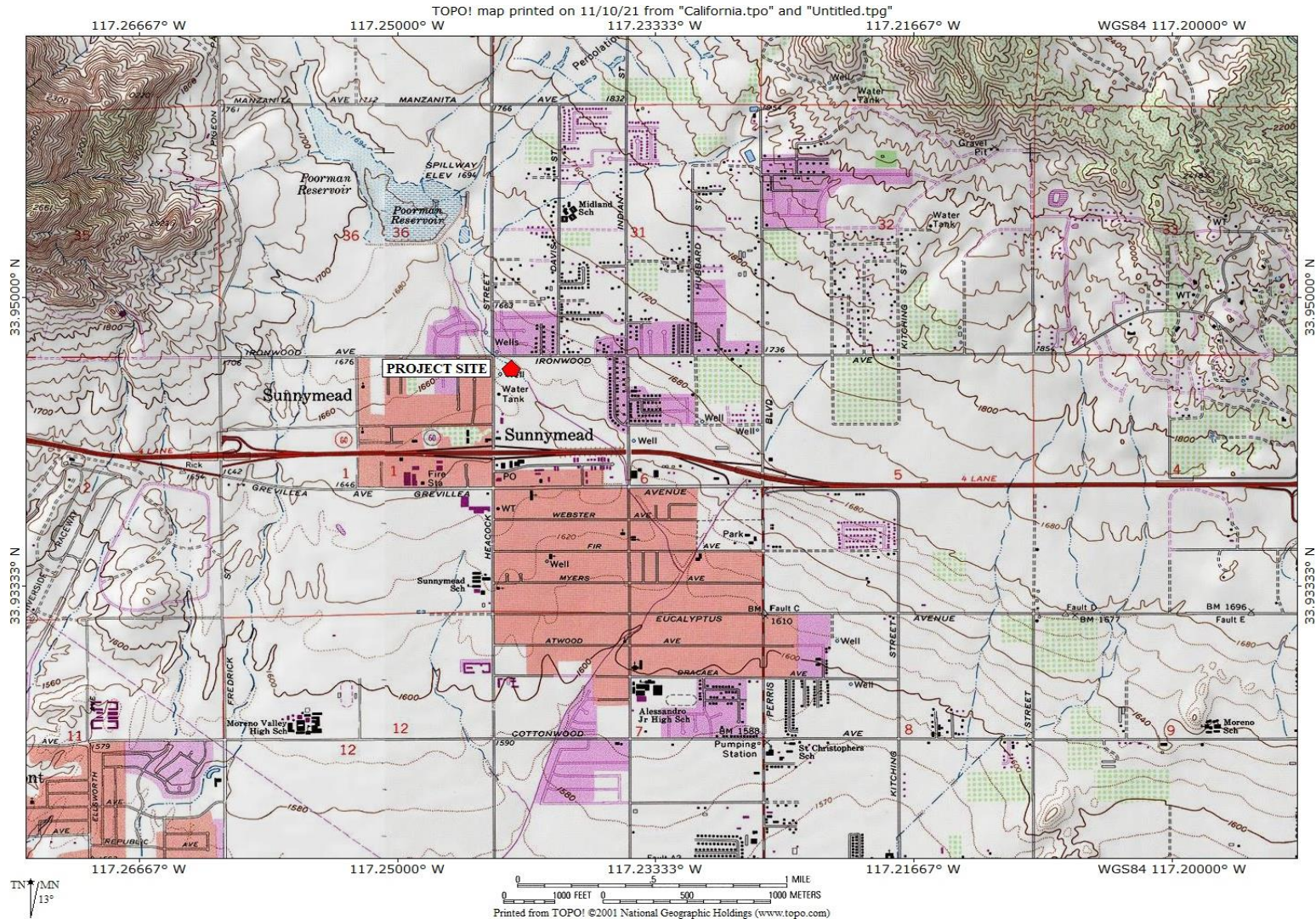


Figure 1: Location of the Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site in Riverside County, California. Source: USGS Topographical quadrant: Sunnymead.

