Appendix C

Biological Technical Report

Santee Town Center Specific Plan Update

DRAFT Biological Technical Report

August 2024 | 01427.00004.001

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEN	Arts & Entertainment Neighborhood
ALUCP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
AMSL	above mean sea level
BMPs	best management practices
BRCA	Biological Resource Core Area
BTR	Biological Technical Report
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFG Code	California Fish and Game Code
City	City of Santee
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
County	County of San Diego
CRPR	California Rare Plant Rank
CWA	Clean Water Act
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FC	federally listed candidate
FE	federally listed endangered
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
ft	feet
FT	federally listed threatened
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
HAP	Housing Acceleration Program
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HE	Housing Element
HELIX	HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc.
HLP	Habitat Loss Permit
lf.	linear feet
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MSCP	Multiple Species Conservation Program
NCCP	Natural Communities Conservation Planning
NPPA	Native Plant Protection Act
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service

project	Town Center Specific Plan Update
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SAA	Streambed Alteration Agreement
SANDAG	San Diego Association of Governments
SanGIS	San Diego Geographic Information Source
SDG&E	San Diego Gas & Electric
SDMMP	San Diego Management and Monitoring Program
SR	State Route
SSC	Species of Special Concern
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TCSP	Town Center Specific Plan Update
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
WEAP	Worker Environmental Awareness Program
WL	Watch List

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the request of the M.W. Steele Company, HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX) completed this Biological Technical Report (BTR) for the Town Center Specific Plan Update (project), which is proposed in the City of Santee (City), San Diego County (County), California. The project proposes a technical update to the Santee Town Center Specific Plan Amendment Final Master Environmental Impact Report ([EIR]; City 2006), an amendment to the Arts & Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and a project-level environmental analysis of four sites within the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) boundary.

The purpose of this report is to document the existing biological resources identified as present or potentially present within the project area; identify potential biological resource impacts resulting from the proposed project; and recommend measures to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate significant impacts consistent with federal, state, and local rules and regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This report provides the biological resources documentation necessary for review under CEQA by the City and other responsible agencies for the project.

Figures and other supporting information are provided as enclosures attached to this report.

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The project area is located in the City of Santee, in the eastern portion of the County of San Diego, north of State Route (SR) 52 and west of SR 67 (Figure 1, *Regional Location*). The project area is situated within Section 27 of Township 15 South, Range 1 West on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute El Cajon quadrangle topographic map (Figure 2, *USGS Topography*). The project area is situated on 1,068 Assessor Parcel Numbers in the central portion of the City, bounded by Mission Gorge Road to the south, Mast Boulevard to the north, Red River Trail Place to the west, and North Magnolia Avenue to the east (Figure 3, *Aerial Photograph*). The topography of the project area is bisected by the San Diego River. The San Diego River flows through the eastern boundary of the project area and continues in an eastward direction where it exits the project area and continues in a mostly westward direction. The San Diego River originates within the Santa Ysabel Open Space Preserve East, 28 miles east of the project area, flowing west and southwest, and ultimately reaches the Pacific Ocean 16 miles west of the project area. An unnamed tributary to the San Diego River flows through the northern boundary of the project area and continues generally in a southward direction until it meets the San Diego River. The unnamed tributary occurs as a previously re-channelized and restored natural bottom drainage and is a major conveyance of stormwater for the existing development north of the San Diego River.

Within the Final Multiple Species Conservation Program Plan (MSCP), the project area occurs within the City of Santee MSCP Subarea Plan subregion (County 1998). The Mission Trails/Kearny Mesa/East Elliot/Santee Biological Resource Core Area (BRCA), as identified in the Final MSCP Plan, surrounds the northern and western portions of the City and overlaps a small portion of the western project area (Figure 4, *Regional Designations and Conserved Lands*).

The project area occurs approximately 17 miles inland from the coast, is located outside the Coastal Overlay Zone, and is not within any lands identified as critical habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The surrounding area contains USFWS-designated critical habitat for Hermes copper butterfly (*Lycaena hermes*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), and coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*). Critical habitat for coastal California gnatcatcher is located 0.3 mile

northeast of the project area. Hermes copper butterfly critical habitat occurs approximately 0.4 mile northwest of the project area. Critical habitat for least Bell's vireo is located approximately 0.4 mile west of the project area. The project area occurs outside the USFWS Recommended Survey Area for Quino checkerspot butterfly and inside the Hermes copper butterfly exempt from take area. Conserved lands managed by the City occur along the San Diego River and at the intersection of Riverwalk Drive and Park Center Drive. Conserved lands managed by the San Diego Habitat Conservancy occur north of residential development along Town Center Parkway (Figure 4).

1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project consists of a comprehensive update to the TCSP to modify or establish new land use designations, land uses, development standards, and conceptual guidelines that would apply to future development within the TCSP area. As part of this effort, the City would also make modifications to the AEN and provide objective design standards and conceptual designs for strategic Housing Element sites within the TCSP.

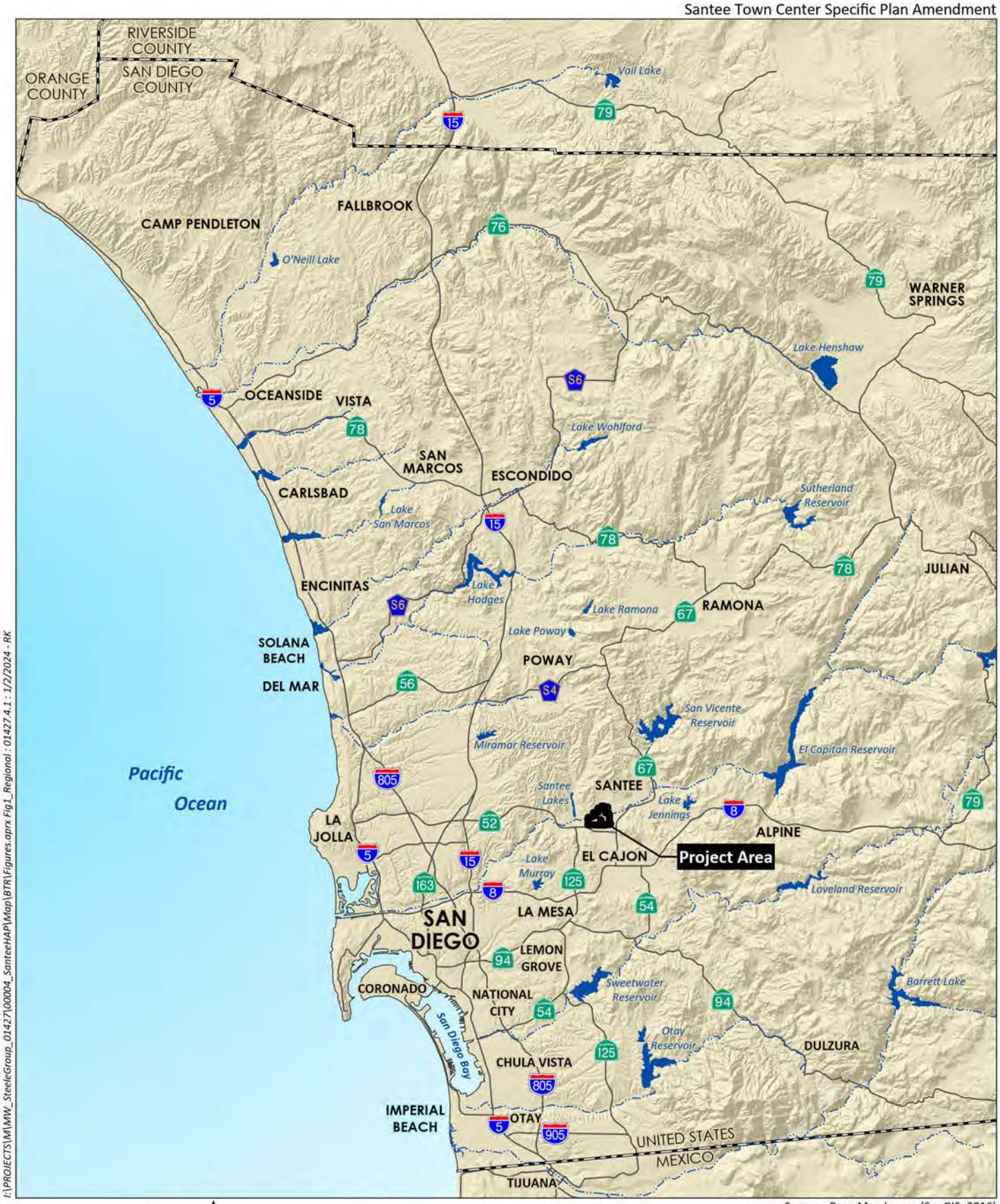
Town Center Specific Plan

Amendments to the TCSP would incorporate relevant updates to the plan's vision, land use permissions, and development standards. As part of the updates, new text and graphics would be developed and organized into a series of chapters, such as: Introduction, Land Use and Urban Form, Mobility and Beautification, Infrastructure and Public Facilities, Implementation, and Administration. Text and concepts that remain relevant to the vision and goals of the TCSP would be maintained and incorporated into the updated TCSP document format and structure.

The amended TCSP would incorporate updated allowable and permitted land uses and development standards tailored to the project area. The updated TCSP would include graphics that illustrate the planned land use concepts and the plan's vision at key sites. As part of the TCSP, the circulation network exhibits of the plan would be updated, including the bicycle, pedestrian, and transit network maps and the street cross sections. The TCSP would include concepts for key improvements in the public right-of-way to enhance circulation within the project area. The TCSP would incorporate concepts to illustrate wayfinding and branding signage at important locations within the public right-of-way and public trails, such as signs tailored for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, and signs designed to direct vehicular traffic and refer to parking areas, as well as iconic gateway structures that enhance the identity and sense of place in the project area.

The TCSP would also outline fundamental elements for the administration of the plan, such as the process for future specific plan amendments, and the development review, permit, and approval process for projects within the TCSP area. Additionally, the TCSP would address the relationship between the TCSP document and other planning documents, as well as consistency with the General Plan. The TCSP would also include a section describing how to use the document and guide reviewers and applicants through the path for review and approval of proposals within the TCSP area.

Finally, the TCSP amendment would also incorporate an adjustment to the Specific Plan boundaries to include additional sites, such as the shopping center located at the northwest corner of Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Road and the shopping center located west of Cuyamaca Road, between Mission



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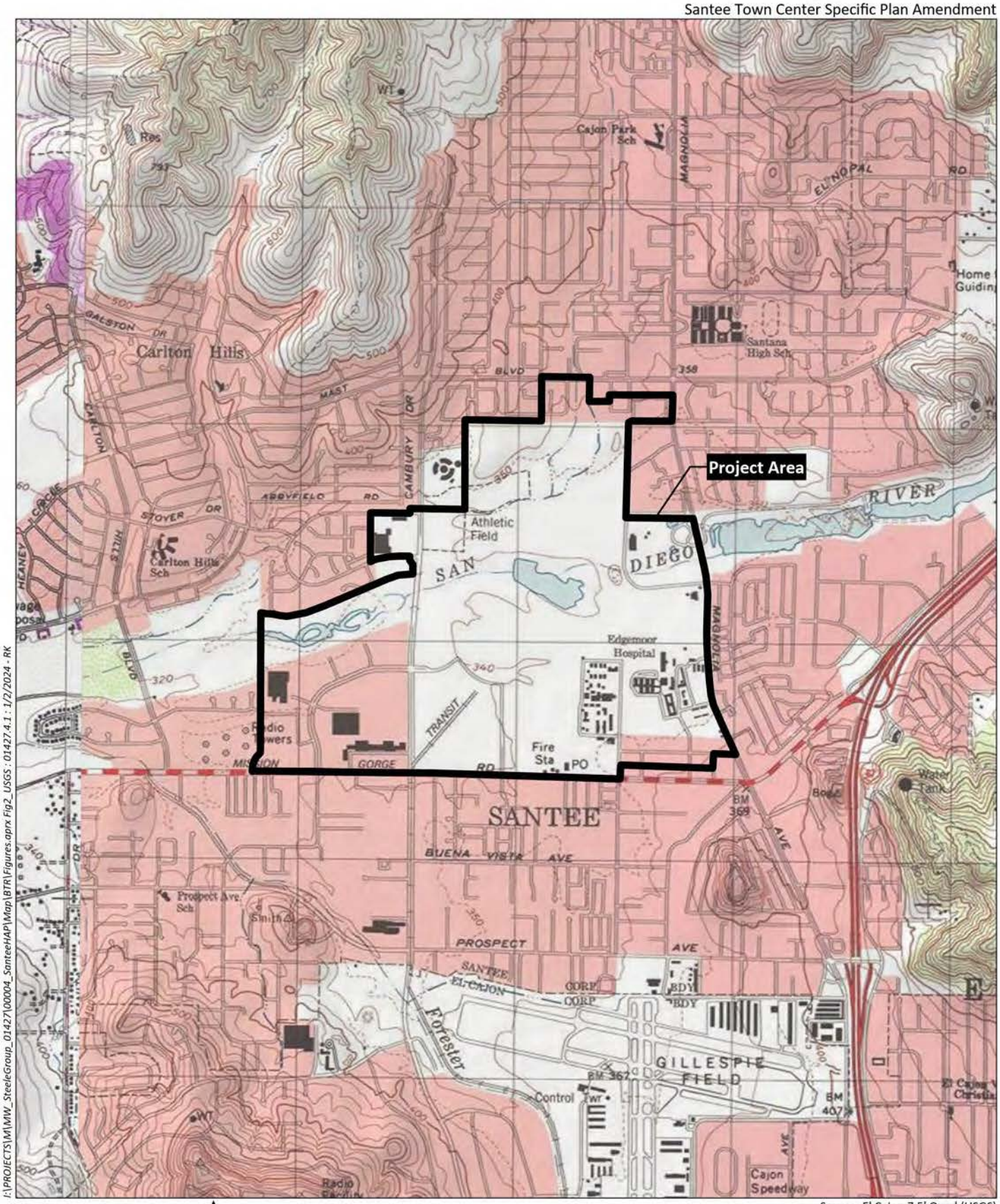
Source: Base Map Layers (SanGIS, 2016)

HELIX Environmental Planning

Regional Location

Figure 1



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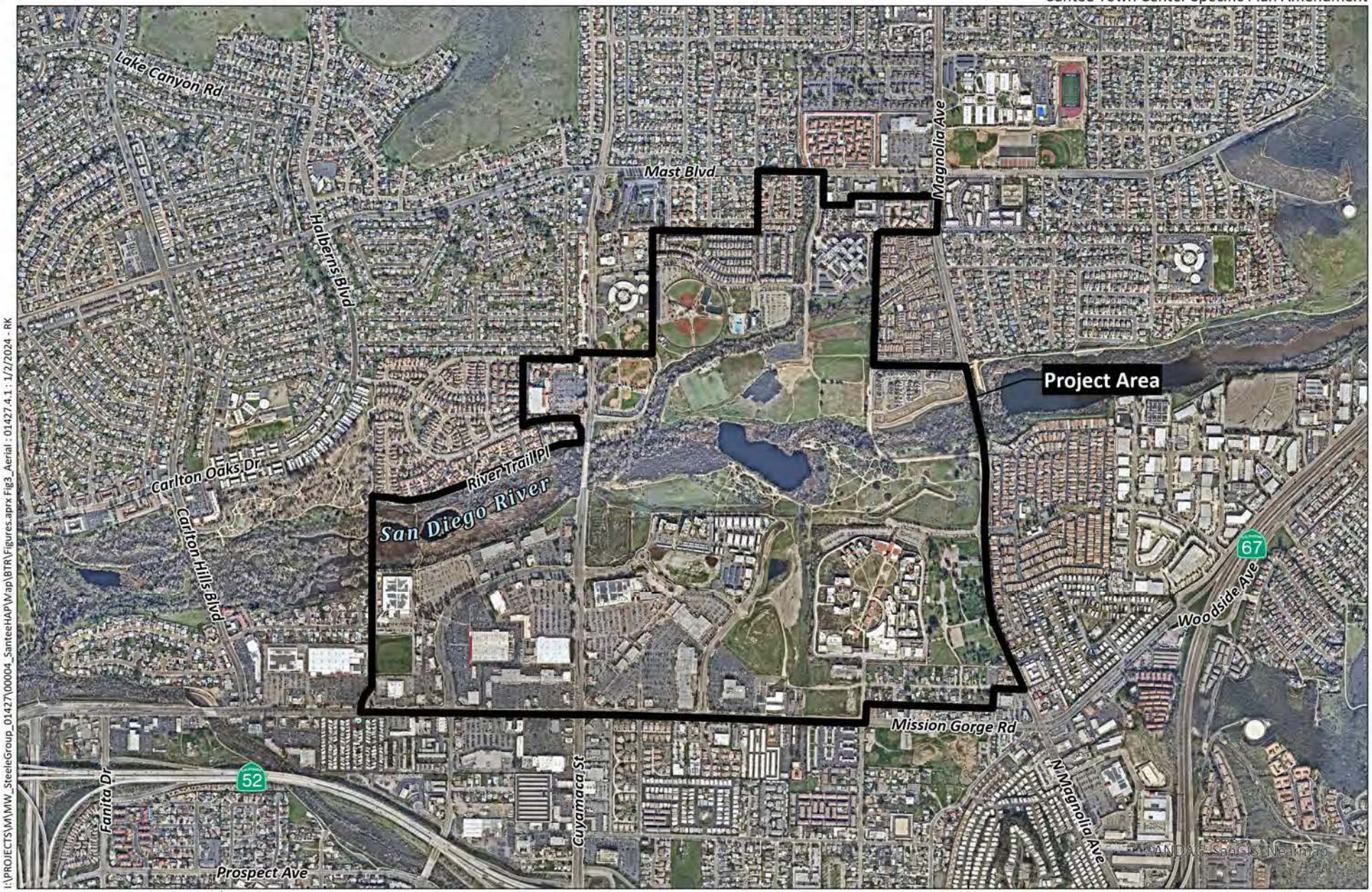
0 2,000 Feet

Source: El Cajon 7.5' Quad (USGS)

HELIX Environmental Planning

USGS Topography

Figure 2



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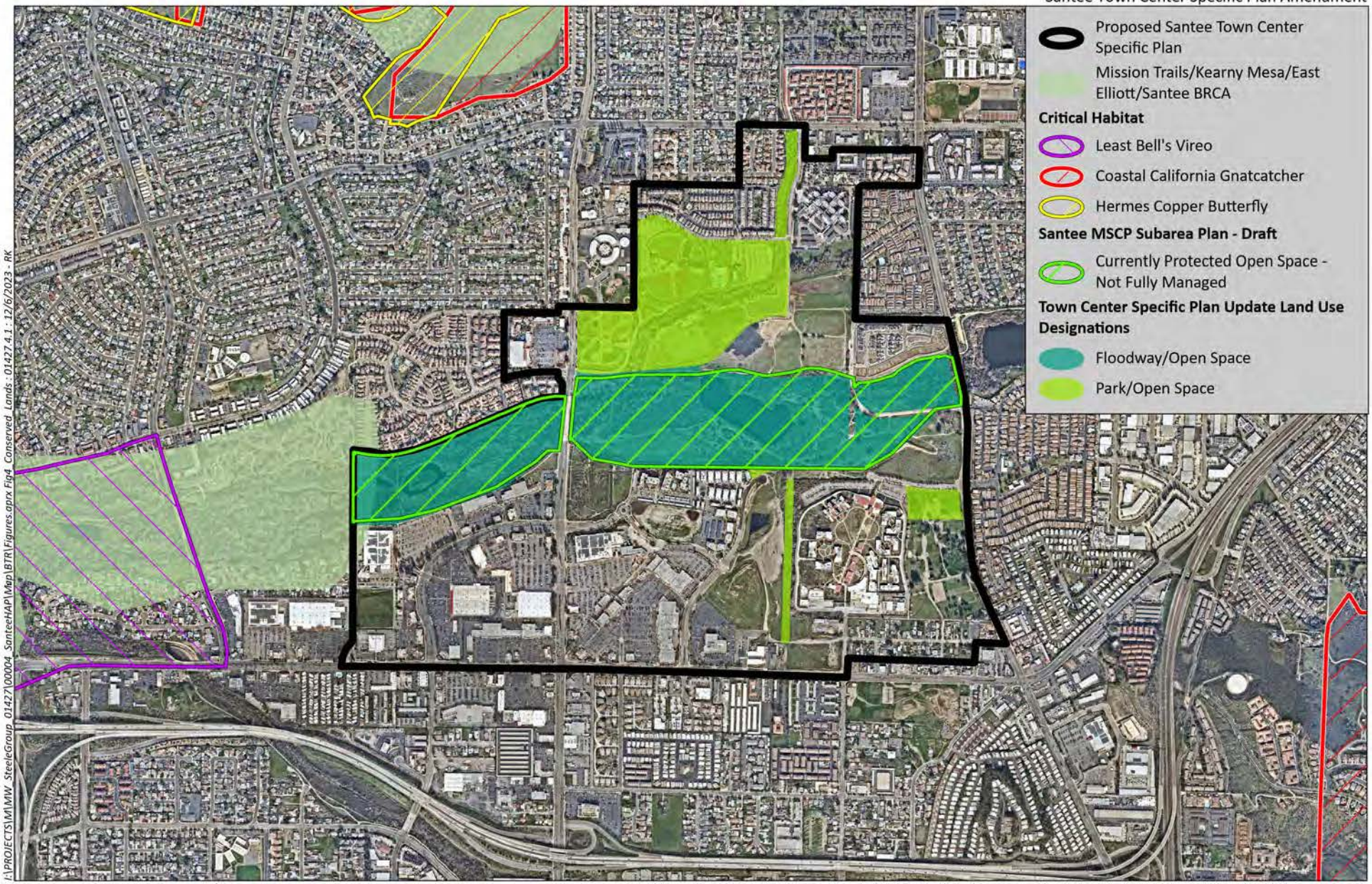
Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)

HELIX Environmental Planning

Aerial Photograph

Figure 3

Santee Town Center Specific Plan Amendment



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Source: Aerial Photo (SanGIS 2023); Conserved Lands (SANDAG Technical Services - GIS 2018); Critical Habitat (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2022)

HELIX Environmental Planning

Regional Designations and Conserved Lands

Figure 4

Creek Drive and River Park Drive. As a result of the boundary adjustment, the TCSP area would expand from 609.70 to 651.42 acres[1], increasing by a total of 41.72 acres.

Arts & Entertainment Neighborhood

The TCSP would include an amendment to the AEN. As discussed above, the City adopted the AEN in 2019 with the intent of encouraging the development of an Arts & Entertainment district within a significant portion of the TCSP. The update would incorporate the vision, guidelines, and development standards specific to the AEN as a subsection of the Land Use and Urban Form chapter of the TCSP. This section of the TCSP would also incorporate tailored land use designations that support uses related to art and culture, entertainment, commercial recreation, visitor, and civic uses.

The update to the vision and development standards for the AEN would aim to enhance connections to the San Diego River, strengthen the sense of place by creating an attraction for residents and visitors to gather, and public space concepts that would incorporate streetscape concepts with features such as landscaping, water elements, shade, lighting, and wayfinding. The concepts would also aim to create a central destination within the TCSP area, with a strong emphasis on connecting Arts & Entertainment to the natural environment.

