July 11, 2022

Sage McCleve
Lewis Management Corp.
1156 N. Mountain Avenue
Upland, CA 91786

Derek Barbour Richland Communities
3161 Michelson Drive, Ste. 425
Irvine, CA 92615

Subject: Burrowing Owl Breeding Season Survey Report for Subarea 29 Specific Plan Amendment/General Plan Amendment Project (Planning Areas 30-34); City of Ontario, County of San Bernardino, California.

Dear Sage and Derek,

This letter report provides a summary of existing conditions and provides the results of four burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) [BUOW] surveys conducted in Spring and Summer 2022 within the Subarea 29 Specific Plan Amendment Project (Project) located in the City of Ontario, San Bernardino County (Figure 1; *Regional Site Location Map*). The Burrowing Owl Study Area includes the Project limits and a 500-foot surrounding buffer as depicted on Figure 2; *Burrowing Owl Study Area* where direct or indirect impacts could potentially occur.

The surveys were conducted pursuant to the CDFW survey guidelines described in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (CDFW 2012) [Staff Report], to determine the presence or absence of this species and its suitable habitat within the Project site. The results of these surveys will be used to determine whether and to what extent this species would be affected by Project development.

Four breeding season BUOW surveys were conducted beginning on March 16, 2022, followed by surveys conducted at least three weeks apart on May 9, June 1, and June 21, 2022, led by Wade Caffrey, Carla Marriner, Molly Burdick-Whipp and Sierra Valladares of VCS Environmental (VCS), along with VCS field assistants. The biologists focused on identifying presence or absence of BUOW, suitable burrows and/or burrow surrogates for BUOW, and any other sign of BUOW within the study area as shown on the attached Figure 3.

No BUOW or signs thereof were observed within the Study Area during the surveys. Based on the lack of any direct or indirect evidence of BUOW presence, the survey results indicate that the Study Area was not occupied by BUOW at the time of the surveys.

Project Information

The Project is located in the City of Ontario, County of San Bernardino and consists of ten Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs): 107317101, 107317102, 107317103, 107317104, 107317105, 107317106, 107317107, 107317108, 107317109, and 107317110, totaling approximately 159.67 acres ("Project site"), plus an additional 11.74 acres of offsite right-of-way improvements, together comprising the 171-acre Project Footprint. The Study Area includes an additional 500-foot buffer zone surrounding the Project Footprint. More specifically, the Project site is regionally accessible from State Route 60 (SR-60) and Haven Avenue to the north, and from Interstate 15 (I-15) and Limonite Avenue to the southeast [Figures 1 and 2; Regional Location and Aerial Map], respectively.

The Project site is generally flat with elevations ranging from approximately 676 to 703 feet (206 to 214 meters) above mean sea level (MSL) (Google Earth 2021).

Past Burrowing Owl Survey Efforts

General and focused surveys were previously conducted for portions of the Project site by Psomas in 2006 (Psomas 2018) and BonTerra Consulting in 2005, 2006, and 2007 (BonTerra 2008). Vegetation mapping and general plant and wildlife surveys were performed on October 23, 2018 covering the approximately 125.8-acres of the eastern side of the Project site (east of Haven Avenue); and, September 13, 2005 and January 9 and 25, 2006 surveys that covered the eastern half and the southern corner of the eastern portion of the Project site; most of the western half of the Project site was not mapped. Vegetation and other landcover was mapped in 2005/2006 as agricultural/dairies and stockyards, annual grassland, ruderal, developed/ornamental, and disturbed. The area east of Haven Avenue was included in the June 11, 2007 survey to reflect current conditions following dairy demolition and drought conditions.

During the 2006 survey conducted by Psomas, burrowing owls were observed on the eastern half of the current project site: a single owl which didn't exhibit breeding behavior and a nesting pair with three fledglings. The owls were not observed during the August 7, 2006 survey, which occurred after demolition and clearing activities on the project site.

A habitat assessment and single day focused survey for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) [BUOW] was conducted by VCS Biologists on September 1, 2021 at the time of the general field biological survey. The habitat assessment and focused survey was conducted on foot, visually

inspecting and mapping all areas of the site and adjacent areas (Figure 3) for components of burrowing owl habitat (i.e., sparsely vegetated areas with appropriate-sized burrows or man-made structures suitable for burrowing owl use). No burrowing owls or signs thereof, were observed during the survey.

Survey Methods

Prior to the field survey, available literature and databases, including the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), were reviewed to identify sensitive habitats and special status wildlife species, specifically BUOW, in the vicinity of the study area.

VCS biologists conducted four protocol BUOW surveys. Table 1 provides the survey dates and environmental conditions for each of the surveys conducted within the study area.