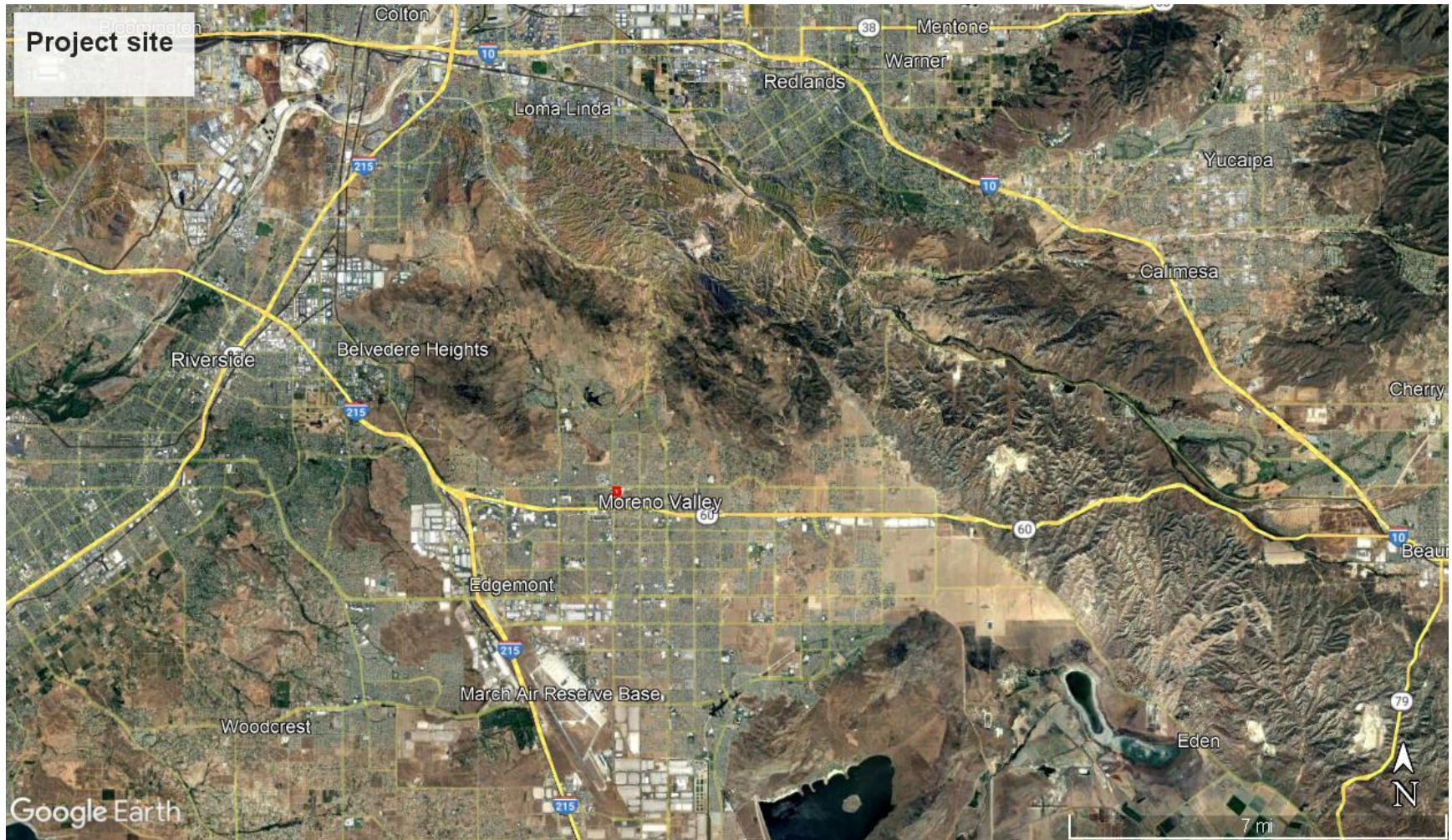


Figure 2: Location of the Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site (in red). Source: Google Earth, Inc.



Figure 3: Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site (in red). Source: Google Earth, Inc.



Figure 4
Site Plan Concept

3.0 RESERVE ASSEMBLY ANALYSIS

There is no Cell(s) or Cell Group within the project site and no part of the project site is required for conservation or reserve assembly under the MSHCP.