Additionally, the update would incorporate an adjustment to the AEN boundaries to include additional sites such as the open space designated areas along the San Diego River, areas north of the San Diego River, south of Riverwalk Drive, west of River Park Drive, east of Cuyamaca Street, and west of Magnolia Avenue. As a result of the boundary adjustments, the AEN area would expand from 172.49[2] to 341.72 acres, increasing by a total of 169.23 acres.

The AEN incorporates the Trolley Square shopping center, Town Center Park East, Sportsplex USA, Rio Seco School, and the four Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. In addition to the four Housing Element sites, the AEN includes civic uses, a San Diego River Bridge, and an entertainment commercial site referred to as the Town Center Core. The San Diego River Bridge would connect areas north and south of the San Diego River, beginning at the southern edge of Town Center Park East and ending just north of Housing Element Site 16A. The San Diego River Bridge would support passive and active recreation and provide multi-modal connections within the TCSP area. Also, access to major recreational facilities such as the Town Center Community Park, the Sportsplex, and the YMCA and Aquatics Center, located north of the San Diego River, would be accessible to residents south of the San Diego River. Lookouts across the bridge would create opportunities for art installations, interpretive signage, and seating.

Four Strategic Housing Element Sites (2021-2029 Sixth Cycle)

The City Council adopted the Housing Element (2021-2029 Sixth Cycle) on May 11, 2022. The Housing Element (HE) was prepared in compliance with State housing law as determined by the California Department of Housing and Community Development on December 6, 2022. The HE included a Sites Inventory map and table (figure C-1 and table C-1 of the HE), which included a series of sites that are

[1] The original Town Center Specific Plan published in 1986 cited the TCSP area as 706 acres, however amendments to the plan have reduced the Specific Plan total acreage. Additionally, the original acreage was based on an estimate, due to improved geographic information software over time, the number of reported acres in the TCSP has changed as the accuracy of the data has increased.

[2] The 2019 Art and Entertainment Overlay District refers to 155 acres; however, current GIS data shows 172 acres for the same area.

currently undeveloped or underutilized. The identified sites provide an opportunity for the City to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation housing production goals. Four strategic undeveloped housing sites identified in the Sites Inventory are located within the boundary of the TCSP and the AEOD. The sites are identified as 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Sites 16A and 16B are undeveloped sites located just north of Mission Gorge Road and east of Riverview Parkway in the Santee Town Center. The area surrounding the sites is primarily developed, with Santee Trolley Square immediately west of the site, the Las Colinas Detention Facility to the east, and open space associated with the San Diego River to the north. A portion of Site 16A is located within the Airport Safety Zone 4 as designated in the Gillespie Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). Sites 20A and 20B are undeveloped sites located just west of Magnolia Avenue, south of Riverview Parkway, and east of Edgemoor Drive. Sites 20A and 20B surround the Historic Edgemoor Polo or Dairy Barn. To the west of Site 20A is the Las Colinas Detention Facility, and to the east is a gated 55+ manufactured home community. Site 20B is bordered by single-family residential homes to the south, multifamily residential to the east, and Las Colinas and Riverview Office Park to the west. A portion of the site is located within the Gillespie Field ALUCP Airport Safety Zone 4. The sites are proposed to be developed for residential uses.

The HE Implementation Program identified specific sites that would need to be rezoned to allow for residential uses, and/or to allow for the estimated housing capacity included in the HE. The HE proposed zoning changes for sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. As part of the realization of the Housing Element Implementation Program, the City analyzed and approved the re-zone of the four above-mentioned sites and adopted the rezoning on October 26, 2022.

To further advance the housing production in Santee, City staff applied for a Housing Acceleration Program (HAP) grant from the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). The grant application was awarded to the City. The HAP grant provides funding for project-level analysis of HE sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. The amended TCSP will include graphics and data that illustrate site planning and development concepts for each of these sites based on the maximum allowable density allowed by zoning. The EIR will analyze these sites at a project level of detail.

2.0 METHODS

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

HELIX conducted a thorough review of maps, federal and state databases, and literature pertaining to biological resources known to occur within the vicinity of the project area before conducting field surveys for the project. HELIX also reviewed recent and historical aerial imagery (Google Earth, historicalaerials.com), USGS topographic maps, soils maps (U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2023), and other relevant maps of the project area and the immediate surrounding vicinity. Queries for special-status species and sensitive biological resources databases were also conducted, including, but not limited to: the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; CDFW 2023a-c), USFWS species records (USFWS 2023), USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation system (USFWS 2023); San Diego Management and Monitoring Program (SDMMP 2023), and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (CNPS 2023). Additionally, HELIX reviewed the *Cottonwood and Park Project Biological Technical Report* (Dudek 2024), the *Riverview Parkway Project USACE Aquatic Resources Delineation Report* (REC Consultants, Inc. 2022a), the *Riverview Parkway CDFW Jurisdictional Delineation Report* (REC

Consultants, Inc. 2022b), and the *Restoration/Revegetation Plan for the Riverview Parkway Project* (REC Consultants, Inc. 2023).

2.2 BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS

2.2.1 General Biological Survey

HELIX biologists Benjamin Rosenbaum and Jonathan Mercado conducted a general biological survey of the project area on July 25, 2023, to map existing vegetation communities, document the locations of special-status species, identify and map potential jurisdictional resources (i.e., wetlands, waters, and riparian vegetation), and evaluate the potential for other sensitive biological resources and special-status species to occur within the project area and immediate vicinity (Table 1, *Biological Survey for the Project*). The survey was conducted on foot with the aid of binoculars. Detected biological resources were mapped directly in the field on a 1"=200' scale aerial photograph with an overlay of the project area. Animal identifications were made in the field by direct, visual observation, or indirectly by detection of calls, burrows, tracks, or scat. Plant identifications were made in the field or in the lab through comparison with voucher specimens or photographs. Plant and animal species observed or otherwise detected during the survey were recorded (Appendix A, *Plant Species Observed*, and Appendix B, *Animal Species Observed or Detected*). The survey incorporated a 100-foot buffer surrounding the project area for the understanding of adjacency context only, which is referred to in this report as the project study area; however, for purposes of this report, the project area is the primary focus of the report analysis and discussion. Areas beyond and outside of the project area are discussed as applicable.

Table 1
BIOLOGICAL SURVEY FOR THE PROJECT

Survey Date	Personnel	Conditions
July 25, 2023	Benjamin Rosenbaum Jonathan Mercado	79-96 °F; wind 0-5 mph; 5-15% clouds

2.2.2 Jurisdictional Delineation

The project area was examined by HELIX biologists for evidence of potential jurisdictional waters and wetlands during the general biological survey. Potential jurisdictional waters and wetlands would be regulated under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), or CDFW.

A jurisdictional delineation review area was established within a portion of the AEN and was examined for evidence of potential jurisdictional waters and wetlands in 2021 (REC Consultants, Inc. 2022a-b).

2.3 SURVEY LIMITATIONS

Not all plant species would have bloomed during the survey period, and it is possible that detection of some special-status plant species may not have been possible due to the timing of the focused plant surveys and variable seasonal conditions (e.g., rainfall and temperatures) that influence growth and flowering. Noted animal species were identified by direct observation, vocalizations, or the observance of scat, tracks, or other signs. However, the lists of species identified are not necessarily comprehensive

accounts of all species that utilize the study area, as species that are nocturnal, secretive, or seasonally restricted may not have been observed or detected. Those species that are of special status and have the potential to occur within the project are addressed in Appendix C, *Special-Status Plant Species Potential to Occur*, and Appendix D, *Special Status Wildlife Species Potential to Occur*. An explanation of status codes for plant and animal species is included in Appendix E, *Explanation of Status Codes for Plant and Animal Species*.

2.4 NOMENCLATURE

Nomenclature used in this report generally comes from Holland (1986), Oberbauer et al. (2008), Jepson eFlora (2023), and Baldwin et al. (2012) for plants; Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (2023) for reptiles and amphibians, American Ornithological Society (2023) for birds; and Bradley et al. (2014) for mammals. Plant species status is from the CNPS' Rare Plant Inventory (CNPS 2023) and CDFW (2023a). Animal species status is from the CDFW (2023b). Soils information was taken from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS; USDA 2023).

3.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.1 GENERAL LAND USES

The southern and northern portions of the project area are developed lands associated with commercial office buildings, residential development, and recreational activities (parks and baseball fields). The center of the project area is bisected by the San Diego River. The San Diego River flows through the eastern boundary of the project area, continuing in an eastward direction until it exits the project area, and then continues in a mostly westward direction. An unnamed tributary to the San Diego River flows through the northern boundary of the project area and continues generally in a southward direction until it meets the San Diego River.

3.2 TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS

Elevations within the project area vary from 320 feet above mean sea level (amsl) along the San Diego River where it flows through the center of the project area to 380 feet amsl in the northern portion of the project area. There is little topographic variety within much of the study area aside from the lower in elevation San Diego River, which flows through the center of the site in an east-west direction.

A total of nine soil mapping units in nine soil series are shown within the project area (Figure 5, *Soils*): Grangeville fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (GoA); Placentia sandy loam, thick surface, 2 to 9 percent slopes (PfC); Ramona sandy loam, 9 to 15 percent (RaD2); Redding gravelly loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes (RdC); Riverwash (Rm); Salinas clay 0 to 2 percent slopes (ScA); Tujunga sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes (TuB); Visalia sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (VaA); and Water (W). Grangeville fine sandy loam and Riverwash make up the largest areas of soil map units in the project area and coincide with the location of the San Diego River and developed areas to the south of the San Diego River.

3.3 VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

A total of 18 vegetation communities or land use types occur within the project area: southern riparian forest, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, southern riparian scrub (including disturbed and

Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan

Soils

- CnG2 - Cieneba-Fallbrook rocky sandy loams, 30 to 65 percent s lopes, eroded
- DaC - Diablo clay, 2 to 9 percent slopes
- DoE - Diablo-Olivenhain complex, 9 to 30 percent slopes
- FaB - Fallbrook sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes
- GoA - Grangeville fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- GrC - Greenfield sandy loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes
- LsE,Linne clay loam, 9 to 30 percent slopes
- PfC - Placentia sandy loam, thick surface, 2 to 9 percent slopes
- RaB - Ramona sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes
- RaC - Ramona sandy loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes
- RaD2,Ramona sandy loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes, eroded
- RdC - Redding gravelly loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes
- RhC - Redding-Urban land complex, 2 to 9 percent slopes
- RhE - Redding-Urban land complex, 9 to 30 percent slopes
- Rm - Riverwash
- SbA - Salinas clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- ScA - Salinas clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- SvE - Stony land
- TuB - Tujunga sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes
- VaA - Visalia sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- VaD - Visalia sandy loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes
- VsE - Vista coarse sandy loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes
- VsG - Vista coarse sandy loam, 30 to 65 percent slopes
- W - Water

0 800 Feet

Source: Aerial Photo (SanGIS 2023); Soils (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service 2005)

HELIX Environmental Planning

Soils

Figure 5

restored), southern willow scrub, tamarisk scrub, arrowweed scrub, open water, Diegan coastal sage scrub (including disturbed), Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated (including disturbed), non-native grassland, eucalyptus woodland, artificial detention basin, disturbed habitat, and developed lands (Table 2, *Existing Vegetation Communities/Land Use Types Within the Project Area*; Figure 6, *Vegetation and Sensitive Resources*).

Table 2
EXISTING VEGETATION COMMUNITIES/LAND USE TYPES WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA[1,2]

Vegetation Community	Santee Town Center SPA	Arts & Entertainment Neighborhood	Property 16A	Property 16B	Property 20A	Property 20B
Wetland Habitats						
Southern Riparian Forest (61300)	0.42	--	--	--	--	--
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest (61320)	85.31	43.19	--	--	--	--
Southern Riparian Scrub (63300)	0.84	--	--	--	--	--
Southern Riparian Scrub – Disturbed (63300)	0.68	--	--	--	--	--
Southern Riparian Scrub – Restoration (63300)	0.89	0.14	--	--	--	--
Southern Willow Scrub (63320)	0.96	0.96	0.19	--	--	--
Tamarisk Scrub (63810)	3.98	3.98	--	--	--	--
Arrowweed Scrub (63820)	2.06	0.10	--	--	--	--
Open Water (64100)	11.06	8.68	--	--	--	--
Subtotal	*106.20*	*57.05*	*0.19*	--	--	--
Upland Habitats						
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (32500)	0.3	--	--	--	--	--
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub, Disturbed (32500)	15.7	15.7	--	--	--	--
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis-dominated (32530)	6.6	6.6	--	--	--	--
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis-dominated, Disturbed (32530)	0.9	0.9	--	--	--	--
Non-native Grassland (42200)	5.1	0.9	--	--	--	--
Eucalyptus Woodland (79100)	1.7	1.3	--	--	--	--
Artificial Detention Basin (N/A)	2.0	2.0	1.3	--	--	--
Disturbed Habitat (11300)	128.4	98.2	9.5	8.5	5.9	7.9
Developed (12000)	384.6	155.2	<0.1 (0.02)	0.1	1.8	2.0
Subtotal	*545.3*	*280.8*	*10.8*	*8.6*	*7.7*	*9.9*
TOTAL	**651.50**	**337.85**	**10.99**	**8.6**	**7.7**	**9.9**

1 Vegetation categories and numerical codes are from Holland (1986) and Oberbauer (2008)
2 Upland habitats are rounded to the nearest 0.1 acre, while wetland habitats are rounded to the nearest 0.01; thus, total reflects rounding.

3.3.1 Wetlands

3.3.1.1 Southern Riparian Forest (Holland Code 61300)

Southern riparian woodlands and forests are composed of winter-deciduous trees that require water near the soil surface. Willow (*Salix* spp.), cottonwood (*Populus* spp.), and western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) form a dense, medium-height woodland or forest in moist canyons and drainage bottoms. Associated understory species include mule fat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica* ssp. *holosericea*), and wild grape (*Vitis girdiana*; Beauchamp 1986).

There is 0.42 acre of southern riparian forest mapped within the project area. Southern riparian forest is found in the northern portion of the project area along an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.1.2 Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest (Holland Code 61320)

Southern arroyo willow riparian forest is an open to dense riparian community that is dominated by arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*). Arroyo willow requires moist, bare mineral soil for germination and establishment. This community occurs along large stream courses where there is an abundant supply of water at or near the surface for most of the year. Though southern arroyo willow riparian woodland may not differ in floristic composition from some riparian scrub communities, it does so in physiognomy. The absence of large, frequent disturbances, usually in the form of floods, allows the component tree species to attain a sizable height.

There are 85.31 acres of southern arroyo willow riparian forest mapped within the project area. Southern arroyo willow riparian forest is found along the San Diego River and an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.1.3 Southern Riparian Scrub – including disturbed and restoration (Holland Code 63300)

Southern riparian scrub is a generic term for several shrub dominated communities that occur along drainages and/or riparian corridors, including southern willow scrub, mule fat scrub, and tamarisk scrub. Disturbed southern riparian scrub contains many of the same shrub species as undisturbed southern riparian scrub but is sparser and has a higher proportion of non-native perennial and annual species. Southern riparian scrub - restoration contains many of the same shrub species as naturally occurring southern riparian scrub but is less mature, artificially irrigated, and maintained.

There are 0.84 acre of southern riparian scrub, 0.68 acre of disturbed southern riparian scrub, and 0.89 acre of southern riparian scrub restoration within the project area. Southern riparian scrub (including disturbed and restoration) is found along the fringes of the San Diego River and within an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.1.4 Southern Willow Scrub (Holland Code 63320)

Southern willow scrub consists of dense, broad-leaved, winter-deciduous stands of trees dominated by shrubby willows in association with mule fat, and with scattered emergent cottonwood and western sycamores. This vegetation community occurs on loose, sandy, or fine gravelly alluvium deposited near stream channels during flood flows. Frequent flooding maintains this early seral community, preventing succession to a riparian woodland or forest (Holland 1986). In the absence of periodic flooding, this early seral type would be succeeded by southern cottonwood or western sycamore riparian forest.

There is 0.96 acre of southern willow scrub mapped within the project area. Southern willow scrub is found within an unnamed drainage east of Riverview Parkway (Figure 6).

3.3.1.5 Tamarisk Scrub (Holland Code 63810)

Tamarisk scrub is typically composed of shrubs and/or small trees of exotic tamarisk species (*Tamarix* spp.) but may also contain willows, salt bushes (*Atriplex* spp.), catclaw acacia (*Acacia greggii*), and salt

- Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan
- Study Area
- Proposed Arts & Entertainment District Overlay
- Property 16A
- Property 16B
- Property 20A
- Property 20B

Special Status Plant Species

- San Diego Marsh Elder (*Iva hayesiana*)
- Southwestern Spiny Rush (*Juncus acutus* ssp. *leopoldii*)
- Smooth Tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*)
- Smooth Tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*)
- Rabbit Tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum*)

Holland/Oberbauer Classification

Riparian Forests and Woodlands

- (61300) Southern Riparian Forest
- (61320) Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest

Riparian Shrublands

- (63300) Southern Riparian Scrub - Disturbed
- (63300) Southern Riparian Scrub - Restoration
- (63320) Southern Willow Scrub
- (63810) Tamarisk Scrub
- (63820) Arrowweed Scrub

Upland Forestes and Woodlands

- (79100) Eucalyptus Woodland

Soft-leaved, Drought-Deciduous Shrublands

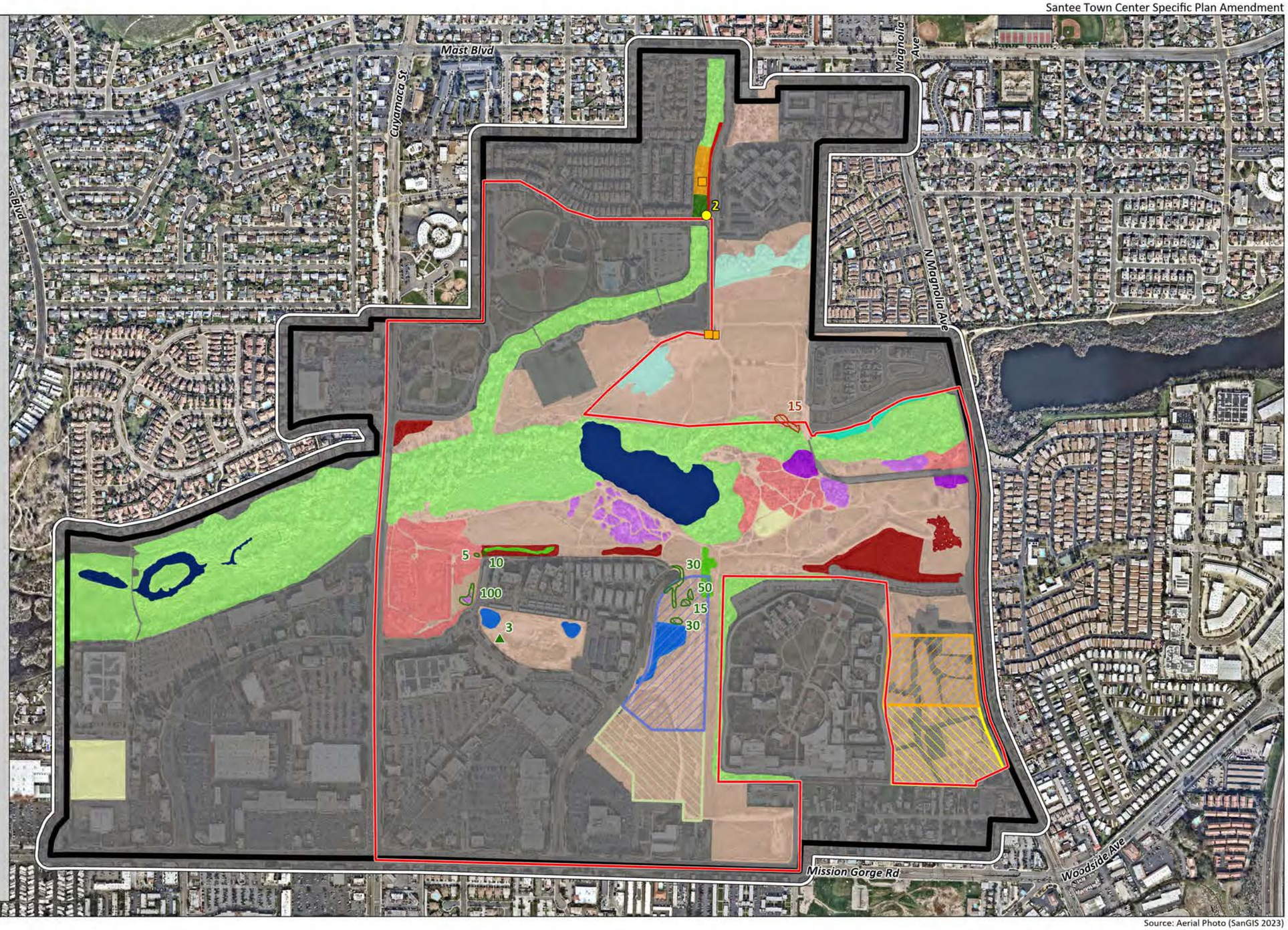
- (32500) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub
- (32500) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Disturbed
- (32530) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Baccharis-dominated
- (32530) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Baccharis-dominated -Disturbed

Upland Herbaceous Vegetation

- (11300) Disturbed Habitat
- (42200) Non-native Grassland

Unvegetated

- (12000) Developed
- (64100) Open Water
- (N/A) Artifical Dentention Basin



0 750 Feet

Source: Aerial Photo (SanGIS 2023)

I:\PROJECTS\MMW_SteeleGroup_01427\100004_SanteeHAP\Map\BTR\Figures.aprx Fig6_Vegetation : 01427.4.1 : 8/23/2024 - RK

HELIX Environmental Planning

Vegetation and Sensitive Resources

Figure 6

grass (*Distichlis spicata*). This habitat occurs along intermittent streams in areas where high evaporation rates increase the salinity level of the soil. Tamarisk is a phreatophyte, a plant that can obtain water from an underground water table. Because of its deep root system and high transpiration rates, tamarisk can substantially lower the water table to below the root zone of native species, thereby competitively excluding them. As a prolific seeder, it may rapidly displace native species within a drainage (Holland 1986).

There are 3.98 acres of tamarisk scrub mapped within the project area. Tamarisk scrub is found as patches intermixed within disturbed habitat south of the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.1.6 Arrowweed Scrub (Holland Code 63820)

Arrowweed scrub occurs as moderate to dense streamside thickets strongly dominated by arrowweed (*Pluchea sericea*) and may also include cattails (*Typha* spp.), southwestern spiny rush (*Juncus acutus* ssp. *leopoldii*), and salt grass, especially around the margins of the thickets.

There are 2.06 acres of arrowweed scrub mapped within the project area. Arrowweed scrub is found as a single patch located north of the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.1.7 Open Water (Holland Code 64100)

Open water is an unvegetated habitat. It is made up of year-round bodies of saline or fresh water. Fresh water bodies include lakes, streams, ponds, or rivers.

There are 11.06 acres of open water mapped within the project area. Open water occurs along the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.2 Uplands

3.3.2.1 Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - including disturbed (Holland Code 32500)

Diegan coastal sage scrub is one of the two major shrub types that occur in southern California, occupying xeric sites characterized by shallow soils (the other is chaparral). Diegan coastal sage scrub may be dominated by a variety of species depending on soil type, slope, and aspect. Typical species found within Diegan coastal sage scrub include California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*), lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), and black sage (*Salvia mellifera*). Disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub contains many of the same shrub species as undisturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub but is sparser and has a higher proportion of non-native perennial and annual species.

There is 0.3 acre of Diegan coastal sage scrub mapped within the project area. There are 15.7 acres of disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub mapped within the project area. Diegan coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) is found both north and south of the San Diego River as remnant patches within disturbed habitat (Figure 6).

3.3.2.2 Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis Dominated – including disturbed (Holland Code 32530)

Within Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated, coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) is the dominant species in the shrub canopy. Associated species include California sagebrush, California buckwheat, and goldenbush. The herbaceous layer contains codominant species, which includes bromes (*Bromus* spp.), barleys (*Hordeum* spp.), Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), giant wild rye (*Elymus condensatus*), purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*), and deergrass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*). Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated is usually open and often occurs on floodplains as a transition between riparian and upland habitat types. Disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated contains many of the same shrub species as undisturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated but is sparser and has a higher proportion of non-native perennial and annual species.

There are 6.6 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated mapped within the project area. There is 0.9 acre of disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated mapped within the project area. Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated (including disturbed) is found both north and south of the San Diego River as remnant patches within disturbed habitat (Figure 6).

3.3.2.3 Non-Native Grassland (Holland Code 42200)

Non-native grassland may be composed of dense to sparse cover of annual grasses. It is 0.2 to one meter tall. In years of high rainfall, it can be associated with native wildflowers. In San Diego County, associated species include oats (*Avena* spp.), bromes, filaree (*Erodium* spp.), mustards (*Brassica* spp.), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), and plantain (*Plantago* spp.), among others. In some areas, depending on rainfall, forbs can be dominant. Germination often occurs with the onset of fall rains and continues through the spring. Grass species are often dead in the summer and fall. It is usually found on fine-textured to clay soils.

There are 5.1 acres of non-native grassland mapped within the project area. Non-native grassland occurs as an isolated patch north of Mission Gorge Road, west of Town Center Parkway, and as an isolated patch south of the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.2.4 Eucalyptus Woodland (Holland Code 79100)

Eucalyptus woodland is dominated by eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), an introduced tree that has often been planted purposely for wind-blocking, ornamental, and hardwood production purposes. Most groves are monotypic, with the most common species being either the blue gum (*Eucalyptus gunnii*) or red gum (*E. camaldulensis* ssp. *obtusa)*. The understory within well-established groves is usually very sparse due to the closed canopy and allelopathic nature of the abundant leaf and bark litter.

There are 1.7 acres of eucalyptus woodland mapped within the project area. Eucalyptus woodland occurs as isolated patches north and south of the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.2.5 Artificial Detention Basin (Holland Code N/A)

Artificial detention basins on-site consist of open water habitat excavated in uplands. These detention basins are considered an artificially-created community because they act as holding basins for storm water as a result of human activities in historically non-wetland areas.

A total of three artificial detention basins totaling 2.0 acres are present in the project area (Figure 6).

3.3.2.6 Disturbed Habitat (11300)

Disturbed habitat includes those areas that have been disturbed and are no longer considered native habitat but still have a soil substrate. Vegetation is usually made up of invasive non-native species and ornamentals, and in particular, those species that take advantage of disturbed areas. Commonly associated species include thistles (*Sonchus* spp.), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), mustards, pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), and fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*). The habitat no longer provides animal species with many beneficial uses other than for dispersal. Examples of areas that are considered disturbed habitat include graded pads, areas actively managed for fuels, dirt parking lots, firebreaks, off-road vehicle trails, and home sites.

There are 128.4 acres of disturbed habitat mapped within the project area. Disturbed habitat occurs on undeveloped lands north and south of the San Diego River (Figure 6).

3.3.2.7 Developed Land (Holland Code 12000)

Developed areas are those that have been built on or physically altered to the extent that native vegetation is not supported. Developed land is often characterized by permanent or semi-permanent structures, pavement, hardscape, or landscaped areas that require irrigation. Areas where no natural land is evident due to large quantities of debris or other material being placed upon it are also considered developed. Usually, plants in these areas are invasive non-native plants or ornamental.

There are 384.6 acres of developed land mapped within the project area. Developed land occurs throughout the project area (Figure 6).

3.4 PLANTS

A total of 56 plant species were observed in the project area during the biological survey, of which 19 (34 percent) are non-native species (Appendix A).

3.5 ANIMALS

A total of 14 animal species were observed or otherwise detected in the project area during the biological survey, including four species of insects, two reptiles, six birds, and two mammals (Appendix B).

3.6 SENSITIVE RESOURCES

3.6.1 Sensitive Vegetation Communities/Habitats

Sensitive vegetation communities/habitat types are defined as land that supports unique vegetation communities or the habitats of rare or endangered species or subspecies of animals or plants as defined by Section 15380 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Sensitive vegetation communities/habitat types mapped on the project area include open water, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, southern riparian forest, southern riparian scrub (including restoration and disturbed), southern willow scrub, tamarisk scrub, arrowweed scrub, Diegan coastal sage scrub (including baccharis dominated and disturbed), and non-

native grassland. Disturbed habitat, eucalyptus woodland, detention basin (artificial), and developed lands do not meet the definition of sensitive habitat under CEQA. Impacts to these vegetation communities do not require mitigation.

3.6.2 Special-status Plant Species

Special-status plant species have been afforded special status and/or recognition by the USFWS and CDFW, and may also be included in the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants. Their status is often based on one or more of three distributional attributes: geographic range, habitat specificity, and/or population size. A species that exhibits a small or restricted geographic range (such as those endemic to the region) is geographically rare. A species may be more or less abundant but occurs only in very specific habitats. Lastly, a species may be widespread but exists naturally in small populations.

3.6.2.1 Special-status Plant Species Observed

Three special-status plant species were observed within the project area during the general biological survey and surveys conducted for the Cottonwood and Park project (Dudek 2024).

Smooth tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*)
Listing: --/--; California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1B.1
Distribution: San Diego, Orange, Riverside, Los Angeles, Kern, and San Bernardino counties below approximately 1,500 feet in elevation.
Habitat: Valley and foothill grasslands, particularly near alkaline locales.
Status on site: HELIX observed 243 individuals within the TCSP in areas of disturbed habitat and Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis-dominated habitat south of the San Diego River (Figure 6). All individuals occur within the AEN, and approximately 100 of these individuals occur within Property 16A.

San Diego marsh-elder (*Iva hayesiana*)
Listing: --/--; CRPR 2.2
Distribution: San Diego County and Baja California, Mexico.
Habitat: Creeks of intermittent streambeds are preferred habitat for this low-growing, conspicuous shrub. Typically, the riparian canopy is open, allowing substantial sunlight to reach this marsh-elder. Sandy alluvial embankments with cobbles are frequently utilized.
Status on site: HELIX observed two individuals within southern riparian forest habitat along an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River (Figure 6). These individuals occur within the TCSP but outside the AEN and Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B.

Southwestern spiny rush (*Juncus acutus* ssp. *leopoldii*)
Listing: --/--; CRPR 4.2
Distribution: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Ventura, and San Diego counties; Baja California, Mexico.
Habitat: Moist, saline, or alkaline soils in coastal salt marshes and riparian marshes.
Status on site: HELIX observed three individuals. One individual occurs within the TCSP on conserved land designated as Park/Open Space along an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River. A second individual occurs within the TCSP outside conserved lands at the southern terminus of Park Center Drive. Additionally, a third individual occurs within the TCSP and AEN outside conserved lands at the southern terminus of Park Center Drive. These individuals do not occur on Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B (Figure 6).

White rabbit-tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum*)
Listing: --/--; CRPR 2B.2
Distribution: San Diego, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, Inyo, Mono, Monterey, and Plumas counties; Arizona; New Mexico; and Mexico.
Habitat: Sandy or gravelly soils of benches, dry stream bottoms, and canyon bottoms within coastal scrub, chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland.
Status on site: Surveys for the Park and Cottonwood project observed 15 individuals within southern willow scrub and disturbed habitat along the northern edge of the San Diego River. A total of six individuals occur within the TCSP outside conserved lands. A total of nine individuals occur within the TCSP and AEN on conserved lands designated as Floodway/Open Space (Figure 6; Dudek 2024).

3.6.2.2 Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur

The potential for special-status plant species to occur within the project area was evaluated based on the elevation, soils, vegetation communities, and level of disturbance, as well as species status, previous occurrences, and distribution in the vicinity of the study area. No special-status plant species were determined to have a high potential to occur within the project area.

Additional special-status plant species that were not observed but were evaluated for the potential to occur within the project area are listed in Appendix C. An explanation of status codes is included as Appendix E.

3.6.3 Special-status Animal Species

Special-status animal species include those that have been afforded special status and/or recognition by the USFWS and/or CDFW. In general, the principal reason an individual taxon (species or subspecies) is given such recognition is the documented or perceived decline or limitations of its population size or geographical extent and/or distribution, resulting in most cases from habitat loss.

3.6.3.1 Special-status Animal Species Observed

Special-status animal species were not observed or detected in the project area during the general biological survey.

3.6.3.2 Sensitive Animal Species with Potential to Occur

Special-status animal species that were not observed or otherwise detected but were evaluated for the potential to occur on-site are included in Appendix D. An explanation of status codes is included as Appendix E.

A total of 17 special-status animal species were determined to have high potential to occur in the project area: San Diegan legless lizard (*Anniella stebbinsi*), California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*), Belding's orange-throated whiptail (*Aspidoscelis hyperythra beldingi*), San Diegan tiger whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), red diamond rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber*), Blainville's horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), western spadefoot toad (*Spea hammondii*), two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), and least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*). The remaining species analyzed were determined to have either a moderate or low potential to occur or are not expected to occur due to existing site disturbances, site vegetation maintenance, and lack of suitable habitat conditions.

San Diegan legless lizard (*Anniella stebbinsi*)
Status: --/Species of Special Concern (SSC)
Distribution: Widespread resident species in San Diego County.
Habitat(s): Occurs in moist warm, loose soil with plant cover. May be found in coastal sand dunes, chaparral, pine-oak woodlands, desert scrub, sandy washes, and stream terraces with sycamores, cottonwoods, or oaks.
Status on site: Areas of loose soils with plant cover along the San Diego River are considered high potential to support San Diegan legless lizard. However, the project area has been heavily degraded by surrounding development.

California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*)
Status: --/SSC
Distribution: Occurs along the coastal regions of California from San Francisco south to San Diego County, though it is absent along the central coast.
Habitat(s): Occurs in arid scrub, rocky washes, grasslands, and chaparral. Prefers open areas and loose soil.
Status on site: Rocky washes along the San Diego River are considered high potential to support California glossy snake. However, the project area has been heavily degraded by surrounding development.

Belding's orange-throated whiptail (*Aspidoscelis hyperythra beldingi*)
Status: --/WL
Distribution: Southern Orange County and southern San Bernardino County, and south through Baja California.
Habitat(s): Coastal sage scrub, chaparral, edges of riparian woodlands, and washes. Also found in weedy, disturbed areas adjacent to these habitats. Important habitat requirements include open, sunny areas, shaded areas, and abundant insect prey base, particularly termites (*Reticulitermes* sp.).
Status on site: Suitable habitat (Diegan coastal sage scrub) occurs within the project area and is considered to have high potential to support Belding's orange-throated whiptail. There are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity.

San Diegan tiger whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*)
Status: --/SSC
Distribution: Ventura County south, in cismontane California, to south-central Baja California.
Habitat(s): Open coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and woodlands. Frequently found along the edges of dirt roads traversing its habitats. Important habitat components include open, sunny areas, shrub cover with accumulated leaf litter, and an abundance of insects, spiders, or scorpions.
Status on site: Suitable habitat (Diegan coastal sage scrub) occurs within the project area and is considered to have high potential to support San Diegan tiger whiptail. There are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity.

Red diamond rattlesnake (*Crotalus ruber*)
Status: --/SSC
Distribution: Extreme southeastern Los Angeles County (Diamond Bar) into southern San Bernardino County, and south into southern Baja California, Mexico.
Habitat(s): Found in chaparral, coastal sage scrub, along creek banks, particularly among rock outcrops or piles of debris with a supply of burrowing rodents for prey.

Status on site: Suitable habitat (Diegan coastal sage scrub) occurs within the project area and is considered to have high potential to support red diamond rattlesnake. There are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity.

Blainville's horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*)
Status: --/SSC
Distribution: Northern California through coastal southern California into northern Baja California.
Habitat(s): Coastal sage scrub and open areas in chaparral, oak woodlands, and coniferous forests with sufficient basking sites, adequate scrub cover, and areas of loose soil; require native ants, especially harvester ants (*Pogonomyrmex* sp.), and are generally excluded from areas invaded by Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*).
Status on site: Suitable habitat (Diegan coastal sage scrub) occurs within the project area and is considered to have high potential to support Blainville's horned lizard. There are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity.

Western spadefoot toad (*Spea hammondii*)
Status: --/SSC
Distribution: Throughout the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay area, south along the coast to northwestern Baja California
Habitat(s): Occurs in open coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and grassland, along sandy or gravelly washes, floodplains, alluvial fans, or playas; require temporary pools for breeding and friable soils for burrowing; generally excluded from areas with bullfrogs (*Rana catesbiana*) or crayfish (*Procambarus* sp).
Status on site: Suitable habitat occurs within the project area along the San Diego River and along an unnamed drainage that is tributary to the San Diego River and these areas are considered high potential to support western spadefoot toad. There are documented occurrences in the vicinity of the project area. However, the project area has been heavily degraded and disturbed by surrounding development.

Two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*)
Status: --/SSC
Distribution: Monterey County south through the coastal ranges into northwestern Baja California
Habitat(s): Occurs along permanent and intermittent streams bordered by dense riparian vegetation, but occasionally associated with vernal pools or stock ponds.
Status on site: Potentially suitable riparian habitats occur within the project area along the San Diego River and along an unnamed drainage that is tributary to the San Diego River, but the site lacks rocky streambed habitat typically associated with the species. There are documented occurrences, including historical observations, in the project area and within the vicinity.

Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)
Status: --/SSC
Distribution: Occurs year-round throughout San Diego County's coastal slope where stands of trees are present.
Habitat(s): Oak groves, mature riparian woodlands, and eucalyptus stands or other mature forests.
Status on site: Suitable mature riparian woodland occurs within the project area along the San Diego River and is considered to have high potential to support Cooper's hawk. There are documented occurrences in the vicinity of the project area.

Coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*)
Status: FT/SSC
Distribution: Widespread resident species in San Diego County
Habitat(s): Diegan coastal sage scrub areas, typically dominated by California sagebrush, California buckwheat, and prickly-pear cactus.
Status on site: This species has been documented in multiple locations in sage scrub habitat along the San Diego River as recently as 2016 (USFWS 2023). Though the species has high potential to occur in the project area, suitable habitat present is limited to small remnant patches of coastal sage scrub within disturbed undeveloped land and does not connect to larger blocks of coastal sage scrub off-site. The species may utilize these areas on-site for foraging opportunities but would most likely breed off-site in more extensive, higher quality habitat.

Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)
Status: FE/SE
Distribution: Observed throughout much of San Diego County in the breeding season but in smaller numbers in foothills and mountains
Habitat(s): Mature riparian woodland.
Status on site: Suitable habitat for this species occurs along the San Diego River and along an unnamed drainage that is tributary to the San Diego River. This species has been documented in multiple locations along the San Diego River, where it runs through the project area, as recently as 2008 (USFWS 2023)

Nesting Birds

Trees and shrubs both within and adjacent to the project area could provide suitable nesting habitat for numerous bird species known to the region.

Raptor Foraging

Raptor species were not observed in the project area during the biological survey. Raptor species that have shown the ability to adapt to urban and suburban environments may use the area for foraging and could use on-site trees for nesting. These include red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) and Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*; State Watch List). Suitable foraging habitat for these species are fallow fields or open lands greater than five acres that are characterized by fossorial activity and/or the presence of trees. Raptors typically utilize tall trees for nesting and perching. Although present, the area of potential foraging habitat for raptors is limited within the project area. The habitat within the project area does not provide high-quality raptor habitat, as many on-site trees with potential for nesting are located adjacent to roadways with heavy traffic. Additionally, potential foraging habitat (fallow fields/open lands with fossorial activity) is limited within the project area, and nearby disturbance such as roads, freeways, and proximity to human activity are also a deterrent for foraging raptors.

3.6.4 Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

In the context of this assessment, jurisdictional waters and wetlands include waters of the U.S., including wetlands regulated by the USACE pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404; waters of the State regulated by the RWQCB pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act; and streambed and riparian habitat regulated by the CDFW pursuant to Sections 1600 *et seq*. of the California Fish and Game Code (CFG Code).

Potential jurisdictional aquatic resources present within the study area consist of waters of the U.S. subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of USACE, waters of the State subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the RWQCB, and streambed and riparian habitat subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the CDFW. These potential jurisdictional resources are primarily associated with the San Diego River, unnamed drainages, and riparian-associated vegetation occurring along the river and drainages.

The jurisdictional delineation review area consisted of the proposed Riverview Parkway project site and encompassed the entire parcel (381-050-82-00; REC Consultants, Inc. 2022a-b). Within the Riverview Parkway project site, a total of 0.33 acre (2,117 linear feet) of waters of the U.S. may be subject to USACE and RWQCB regulatory jurisdiction pursuant to Sections 404 and 401 of the CWA. Additionally, 1.13 acres of streambed and riparian resources occur within the jurisdictional delineation review area and would be subject to CDFW jurisdiction pursuant to Sections 1600–1616 of the CFG Code.

USACE Jurisdiction

USACE-jurisdictional waters within the jurisdictional delineation review area include wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S. (Table 3, *Aquatic Resources within the Jurisdictional Delineation Review Area*). A total of 0.33 acre / 2,117 linear feet (lf) of potential waters of the U.S. were delineated in the jurisdictional delineation review area. Potential waters of the U.S. consist of 0.05 acre of wetland and 0.28 acre of non-wetland waters.

RWQCB Jurisdiction

RWQCB-jurisdictional waters within the jurisdictional delineation review area include wetland and non-wetland waters of the State (Table 3). A total of 0.33 acre / 2,117 (lf) of potential waters of the State were delineated in the jurisdictional delineation review area. Potential waters of the State consist of 0.05 acre of wetland and 0.28 acre of non-wetland waters. No isolated waters or isolated wetlands meeting the SWRCB's State Wetland Definition were identified in the jurisdictional delineation review area. Thus, no waters or wetlands subject to RWQCB regulation solely under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act were observed on-site.

CDFW Jurisdiction

CDFW habitat was delineated within the jurisdictional delineation review area (Table 3). A total of 1.18 acres of CDFW jurisdictional habitat occur within the jurisdictional delineation review area, composed of 0.54 acre of riparian habitat (including vegetated streambed) and 0.64 acre of unvegetated streambed.

Table 3
AQUATIC RESOURCES WITHIN THE JURISDICTIONAL DELINEATION REVIEW AREA

TYPE	Acres[1] (Linear Feet)
USACE Waters of the U.S.	
Wetland Waters (WW-1)	0.04 (210)
Wetland Waters (WW-2)	0.01 (68)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-1)	0.19 (1,360)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-2)	0.08 (366)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-3)	0.01 (92)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-4)	<0.01 (0.001; 21)
Waters of the U.S. Total	**0.33 (2,117)**

TYPE	Acres[1] (Linear Feet)
RWQCB Waters of the State	
Wetland Waters (WW-1)	0.04 (210)
Wetland Waters (WW-2)	0.01 (68)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-1)	0.19 (1,360)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-2)	0.08 (366)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-3)	0.01 (92)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-4)	<0.01 (0.001; 21)
Waters of the State Total	**0.33 (2,117)**
CDFW Jurisdictional Areas	
Riparian (including vegetated streambed)	0.54
Streambed	0.64
CDFW TOTAL	**1.18**

[1] Acreages are rounded to nearest 0.01 acre. Linear feet is rounded to the nearest foot.

3.6.5 Wildlife Corridor/Core Wildlife Areas

Wildlife corridors connect otherwise isolated pieces of habitat and allow movement or dispersal of plants and animals. Local wildlife corridors allow access to resources such as food, water, and shelter within the framework of their daily routine. Regional corridors provide these functions over a larger scale and link two or more large habitat areas, allowing the dispersal of organisms and the consequent mixing of genes between populations. A corridor is a specific route that is used for the movement and migration of species and may be different from a linkage in that it represents a smaller or narrower avenue for movement. A linkage is an area of land that supports or contributes to the long-term movement of animals and genetic exchange by providing live-in habitat that connects to other habitat areas. Many linkages occur as stepping-stone linkages that are made up of a fragmented archipelago arrangement of habitat over a linear distance.

With respect to wildlife movement in the region, conservation targets generally include conserving core blocks of coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitat, as well as maintaining linkages between critical biological resource areas. The Mission Trails/Kearny Mesa/East Elliot/Santee BRCA, as identified in the Final MSCP Plan, surrounds the northern and western portions of the City and overlaps a small portion of the project area. This BRCA is generally associated with Mission Trails Regional Park to the west and habitat along the San Diego River. Undeveloped habitat in the project area functions as both "live-in" habitat for a wide variety of large and small wildlife, and functions as partial territory for the largest of mammals (i.e., mule deer, bobcat, and coyote). The project area also acts as a movement corridor (e.g., San Diego River) between County open space, MCAS Miramar, and Santee Lakes. The San Diego River is expected to be a key component for the movement of wildlife in the region, namely birds and mammals. The San Diego River supports a permanent water source and provides cover for a wide range of species known to the region. Large mammals, such as southern mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus fuliginata*) and coyote (*Canis latrans*), would be expected to travel to and from the San Diego River and expansive habitat blocks associated with Mission Trails Regional Park. Large mammals would also be expected to travel along the San Diego River and riparian corridor. Birds would be expected to move unobstructed between key habitat blocks of coastal sage scrub and riparian habitat that provides important breeding, foraging, and dispersal functions. Key blocks of coastal sage scrub where gnatcatchers are known to occur include Mission Trails Regional Park, with additional habitat extending further north within Sycamore Canyon Preserve, and to the southeast into Crestwood Ecological Reserve.

A variety of land uses surround the project area and include mixed uses that place residential use within walking distance of commercial and recreational uses (Figure 3). The San Diego River runs through the project area, and most of the on-site reach of the river is characterized by dense southern arroyo willow riparian forest habitat. East-west wildlife movement in the region would likely follow the San Diego River. The upland vegetation communities/land use types present outside and along the San Diego River corridor provide minimal cover for wildlife movement and, as evaluated on their own, do not function as a wildlife movement corridor. However, the upland undeveloped lands in the project area are contiguous with the San Diego River, which does function as a wildlife corridor.