3.1 Public Quasi-Public Lands

3.1.1 Public Quasi-Public Lands in reserve Assembly Analysis

The project site is located outside any lands depicted as PQP lands on the MSHCP Plan map.

4.0 VEGETATION MAPPING

4.1 Vegetation mapping

Vegetation mapping was conducted on 30 October 2021 by Glen Morrison. Vegetation types within the project site were mapped according to the state-wide *A Manual of California Vegetation, Second Edition* (Sawyer *et al.* 2009). This is the mapping system recognized and recommended by regulatory agencies. Vegetation was mapped to the association level by hand on an aerial photographic base map conducted while walking throughout the study area. A general plant species list was compiled concurrently with the vegetation mapping surveys. Scientific and common nomenclature in the Jepson eFlora (Jepson eFlora 2021) or Hickman (1993) were used as the taxonomic resource. The equivalent vegetation community under the old Holland classification system (Holland 1986) was also noted.

4.2 Vegetation communities

The Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site has been significantly impacted by historical and recent human land use, such as disking, dumping and disturbance (Photographs 1 through 10). Currently the site contains two vegetation community/land types; ruderal and annual brome grasslands. Vegetation types within the project site were mapped according to the state-wide *A Manual of California Vegetation* (Sawyer *et al.* 2009) to the extent possible. Since this system focuses on native vegetation communities many disturbed and man-made land covers do not fit cleanly into the system. The best fit possible was made to map and classify the onsite vegetation. The equivalent vegetation community under the old Holland classification system (Holland 1986) is also noted. Dirt roads were mapped as the vegetation community which they go through.

Ruderal

Ruderal is a low to medium growing herbaceous vegetation type dominated by annual grasses and forbs of Mediterranean origin. It is a type of non-native grassland community, mapped under the semi-natural herbaceous stands by Sawyer *et al.* 2009.

The onsite ruderal area was highly disturbed from regular disking, grading and other disturbances. Some areas had gravel deposits and other soil disturbances. A water tower was located in the southwest corner and a temporary, shallow earthen detention basin was located along the southeastern boundary. Bare soil areas were found throughout this area, on which no considerable vegetation occurred.

The most abundant plant species were brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), Russian thistle (*Salsola australis*) and Mediterranean mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), making up a small fraction of overall ground cover. A few non-native perennial, woody species were also present, including tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), peppertree (*Schinus molle*), red gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) and European olive (*Olea europaea*).

Throughout much of the cleared area there was many grass seedlings started to grow at the time of the survey, which was a few days after a relatively heavy rain event. These seedlings were most likely ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*) and given a longer period of time without disturbance or clearance, these cleared areas would presumably become covered with ripgut brome association vegetation. The areas that were covered with gravel did not have a substantial number of any seedlings growing.

A total of 9.08 acres of ruderal occurred onsite (Table 1; Figure 5).

Annual brome grasslands - *Bromus (diandrus)* semi-natural herbaceous stands

This vegetation type describes areas dominated by the non-native Eurasian annual grasses, where ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), is a dominant or co-dominant species, with a large component of ruderal herbs/forbs. This classification is the best fit under the Sawyer *et al.* 2009 system. This is a type of non-native grassland community, mapped under non-native grassland by Holland (1986).

Annual brome grassland was found in two patches in the northern portion of the site. These patches of vegetation were strongly dominated by the non-native Eurasian annual grass ripgut brome. Other species in this vegetation onsite, Russian thistle, summer mustard and tree tobacco, were represented by a small number of individuals.

Towards the northwestern end of the northern patch of Annual brome grassland there was evidence of a past stand of Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*) and Goodding's black willow (*Salix gooddingii*). The trees were recently cleared, and all the willow were dead at the time of the survey, although a few branches of some of the cottonwoods still had green and living foliage (Photographs 6-10). This area has been included in the Annual brome grassland vegetation category due to the absence of tree cover at the time

of the survey and since existing site vegetation in this area consisted mostly of ripgut brome.

A total of 0.9 acres of annual brome grasslands occurred onsite (Table 1; Figure 5).

Table 1: Vegetation communities at the project site.