4.0 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Biological resources in the project area are subject to regulatory review by federal, state, and local agencies. Under CEQA, impacts associated with a proposed project or program are assessed with regard to significance criteria determined by the CEQA Lead Agency (in this case, the City) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines. Biological resource-related laws and regulations that apply include the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), CWA, CEQA, California Endangered Species Act (CESA), Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA), CFG Code, Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act, MSCP, Santee General Plan, City of Santee Draft MSCP Subarea Plan (currently being prepared), Habitat Loss Permit Ordinance, and Santee Municipal Code.

4.1 FEDERAL

4.1.1 Federal Endangered Species Act

Administered by the USFWS, the FESA provides the legal framework for the listing and protection of species (and their habitats) that are identified as being endangered or threatened with extinction. Actions that jeopardize endangered or threatened species and the habitats upon which they rely are considered a "take" under the FESA. Section 9(a) of the ESA defines take as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct." "Harm" and "harass" are further defined in federal regulations and case law to include actions that adversely impair or disrupt a listed species' behavioral patterns.

The USFWS designates critical habitat for endangered and threatened species. Critical habitat is a term defined and used in the FESA and refers to specific geographic areas that contain features considered necessary for endangered or threatened species to recover. Critical habitat designations can include areas that are not currently occupied by the species, as the ultimate goal is to restore healthy populations of listed species within their native habitats so that they can be removed from the list of threatened or endangered species. Once an area is designated as critical habitat pursuant to the FESA, all federal agencies must consult with the USFWS to ensure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat. Only activities that involve a federal permit, license, or funding require consultation with the USFWS.

Sections 7 and 10(a) of the FESA regulate actions that could jeopardize endangered or threatened species. Section 7 describes a process of federal interagency consultation for use when federal actions may adversely affect listed species. In this case, take can be authorized via a letter of Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS for non-marine related listed species issues. A Section 7 consultation (formal or

informal) is required when there is a nexus between endangered species' use of a site and if there is an associated federal action for a proposed impact (e.g., the USACE would initiate a Section 7 consultation with the USFWS for impacts proposed to USACE jurisdictional areas that may also affect listed species or their critical habitat). Section 10(a) allows the issuance of permits for incidental take of endangered or threatened species with the preparation of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) when there is no federal nexus. The term "incidental" applies if the taking of a listed species is incidental to, and not the purpose of, an otherwise lawful activity. An HCP demonstrating how the taking would be minimized and how steps taken would ensure the species' survival must be submitted for issuance of Section 10(a) permits. The MSCP is a regional HCP that was developed pursuant to Section 10(a) of the ESA.

4.1.2 Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act has protections for all migratory bird species that are native to the United States or that have territories protected under the federal MBTA, as amended under the Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2004 (FR Doc. 05-5127). The MBTA is generally protective of migratory birds, but does not actually stipulate the type of protection required. In common practice, the MBTA is used to place restrictions on the disturbance of active bird nests during the nesting season (generally February 1 to September 15; beginning January 15 for raptors). In addition, the USFWS commonly places restrictions on disturbances allowed near active raptor nests.

4.1.3 Clean Water Act and Rivers and Harbors Act

Federal wetland regulation (non-marine issues) is guided by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and the CWA. The Rivers and Harbors Act deals primarily with discharges into navigable waters, while the purpose of the CWA is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of all waters of the U.S. Permitting for projects filling waters of the U.S. is overseen by the USACE under Section 404 of the CWA. Most development projects are permitted using Individual Permit or Nationwide Permit instruments.

4.2 STATE

4.2.1 California Environmental Quality Act

Primary environmental legislation in California is found in CEQA and its implementing guidelines (State CEQA Guidelines), which require that projects with potential adverse effects (or impacts) on the environment undergo environmental review. Adverse environmental impacts are typically mitigated as a result of the environmental review process, in accordance with existing laws and regulations.

4.2.2 California Endangered Species Act

The CESA established that it is state policy to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance state endangered species and their habitats. Under state law, plant and animal species may be formally designated rare, threatened, or endangered by official listing by the California Fish and Game Commission. The CESA authorizes that private entities may "take" plant or wildlife species listed as endangered or threatened under the FESA and CESA, pursuant to a federal Incidental Take Permit, if the CDFW certifies that the incidental take is consistent with CESA (CFG Code Section 2080.1[a]). For state-only listed species, Section 2081 of the CFG Code authorizes the CDFW to issue an Incidental Take Permit for state listed threatened and endangered species if specific criteria are met. The MSCP is a regional Natural

Communities Conservation Plan that was granted take coverage under Section 2081 of the CESA for specific species.

4.2.3 Native Plant Protection Act

Sections 1900 through 1913 of the CFG Code (Native Plant Protection Act) direct the CDFW to carry out the state legislature's intent to "…preserve, protect, and enhance endangered or rare native plants of this state." The NPPA gives the California Fish and Game Commission the power to designate native plants as "endangered" or "rare" and protect endangered and rare plants from "take".

4.2.4 California Fish and Game Code

The CFG Code provides specific protection and listing for several types of biological resources. Section 1600 of the CFG Code requires a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) for any activity that would alter the flow, change, or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral river, stream, and/or lake. Typical activities that require an SAA include excavation or fill placed within a channel, vegetation clearing, structures for diversion of water, installation of culverts and bridge supports, cofferdams for construction dewatering, and bank reinforcement. Notification is required before any such activities.

Pursuant to CFG Code Section 3503, it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. Raptors and owls, and their active nests, are protected by CFG Code Section 3503.5, which states that it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds of prey or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird unless authorized by the CDFW. Section 3513 states that it is unlawful to take or possess any migratory non-game bird, as designated in the MBTA. These regulations could require that construction activities (particularly vegetation removal or construction near nests) be reduced or eliminated during critical phases of the nesting cycle, unless surveys by a qualified biologist demonstrate that nests, eggs, or nesting birds will not be disturbed.

4.2.5 Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

This statute regulates surface waters and wetlands within the State and is governed by the RWQCB. Features that support aquatic resources (i.e., hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology) but are isolated (i.e., lack downstream connectivity to waters of the U.S.) could be subject to regulation pursuant to the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne). Impacts to isolated wetlands and/or waters of the State require a Waste Discharge Requirement Permit from the RWQCB.

4.2.6 Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act

The NCCP program is a cooperative effort to protect habitats and species. It began under the state's NCCP Act of 1991, legislation broader in its orientation and objectives than the CESA or FESA. These laws are designed to identify and protect individual species that have already declined significantly in number. The NCCP Act of 1991 and the associated Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP Process Guidelines (1993), Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP Conservation Guidelines (1993), and NCCP General Process Guidelines (1998) have been superseded by the NCCP Act of 2003.

The primary objective of the NCCP program is to conserve natural communities at the ecosystem level, while accommodating compatible land use. The program seeks to anticipate and prevent the controversies and gridlock caused by species' listings by focusing on the long-term stability of wildlife and plant communities and including key interests in the process.

This voluntary program allows the state to enter into planning agreements with landowners, local governments, and other stakeholders to prepare plans that identify the most important areas for a threatened or endangered species, and the areas that may be less important. These NCCP plans may become the basis for a state permit to take threatened and endangered species in exchange for conserving their habitat. The CDFW and USFWS worked to combine the NCCP program with the federal HCP process to provide take permits for state and federal listed species. Under the NCCP, local governments, such as the County, can take the lead in developing these NCCP plans and become the recipients of state and federal take permits.

4.3 COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

The County regulates natural resources (among other resources) via the MSCP, as discussed below.

4.3.1 Multiple Species Conservation Program

The California NCCP Act of 1991 (Section 2835) allows the CDFW to authorize take of species covered by plans in agreement with NCCP guidelines. A Natural Communities Conservation Program initiated by the State of California focuses on conserving coastal sage scrub, and in concert with the USFWS and the federal ESA, is intended to avoid the need for future federal and state listing of coastal sage scrub-dependent species.

The San Diego MSCP Plan for the southwestern portion of San Diego County was approved in August 1998 and covers 85 species (County 1998). The City of San Diego, portions of the unincorporated County, and 10 additional city jurisdictions make up the San Diego MSCP Plan area. It is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation plan that addresses the needs of multiple species by identifying key areas for preservation as open space, in order to link core biological areas into a regional wildlife preserve.

The San Diego Final MSCP Plan includes the cities of Del Mar, Poway, San Diego, Santee, El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Chula Vista, Coronado, and Imperial Beach. Local jurisdictions implement their respective portions of the plans by developing subarea plans that describe their specific implementing mechanisms, preserve boundaries, and species and habitats protection while preserving the integrity of the MSCP. The City of Santee is currently in the process of developing its Subarea plan, which would rely on a combination of hardline protection areas and softline protection zones to protect species and habitat.

4.4 LOCAL

4.4.1 Santee General Plan

Section 65302 (d) of the California Planning and Zoning Laws requires each City’s General Plan to contain a Conservation Element that is intended to address the conservation, development, and utilization of

natural resources. These resources may include water, forests, rivers, soils, minerals, fisheries, and wildlife.

Objective 7.0 of the Santee General Plan Conservation Element requires the following policies to preserve significant biological resources.

- Policy 7.1: The City shall encourage the preservation and enhancement of significant biological resources in areas designated as permanent open space.

- Policy 7.2: The City shall require that all development proposals provide appropriate mitigation for identified significant biological resources, including selective preservation, sensitive site planning techniques, and in-kind mitigation for identified impacts.

- Policy 7.3: The City shall require that, for all development proposals involving the setting aside of land for permanent open space, either on-site or off-site, provisions are in place to ensure the long-term management of the open space and biological resources.

4.4.2 City of Santee Draft MSCP Subarea Plan

The City of Santee is currently participating in the MSCP through the preparation of a Subarea Plan. The Plan provides a framework for promoting the protection and enhancement of natural resources, including listed species and species that may become listed during the permit term and their habitats, while streamlining the permitting process for planned development, infrastructure development, and infrastructure and facilities operations and maintenance activities (Covered Activities). The Plan will enable the City of Santee to receive listed species take permits for identified activities and projects conducted by the City and those under their jurisdiction where the City has discretion over the activity. The Plan Area covers 10,500.8 acres, including lands within the jurisdiction of the City of Santee, plus off-site conservation areas. The permits that would ultimately be issued by the Wildlife Agencies will address 20 Covered Species that are currently listed as threatened or endangered or may become listed during the permit term, that may be impacted by Covered Activities, and that will benefit from Plan-related conservation and management.

4.4.3 Santee Municipal Code

The City's municipal code requires that all new developments, subdivisions, or tracts that are planned in Fire Hazard Severity Zones and/or Wildland Urban Interface areas have a minimum of 100 horizontal feet of defensible space between flammable structures and wildland areas. Typically, defensible space comprises two brush management areas: Zone 1 (the first 50 feet from flammable structures) and Zone 2 (the second 50 feet). Zone 1 may consist of pavement; walkways; turf; and permanently landscaped, irrigated, and maintained ornamental plantings. Fire resistive trees are allowed if placed or trimmed so that crowns are maintained more than 10 feet from the structure(s). Zone 2 may include low-growing, fire resistant shrubs and ground covers. Zone 2 must have an average plant height of under 24 inches and cover of native, non-irrigated vegetation of under 30 percent.

5.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF PROJECT IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION

This section presents an analysis of anticipated direct and indirect impacts to biological resources associated with the implementation of the proposed project. Direct impacts immediately alter the affected biological resources such that those resources are eliminated temporarily or permanently. Indirect impacts consist of secondary effects of a project, including drainage and toxins (water quality), lighting, noise, and invasive plant species. Overall, cumulative impacts are also addressed.

5.1 CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of impacts to biological resources present or those with the potential to occur was determined based on the sensitivity of the resource and the extent and severity of the anticipated impacts. In general, for certain highly sensitive resources (e.g., federally listed species), any impact would be significant. Conversely, other resources that are of low sensitivity (e.g., species with a large, locally stable population in the region but declining elsewhere) could sustain some impact with a less than significant effect.

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, project impacts to biological resources would be considered significant if they would:

(a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS.

(b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or sensitive natural community identified by local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS.

(c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the CWA (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling hydrological interruption, or other means.

(d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

(e) Conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

(f) Conflict with provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

5.2 ISSUE 1: SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS?

Direct impacts immediately alter the affected biological resources such that those resources are eliminated temporarily or permanently. Impacts were analyzed and quantified by overlaying the proposed boundaries of the impact associated with the project onto the baseline biological maps.

5.2.1 Impacts to Vegetation Communities

Implementation of the overall proposed project is anticipated to result in direct impacts to 448.89 acres of habitat (Table 4, *Vegetation Community/Land Use Types Impacts and Mitigation Requirements*; Figure 7, *Vegetation and Sensitive Resources/Impacts*). No direct impacts are anticipated to occur to conserved lands designated as Park/Open Space and Floodway/Open Space (Figure 4).

Project activities would occur over an extended period; therefore, the overall proposed project impacts would not occur all at once. Impacts presented in Table 4 account for all the proposed projects known and potential impacts within the defined TCSP, AEN, and Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B footprint, and there are currently no additional impacts anticipated to occur. If any future development were required to occur outside of the defined TCSP, AEN, or Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B footprint, a project-level analysis would be submitted to the City to determine if the planned activity deviating from the proposed footprint is consistent with the TCSP, AEN, and applicable mitigation measures and conditions included in that permit. Impacts to vegetation would occur as part of development activities.

Table 4
VEGETATION COMMUNITY/LAND USE TYPES IMPACTS AND MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS[1,2]

Vegetation Community	Santee Town Center SPA	Arts & Entertainment Neighborhood	Property 16A	Property 16B	Property 20A	Property 20B	Mitigation Ratio	Maximum Mitigation Acres
Wetland Habitats								
Southern Riparian Forest (61300)	0.01	--	--	--	--	--	3:1	0.03
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest (61320)	6.57	1.52	--	--	--	--	3:1	19.71
Southern Riparian Scrub (63300)	0.01	--	--	--	--	--	3:1	0.03
Southern Riparian Scrub – Disturbed (63300)	0.68	--	--	--	--	--	3:1	2.04
Southern Riparian Scrub – Restoration (63300)	0.03	0.03	--	--	--	--	3:1	0.09
Southern Willow Scrub (63320)	0.47	0.47	0.19	--	--	--	3:1	1.41
Tamarisk Scrub (63810)	0.16	0.16	--	--	--	--	3:1	0.48
Arrowweed Scrub (63820)	1.96	0.03	--	--	--	--	3:1	5.88
Open Water (64100)	--	--	--	--	--	--	3:1	--
Subtotal	*9.89*	*2.21*	*0.19*	--	--	--	--	*29.67*
Upland Habitats								
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (32500)	--	--	--	--	--	--	2:1	--
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub, Disturbed (32500)	8.7	8.7	--	--	--	--	2:1	17.4
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis-dominated (32530)	4.5	4.5	--	--	--	--	2:1	13.5
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis-dominated, Disturbed (32530)	0.9	0.9	--	--	--	--	2:1	2.7
Non-native Grassland (42200)	4.2	--	--	--	--	--	0.5:1	2.1
Eucalyptus Woodland (79100)	1.1	0.7	--	--	--	--	--	--

Vegetation Community	Santee Town Center SPA	Arts & Entertainment Neighborhood	Property 16A	Property 16B	Property 20A	Property 20B	Mitigation Ratio	Maximum Mitigation Acres
Artificial Detention Basin (N/A)	2.0	2.0	1.3	--	--	--	--	--
Disturbed Habitat (11300)	85.7	55.9	9.5	8.5	5.9	7.9	--	--
Developed (12000)	331.9	108.2	<0.1 (0.02)	0.1	1.8	2.0	--	--
Subtotal	*439.0*	*189.9*	*10.8*	*8.6*	*7.7*	*9.9*	--	*35.7*
TOTAL	**448.89**	**183.11**	**10.99**	**8.6**	**7.7**	**9.9**	**--**	**65.37**

[1] Vegetation categories and numerical codes are from Holland (1986) and Oberbauer (2008).

[2] Upland habitats are rounded to the nearest 0.1 acre, while wetland habitats are rounded to the nearest 0.01; thus, total reflects rounding.

5.2.2 Impacts to Special-status Species

Several special-status plant and animal species were observed in the project area during biological surveys. Project impacts would primarily occur in existing developed and disturbed areas. However, portions of the proposed project area extend into native habitats, including wetland and riparian habitats and sensitive uplands habitats, where special-status plant and animal species have been detected or have the potential to occur. Potential project effects on special-status plant and animal species are described below.

5.2.2.1 Special-status Plant Species

The project would result in impacts to three special-status plant species: smooth tarplant (CRPR 1B.1), white rabbit-tobacco (CRPR 2B.2), and southwestern spiny rush (CRPR 4.2). All other special-status plant species observed on-site would either remain undisturbed or be conserved in open space. A total of 243 smooth tarplant individuals, six white rabbit-tobacco individuals, and two southwestern spiny rush individuals observed within the project area would be impacted by the proposed project. No special-status plant species were determined to have a high potential to occur within the project area.

Federal or State Listed Plant Species

No impacts would occur to federally and/or state listed plant species as none were documented within the TCSP, AEN, or Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, or 20B.

CRPR 1 or 2 Listed Plant Species

Generally, impacts to plant species with a CNPS CRPR of 1 or 2 are considered potentially significant due to their higher sensitivity status, and the impact analysis evaluates substantial adverse effects to these species. Implementation of the proposed project has the potential to result in direct impacts to the following special-status plant species with a CRPR of 1 or 2: smooth tarplant and white rabbit-tobacco.

Smooth Tarplant

Approximately 243 individuals of smooth tarplant occur in the TCSP project area and the AEN, and within these mapped occurrences, approximately 110 individuals occur on Property 16A (Figure 6). Mitigation measures **BIO-1** and **BIO-2** would reduce proposed project impacts on Property 16A to less than significant. If project work limits are exceeded and additional inadvertent impacts occur, the impacts could increase in severity and represent a potential significant impact. Mitigation measures

- Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan
- Study Area
- Proposed Arts & Entertainment District Overlay
- Property 16A
- Property 16B
- Property 20A
- Property 20B
- Impact Avoidance Area
- Impact Avoidance Area (SD River Trails)

Special Status Plant Species

- San Diego Marsh Elder (*Iva hayesiana*)
- Southwestern Spiny Rush (*Juncus acutus* ssp. *leopoldii*)
- Smooth Tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*)
- Smooth Tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*)
- Rabbit Tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum*)

Holland/Oberbauer Classification

Riparian Forests and Woodlands

- (61300) Southern Riparian Forest
- (61320) Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest

Riparian Shrublands

- (63300) Southern Riparian Scrub - Disturbed
- (63300) Southern Riparian Scrub - Restoration
- (63320) Southern Willow Scrub
- (63810) Tamarisk Scrub
- (63820) Arrowweed Scrub

Upland Forestes and Woodlands

- (79100) Eucalyptus Woodland

Soft-leaved, Drought-Deciduous Shrublands

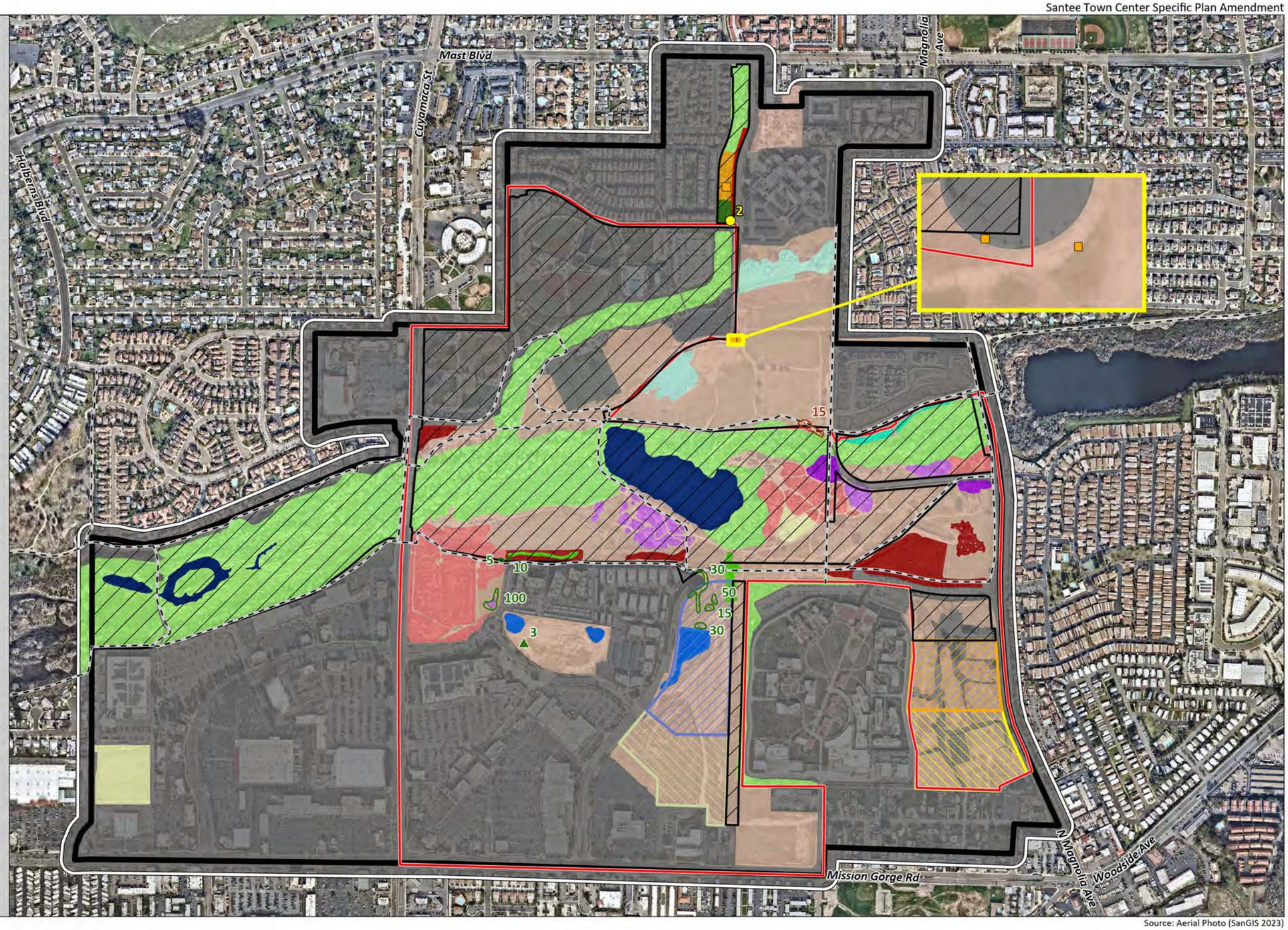
- (32500) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub
- (32500) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Disturbed
- (32530) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Baccharis-dominated
- (32530) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Baccharis-dominated -Disturbed

Upland Herbaceous Vegetation

- (11300) Disturbed Habitat
- (42200) Non-native Grassland

Unvegetated

- (12000) Developed
- (64100) Open Water
- (N/A) Artifical Dentention Basin



0 750 Feet

Source: Aerial Photo (SanGIS 2023)

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HELIX Environmental Planning

Vegetation and Sensitive Resources/Impacts

Figure 7

BIO-3 and **BIO-4** would require the installation of temporary construction fencing and biological monitoring where work limits occur adjacent to known sensitive resources to be avoided, including smooth tarplant individuals. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-3** and **BIO-4** would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided. Additionally, Mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities. Implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-6** would ensure that future development impacts on smooth tarplant in the TCSP project area and the AEN are reduced to less than significant levels.

White Rabbit-tobacco

A total of six individuals of white rabbit-tobacco occur within the TCSP outside the AEN and conserved lands. These individuals do not occur on Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B (Figure 7). Implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-6** would ensure that future development impacts on white rabbit-tobacco in the TCSP project area and the AEN are reduced to less than significant levels.

CRPR 3 or 4 Listed Plant Species

CRPR 3 and 4 species are relatively widespread, and impacts to such species would not substantially reduce their populations in the region and are not significant. Implementation of the project is anticipated to result in direct impacts to the following special-status plant species with a CRPR of 3 or 4: southwestern spiny rush.

Southwestern Spiny Rush

One individual occurs within the TCSP on conserved land designated as Park/Open Space along an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River. A second individual occurs within the TCSP outside conserved lands at the southern terminus of Park Center Drive. Additionally, a third individual occurs within the TCSP and AEN outside conserved lands at the southern terminus of Park Center Drive. These individuals do not occur on Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B (Figure 7). Project impacts to southwestern spiny rush would be less than significant because this relatively widespread species is known to occur elsewhere in the project vicinity, such that the local long-term survival of the species would not be impacted by impacts to two individuals. The impacted individuals are not part of a population at the periphery of the species' range, located in an area where the taxon is especially uncommon, or occurring on unusual substrates. Lastly, there are numerous documented occurrences of this species throughout the region, including on conserved lands, indicating that the project does not represent a geographically significant population.

Other Special-status Plant Species

Implementation of the proposed project is not anticipated to result in impacts to other special-status plant species known from or with high potential to occur in the project area. These species are expected to be avoided by project activities due either to the species' location being outside of the proposed development footprint, or the lack of suitable conditions (habitat, soils, hydrology, elevations, etc.) within the development footprint. However, due to the long-term nature of the project, potential additional or new populations of special-status plant species could be discovered in the future, including MSCP Narrow Endemic species. Project impacts to special-status plant species may be considered significant depending on the species, sensitivity, and the number of plants to be impacted. Significant impacts to special-status plant species, if determined to occur, would require mitigation, including

species-specific mitigation, consistent with the City's General Plan (City 2020). Implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-6** would ensure that future development impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided. Additionally, Mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

5.2.2.2 Special-status Animal Species

Implementation of the proposed project has the potential to result in direct impacts to habitats occupied or suitable for special-status wildlife species. These habitats include wetland and riparian habitats, open water/lake, Diegan coastal sage scrub and various subtypes of this habitat, and non-native grassland. Such impacts would be a result of development activities such as vegetation removal, which could cause loss of habitat and/or direct injury or mortality to individuals. These impacts are described below.

Federally or State Listed Animal Species

Implementation of the proposed project would impact locations where the following three listed animal species have been documented within the proposed project area or have high potential to occur: coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, and western spadefoot toad; additional information is provided below. Nesting and migratory birds also may be impacted by future development.

Coastal California Gnatcatcher

Implementation of the proposed project within both the TCSP and AEN areas would result in impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher from the removal of 14.1 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub (comprising disturbed, baccharis-dominated, and disturbed baccharis-dominated). Habitat suitable for CAGN does not occur on Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, or 20B. Impacts from the TCSP and AEN total no more than 8.7 acres of disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub and 5.4 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis dominated (including disturbed). Impacts to occupied and potential CAGN habitat within the TCSP and AEN areas are considered significant and would require mitigation.

If construction activities or operational activities in the TCSP or AEN were to occur during the gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 through August 15) and impact occupied CAGN habitat, direct impacts to nesting CAGN would be considered significant and would require mitigation. Through the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, and **BIO-9**, impacts to this species would be reduced to less than significant. Additionally, Mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

Least Bell's Vireo

A maximum amount of 7.93 acres of suitable habitat for least Bell's vireo may be impacted by the development of the TCSP, AEN, and Property 16A areas, respectively. Suitable breeding habitat for the least Bell's vireo within the TCSP project area comprises 0.01 acre of southern riparian forest, 6.57 acres of southern arroyo willow riparian forest, 0.72 acre of southern riparian scrub (including disturbed and restoration), 0.47 acre of southern willow scrub, and 0.16 acre of tamarisk scrub. Suitable breeding habitat for the least Bell's vireo within the AEN project area comprises 1.52 acres of southern arroyo willow riparian forest, 0.03 acre of southern riparian scrub (restoration), 0.47 acre of southern willow

scrub, and 0.16 acre of tamarisk scrub. Suitable breeding habitat for the least Bell's vireo within Property 16A comprises 0.19 acre of southern willow scrub. If construction activities were to occur during the vireo breeding season (March 15 through September 15) and impact occupied least Bell's vireo habitat, direct impacts to nesting least Bell's vireo would be considered significant and would require mitigation. Additionally, indirect impacts to least Bell's vireo would occur if construction activities or operational activities were to take place during the vireo breeding season and were to generate noise levels greater than 60 dBA, or exceed ambient noise levels if greater than 60 dBA, within occupied least Bell's vireo habitat. Through the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, and **BIO-9**, impacts to this species would be reduced to less than significant. Additionally, Mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

Western Spadefoot Toad

The western spadefoot toad has a high potential to occur in sparse riparian habitat along the San Diego River. Construction related to the implementation of the proposed project could impact western spadefoot toad. Through the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-6** and **BIO-10**, impacts to this species would be reduced to less than significant. Additionally, Mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities. Therefore, the proposed project's impacts to western spadefoot toad would be less than significant.

Nesting Birds

The project area contains trees, shrubs, and other vegetation that provide suitable nesting habitat for common birds, including raptors (such as Cooper's hawk), protected under the MBTA and CFG Code. Construction of the proposed project could result in the removal or trimming of trees and other vegetation during the general bird nesting season (January 15 through July 15 for raptors and February 1 to September 15 for general avian species) and, therefore, could result in impacts to nesting birds in violation of the MBTA and CFG Code. The proposed project construction or operation within 500 feet of breeding habitat for nesting birds could result in adverse indirect impacts related to construction or operational noise. Impacts to nesting birds and temporary (foraging, migration, and dispersal) habitat would be significant. However, through the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-7, BIO-8**, and **BIO-9**, impacts to nesting birds would be reduced to less than significant.

Other Special-status Animal Species

Implementation of the proposed project could result in impacts to the following seven other special-status animal species with high potential to occur: San Diegan legless lizard, California glossy snake, Belding's orange-throated whiptail, San Diegan tiger whiptail, red diamond rattlesnake, Blainville's horned lizard, and two-striped garter snake.

Potential impacts to other special-status animal species would result from the removal of 9.89 acres of wetland and riparian habitats, 18.3 acres of sensitive upland habitats, and 420.7 acres of non-sensitive upland habitats that may support these species. These impacts would be less than significant due to the small number of individuals that would potentially be affected, the relatively small amount of habitat to be impacted, and the large amount of suitable habitat in the project area that would be avoided by activities and would continue to be preserved within conserved lands. Impacts to MSCP-covered species

would be less than significant based on adequate species coverage and suitable habitats protected under the MSCP.

5.2.3 Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures would ensure that potential impacts on special-status plant and animal species are avoided by the project.

BIO-1 Focused surveys for smooth tarplant will be completed during the blooming period for this species (April to September) before clearing and grubbing for the development of sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Smooth tarplant observed in a proposed impact area will be flagged and avoided during construction. If impacts to smooth tarplant individuals cannot be avoided, mitigation will consist of on- or off-site preservation, translocation, and/or restoration within a BRCA, with a preference for species salvage and transplantation on-site if feasible, as determined by a qualified biologist and approved by the City. Seed material will be sourced from within 25 miles of the project area, but if seed is not available, due to seasonality or a poor seeding year, seed collected from southeastern San Diego County may be used. If species are transplanted for mitigation, these species will be included in a plant salvage and translocation plan according to mitigation measure **BIO-2**.

BIO-2 Before vegetation clearing for development of sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, if smooth tarplant is being impacted, and translocation is selected as part of the mitigation package according to mitigation measure **BIO-1**, a plant salvage and translocation plan shall be prepared for smooth tarplant impacted by the project. The plan shall, at a minimum, evaluate options for plant salvage and relocation, including native plant mulching, selective soil salvaging, and application/relocation of resources within the project area. Relocation efforts may include seed collection and/or transplantation to a suitable receptor site and will be based on the most reliable methods of successful relocation. The program shall contain a recommendation for the method of salvage and relocation/application based on the feasibility of implementation and the likelihood of success. The program shall include, at a minimum, an implementation plan, maintenance and monitoring program, success criteria, estimated completion time, and any relevant contingency measures. The resource salvage plan shall be prepared by a qualified biologist and shall be implemented according to the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the project, to the satisfaction of the City.

BIO-3 To help ensure errant impacts to sensitive vegetation communities and jurisdictional waters outside of the impact footprint are avoided during construction in the Housing Element sites, environmental exclusionary fencing, where determined necessary by the qualified biologist, would be installed at the edges of the impact limits before the initiation of grading. All construction staging shall occur within the approved limits of construction. A qualified biologist will monitor the installation of environmental fencing wherever it would abut sensitive vegetation communities. The biologist will periodically monitor the limits of construction operations to ensure that avoidance areas are delineated with temporary fencing and that fencing remains intact. Unless otherwise determined by the monitoring biologist, periodically means once every 14 days after environmental exclusionary fencing has been installed at the edges of the impact limits.

BIO-4 Before vegetation clearing for development of the Housing Element sites a qualified biologist shall conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training session for project and construction personnel before the commencement of work. The training shall include a description of the species of concern and their habitats, the general provisions of the Endangered Species Acts (FESA and CESA), the penalties associated with violating the provisions of the acts, the general measures that are being implemented to conserve the species of concern as they relate to the project, and the access routes to and project area boundaries.

BIO-5 Immediately following completion of temporary construction activities within the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element Sites, the contractor shall restore the temporary impact areas to pre-construction contours and revegetate the areas with native plant material, as follows: excavated soils and cleared native plant material shall be stockpiled within an appropriate staging area along the edge of the work corridor to the extent feasible; excavated soils shall be backfilled upon completion of construction and recontoured to pre-existing conditions; cleared native plant material shall be distributed over the temporarily disturbed areas; native seed application and installation of native container plants. Plant and seed material will be sourced from within five miles of the project area, but if plant and seed material is not available, due to seasonality or a poor seeding year, seed collected from southeastern San Diego County may be used. Maintenance and monitoring of the revegetation shall be provided for a period of up to 25 months or for a period sufficient to establish native plant material and to provide vegetative cover that prevents soil erosion. Appropriate landscaping will be selected based on the vegetation communities within the portion of the study area adjacent to the project. In areas supporting native (or disturbed native) vegetation communities, revegetation of temporarily impacted areas will be with appropriate native plant materials. Only non-invasive plant species will be included in the revegetation plans (species not listed on the California Invasive Plant Inventory prepared by the California Invasive Plant Council (2023). A qualified landscape architect and/or qualified biologist shall review landscape plant palettes before implementation to ensure that no invasive species are included. Any planting stock brought onto the project area shall be inspected to ensure it is free of pest species that could invade natural areas, including but not limited to, Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*) and South American fire ants (*Solenopsis invicta*). Inspections of planting stock for habitat revegetation shall be by a qualified biologist. Any planting stock found to be infested with such pests shall be quarantined, treated, or disposed of according to best management practices (BMPs) by qualified personnel, in a manner that precludes invasions into natural habitats. Temporary irrigation via irrigation lines and appurtenances (or an alternate method approved by the City and qualified biologist) shall be provided by the contractor for a period sufficient to establish plant material and to provide vegetative cover that prevents soil erosion. Irrigation shall be performed in a manner that avoids runoff, seepage, and overspray onto adjacent properties, non-irrigated areas, walls, roadways, waterways, or structures.

BIO-6 Applications for future development outside of sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, where the City has determined the potential for impacts to sensitive biological resources, shall be required to comply with the following mitigation measure:

a. Before the issuance of any construction permit or any earth-moving activities, a site-specific general biological resources survey shall be conducted to identify the presence of any sensitive biological resources, including any sensitive plant or wildlife species. A biological resources report shall be submitted to the City to document the results of the

biological resources survey. The report shall include (1) the methods used to determine the presence of sensitive biological resources; (2) vegetation mapping of all vegetation communities and/or land cover types; (3) the locations of any sensitive plant or wildlife species; (4) an evaluation of the potential for occurrence of any listed, rare, and narrow endemic species; and (5) an evaluation of the significance of any potential direct or indirect impacts from the proposed project. If suitable habitat for sensitive species is identified based on the general biological survey, then focused presence/absence surveys shall be conducted in accordance with applicable resource agency survey protocols and incorporated into the biological resources report. If potentially significant impacts to sensitive vegetation communities and biological resources are identified, project-level grading and site plans shall incorporate project design features to avoid or minimize direct impacts on sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible, and the report shall also recommend appropriate mitigation to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance, where feasible. Mitigation measures shall be consistent with the standards contained in the Santee Subarea Plan, and projects shall be required to obtain all necessary permits to ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, such as the federal and state Endangered Species Acts. Mitigation ratios for sensitive vegetation community impacts are:

- Wetland habitats – 3:1 ratio
- Diegan coastal sage scrub – 2:1 ratio
- Non-native grassland – 0.5:1 ratio

Mitigation ratios shall be doubled for sensitive vegetation community impacts within the Preserve and Open Space System designated by the Santee Subarea Plan, once adopted.

b. Environmentally Sensitive Areas shall be identified in the biological resources report and avoided to the maximum extent practicable. In areas near or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas (i.e., natural habitats and vegetation, wetlands, wildlife areas, wildlife corridors), the biological resources report will consider the following measures:

Avoidance of Environmentally Sensitive Areas. In areas near or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas, construction limits shall be clearly demarcated using highly visible barriers (such as silt fencing), which shall be installed under the supervision of a qualified biologist before the commencement of work. Construction personnel shall strictly limit their activities, vehicles, equipment, and construction materials to the project footprint, including designated staging areas and routes of travel. The construction areas shall be limited to the minimal area necessary to complete the proposed project. The fencing shall remain in place until the completion of all construction activities and shall be promptly removed when construction is complete.

Biological Monitoring. A qualified biological monitor shall conduct construction monitoring of all work conducted within/adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas

during all vegetation removal and ground-disturbing activities such as staging and grading, for the duration of the proposed project to ensure that practicable measures are being employed to avoid incidental disturbance of habitat outside the project footprints and to survey for sensitive wildlife species. When vegetation removal and ground-disturbing activities are not occurring, as-needed monitoring at the project areas shall occur.

Worker Environmental Awareness Program. In areas near or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas, a qualified biologist shall conduct a WEAP training session for project and construction personnel before the commencement of work. The training shall include a description of the species of concern and their habitats, the general provisions of the Endangered Species Acts (FESA and CESA), the penalties associated with violating the provisions of the acts, the general measures that are being implemented to conserve the species of concern as they relate to the project, and the access routes to and project area boundaries.

Best Management Practices. During future project construction activities, the following BMPs shall be implemented:

- All equipment maintenance, staging, and dispensing of fuel, oil, or any other such activities shall occur in developed or designated non-sensitive upland habitat areas. The designated upland areas shall be located to prevent runoff from any spills from entering Waters of the US.

- A construction Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and a soil erosion and sedimentation plan shall be developed (where requirements are met) to minimize erosion and identify specific pollution prevention measures that shall eliminate or control potential point and nonpoint pollution sources on-site during and following the project construction phase. The SWPPP shall identify specific BMPs during project construction to prevent any water quality standard exceedances. In addition, the SWPPP shall contain provisions for changes to the plan such as alternative mechanisms, if necessary, during project design and/or construction to achieve the stated goals and performance standards.

- Trash shall be stored in closed containers so that it is not readily accessible to scavengers and shall be removed from the construction site on a daily basis.

- Water quality shall be visually monitored by the biological monitor to ensure that no substantial increases in turbidity occur during construction. All relevant natural resource permits and authorizations shall be obtained from appropriate agencies (i.e., USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW) before the initiation of construction activities. Permit conditions contained within the permits and authorizations shall be employed throughout the duration of the project.

- Hydrologic connectivity shall be maintained within drainages during the duration of construction. Brush, debris material, mud, silt, or other pollutants

from construction activities shall not be placed within drainages and shall not be allowed to enter a flowing stream.

- Dust control measures shall be implemented by the contractor to reduce excessive dust emissions. Dust control measures shall be carried out at least two times per day on all construction days, or more during windy or dry periods, and may include wetting work areas, the use of soil binders on dirt roads, and wetting or covering stockpiles.

- No pets shall be allowed in, or adjacent to, the project areas.

- Rodenticides, herbicides, insecticides, or other chemicals that could potentially harm wildlife or native plants shall not be used near or within Environmentally Sensitive Areas within or near the roadway segments.

- Construction equipment shall be cleaned of mud or other debris that may contain invasive plants and/or seeds and inspected to reduce the potential of spreading noxious weeds before mobilizing to the site and before leaving the site during the course of construction.

- The cleaning of equipment will occur at least 300 feet from Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing.

- *Use of Native Plants.* All project-related planting and landscaping shall not use plants listed by the California Invasive Plant Council. Locally native plants shall be used near open space and native areas to the greatest extent feasible.

BIO-7 Grubbing or clearing of vegetation within the TCSP, AEN, or Housing Element Sites during the general avian breeding season (February 1 to September 15), least Bell's vireo breeding season (March 15 to September 15), coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 to August 15), or raptor breeding season (January 15 to July 15) shall be avoided to the extent feasible. If grubbing, clearing, or grading occurs during the breeding season, a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than three days before the commencement of activities to determine if active bird nests are present in the affected areas. If there are no nesting birds (includes nest building or other breeding/nesting behavior) within 300 feet of the survey area (500 feet for raptors), clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed in that area. Furthermore, if clearing, grubbing, or grading activities are to resume in an area where they have not occurred for a period of seven or more days during the breeding season, an updated survey for avian nesting will be conducted by a qualified biologist within three days before the commencement of clearing, grubbing, or grading activities in that area. If active nests or nesting birds are observed within 300 feet of the survey area (500 feet for raptors), the biologist shall flag a buffer around the active nests, and clearing, grubbing, or grading activities shall not occur within 300 feet of active nests (500 feet for raptors) until nesting behavior has ceased, nests have failed, or young have fledged as determined by a qualified biologist. If the qualified biologist determines that the species will not be impacted with a reduced buffer (i.e., less than 300 feet for general avian species and 500 feet for raptors), potentially with the implementation of avoidance measures to reduce noise, as necessary, and/or the qualified biologist monitors the active nest during clearing, grubbing, or grading to ensure no impacts to

the species occur, these activities may occur outside the reduced buffer during the breeding season, as long as the species is not impacted.

BIO-8 If heavy equipment would be in operation during construction within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element Sites during the breeding season for least Bell's vireo (March 15 to September 15), coastal California gnatcatcher (March 1 to August 15), or raptors (January 15 to July 15), pre-construction survey(s) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist, as appropriate, to determine whether these species occur within the areas potentially impacted by noise. If pre-construction surveys determine that active nests belonging to these species are absent from the potential noise impact area (within 300 feet for vireo or gnatcatcher, 500 feet for raptors, or as otherwise determined by a qualified biologist), clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed. If pre-construction surveys determine the presence of active nests belonging to these species, then clearing, grubbing, and grading within 300 feet of the nest location(s) for vireo or gnatcatcher and 500 feet for raptors, shall: (1) be postponed until a permitted biologist determines the nest is no longer active; (2) be allowed to continue if nest monitoring by a qualified biologist determines that noise levels are not adversely affecting the nesting birds, or (3) not occur until a temporary noise barrier or berm is constructed at the edge of the clearing, grubbing, or grading footprint and/or around the piece of equipment to ensure that noise levels are reduced to below 60 A-weighted decibels (dBA) or ambient at the nest location. Decibel output for Item (3) will be confirmed by a qualified noise specialist, and intermittent monitoring by a qualified biologist will be required to ensure that conditions have not changed.

BIO-9 If operational activities within the TCSP, AEN, or Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B will produce noise levels that will adversely affect nesting birds during the breeding season for least Bell's vireo (March 15 to September 15), coastal California gnatcatcher (March 1 to August 15), or raptors (January 15 to July 15), activities nearby to suitable special-status species habitat on preserved land will be designed and implemented to minimize noise impacts to preserves and wildlife. Operational activities shall (1) be allowed to continue if a temporary noise barrier or berm is constructed at the edge of the suitable special-status species habitat to ensure that noise levels are reduced to below 60 A-weighted decibels (dBA) or the measured existing ambient at the edge of suitable habitat, or (2) operational activities that would be above 60 dBA Leq hourly at the edge of suitable habitat shall be allowed to continue with the incorporation of noise reduction strategies in equipment, siting and site design, features, timing, noise barriers, landscaping, and buffer separation.

BIO-10 A focused pre-construction survey for special-status animal species will be completed by a qualified biologist before clearing and grubbing within the TCSP, AEN, or Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Aside from birds, which are covered by other mitigation measures, this survey will focus on the special-status animal species identified as having high potential to occur on-site: western spadefoot toad, San Diegan legless lizard, California glossy snake, Belding's orange-throated whiptail, San Diegan tiger whiptail, red diamond rattlesnake, Blainville's horned lizard, and two-striped garter snake. Occupied special-status species habitat observed in the proposed impact area will be flagged and avoided during construction until the qualified biologist determines that special-status species are no longer using the habitat.

5.2.4 Conclusions

Project implementation could result in significant impacts to smooth tarplant, western spadefoot toad, and nesting birds and raptors with the potential to nest within or adjacent to the project area. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-1** through **BIO-10** would ensure that potential impacts are avoided by the project.

5.3 ISSUE 2: RIPARIAN HABITAT AND SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES

Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS?

5.3.1 Impact Analysis

TCSP

Less than Significant with Mitigation. The project would result in impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and riparian habitats as defined by the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW. These impacts would be considered potentially significant. These impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-11**, which requires the project to obtain wetland permits through the appropriate wetland permitting agencies and would require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values.

Indirect impacts to adjacent jurisdictional waters and wetlands could occur through inadvertent intrusion into these adjacent areas by construction vehicles, equipment, and personnel. These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-6**.

The proposed project, if fully built out, would result in impacts to Diegan coastal sage scrub (including disturbed), Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated, and non-native grassland, which are considered sensitive natural communities and require mitigation. The project would also result in impacts to eucalyptus woodland, artificial detention basin, disturbed habitat, and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to non-sensitive vegetation communities are not considered significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation.