Vegetation communities/Land Cover Type	Acreage onsite
Ruderal grasslands	9.08
Annual brome grasslands	0.90
Site total	9.98

4.3 Vegetation impacts

The entire 10-acres of the Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site would be permanently impacted.



Figure 5: Vegetation map of Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site (in red). Source: Google Earth, Inc.

5.0 PROTECTION OF SPECIES WITH RIPARIAN/RIVERINE AREAS AND VERNAL POOLS (SECTION 6.1.2)

5.1 Riparian/Riverine

Riparian/riverine areas are defined under Section 6.1.2 of the MSHCP as;

lands which contain habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, or emergent mosses and lichens, which occur close to or depend on soil moisture from a nearby freshwater source; or areas with fresh water flow during all or a portion of the year.

5.1.1 Methods

A formal delineation was conducted for Riparian/riverine areas, the project area was checked in the field for the presence of streambeds, definable channels, wetland/riparian vegetation, hydric soils and any areas that would qualify as Riparian/riverine areas as defined under the MSHCP. All areas of topographic relief suspected of representing historic or current drainage patterns were inspected on-foot. Field visits were conducted on 21 and 28 October 2021 by Paul Galvin.

5.1.2 Existing Conditions and Results

Historically, an ephemeral channel crossed the northern portion of the site and drained from the northwest to southeast. The channel is marked on the Sunnymead, California, United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (Figure 1). It drained Poorman Reservoir southeast, across the site and to the southeast. City approved storm drain re-alignment and undergrounding of stormwater Line H in 2009 redirected all flows entering the property from the north and west into an underground storm drain north of the property. Line H directs flows into the Indian Detention Basin that occurs approximately 600 feet off-site to the east.

The undergrounding of Line H starved the onsite channel of upstream water flows and turned the onsite channel into an isolated remnant channel. Development of downstream properties in 2019 further isolated this channel. More recent grading eliminated the southern-most portion of the channel on the project site (Figure 6).

Currently the onsite remnant channel is isolated from both upstream and downstream aquatic resources. No off-site water can reach the channel. The only water that can enter the channel would be direct rainfall on the project site. As the site is flat and soils porous, rainfall run-off into the channel would be minimal. There is no evidence of rainfall run-off into the channel and no evidence of current or recent flows in the channel.

Currently the onsite remnant channel runs from the northwest corner of the site southeast for approximately 209 feet (Figure 6). There was a fairly clearly defined bed and bank,

with the channel approximately 2-6 feet wide, and overall covered approximately 1,392 square feet (0.03 acres) onsite. The substrate was sandy clay and was dry at the time of the site survey. The channel and banks were vegetated with annual brome grasslands similar to the adjacent areas. There was evidence of a past stand of Fremont cottonwood and Goodding's black willow in the channel. The trees were recently cleared, and all the willow were dead at the time of the survey, although a few branches of some of the cottonwoods still had green and living foliage (Photographs 6-10).

Because the remnant channel no longer conveys water and is isolated from both upstream and downstream aquatic resources, the channel is not considered to comprise an MSHCP jurisdictional Riparian/riverine area.

A temporary, shallow earthen detention basin was located along the southeastern boundary. The basin was installed for erosion control, as part of the adjacent site grading in 2019. The bottom of the basin was approximately 2 inches below the drain in the outlet pipe. As site soils drain quickly and have limited capacity to store water, the detention basin has limited capacity to pond water. Likely the detention basin ponds for no more than 4-5 days after heavy rains, to a maximum depth of approximately 2 inches. The temporary detention basin does not qualify as a Riparian/riverine area.

No other streambeds, definable channels, wetland/riparian vegetation, hydric soils or any areas that would qualify as Riparian/riverine areas as defined under the MSHCP, were present onsite. No portion of the site had the potential to support ponded water for any significant period.



Figure 6: Drainage map of Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site (in red), drainage channel in blue. Source: Google Earth, Inc.