Impacts to up to 8.7 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub (disturbed), 5.4 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated (including disturbed), and 4.2 acres of non-native grassland, totaling 18.3 acres) would be reduced to less than significant through the implementation of Mitigation measure **BIO-6**. Mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following the completion of construction activities.

AEN

Less than Significant with Mitigation. The AEN portion of the project would result in impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and riparian habitats as defined by the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW. These impacts would be considered potentially significant. These impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of Mitigation Measure **BIO-11**, which requires the project

to obtain wetland permits through the appropriate wetland permitting agencies and would require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values.

Indirect impacts to adjacent jurisdictional waters and wetlands could occur through inadvertent intrusion into these adjacent areas by construction vehicles, equipment, and personnel. These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-6**.

The AEN portion of the proposed project would result in impacts to Diegan coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) and Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated, which are considered sensitive natural communities and require mitigation. The project would also result in impacts to eucalyptus woodland, artificial detention basin, disturbed habitat, and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to non-sensitive vegetation communities are not considered significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation.

Impacts to 8.7 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub (disturbed) and 5.4 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated (including disturbed; totaling 14.1 acres) would be reduced to less than significant through the implementation of Mitigation measure **BIO-6**. Mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following the completion of construction activities.

Property 16A

Less than Significant with Mitigation. Development of the Riverview Parkway project site, which is inclusive of Property 16A, and associated mitigation within Las Colinas Channel, would not result in impacts to sensitive upland natural communities requiring mitigation. The Riverview Parkway project would result in impacts to the artificial detention basin, disturbed habitat, and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to southern willow scrub are discussed below under CDFW jurisdiction.

Waters of the U.S.

Development of the Riverview Parkway project site, which is inclusive of Property 16A and associated mitigation within Las Colinas Channel, would impact a total of 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S. (Table 5, *Impacts to Jurisdictional Waters [River Parkways Project]*), comprising 0.04 acre of wetland waters of the U.S. and 0.32 acre of non-wetland waters of the U.S. (REC 2023). By re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas channel as mitigation for the Riverview Parkway Project, the mitigation will comprise the creation of 0.74 acre waters of the U.S. and 1.24 acres of riparian habitat. Additionally, 0.08 acre of existing waters of the U.S. that would be temporarily affected by recontouring (will remain within the widened Las Colinas Channel) will also be revegetated and maintained (REC 2023). These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-12**. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-3** and **BIO-4** would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided.

Table 5
IMPACTS TO JURISDICTIONAL WATERS (RIVER PARKWAYS PROJECT)[1]

Habitat	USACE	RWQCB	CDFW
Wetlands/Riparian			
Wetland waters of the U.S./State	0.04	0.04	--
Southern willow scrub	--	--	1.18
Subtotal	**0.04**	**0.04**	**1.18**
Non-wetland Waters			
Non-wetland waters of the U.S./State	0.32	0.32	--
Subtotal	**0.32**	**0.32**	**--**
TOTAL	**0.37**	**0.37**	**1.18**

[1] Impacts are presented in acre(s) rounded to the nearest 0.01. Totals calculated by adding the raw acreage and then rounding to the nearest 0.01.

Waters of the State

Development of the Riverview Parkway Property, which is inclusive of Property 16A and associated mitigation within Las Colinas Channel, would impact a total of 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the State (Table 5), comprising 0.04 acre of wetland waters of the State and 0.32 acre of non-wetland waters of the State. By re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas channel as mitigation for the Riverview Parkway Project, the mitigation will comprise the creation of 0.74 acre of waters of the State and 1.24 acres of riparian habitat. Additionally, 0.08 acre of existing waters of the State that would be temporarily affected by recontouring (will remain within the widened Las Colinas Channel) will also be revegetated and maintained (REC 2023). These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-12**. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-3** and **BIO-4** would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife Jurisdiction

Development of the Riverview Parkway Property, which is inclusive of Property 16A and associated mitigation within the Las Colinas Channel, would impact a total of 1.18 acres of CDFW jurisdictional streambed and riparian areas (Table 5). A total of 0.19 acre of CDFW jurisdictional habitat, comprising southern willow scrub, occurs within Property 16A. By re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas channel as mitigation for the Riverview Parkway Project, the mitigation will comprise the restoration of 1.24 acres of riparian habitat (REC 2023). These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-12**. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-3** and **BIO-4** would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided.

Properties 16B, 20A, and 20B

Less than Significant with Mitigation.

The proposed Properties 16B, 20A, and 20B would not result in impacts to sensitive natural communities requiring mitigation. The proposed Properties 16B, 20A, and 20B would result in impacts to disturbed habitat and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to non-sensitive vegetation communities are not considered significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-3** and **BIO-4** would ensure that additional

impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided. Additionally, mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

5.3.2 Mitigation Measures

BIO-11 Applications where the City has determined the potential for impacts to jurisdictional waters and wetlands shall be required to comply with the following permitting and mitigation framework.

Before the issuance of any construction permit or any earth-moving activities, a site-specific general biological resources survey (**BIO-6**) shall be conducted to identify the presence of any sensitive biological resources, including any wetlands. Should any potential jurisdictional waters or wetlands be identified on-site during the general biological resources survey, then a jurisdictional wetlands delineation shall be conducted following the methods outlined in the USACE's 1987 *Wetlands Delineation Manual* and the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Delineation Manual for the Arid West Region* or most current USACE guidance. The limits of any riparian habitats on-site under the sole jurisdiction of CDFW shall also be delineated, as well as any special aquatic sites that may not meet federal jurisdictional criteria but are regulated by the RWQCB.

Avoidance measures based on project-level grading and site plans shall be incorporated into the project design to minimize direct impacts to jurisdictional waters consistent with federal, state, and City guidelines. Unavoidable impacts to wetlands shall be minimized to the maximum extent practicable and would be subject to alternatives and mitigation analyses consistent with the USACE's and RWQCB's permit processes. Unavoidable impacts would require the project to submit permit applications to the USACE under CWA Section 404, the RWQCB under CWA Section 401 and/or the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and/or the CDFW under CFG Code Sections 1600 *et seq*., depending on the jurisdictional resources impacted. The permits issued for the project will set the mitigation requirements, which typically require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values. (See mitigation measure **BIO-12** for the proposed mitigation package for the Riverview Parkway Project.) Wetland creation on-site or within the same wetland system should be given preference over replacement off-site or within a different system. The City shall also control the use and development in surrounding areas of influence to wetlands with the application of buffer zones as may be required for wetlands pursuant to federal and/or state permits in accordance to the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines, conservation measures, and wetland protection standards in the Draft Subarea Plan Chapter 5. Use and development within buffer areas shall be limited to minor passive recreational uses, such as trails, with fencing, desiltation, or erosion control facilities, or other improvements deemed necessary to protect the habitat, to be located in the upper (upland) half of the buffer when feasible. All wetlands and buffers shall be permanently conserved or protected through the application of an open space easement or other suitable device.

BIO-12 Site 16A would result in impacts to 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S., 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the State, and 1.18 acres of CDFW Jurisdictional Habitat. By re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas Channel as part of the Riverview Parkway Project, the mitigation will comprise the creation of 0.74 acre waters of the U.S., 0.74 acre waters of the State, and 1.24 acres of riparian habitat. Additionally, 0.08 acre of existing waters of the U.S./State that would be temporarily affected by recontouring (will remain within the widened Las Colinas Channel) will also be revegetated and maintained.

5.3.3 Conclusion

The proposed project would result in significant impacts to sensitive natural communities; however, with the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-3**, **BIO-4**, **BIO-5**, **BIO-6**, **BIO-11**, and **BIO-12**, impacts on sensitive natural communities would be reduced to less than significant.

5.4 ISSUE 3: JURISDICTIONAL WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS

Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the federal CWA (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

5.4.1 Impact Analysis

Less than significant with mitigation. As previously stated in Section 5.3.1, implementation of the Riverview Parkway Project (inclusive of Property 16a) would result in a total of 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S. Impacts to wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S. would be considered potentially significant.

Impacts to USACE wetland and non-wetland waters, which are anticipated from the Riverview Parkway Project and from other portions of the AEN and TCSP to be determined through site-specific studies, would require the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-6**, **BIO-11**, and **BIO-12** above, which require the project to obtain wetland permits through the appropriate wetland permitting agencies and would require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values.

Potential indirect impacts on jurisdictional resources would be prevented during construction through the successful implementation of standard BMPs as part of the project's SWPPP. Implementation of a SWPPP and associated BMPs are a regulatory requirement for the proposed project. Specific BMPs may include but would not necessarily be limited to maintaining the project work areas free of trash and debris; employing appropriate standard spill prevention practices and clean-up materials; installing and maintaining sediment and erosion control measures; maintaining effective control of fugitive dust; and properly storing, handling, and disposing of toxins and pollutants, including waste materials. Mitigation measures **BIO-3** and **BIO-4** identified for Issue 1 would further ensure that no impacts on adjacent resources occur.

5.4.2 Mitigation Measures

Implementation of required BMPs in combination with mitigation measures **BIO-3** and **BIO-4** for Issue 1 would ensure that construction activities are contained within the proposed work limits and that potentially significant direct and indirect impacts on jurisdictional resources are avoided.

Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-6**, **BIO-11**, and **BIO-12** would ensure that the project does not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands.

5.4.3 Conclusion

The proposed project would result in significant impacts to jurisdictional resources; however, with the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-3**, **BIO-4**, **BIO-6**, **BIO-11**, and **BIO-12**, impacts on federally protected wetlands would be reduced to less than significant.

5.5 ISSUE 4: WILDLIFE MOVEMENT AND NURSERY SITES

Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

5.5.1 Impact Analysis

Less than Significant. Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are primarily restricted by developed land. Although Properties 16A and 16B are bounded, in part, by undeveloped land, they do not meet the criteria for a wildlife movement corridor as they are restricted by roads and other developments. Additionally, they are not identified as a wildlife movement corridor in the Santee of Santee Draft Subarea Plan.

Future development areas potentially contain areas associated with the San Diego River and its tributaries. While the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan identifies the San Diego River as a regionally significant wildlife movement corridor, the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan shows Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B as well as locations within the TCSP and ACOE sites as being located outside of the Preserve. Retention of the river corridor as Open Space consistent with the TCSP and the implementation of Objective Design Standards related to Bird Friendly Design would ensure no impact to wildlife corridors would occur.

Application of the mitigation measures described in this report to both ministerial and discretionary development projects subject to the TCSP would ensure impacts to wildlife corridors would be reduced or avoided to a level that would be less than significant.

5.5.2 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.5.3 Conclusion

Project implementation would not result in significant impacts on wildlife movement and nursery sites. No impact would occur, and mitigation is not required.

5.6 ISSUE 5: LOCAL POLICIES AND ORDINANCES

Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

5.6.1 Impact Analysis

No Impact. The project would not conflict with an adopted HCP, NCCP, or any other approved local, regional, or state HCP. As noted above, the project area is located within the planning area for the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan, which has not been adopted. Implementation of **BIO-6** and **BIO-11** would ensure future development within the project area is consistent with the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan by requiring site-specific surveys to be conducted for future project-level review to verify the presence of sensitive biological resources occurring on individual sites, determine the extent of any potential impacts, and provide mitigation to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance.

Overall, all future projects (discretionary projects and by-right housing projects as discussed in the City's Municipal Code Chapter 13.11) would be required to address sensitive species and vegetation communities identified in the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan and, therefore, impacts associated with conflicts with an adopted HCP, NCCP, or any other approved local, regional, or state HCP would be less than significant.

Additionally, the City's Municipal Code Chapter 8.06 regulates the planting, maintenance, and removal of public trees, and Chapter 11.38 regulates the obstruction or interference of any natural watercourse or channel. Chapters 13.08 and 13.16 also require development review procedures and standards pertaining to biological resources. Future development, discretionary or by-right, would be subject to the City's adopted regulations pertaining to trees or natural watercourses. All future projects and residents within the project area would be required to adhere to these policies and regulations; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

5.6.2 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

5.6.3 Conclusion

The project would not conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

5.7 ISSUE 6: ADOPTED CONSERVATION PLANS

Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

5.7.1 Impact Analysis

No Impact. The project does not propose any activities that would conflict with the San Diego Final MSCP Plan, City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan, local policies, or ordinances protecting biological resources. Future development and operation would be required to implement the mitigation framework, including **BIO-5**, **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, **BIO-9**, and **BIO-11**, as applicable, to ensure impacts associated with biological resources would be reduced to a level that is less than significant.

5.7.2 Mitigation Measures

Compliance with existing regulations and the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-5**, **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, **BIO-9**, and **BIO-11** would ensure project consistency with the San Diego Final MSCP Plan and the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan.

5.7.3 Conclusion

The project could result in potential significant impacts to sensitive biological resources addressed under the MSCP; however, compliance with existing regulations and the implementation of measures **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, **BIO-9**, **BIO-11**, and **BIO-12** would help ensure that impacts are avoided and the project activities are not in conflict with the San Diego Final MSCP Plan or the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan.

6.0 FEDERAL CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS FOR BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ISSUES

6.1 ISSUE 1: FEDERAL ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, SECTION 7

Does the project involve any direct effects from construction activities, or indirect effects such as growth inducement that may affect federally listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat that are known, or have a potential, to occur on-site, in the surrounding area, or in the service area?

The project area is situated mainly on disturbed and developed land. The Mission Trails/Kearny Mesa/East Elliot/Santee BRCA, as identified in the Final MSCP Plan, surrounds the northern and western portions of the City and overlaps a small portion of the western project area. The Mission Trails/Kearny Mesa/East Elliot/Santee BRCA is connected to one BRCA to the west by the Vernal Pools, Kearny Mesa, and one BRCA to the east by the Central Poway/San Vicente Reservoir/North Poway BRCA. The proposed project would occur outside of, but adjacent to, the MHPA. Though construction activities may temporarily disrupt local wildlife in the area, wildlife would be expected to move back into the area once construction activities have ceased. Therefore, the project would not constrain wildlife movement through the area and would not result in a significant impact to wildlife corridors or movement.

Coastal California gnatcatcher has a high potential to occur in the project in areas of Diegan coastal sage scrub. If construction activities or operational activities in the TCSP or AEN were to occur during the coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 through August 15) and impact occupied coastal California gnatcatcher habitat, the project would directly affect nesting coastal California gnatcatcher. However, the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8, and BIO-9** would mitigate for impacts to Diegan coastal sage scrub and prevent nesting coastal California gnatcatchers from being directly impacted by clearing of occupied habitat or indirectly impacted by noise. Additionally, mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities, including coastal California gnatcatcher habitat, will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities. With the implementation of the required mitigation measures, the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, coastal California gnatcatcher. Take authorization for impacts to Diegan coastal sage scrub would be provided, either through ESA Section 7 consultation if applicable, or the issuance of an HLP or through consistency with the City of Santee Subarea Plan when adopted.

Least Bell's vireo has a high potential to occur in the project in areas of riparian vegetation communities. If construction activities or operational activities in the TCSP or AEN were to occur during the least Bell's vireo breeding season (March 1 through August 15) and impact occupied least Bell's vireo habitat, the project would directly affect nesting least Bell's vireo. However, with the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-6**, **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, and **BIO-9**, the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, least Bell's vireo. Additionally, mitigation measure **BIO-5** would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following the completion of construction activities. Although no take of least Bell's vireo is anticipated, take authorization could be provided either through ESA Section 7 or 10 as applicable, or through consistency with the City of Santee Subarea Plan when adopted.

Federally Listed Plant Species. No federally listed endangered (FE), threatened (FT), or candidate (FC) plant species are known or have the potential to occur in the vicinity of the project area. Therefore, the project would have no effect on federally listed plant species.

Federally Listed Animal Species. In total, one FE animal species and one FT animal species are known to occur in the vicinity of the project area (Appendix D):

- Least Bell's vireo; FE
- Coastal California gnatcatcher; FT

Mitigation measures **BIO-5** through **BIO-9** include site protection and biological monitoring measures that would ensure that no adverse effect on these species occurs.

6.1.1 Mitigation Measures

With the implementation of Mitigation measures **BIO-5** through **BIO-9**, the proposed action would have no adverse effect on federally listed species or their critical habitat, and the project would be in conformance with the FESA.

6.1.2 Conclusion

If unmitigated, project implementation may affect coastal California gnatcatcher and least Bell's vireo; however, implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-5** through **BIO-9** would ensure that the project would not adversely affect federally listed species.

6.2 ISSUE 2: MAGNUSON-STEVENS FISHERY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT, ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

Does the project involve any direct effects from construction activities, or indirect effects such as growth inducement that may adversely affect essential fish habitat?

The project would be constructed within areas that lack marine resources and Essential Fish Habitat regulated under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. No Essential Fish Habitat occurs in the immediate vicinity of the project area. Therefore, the project would have no effect on Essential Fish Habitat and would be in conformance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

6.2.1 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

6.2.2 Conclusion

The project would have no direct or indirect effect on essential fish habitat.

6.3 ISSUE 3: COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT

Is any portion of the project site located within the coastal zone?

The project area is not located within the coastal zone and does not require Coastal Zone Management Act consistency and CDP issuance.

6.3.1 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

6.3.2 Conclusion

The project would have no direct or indirect effect on areas designated as Coastal Zone.

6.4 ISSUE 4: MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT

Will the project affect protected migratory birds that are known, or have a potential, to occur on-site, in the surrounding area, or in the service area?

Construction of the proposed project may result in the removal or trimming of trees and other vegetation during the general bird nesting season (January 15 through September 15) and, therefore, would have the potential to adversely affect nesting birds protected under the MBTA. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, and **BIO-9** would ensure the appropriate pre-construction surveys and avoidance measures are completed to prevent adverse effects on nesting birds. With the implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-7**, **BIO-8**, and **BIO-9**, the project would result in no effect on migratory birds and would be in conformance with the MBTA.

6.5 ISSUE 5: PROTECTION OF WETLANDS

Does any portion of the project boundaries contain areas that should be evaluated for wetland delineation or require a permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers?

Impacts from future development in the TCSP or AEN would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-11**, which requires the project to obtain wetland permits through the appropriate wetland permitting agencies and would require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values.

Impacts from the Riverview Parkway Project (inclusive of Property 16A) would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-12***,* which requires re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas channel, resulting in the creation of 0.74 acre waters of the U.S., 0.74 acre of waters of the State, and 1.24 acres of riparian habitat. Additionally, 0.08 acre of existing waters of the U.S. that would be temporarily affected by recontouring (will remain within the widened Las Colinas Channel) will also be revegetated and maintained.

Indirect impacts to adjacent jurisdictional waters and wetlands could occur through inadvertent intrusion into these adjacent areas by construction vehicles, equipment, and personnel. These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-6**.

6.6 ISSUE 6: WILD AND SCENIC RIVER ACT

Is any portion of the project located within a wild and scenic river?

None of the proposed project components are planned on or in the immediate vicinity of areas designated as Wild and Scenic River. Therefore, the proposed project would have no effect on any areas designated as Wild and Scenic River and would be in conformance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

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Appendix A

Plant Species Observed

Family	Scientific Name*,†	Common Name	Habitat[1]
Dicots			
Adoxaceae	*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*	blue elderberry	SAWRF
Anacardiaceae	*Malosma laurina*	laurel sumac	DCSS
	Rhus integrifolia	lemonade berry	DCSS
	*Schinus terebinthifolius**	Brazilian pepper tree	SRS
Apiaceae	*Foeniculum vulgare**	fennel	NNG
Asteraceae	*Ambrosia acanthicarpa*	annual bur-sage	NNG
	Artemisia californica	California sagebrush	DCSS
	Artemisia douglasiana	California mugwort	SAWRF
	Baccharis pilularis	coyote brush	DCSS
	Baccharis sarothroides	broom baccharis	AS, DCSS, DCSS-D
	Baccharis salicifolia	mule fat	SRS
	*Carduus pycnocephalus**	Italian thistle	DH
	*Centaurea melitensis**	star thistle	NNG, SRS
	Centromadia pungens spp. laevis†	smooth tarplant	NNG
	*Dittrichia graveolens**	stinkwort	DCSS-D, NNG
	Heterotheca grandiflora	telegraph weed	DCSS-D, NNG
	Isocoma menziesii	goldenbush	DCSS, DCSS-D DH, NNG
	Iva hayesiana†	San Diego marsh-elder	DCSS
	*Lactuca serriola**	prickly lettuce	SRS
	Pluchea sericea	arrow weed	AS
Brassicaceae	*Hirschfeldia incana**	short-podded mustard	DCSS-D, DH
Cactaceae	*Cylindropuntia prolifera*	coast cholla	SRS
	Opuntia littoralis	coast prickly pear	SRS
Chenopodiaceae	*Atriplex* sp.	saltbush	SRS
	*Salsola tragus**	tumbleweed	DH
Cucurbitaceae	*Cucurbita foetidissima*	calabazilla	NNG, SRS
Euphorbiaceae	*Croton californicus*	California croton	NNG
	Croton setigerus	dove weed	NNG
	*Ricinus communis**	castor bean	AS
Fagaceae	*Quercus agrifolia*	coast live oak	SAWRF
Lamiaceae	*Salvia apiana*	white sage	DCSS
	Salvia mellifera	black sage	DCSS
Myrtaceae	*Eucalyptus* sp.*	eucalyptus	SRS
Onagraceae	*Camissoniopsis* sp.	sun cup	NNG
	Oenothera elata	evening primrose	SRS
Platanaceae	*Platanus racemosa*	Californica sycamore	SAWRF
Polygonaceae	*Eriogonum fasciculatum*	California buckwheat	DCSS, DCSS-D
Rosaceae	*Heteromeles arbutifolia*	toyon	DCSS
Salicaceae	*Populus fremontii*	western cottonwood	SAWRF
	Salix gooddingii	black willow	SAWRF
	Salix laevigata	red willow	SAWRF
	Salix lasiolepis	arroyo willow	SAWRF
Solanaceae	*Nicotiana glauca**	tree tobacco	SRS
Tamaricaceae	*Tamarix ramosissima**	tamarisk	SRS
Vitaceae	*Vitis girdiana*	wild grape	SAWRF

Family	Scientific Name*,†	Common Name	Habitat[1]
Monocots			
Agavaceae	*Agave* sp.*	agave	DCSS
Arecaceae	*Washingtonia robusta**	Mexican fan palm	DH, SAWRF
Cyperaceae	*Schoenoplectus californicus*	California bulrush	SAWRF
Juncaceae	*Juncus acutus spp. leopoldii*†	spiny rush	DH
Poaceae	*Avena barbata**	wild oat	NNG
	*Bromus diandrus**	ripgut brome	NNG
	*Bromus hordeaceus**	soft chess	NNG
	Bromus madritensis ssp. *rubens**	foxtail brome	NNG, SRS
	*Cortaderia selloana**	pampas grass	SRF
	Elymus condensatus	giant wild-rye	DCSS, SAWRF
Typhaceae	*Typha* sp.	cattail	SAWRF

* Non-native

† Sensitive

1 AS=arrow weed scrub; DCSS=Diegan coastal sage scrub; DCSS-D=Diegan coastal sage scrub-disturbed; DH=Disturbed habitat; NNG= Nonnative grassland; SAWRF=Southern arroyo willow riparian forest; SRS=Southern riparian scrub.

Appendix B

Animal Species Observed or Detected

Taxon Order	Taxon Family	Scientific Name	Common Name
INVERTEBRATES			
Hymenoptera	Apidae	*Apis* sp.	honey bee
Lepidoptera	Papilionidae	*Papilio rutulus*	western tiger swallowtail
	Pieridae	*Pieris* sp.	white
	Pieridae	*Phoebis* sp.	sulphur
VERTEBRATES			
Amphibians and Reptiles			
Squamata	Phrynosomatidae	*Sceloporus occidentalis longipes*	great basin fence lizard
		Uta stansburiana	side-blotched lizard
Birds			
Accipitriformes	Accipitridae	*Buteo lineatus*	red-shouldered hawk
Passeriformes	Aegithalidae	*Psaltriparus minimus*	bushtit
	Fringillidae	*Haemorhous mexicanus*	house finch
	Fringillidae	*Spinus psaltria*	lesser goldfinch
	Icteridae	*Icterus cucullatus*	hooded oriole
	Passerellidae	*Pipilo maculatus*	spotted towhee
Mammals			
Lagomorpha	Leporidae	*Sylvilagus audubonii*	desert cottontail
Rodentia	Sciuridae	*Otospermophilus beecheyi*	California ground squirrel

Appendix C

Special-Status Plant Species Potential to Occur

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat, Ecology and Life History	Potential to Occur
Acanthomintha ilicifolia	San Diego thornmint	FT/CE CRPR 1B.1	Annual herb. Typically found on clay soils within chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools. Flowering period: April to June. Elevation: below 3150 feet (960 meters).	**None**. Suitable clay soils are absent from the project area. The closest records of the species are located over 3.7 miles north of the site approximately 0.5-mile to the west of Highway 67 (CNDDB 2022).
Adolphia californica	California adolphia	--/-- CRPR 2B.1	Perennial shrub. Most often found in sage scrub but occasionally occurs in peripheral chaparral habitats, particularly hillsides near creeks on clay soils. Flowering period: December to April. Elevation: below 1,312 feet (400 meters).	**Low**. Very little sage scrub occurs on site and clay soils are absent. This perennial shrub was not observed on site during the biological survey.
Ambrosia monogyra	Singlewhorl burrobrush	--/-- CRPR 2B.2	Perennial shrub. Found on sandy soils within washes and dry riverbeds within chaparral communities. Flowering period: September to November. Elevation: below 1,640 feet (500 meters).	**Low.** The project area occurs east of this species known range. This perennial shrub was not observed on site during the biological survey.
Ambrosia pumila	San Diego ambrosia	FE/-- CRPR 1B.1	Perennial herb. Occurs on sandy loam or clay, sometimes alkaline, soils. Found in native grassland, valley bottoms, dry drainages, stream floodplain terraces, and vernal pool margins. Also occurs on slopes, disturbed places, and in coastal sage scrub or chaparral. Flowering period: April to July. Elevation: 164 to 1,969 feet (50 to 600 meters).	**Low.** Suitable habitat for this species occurs along the San Diego River within the project area. A 1936 observation is generally noted in a location approximately 0.5-mile north of Santee in areas that have been disturbed or developed. Repeated surveys within suitable habitat in the general area were negative in 1996, 1998, 2005, and 2006.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat, Ecology and Life History	Potential to Occur
Arctostaphylos otayensis	Otay manzanita	--/-- CRPR 1B.2	Perennial shrub. Found in chaparral and cismontane woodland on metavolcanics soils. Flowering period: January to April. Elevation: 900 to 5,580 feet (275 to 1,700 meters).	**None**. Suitable soils and habitat are absent from the project area. The site is located below the elevation range for the species.
Artemisia palmeri	San Diego sagewort	--/-- CRPR 4.2	Perennial herb. Typically found along stream courses, often beneath riparian woodland, on sandy and mesic soils. May occur in coast live oak woodland, coastal sage scrub, and southern mixed chaparral. Flowering period: June to October. Elevation: below 1,969 feet (600 meters).	**Moderate.** Suitable habitat along the San Diego River, including sandy and mesic soils, occur in the project area. Nearest observation occurs 4.6 miles east in Crestwood Ecological Reserve (CNDDB 2022)
Bloomeria clevelandii	San Diego goldenstar	--/-- CRPR 1B.1	Perennial bulbiferous herb. Occurs in valley grasslands and coastal scrub, particularly near mima mound topography or in the vicinity of vernal pools, on clay soils. Flowering period: April to May. Elevation: 164 to 1,526 (50 to 465 meters).	**Low**. Limited suitable coastal sage scrub habitat occurs on site, but the site lacks suitable clay soils. A population was documented in the project area east of Cuyamaca Street and south of Mast Boulevard in 1983, but the area has since been developed.
Centromadia pungens ssp. *laevis*	Smooth tarplant	--/-- CRPR 1B.1	Annual herb. Occurs on alkaline soils in chenopod scrub, meadows and seeps, playas, riparian woodland, and valley and foothill grassland. Flowering Period: April to September. Elevation: below 2,100 feet (640 meters).	**Present**. Approximately 243 individuals were observed in disturbed areas of disturbed habitat or in Diegan coastal sage scrub habitat to the south of the San Diego River. All observations occur within the Arts and Entertainment District Overlay, and approximately 110 individuals occur within Property 16A.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat, Ecology and Life History	Potential to Occur
Dudleya variegata	Variegated dudleya	--/-- CRPR 1B.2	Perennial herb succulent. Occurs on clay soils of dry hillsides and mesas within chaparral, valley grassland, foothill woodland and coastal sage scrub communities. Flowering period: April to June. Elevation: below 984 feet (300 meters).	**Low**. Suitable habitat on site limited to coastal sage scrub in occurring within disturbed undeveloped areas. However, clay soils are absent from the project site. Furthermore, the nearest occurrence of the species is approximately 16 miles west within Mission Trails Regional Park (CNDDB 2022).
Ferocactus viridescens	San Diego barrel cactus	--/-- CRPR 2B.1	Perennial (stem succulent) shrub. Grows in sandy to rocky areas within chaparral, valley grassland and coastal sage scrub communities. Flowering period: May to June. Elevation: 33 to 492 feet (10 to 150 meters).	**Presumed Absent**. Suitable habitat on site limited to remnant patches of coastal sage scrub in disturbed undeveloped areas. However, this conspicuous perennial species would have been observed if present.
Harpagonella palmeri	Palmer's grapplinghook	--/-- CRPR 4.2	Annual herb. Found in clay soils in annual grasslands and coastal sage scrub. Flowering Period: March to May. Elevation: 65 to 3,100 feet (20 to 955 meters).	**Low.** Suitable habitat on site limited to coastal sage scrub pockets within disturbed undeveloped areas. However, clay soils are absent from the project site. This species was observed in the northern portion of the City of Santee west of Trenchard Street in 1994, but portions of this area have since been developed (CNDDB 2022).

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat, Ecology and Life History	Potential to Occur
Isocoma menziesii var. *decumbens*	Decumbent goldenbush	--/-- CRPR 1B.2	Perennial shrub. Occurs in sandy soil and disturbed areas on the inland side of dunes, hillsides, and arroyos within coastal sage scrub and chaparral communities. Flowering period: July to November. Elevation: below 656 feet (200 meters).	**Moderate.** Suitable habitat on site is limited to remnant patches of coastal sage scrub within disturbed undeveloped lands. Few recent records of the species are present within the project vicinity. This perennial shrub would most likely have been observed if present.
Iva hayesiana	San Diego marsh-elder	--/-- CRPR 2B.2	Perennial herb. Found in alkaline flats, depressions, and streambanks within wetland communities. Flowering period: April to October. Elevation: 32 to 1,640 feet (10 to 500 meters).	**Present.** Two individuals were observed during the 2023 survey at the intersection of Riverwalk Drive and Park Center Drive in Southern Riparian Forest Habitat.
Juncus acutus ssp. *leopoldii*	Southwestern spiny rush	--/-- CRPR 4.2	Perennial herb. Found in moist saline environments such as alkaline seeps and meadows, and coastal salt marshes and swamps. Flowering period: May to June. Elevation: below 984 feet (300 meters).	**Present.** One individual occurs within the TCSP on conserved land designated as Park/Open Space along an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River. A second individual occurs within the TCSP outside conserved lands at the southern terminus of Park Center Drive. Additionally, a third individual occurs within the TCSP and AEN outside conserved lands at the southern terminus of Park Center Drive. These individuals do not occur on Properties 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat, Ecology and Life History	Potential to Occur
Monardella viminea	Willowy monardella	FE/SE CRPR 1B.1	Perennial herb. Occurs on alluvial ephemeral washes in chaparral, coastal sage scrub, riparian forest, riparian scrub, and riparian woodland. Flowering period June – August. Elevation: 164-738 feet (50-225 meters).	**Low.** Some suitable alluvial ephemeral wash habitat may occur along the San Diego River, but the species is not known to occur within the project vicinity.
Pogogyne nudiuscula	Otay mesa mint	FE/SE CRPR 1B.1	Annual herb. Grows in vernal pools of San Diego County. Flowering period: May to July. Elevation: 295 to 820 feet (90 to 820 meters).	**None.** Suitable vernal pool habitat is absent from the project area. No records of the species occur within the project vicinity.
Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum	White rabbit-tobacco	--/-- CRPR 2B.2	Perennial herb. Occurs on sandy or gravelly soils of benches, dry stream bottoms, and canyon bottoms within coastal scrub, chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland. Flowering period: July to November. Elevation: below 6,890 feet (2,100 meters).	**High.** Though potentially suitable habitat occurs on site along the San Diego River, the site has been highly disturbed by adjacent development. This species was documented in 2011 on the south side of the San Diego River adjacent to the intersection of Magnolia Avenue and Cottonwood Avenue (CNDDB 2022).
Quercus cedrosensis	Cedros Island oak	--/-- CRPR 2B.2	Perennial tree. Occurs within closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, and coastal scrub of San Diego County. Flowering period: April to May. Elevation: 835 to 3,150 feet (255 to 960 meters).	**Presumed Absent.** This conspicuous perennial tree would most likely have been observed if present. The area occurs below the elevation range for this species.
Quercus dumosa	Nuttall's scrub oak	--/-- CRPR 1B.1	Perennial shrub. Occurs on sandy or clay loam soils near the coast within coastal scrub, chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland. Flowering period: March to May. Elevation: below 656 feet (200 meters).	**Presumed Absent.** Suitable habitat on site limited to remnant patches of coastal sage scrub within disturbed undeveloped lands. However, this conspicuous perennial species would have been observed if present.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat, Ecology and Life History	Potential to Occur
Quercus engelmannii	Engelmann oak	--/-- CRPR 4.2	Perennial tree. Occurs on slopes and foothills within grasslands, chaparral, oak woodland, and riparian woodlands. Flowering period: March to June. Elevation: 160 to 4,300 feet (50 to 1,300 meters).	**Presumed Absent.** This conspicuous perennial tree would have been observed if present. No records of the species occur within the project vicinity and are generally located further east or south of the area in higher elevation areas.
Romneya coulteri	Coulter's matilija poppy	--/-- CRPR 4.2	Perennial herb. Occurs in dry washes and canyons coastal scrub chaparral. Often in burned areas. Flowering period: March to August. Elevation: 65 to 3,900 feet (20 to 1,200 meters).	**Presumed Absent**. Suitable habitat on site limited to remnant patches of coastal sage scrub within disturbed undeveloped lands. However, no records of the species occur within the project vicinity. This conspicuous perennial species would have been observed if present.
Salvia munzii	Munz's sage	--/-- CRPR 2B.2	Perennial shrub. Occurs within chaparral and coastal scrub of San Diego County. Flowering period: February to April. Elevation: 370 and 3,500 feet (115 to 1,065 meters).	**Presumed Absent**. Suitable coastal sage scrub habitat on site but this conspicuous species would have been observed if present. Documented occurrences of the species are located further southwest of the area within Otay Mesa.
Selaginella cinerascens	Ashy spike-moss	--/-- CRPR 4.1	Fern. Grows in sunny spots or under shrubs within coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Often associated with “red clay” soils. Elevation: below 1,804 feet (550 meters).	**Low**. Suitable habitat on site limited to remnant patches of coastal sage scrub within disturbed undeveloped lands. However, no records of the species occur within the project vicinity.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat, Ecology and Life History	Potential to Occur
Xanthisma junceum	rush-like bristleweed	--/-- CRPR 4.3	Perennial herb. Grows on dry hillsides within coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Flowering period: May to January. Elevation: 785 to 3,280 feet (240 to 1,000 meters).	**Moderate.** Suitable habitat on site is limited to remnant patches of coastal sage scrub within disturbed undeveloped lands. This perennial plant would most likely have been observed if present.

[1] Listing is as follows: F = Federal; S = State of California; E = Endangered; T = Threatened; R = Rare

[2] CNPS = California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Rank: 1A–presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere; 1B–rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; 2A–presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere; 2B–rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere; 3–more information needed; 4–watch list for species of limited distribution. Extension codes: .1–seriously endangered; .2–moderately endangered; .3–not very endangered.

Not Likely to Occur–There are no present or historical records of the species occurring on or in the immediate vicinity, (within 3 miles) of the Project Site and the diagnostic habitats strongly associated with the species do not occur on or in the immediate vicinity of the Site.
Low Potential to Occur–There is a historical record of the species in the vicinity of the Project Site and potentially suitable habitat on Site, but existing conditions, such as density of cover, prevalence of non-native species, evidence of disturbance, limited habitat area, isolation, substantially reduce the possibility that the species may occur. The Site is above or below the recognized elevation limits for this species.
Moderate Potential to Occur–The diagnostic habitats associated with the species occur on or in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site, but there is not a recorded occurrence of the species within the immediate vicinity (within 3 miles). Some species that contain extremely limited distributions may be considered moderate, even if there is a recorded occurrence in the immediate vicinity.
High Potential to Occur–There is both suitable habitat associated with the species and a historical record of the species on or in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site (within 3 miles).
Species Present–The species was observed on the Project Site at the time of the survey or during a previous biological survey

Appendix D

Special-Status Animal Species Potential to Occur

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
INVERTEBRATES				
Insects				
Bombus crotchii	Crotch bumble bee	--/SCE	Found throughout southwestern California from the Central Valley south to the U.S./Mexico border. Inhabits open grasslands and scrub habitats. Primarily nests underground and forages on a wide variety of flowers, but a short tongue renders it best suited to open flowers with short corollas. Most commonly observed on flowering species in the Fabaceae, Asteraceae, and Lamiaceae families. Occurrence has also been linked to habitats containing *Asclepias, Chaenactis, Lupinus, Medicago, Phacelia,* and *Salvia* genera.	**Moderate**. This species was not observed during the 2023 HELIX survey. While some suitable open grassland and scrub habitat occurs within the project area, these areas are highly disturbed, and no suitable burrows were observed during the survey.
Branchinecta sandiegonensis	San Diego fairy shrimp	FE/--	Restricted to vernal pools and other ephemeral basins in southern California from coastal Orange County to San Diego County. Found in seasonally astatic pools which occur in tectonic swales or earth slump basins and other areas of shallow, standing water often in patches of grassland and agriculture interspersed in coastal sage scrub and chaparral.	**None**. No vernal pools or other suitable habitat to support the species is present within the project area. The closest reported occurrence of the species is located over 1.5 miles west of the site, to the west of the Santee Lakes partially in areas that have been developed.
Danaus plexippus	Monarch butterfly	FC/--	The population west of the Rocky Mountains migrates to, and overwinters, along the coast of central and southern California. Inhabits a wide variety of open habitats including fields, meadows, marshes, and roadsides and roosting on wind-protected tree groves (such as eucalyptus [*Eucalyptus* spp.], Monterey pine [*Pinus radiata*], cypress [*Hesperocyparis* sp.]), with nectar and water sources nearby. Breeds in areas that have a suitable abundance of their host plant, milkweed (*Asclepias* sp.).	**Low.** The species has potential to travel through and potentially breed in the study area where its host plant is present, but there are no significant overwintering populations known to occur in the project area.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Euphydryas editha quino	Quino checkerspot butterfly	FE/--	Occurs in California from western Riverside County southwards to southern San Diego County. Inhabits open and sparsely vegetated areas that contain larval host plant species (principally dot-seed plantain [*Plantago erecta*], woolly plantain [*Plantago patagonia*] but also Coulter's snapdragon [*Antirrhinum coulterianum*], and rigid bird's beak [*Cordylanthus rigidus*]) and nectar sources. Often found on rounded hilltops, ridgelines, and occasionally rocky outcrops. Occurs within a wide range of open-canopied habitats including vernal pools, sage scrub, chaparral, grassland, and open oak and juniper woodland communities.	**Low**. The project area contains suitable sparsely vegetated disturbed sage scrub habitat and there are documented occurrences approximately 2.5 miles north on undeveloped lands in northern City of Santee. Additionally, the project area occurs outside the USFWS Recommended QCB Survey Area.
Lycaena hermes	Hermes copper butterfly	FT/--	Found in coastal sage scrub and southern mixed chaparral habitats with mature specimens of its larval host plant, spiny redberry (*Rhamnus crocea*). This species appears to utilize redberry stands growing in deeper, well drained soils of canyon bottoms and north-facing hillsides. Nectaring resources include California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), and California sunflower (*Encelia californica*), among others.	**None**. The species host plant, redberry, does not occur within the project area. Potentially suitable habitat for the species occurs to the west of the site within Mission Trails Regional Park and other open space areas.
VERTEBRATES				
Amphibians and Reptiles				
Actinemys pallida	Southwestern pond turtle	--/SSC	Found in California from the central coast south of the San Francisco Bay area to San Diego County, including the Mojave River. Habitat generalist that occurs within many types of water from freshwater to brackish environments and permanent to intermittent waterbodies. Inhabit creeks,	**Low**. Suitable slow moving rivers, marshes, ponds, lakes, reservoirs, vernal pools, canals do not occur in the project area. No records of the species occur within the project area and the closest location is 1.5 miles

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
			slow moving rivers, marshes, ponds, lakes, reservoirs, vernal pools, canals and even sewage treatment plants. Prefers habitats with slow flowing water particularly where basking sites (such as rocks, downed logs, or emergent vegetation), deep water retreats, and egg laying areas are readily available.	northeast at the northern boundary of the Santee Lakes.
Anaxyrus californicus	Arroyo toad	FE/SSC	Inhabits low gradient, medium to large streams and rivers with intermittent and perennial flow in coastal and desert drainages of central and southern California. Breeding habitat specialists that require slow-moving streams composed of sandy soils with sandy streamside terraces. May occupy first-order streams, though most populations inhabit second-sixth-order streams that have extensive braided channels and sediment deposits of sand, gravel, or pebbles that are redistributed by flooding. Utilizes shallow pools (at least 1-inch deep) for breeding, egg-laying, and tadpole development. Vulnerable to habitat destruction and alteration due to changes in hydrology, including construction of dams and water diversions. Impacted by the presence of non-native predators such as American bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*).	**Low.** Though San Diego River is within the historical range of the species and potentially suitable habitat is present in the project area, the suitable habitat onsite has been significantly degraded due to adjacent of surrounding development. Potentially suitable habitat for this species occurs southeast of the project area along the Sweetwater River.
Anniella stebbinsi	San Diegan legless lizard	--/SSC	Occurs in sparsely vegetated areas with moist warm, loose soil with plant cover; moisture is essential. Common in several habitats but especially in beach dunes, coastal scrub, chaparral, pine-oak woodlands, desert scrub, sandy washes, and stream terraces with sycamores, cottonwoods, or oaks. Found primarily in	**High.** Potentially suitable habitat occurs along the San Diego River. However, the site has been heavily degraded by surrounding development. The species is reported to occur 0.3 mile west of the site along in Mast Park.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
			areas with sandy or loose organic soils or where there is plenty of leaf litter. Sometimes found in suburban gardens in southern California.	
Arizona elegans occidentalis	California glossy snake	--/SSC	Occurs in arid scrub, rocky washes, grasslands, and chaparral. Prefers open areas and loose soil.	**High.** Suitable habitat and rocky washes occur within the study areas and there are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity. Lack of more sightings is mostly attributed to the lack of focused surveys and the species secretive nature.
Aspidoscelis hyperythra beldingi	Belding's orange-throated whiptail	--/WL	Found within the southwestern portion of California in southern San Bernardino, western Riverside, Orange, and San Diego Counties on the western slopes of the Peninsular ranges below 3,500 feet. Suitable habitat includes coastal sage scrub, chaparral, juniper woodland, oak woodland, and grasslands along with alluvial fan scrub and riparian areas. Occurrence of the species correlated with the presence perennial plants (such as California buckwheat, California sagebrush, black sage, or chaparral) to provide a food base for its major food source, termites.	**High.** Suitable habitat occurs within the project area and there are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity.
Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri	San Diegan tiger whiptail	--/SSC	Occurs along the coastal region of southern California from San Luis Obispo south to San Diego County. Inhabits a wide variety of habitats, primarily in hot and dry open areas with sparse vegetation, from sea level to 4,900 feet. Associated habitats include coastal sage scrub, chaparral, riparian areas, woodlands, and rocky areas with sandy or gravel substrates.	**High.** Suitable habitat occurs within the project area and there are documented occurrences, including historical observations, in the project area and within the vicinity.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Crotalus ruber	Red diamond rattlesnake	--/SSC	Occurs in southwestern portion of California from San Bernardino County southward to San Diego County at elevations below 5,000 feet. Has a wide tolerance for varying environments including the desert, dense foothill chaparral, warm inland mesas and valleys, and cool coastal zones. Most commonly found near heavy brush with large rocky microhabitats. Chamise and red shank chaparral associations may offer better structural habitat for refuges and food resources.	**High.** Suitable habitat occurs within the project area and there are documented occurrences, including historical observations, in the project area and within the vicinity.
Phrynosoma blainvillii	Blainville's horned lizard	--/SSC	Occurs from southern California to northern Baja California. In California, the species predominately occurs from Kern County south to San Diego County west of the desert at elevations below 8,000 feet. Inhabits a wide variety of vegetation types including sagebrush scrub, chaparral, grasslands, forests, and woodlands but is restricted to areas with suitable sandy, loose soils with open areas for basking. Diet primarily composed of native harvester ants (*Pogonmyrmex* sp.) and are generally excluded from areas invaded by Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*).	**High.** Suitable habitat occurs within the project area and there are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity. The species is reported to occur 0.3 mile west of the site along in Mast Park.
Plestiodon skiltonianus interparietalis	Coronado skink	--/WL	Occurs from in coastal and inland portions of southern San Diego County, though can occur up into Riverside County where it intergrades with Skilton's skink (*Plestiodon skiltonianus skiltonianus*). Suitable habitats include grassland, woodlands, pine forests, and chaparral, especially in open sunny areas such as clearings and edges of creeks or rivers. Prefers rocky areas near streams with lots of vegetation but can also be	**Low.** Potentially suitable coastal sage scrub and riparian habitats occur within the project site but lacks rocky areas associated with the species. The project area has also been heavily disturbed by surrounding development.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
			found in areas away from water. Occasionally seen foraging in leaf litter but more commonly found underneath surface objects, such as bark or rocks, where it lives in extensive burrows.	
Rana draytonii	California red-legged frog	FT/SSC	The species has been extirpated from 70 percent of its former range. Current distribution includes coastal drainages of central California, from Marin County south to northern Baja California, and in isolated drainages in the Sierra Nevada, northern Coast, and northern Transverse Ranges at elevations below 5,000 feet. Inhabits a variety of aquatic habitats including pools and backwaters within streams and creeks, ponds, marshes, springs, sag ponds, dune ponds and lagoons. Breeds in artificial impoundments such as stock ponds.	**None.** Though the site contains suitable aquatic habitat that could potentially support the species, there are no known occurrences of the species within the region.
Salvadora hexalepis virgultea	Coast patch-nosed snake	--/SSC	Occurs in the coastal regions of California from the northern Carrizo Plains in San Luis Obispo County south to San Diego County at elevations below 7,000 feet. Inhabits semi-arid shrubby areas such as chaparral and desert scrub. Also found along washes, sandy flats, canyons, and rocky areas. Takes refuge and overwinters in burrows and woodrat nests.	**Low.** Remnant patches of coastal sage scrub occur within disturbed undeveloped lands in the project area. However, these areas are small in size, have been previously disturbed. The nearest reported occurrences of the species are located over 3 miles southwest of the project area in Mission Trails Regional Park.
Spea hammondii	Western spadefoot toad	--/SSC	Occurs from northern California southward to San Diego County, and west of the Sierra Nevada at elevations below 4,500 feet. This terrestrial species requires temporary pools for breeding. Suitable upland habitats include coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and grasslands. Most common in grasslands with vernal pools or mixed grassland-	**High.** Potentially suitable habitat occurs within the project site along the San Diego River and there are documented occurrences in the vicinity of the project area. However, the project area has been heavily