5.2 Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are seasonal wetlands that occur in depression areas that have wetlands indicators of all three parameters (soils, vegetation and hydrology) during the wetter portion of the growing season but normally lack wetlands indicators of hydrology and/or vegetation during the drier portion of the growing season. Obligate hydrophytes and facultative wetlands plant species are normally dominant during the wetter portion of the growing season, while upland species (annuals) may be dominant during the drier portion of the growing season. The determination that an area exhibits vernal pool characteristics, and the definition of the watershed supporting vernal pool hydrology, must be made on a case-by-case basis. Such determinations should consider the length of the time the area exhibits upland and wetland characteristics and the manner in which the area fits into the overall ecological system as a wetland. Evidence concerning the persistence of an area's wetness can be obtained from its history, vegetation, soils, and drainage characteristics, uses to which it has been subjected, and weather and hydrologic records

5.2.1 Methods

The project area was checked in the field for the presence of vernal pools, temporary pools, wetland/riparian vegetation, hydric soils, hydrology and the potential for any portions of the site to support ponded water. All areas were inspected on-foot. Field visits were conducted on 21 and 28 October 2021 by Paul Galvin.

5.2.2 Existing Conditions and Results

No vernal pools or temporary rain pools occur within the project site, and no portion of the site had the potential to support ponded water for any significant period.

There are no hydric soils onsite and all site soils drain quickly and have limited capacity to store water. The site occurs in uplands and slopes gently from west to east so the hydrology is not suitable for ponding water. There are no flat areas, depressions or other areas where water could pond.

A temporary, shallow earthen detention basin was located along the southeastern boundary. The basin was installed for erosion control, as part of the adjacent site grading in 2019. The bottom of the basin was approximately 2 inches below the drain in the outlet pipe. As site soils drain quickly and have limited capacity to store water, the detention basin has limited capacity to pond water. Likely the detention basin ponds for no more than 4-5 days after heavy rains, to a maximum depth of approximately 2 inches. The temporary detention basin does not qualify as a vernal pool.

Upland vegetation occurs throughout the site and there were no areas with aquatic vegetation or the absence of vegetation indicating standing water.

5.3 Fairy Shrimp

Fairy shrimp occur in vernal pools but can also be found in non-vernal pool features such as stock ponds, ephemeral pools, road ruts, human-made depressions, or other depressions that may pond water.

5.3.1 Methods

The project area was checked in the field for the presence of vernal pools, temporary pools, streambeds, stock ponds, ephemeral pools, road ruts, human-made depressions, or other depressions that may pond water. All areas were inspected on-foot. Field visits were conducted on 21 and 28 October 2021 by Paul Galvin.

5.3.2 Existing Conditions and Results

No vernal pools, temporary rain pools, stock ponds, ephemeral pools, road ruts, human-made depressions, or other depressions that may pond water for any significant period occur within the project site. There are no hydric soils onsite and all site soils drain quickly and have limited capacity to store water. No portion of the site had the potential to support ponded water for any significant period.

A temporary, shallow earthen detention basin was located along the southeastern boundary. The basin was installed for erosion control, as part of the adjacent site grading in 2019. The bottom of the basin was approximately 2 inches below the drain in the outlet pipe. As site soils drain quickly and have limited capacity to store water, the detention basin has limited capacity to pond water. Likely the detention basin ponds for no more than 4-5 days after heavy rains, to a maximum depth of approximately 2 inches. The temporary detention basin does not pond long enough to potentially support fairy shrimp. In addition, the detention basin was only installed in 2019.

In the absence of suitable habitat for fairy shrimp species onsite, protocol-level focused surveys are not required.

5.4 Riparian Birds

Riparian birds include least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) and yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*).

5.4.1 Methods

The project area was checked in the field for the presence of streambeds, definable channels, wetland/riparian vegetation, hydric soils and any areas that could support habitat suitable for riparian birds. All areas were inspected on-foot. Field visits were conducted on 21 and 28 October 2021 by Paul Galvin.

5.4.2 Existing Conditions and Results

Towards the northwestern end of the site, along the former channel, there was evidence of a past stand of Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*) and Goodding's black willow (*Salix gooddingii*). The trees were recently cleared, and all the willow were dead at the time of the survey, although a few branches of some of the cottonwoods still had green and living foliage (Photographs 6-10). Even prior to clearing, the trees in this area were too sparse and too low in cover to provide suitable habitat that could potentially support riparian birds.

In the absence of suitable habitat for riparian bird species onsite, protocol-level focused surveys are not required.

6.0 PROTECTION OF NARROW ENDEMIC PLANT SPECIES (SECTION 6.1.3)

The proposed project is not located within a Section 6.1.3 Narrow Endemic Plant Species Survey Area.

7.0 ADDITIONAL SURVEY NEEDS AND PROCEDURES (SECTION 6.3.2)

7.1 Criteria Area Plant Species

The proposed project is not located within a mapped survey area for Criteria Area plant species.

7.2 Amphibians

The proposed project is not located within a mapped survey area for amphibian species.

7.3 Burrowing Owl

The proposed project is within the mapped survey area for burrowing owl.

7.3.1 Methods

Focused burrowing owl surveys were conducted in July 2015 (Hernandez Environmental Services 2015).

7.3.2 Existing Conditions and Results

No burrowing owls or their sign were detected during the current surveys and there was no evidence that any burrowing owls occur onsite. In addition, this species has not been recorded from the project site in the past.

No burrowing owl was detected during the July 2015 surveys (Hernandez Environmental Services 2015).

Burrowing owls are presumed absent from the site.

7.4 Mammals

The proposed project is not located within a mapped survey area for mammal species.

8.0 INFORMATION ON OTHER SPECIES

8.1 Delhi Sands Flower Loving Fly

The proposed project is located outside any area mapped with Delhi soils within the MSHCP baseline data.

8.2 Species Not Adequately Conserved

None of species listed in the MSHCP Table 9-3 occur on the site.

9.0 GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO THE URBAN/WILDLANDS INTERFACE (SECTION 6.1.4)

There are no onsite project conservation areas and we are no existing or future MSHCP Conservation Areas in the project vicinity. The project area is entirely surrounded by development. Consequently, there Are no urban/wildlife interfaces for this project.

10.0 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (VOLUME 1, APPENDIX C)

The following Best Management Practices will be implemented.

- Nesting birds. Impacts to nesting birds will be minimized by complying with the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA). The MBTA governs the taking and killing of migratory birds, their eggs, parts, and nests and prohibits the take of any migratory bird, their eggs, parts, and nests.

Compliance with the MBTA shall be accomplished by the following:

- If possible, all vegetation removal activities shall be scheduled from August 1 to February 15, which is outside the nesting season. This would ensure that no active nests would be disturbed and that removal could proceed rapidly,
 - If vegetation is to be cleared during the nesting season (February 15 – July 31), all suitable habitat will be thoroughly surveyed for the presence of nesting birds by a qualified biologist 72 hours prior to clearing. If any active nests are detected, the area shall be flagged and mapped on the construction plans along with a minimum 50-foot buffer and up to 300 feet for raptors, with the final buffer distance to be determined by the qualified biologist. The buffer area shall be avoided until the nesting cycle is complete or it is determined that the nest has failed. In addition, the biologist will be present on the site to monitor the vegetation removal to ensure that any nests, which were not detected during the initial survey, are not disturbed.
- Construction Minimization measures
 1. Within 30 days prior to disturbance at the project site, a pre-construction survey will be conducted for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), and if owls are present they can be relocated following accepted protocols to comply with the MSHCP.

2. All temporary work areas, including stockpiles, will be located outside any sensitive biological resources.
3. The limits of the work will be flagged prior to start of work.

11.0 REFERENCES

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Specific Plan No. 2, Amendment No. 2 Project site photographs 2021.



Photograph 1: Northeastern corner of site looking west, October 2021.



Photograph 2: Northeastern corner of site looking south, October 2021.



Photograph 3: Southeastern corner of site looking north, showing temporary detention basin, October 2021.



Photograph 4: Southwestern corner of site looking east, October 2021.



Photograph 5: Northwestern corner of site looking south, October 2021.



Photograph 6: Eastern boundary of site, looking northwest, October 2021.



Photograph 7: Northwestern area of site, looking east along remnant channel, October 2021.



Photograph 8: Northwestern area of site, looking east along remnant channel, October 2021.



Photograph 9: Northwestern area of site, looking east along remnant channel, October 2021.



Photograph 10: Surviving Fremont cottonwood in remnant channel, October 2021.