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
			coastal sage scrub areas. Breeds in temporary pools formed by heavy rains, but also found in riparian habitats with suitable water resources. Breeding pools must lack exotic predators such fish, bullfrogs, and crayfish for the species to successfully reproduce. Estivates in burrows within upland habitats adjacent to potential breeding sites.	degraded and disturbed by surrounding development.
Thamnophis hammondii	Two-striped garter snake	--/SSC	Found in California from Monterey County south along the coast to San Diego County at elevations below 7,000 feet. Commonly inhabits perennial and intermittent streams with rocky beds bordered by riparian habitats dominated by willows and other dense vegetation. The species has also been found in stock ponds and other artificially created aquatic habitats if bordered by dense vegetation and potential prey, such as amphibians and fish, are present.	**High.** Potentially suitable riparian habitats occur within the project site along the San Diego River, but the site lacks rocky streambed habitat typically associated with the species. There are documented occurrences, including historical observations, in the project area and within the vicinity.
Birds				
Accipiter cooperii	Cooper's hawk	--/SSC	In California, the species breeds from Siskiyou County south to San Diego County and east towards Owens Valley at elevations below 9,000 feet. Inhabits forests, riparian areas, and more recently suburban and urban areas. Nests within dense woodlands and forests and isolated trees in open areas.	**High.** Suitable mature riparian woodland occurs within the project area along the San Diego River and is considered high potential to support Cooper's hawk. There are documented occurrences in the vicinity of the project area.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Accipiter striatus	Sharp-shinned hawk	--/WL	Primarily winters and migrates throughout California with breeding records in the northern and central portions of the State, but the species breeding range in California is poorly known. Breeds within most closed-canopy woodlands and forests, including riparian habitats, from sea level to near alpine elevations, generally nesting in trees near openings. Wintering habitat similar to breeding habitat but more expansive to include suburban and agricultural areas.	**Low**. Species would only be present as a wintering or migrating individual. The species would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging habitat.
Agelaius tricolor	Tricolored blackbird	BCC/SCE, SSC	Highly colonial, nomadic species occurring as a year-round resident of California from Sonoma County to San Diego. Common locally in the Central Valley and sporadically throughout the state. Breeds in dense colonies. Breeding habitat typically characterized by emergent freshwater marsh dominated by tall, dense cattails and bulrush (*Schoenoplectus* spp.; *Scirpus* ssp.), though also utilizes willows, blackberries (*Rubus* spp.), thistles (*Cirsium* and *Centaurea* spp.), nettles (*Urtica* sp.), and agricultural crops. Forages in grasslands and cropland habitats adjacent to breeding areas.	**Low.** Suitable habitat occurs within the project area along the San Diego River and there are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity, although this species has likely been extirpated from the area.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Aimophila ruficeps canescens	Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow	--/WL	Restricted to southwestern California occurring from Santa Barbara County southwards to San Diego County at elevations below 5,000 feet. Generally found on moderate to steep slopes vegetated with grassland, coastal sage scrub, and chaparral. Prefer areas with California sagebrush but are generally absent from areas with dense stands of coastal sage scrub or chaparral. May occur on steep grassy slopes without shrubs if rock outcrops are present.	**None.** The project site is generally flat, lacking suitable sloped hillsides inhabited by the species. Occurrences of the species are found further north of the project area in the hills in the northwestern portion of the City of Santee.
Ammodramus savannarum	Grasshopper Sparrow	--/SSC	Occurs west of the Cascade and Sierra Nevada mountains from Mendocino County south to San Diego County at elevations below 5,000 feet. Prefers moderately open grasslands and prairies with scattered shrubs. Generally avoids grasslands with extensive shrub cover.	**None**. The site lacks grassland habitat that is required by the species. Occurrences of the species are found further north of the project area along the northern edge of the City of Santee.
Aquila chrysaetos	Golden Eagle	BCC/WL, FP	Uncommon permanent resident and migrant throughout California, except the center of the Central Valley. More common in southern California than in northern regions. Inhabits a variety of habitats, nesting in cliffs or trees and rugged terrain and foraging over plains, grasslands, or low and open shrublands including chaparral and coastal sage scrub. Typically absent from heavily forested areas or on the immediate coast and are almost never detected in urbanized environments.	**Low.** The site lacks suitable nesting habitat for the species, and no known nests occur within 4,000 feet of the project site. The species has been observed within the surrounding area but would not be expected to utilize the site for foraging opportunities based on the presence of development and other human disturbances. Additionally, extensive, higher quality habitat is present within preserved and open space areas off site, including Mission Trails Regional Park and El Capitan Reservoir.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Artemisiospiza belli	Bell's sage sparrow	BCC/WL	Non-migratory resident on the coastal ranges of California and western slopes of the central Sierra Nevada mountains. Occurs year-round in southern California. Breeds in dry coastal sage scrub and chaparral, desert scrub, and similar other open, scrubby habitats. In foothill chaparral, they tend toward younger, less dense stands that are recovering from recent fires; less common in older, taller stands that have remained unburned.	**Moderate.** Small patches of remnant coastal sage scrub occur in disturbed undeveloped lands. Occurrences of the species are found further north of the project area in the northern portion of the City of Santee.
Athene cunicularia	Burrowing Owl	BCC/SSC	Found from central California east to the Mojave Desert and south to coastal San Diego County. Primarily a grassland species that prefers areas with level to gentle topography and well-drained soils. Species can also occupy agricultural areas, vacant lots, and pastures. Requires underground burrows for nesting and roosting that are typically dug by other species such as California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*). Also utilizes natural rock cavities, debris piles, culverts, and pipes for nesting and roosting.	**Low**. While some suitable habitat occurs in the project area, there are no observations of the species within the project vicinity.
Buteo swainsoni	Swainson's hawk	--/ST	Occurs in open grassland, desert, or sparse scrub with large trees. Once a common species in San Diego County, now a rare migrant, observed primarily in Borrego Valley. Species no longer nests in southern California (Unitt 2004).	**Low.** Suitable habitat occurs within the project area along the San Diego River and there are documented occurrences, including historical observations, within the vicinity, although this species has likely been extirpated from the area.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis	Coastal Cactus Wren	BCC/SSC	One of seven subspecies occurring in southern California from southern Orange County south to San Diego County. Occupies native scrub vegetation with thickets of mature cacti consisting of cholla (*Cylindropuntia* spp.) or prickly-pear cactus (*Opuntia littoralis*). Cacti must be tall enough to support and protect the bird's nest (typically 3 feet or more in height). Surrounding vegetation usually consists of coastal sage scrub habitat with shrubs normally below the level of nest placement.	**Not expected.** Small patches of remnant coastal sage scrub occur in disturbed undeveloped portions of the project area but lack mature cacti stands required by the species for nesting. Occurrences of the species are found further north of the project area in the northern portion of the City of Santee.
Circus cyaneus	Northern Harrier	--/SSC	Occurs as a year-round resident in California. Inhabits open areas including wetlands, marshes, marshy meadows, grasslands, riparian woodlands, desert scrub, and pastures and agricultural areas. Breeding populations in southern California from Ventura County to San Diego County are highly fragmented with many local populations extirpated mostly likely as a result of habitat loss and degradation. Nests on the ground in wetlands and uplands within patches of dense, often tall, vegetation in undisturbed areas.	**Moderate.** Potentially suitable riparian habitat occurs along the San Diego River, but the site has been heavily disturbed due to surrounding development. The species would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging and nesting habitat.
Coccyzus americanus occidentalis	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	FT, BCC/SE	Uncommon summer resident of California. Current breeding distribution is restricted to isolated sites in Sacramento, Amargosa, Kern, Santa Ana, and Colorado River valleys. Riparian obligates that nest in riparian woodlands with native broadleaf trees and shrubs, such as cottonwoods and willows, at least 50 acres or more in size within the arid to semiarid landscapes. Most likely to be found in patches of riparian habitat greater than 200 acres.	**None**. The site does not contain a sufficient amount of suitable riparian habitat to support this species. Additionally, there are no known breeding records of the species within the project vicinity or greater region.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Elanus leucurus	White-tailed Kite	--/FP	Year-long resident of California residing along the coasts and valleys west of the Sierra Nevada foothills and southeast deserts, though the species has also been documented breeding in arid regions east of the Sierra Nevada and within Imperial County. Inhabits low elevation grasslands, wetlands, oak woodlands, open woodlands, and is associated with agricultural areas. Breeds in riparian areas adjacent to open spaces nesting in isolated or relatively large stands of trees.	**Moderate.** Suitable riparian habitat occurs along the San Diego River and the species is known to occur in the local area. The species would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging and nesting habitat.
Empidonax traillii extimus	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	FE/SE	Breeds in southern California, Arizona, New Mexico, southwestern Colorado, and extreme southern portions of Nevada and Utah. Riparian obligates that breed in relatively dense riparian habitats along rivers, streams, or other wetlands where surface water is present, or soils are very saturated. Breeding habitat can consist of monotypic stands of willows, a mixture of native broadleaf trees and shrubs, monotypic stands of exotics such as tamarisk (*Tamarix* spp.) or Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), or mixture of native broadleaf trees and shrubs with exotics. Restricted in San Diego County to two modest colonies at San Luis Rey River and Santa Margarita River, with a few scattered pairs.	**Low.** Low quality riparian habitat occurs along the San Diego River; however, there are no reported sightings of the species in the area. The last recorded breeding occurrence in the project vicinity was over 3.5 miles west of the site at Mission Trails Regional Park. Migrating individuals may utilize the site or adjacent off site areas as stop-over habitat, but breeding pairs are not anticipated based on the lack of recent observations and declining status of the species.
Ixobrychus exilis	Least bittern	BCC/SSC	Occurs in coastal lowland brackish lagoons, lakes, and ponds as well as in inland streams.	**Moderate.** This species has been documented in 1997 within mule fat scrub along the San Diego River to the west the intersection of Cottonwood Avenue and Chubb Lane (SanBIOS 2023).

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Falco mexicanus	Prairie Falcon	BCC/WL	In California, the species is an uncommon permanent resident and migrant that ranges from southeastern deserts northwest along the inner coastal mountains and Sierra Nevada but is absent from northern coastal fog belt. Primary habitats include grasslands, savannahs, alpine meadows, some agricultural fields during the winter season, and desert scrub areas where suitable cliffs or bluffs are present for nest sites. Requires sheltered cliff ledges for cover and nesting which may range in height from low rock outcrops of thirty feet to cliffs up to and higher than 400 feet.	**Low**. The project area does not contain suitable nesting habitat for the species. The project area remnant sage scrub patches in disturbed undeveloped areas that would provide limited foraging habitat for the species.
Polioptila californica californica	Coastal California Gnatcatcher	FT/SSC	Year-round resident of California occurring from Ventura County south to San Diego County, and east within the western portions of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Typically occurs in arid, open sage scrub habitats on gently sloping hillsides to relatively flat areas at elevations below 3,000 feet. The composition of sage scrub in which gnatcatchers are found varies; however, California sagebrush is at least present as dominant or co-dominant species. Mostly absent from areas dominated by black sage, white sage, or lemonadeberry, though may occur more regularly in inland regions dominated by black sage.	**High.** This species has been documented in multiple locations in sage scrub habitat along the San Diego River as recently as 2016 (USFWS 2023). Though the species has high potential to occur in the project area, suitable habitat present is limited to small remnant patches of coastal sage scrub within disturbed undeveloped land and do not connect to larger blocks of coastal sage scrub off site. The species may utilize these areas onsite for foraging opportunities but would most likely breed off site in more extensive, higher quality habitat.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Vireo bellii pusillus	Least Bell's Vireo	FE/SE	In California, breeds along the coast and western edge of the Mojave Desert from Santa Barbara County south to San Diego County, and east to Inyo, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties. Breeding habitat consists of early to mid-successional riparian habitat, often where flowing water is present, but also found in dry watercourses within the desert. A structurally diverse canopy and dense shrub cover is required for nesting and foraging. Dominant species within breeding habitat includes cottonwood and willows with mule fat, oaks, and sycamore, and mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) and arrowweed (*Pluchea sericea*) within desert habitats. The species can be tolerant of the presence of non-native species such as tamarisk.	**High.** Suitable habitat for this species occurs along the San Diego River and along an unnamed drainage that is tributary to the San Diego River. This species has been documented in multiple locations along the San Diego River where is runs through the project site, as recently as 2008 (USFWS 2023).
Mammals				
Antrozous pallidus	pallid bat	--/SSC	Locally common species found at low elevations in California. Associated with arid and open habitats including grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, and forests, often with open water nearby. Prefers rocky outcrops, cliffs, and crevices with access to open habitats for foraging. Day roosts in caves, crevices, mines, and occasionally hollow trees and buildings. Appears to be intolerant of most human disturbances, being mostly absent from urban and suburban areas.	**Low.** The species was documented on the southeast portion of the project area in 1951, the area has since been developed (SanBIOS 2022). The site lacks suitable roosting habitat, though the species may utilize the site for foraging opportunities. The species would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging and roosting habitat.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Lasiurus xanthinus	Western yellow bat	--/SSC	Occurs in wooded areas and desert scrub. Roosts in foliage, particularly in thorny vegetation palms and other desert riparian habitats. Rare visitor to San Diego County.	**Low.** The site lacks suitable roosting habitat, though the species may utilize the site for foraging opportunities. The species would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging and roosting habitat.
Lepus californicus bennettii	San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit	--/SSC	Occurs along the coastal regions of southern California south to northern Baja California. Found in arid regions preferring grasslands, agricultural fields, and sparse scrub. Typically absent from areas with high-grass or dense brush, such as closed-canopy chaparral, primarily occupying short-grass and open scrub habitats.	**Moderate.** Though remnant patches of coastal sage scrub occur within disturbed undeveloped areas, these areas are small in size lacking preferred shrub cover inhabited by the species. The species has been documented in undeveloped lands in the northern portion of the City of Santee as recently as 1998 (CNDDB 2023) and would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging and nesting habitat.
Neotoma bryanti [formerly lepida] intermedia	San Diego Bryant's (formerly desert) woodrat	--/SSC	Occurs along the coastal regions of California being found as far north as San Luis Obispo County, south to San Diego County, and in the western portions of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Inhabits a variety of shrub and desert habitats such as coastal sagebrush scrub, chaparral, pinyon-juniper woodland, and Joshua tree woodland among others. Often associated with rock outcroppings, boulders, cacti	**Low.** Though remnant patches of coastal sage scrub occur within disturbed undeveloped areas, these areas are small in size lacking preferred shrub cover and rocky areas inhabited by the species. The species has been documented in undeveloped lands in the northern portion of the City of

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
			patches, and areas with dense understories. Construct dens used for shelter, food storage, and nesting around rock outcroppings and cacti using various materials such as twigs, sticks, and other debris.	Santee as recently as 1998 (CNDDB 2023) and would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging and nesting habitat.
Nyctinomops femorosaccus	Pocketed free-tailed bat	--/SSC	Rare in California occurring from Los Angeles County eastwards to San Bernardino County, and southwards to San Diego County. Closely associated with their preferred roosting habitats consisting of vertical cliffs, quarries, and rocky outcrops. Sometimes roosts under tiled roofs and observed utilizing bat boxes. Habitat generalists foraging in grasslands, shrublands, riparian areas, oak woodlands, forests, meadows, and ponds favoring larger water bodies for drinking.	**Low.** The species was documented adjacent to the project area in 1980, the area has since been developed (SanBIOS 2022). The site lacks suitable roosting habitat, though the species may utilize the site for foraging opportunities. The species would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging and roosting habitat.
Nyctinomops macrotis	Big free-tailed bat	--/SSC	Rare in California with species found in urban areas of San Diego County. Closely associated with their preferred roosting habitats consisting of vertical cliffs, quarries, and rocky outcrops. Also roosts in buildings and occasionally holes in trees. Associated with coastal and desert scrub, forests, riparian zones, and montane woodlands. Probably does not breed in California.	**Low.** The site lacks suitable roosting habitat, though the species may utilize the site for foraging opportunities. The species would likely utilize preserved and open space areas found to the north and west of the project area that provide higher quality foraging and roosting habitat.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	Habitat Associations	Potential to Occur
Onychomys torridus ramona	Southern grasshopper mouse	--/SSC	Ranges from the San Joaquin Valley of Los Angeles County south to northwest Baja California. Typically found in open valleys on the coastal side of the mountains but may extend a short distance onto the eastern desert slopes. Within San Diego County, has only been found on the eastern desert slopes within Dameron Valley, San Felipe Valley, and Scissors Crossing. Prefers open habitats with soft terrain and friable soils within grasslands, coastal sage scrub, alluvial fans, and desert scrub.	**None.** The project site is located outside of the known distribution of the species.
Taxidea taxus	American badger	--/SSC	Uncommon, permanent resident found through California, except for the extreme north coast areas. Associated with large blocks of undeveloped land composed of open valleys, alluvial fans, meadows, grasslands, and sandy desert. Dens function as sites for resting and parturition. Friable, easily crumbled soils are important for denning.	**Low.** Though the project area is within the historical range of the species and potentially suitable habitat is present in the project area, the suitable habitat onsite has been significantly degraded due to adjacent surrounding development. There are no recent records of the species within the project vicinity.

[1] Listing codes are as follows: FE = Federally Endangered; FT = Federally Threatened; FC= Federal Candidate species; BCC = Birds of Conservation Concern; SE = State of California Endangered; FP = State of California Fully Protected; WL = State of California Wait-Listed; SSC = State of California Species of Special Concern.

Not Likely to Occur - There are no present or historical records of the species occurring on or in the immediate vicinity, (within 3 miles) of the Project Site and the diagnostic habitats strongly associated with the species do not occur on or in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

Low Potential to Occur - There is a historical record of the species in the vicinity of the Project Site and potentially suitable habitat on Site, but existing conditions, such as density of cover, prevalence of non-native species, evidence of disturbance, limited habitat area, isolation, substantially reduce the possibility that the species may occur. The Site is above or below the recognized elevation limits for this species.

Moderate Potential to Occur - The diagnostic habitats associated with the species occur on or in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site, but there is not a recorded occurrence of the species within the immediate vicinity (within 3 miles). Some species that contain extremely limited distributions may be considered moderate, even if there is a recorded occurrence in the immediate vicinity.

High Potential to Occur - There is both suitable habitat associated with the species and a historical record of the species on or in the immediate vicinity of the Project Site (within 3 miles).

Species Present - The species was observed on the Project Site at the time of the survey or during a previous biological survey

Appendix E

Explanation of Status Codes for Plant and Animal Species

FEDERAL AND STATE CODES

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

BCC Bird of Conservation Concern
FE Federally listed endangered
FT Federally listed threatened

USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC)

The primary legal authority for Birds of Conservation Concern (2008) is the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1980 (FWCA), as amended. Other authorities include the Endangered Species Act, Fish and Wildlife Act (1956) and 16 USC §701. A FWCA 1988 amendment (Public Law 100-653, Title VIII) requires the Secretary of the Interior through the USFWS to "identify species, subspecies, and populations of all migratory non-game birds that, without additional conservation actions, are likely to become candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act of 1973." The 2008 BCC report is the most recent effort by the USFWS to carry out this proactive conservation mandate.

The BCC report aims to identify accurately the migratory and non-migratory bird species (beyond those already designated as federally threatened or endangered) that represent the USFWS' highest conservation priorities and draw attention to species in need of conservation action. The USFWS hopes that by focusing attention on these highest priority species, the report will promote greater study and protection of the habitats and ecological communities upon which these species depend, thereby ensuring the future of healthy avian populations and communities. Birds of Conservation Concern 2008 lists are available online at https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/DownloadFile/134745.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

SCE State candidate for listing as endangered
SCT State candidate for listing as threatened
SE State listed endangered
SR State listed rare
ST State listed threatened
SSC State species of special concern
WL Watch List
FP Fully Protected species refers to all vertebrate and invertebrate taxa of concern to the Natural Diversity Data Base regardless of legal or protection status. These species may not be taken or possessed without a permit from the Fish and Game Commission and/or CDFW.
Special Animal Refers to all vertebrate and invertebrate taxa of concern to the Natural Diversity Database regardless of legal or protection status.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

For plants with no current federal or state legal standing, "CEQA" refers to the fact that under the Act, impacts to species may be found significant under certain circumstances (e.g., the species are regionally sensitive and/or are protected by a local policy, ordinance, or habitat conservation plan; or the impact involves interference with certain movements or migrations, with wildlife corridors or with nursery sites).

OTHER CODES AND ABBREVIATIONS

California Native Plant Society California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) Codes

Lists

1A = Presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere. Eligible for state listing.

1B = Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. Eligible for state listing.

2A = Presumed extirpated in California but common elsewhere. Eligible for state listing.

2B = Rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere. Eligible for state listing.

3 = Review List: Plants about which more information is needed. Some eligible for state listing.

4 = Watch List: Plants of limited distribution. Needs monitoring for changes in population status. Few (if any) eligible for state listing.

List/Threat Code Extensions

.1 = Seriously threatened in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened/high degree and immediacy of threat)

.2 = Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)

.3 = Not very threatened in California (less than 20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

A “CA Endemic” entry corresponds to those taxa that only occur in California.

All List 1A (presumed extinct in California) and some List 3 (need more information; a review list) plants lacking threat information receive no extension. Threat Code guidelines represent only a starting point in threat level assessment. Other factors, such as habitat vulnerability and specificity, distribution, and condition of occurrences, are considered in setting the Threat Code.