Table 1: Survey Dates and Conditions

Survey #	Date	Start	End	Temperature/Weather Conditions	Surveyors
1	3/16/2022	7:00 am	11:40 am	51˚F - 67° F; sunny and clear; 0-2 mph wind	CM, CE, NM
2	5/9/2022	6:10 am	9:30 am	55˚F - 62°F; mostly cloudy; 0-2 mph wind	WC, MBW, SF, NM
3	6/1/2022	6:10 am	9:30 am	57˚F-72˚F, sunny and clear; 0-2 mph wind	MBW, SF, NM, SV
4	6/21/2022	6:10 am	9:10 am	63˚F-78˚F, sunny and clear; 0-2 mph wind	WC, KD, MBW, SF

WC: Wade Caffrey CM: Carla Marriner MBW: Molly Burdick-Whipp SC: Sierra Valladares
KD: Kathy Douglas CE: Chris Eljenholm SF: Stephanie Fan NM: Natalie Munoz

The surveys were not conducted during rain, high winds (>12 miles per hour (mph) (20 kilometers), dense fog, cloud cover >75%, or temperatures above 78°F (20°C).

The BUOW surveys consisted of four surveys in accordance with the Staff Report guidelines, with the last three surveys being generally three weeks apart. The surveys involved walking through suitable habitat within the study area. The pedestrian survey transects were spaced at an appropriate distance to allow 100 percent visual coverage of the ground surface, adjusting for vegetation height and density. Parcels of land that could not be accessed (e.g., private property)

were viewed using binoculars from suitable vantage points to survey for BUOW activity or signs thereof. The only inaccessible lands were within the 500-foot surrounding survey buffer.

During the surveys, VCS paid special attention to those habitat areas that appeared to provide suitable habitat for BUOW. The methods used to detect and identify BUOW included direct sighting of BUOW and observation of key signs such as scat, tracks, burrows, nests, and calls. All encountered burrows or structure entrances were checked for the presence of BUOWs, molted feathers, cast pellets, prey remains, eggshell fragments, tracks, or excrement at or near a burrow entrance. Natural or man-made structures and debris piles that could support BUOWs were also surveyed. All burrows were monitored at a short distance from the entrance, and at a location that would not interfere with owl behavior.

Onsite soil conditions, topography, vegetative communities, and habitat quality were documented during the field surveys. All wildlife species encountered visually or audibly during the field survey were identified and recorded in field notes. Binoculars were used to aid in the identification of observed wildlife. Photographs were taken to document existing conditions within the study area; photopages are attached (Exhibit A).

Results - Existing Conditions

The Project site is surrounded by agricultural lands such as dairies, stockyards, row crops, and nurseries to the north. The area to the east is currently being developed with a residential development per the Esperanza Specific Plan. The area to the south is developed with existing residential uses in the City of Eastvale. Residential uses in the Subarea 29 Specific Plan area are currently under construction to the west of the proposed expansion area and south of existing PAs 30 and 31. The Project site supports five vegetation communities/land cover types. These vegetation communities/land cover types include Disturbed/Developed, Agricultural Row Crops, Herbaceous Non-native Forbs and Grasses, *Tamarix* spp. Stands and *Nicotiana Glauca* Stands.

Results-Wildlife

During the surveys, the following birds were observed/detected:

- Allen's hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- American avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)
- American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)
- Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)
- black-necked stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

- black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- Bullock's oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)
- Cassin's kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*)
- California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*)
- California Townhee (*Melozone crissalis*)
- cliff swallow (*Etrochelidon pyrrhonota*)
- common raven (*Corvus corax*)
- Eurasian collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)
- European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)
- house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
- killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*)
- lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)
- mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- northern Harrier (*Circus hudsonius*)
- northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)
- northern rough-winged swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)
- house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
- lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)
- peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)
- red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)
- red-winged blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)
- rock pigeon (*Columba livia*)
- Say's phoebe (*Sayornis saya*)
- savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*)
- song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*)
- western kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*)
- western Meadow lark (*Sturnella neglecta*)
- white-faced ibis (*Plegadis chihi*)
- white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)

The following mammals were detected during the survey within the study area: California chipmunk (*Neotamias* obscurus), California ground squirrels (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), Coyote (*Canis latrans),* desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*) and San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennettii*).

Results - BUOW

During the four BUOW surveys, no BUOW or evidence of BUOW was observed within the study area. Potentially suitable burrows were found within the study area (Figure 3); however, the burrows did not display any sign of BUOW use around the burrow entrances. Potential BUOW foraging and nesting habitat was observed within the study area and in the vicinity. Due to the lack of presence of BUOW and lack of occupied burrows the study area is considered not to be occupied by BUOW.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the burrowing owl focused surveys, no burrowing owls or evidence of BUOW activity (e.g., active burrows, whitewash, pellets, etc.) were detected during the surveys. As a result, the Study Area was not considered to be occupied by BUOW. However, the Study Area includes burrows suitable for burrowing owl and suitable burrowing owl foraging habitat; therefore, although burrowing owls were not found, it is recommended that a 30-day burrowing owl pre-construction clearance survey be conducted prior to any ground disturbing activities to avoid direct take of burrowing owls in compliance with the CDFW protocol.

Please contact me at wcaffrey@vcsenvironmental.com or 949.489.2700 x213 should you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Wade Caffrey
Vice President

Enclosures

Figure 1	Site Location / Regional Map
Figure 2	Aerial Map
Figure 3	Burrowing Owl Study Area
Figure 4	Site Plan
Exhibit A	Site Photographs

References

BonTerra (BonTerra Consulting). 2008 (February 26). The Lakes Specific Plan Project Final Biological Technical Report. Costa Mesa, CA: BonTerra.

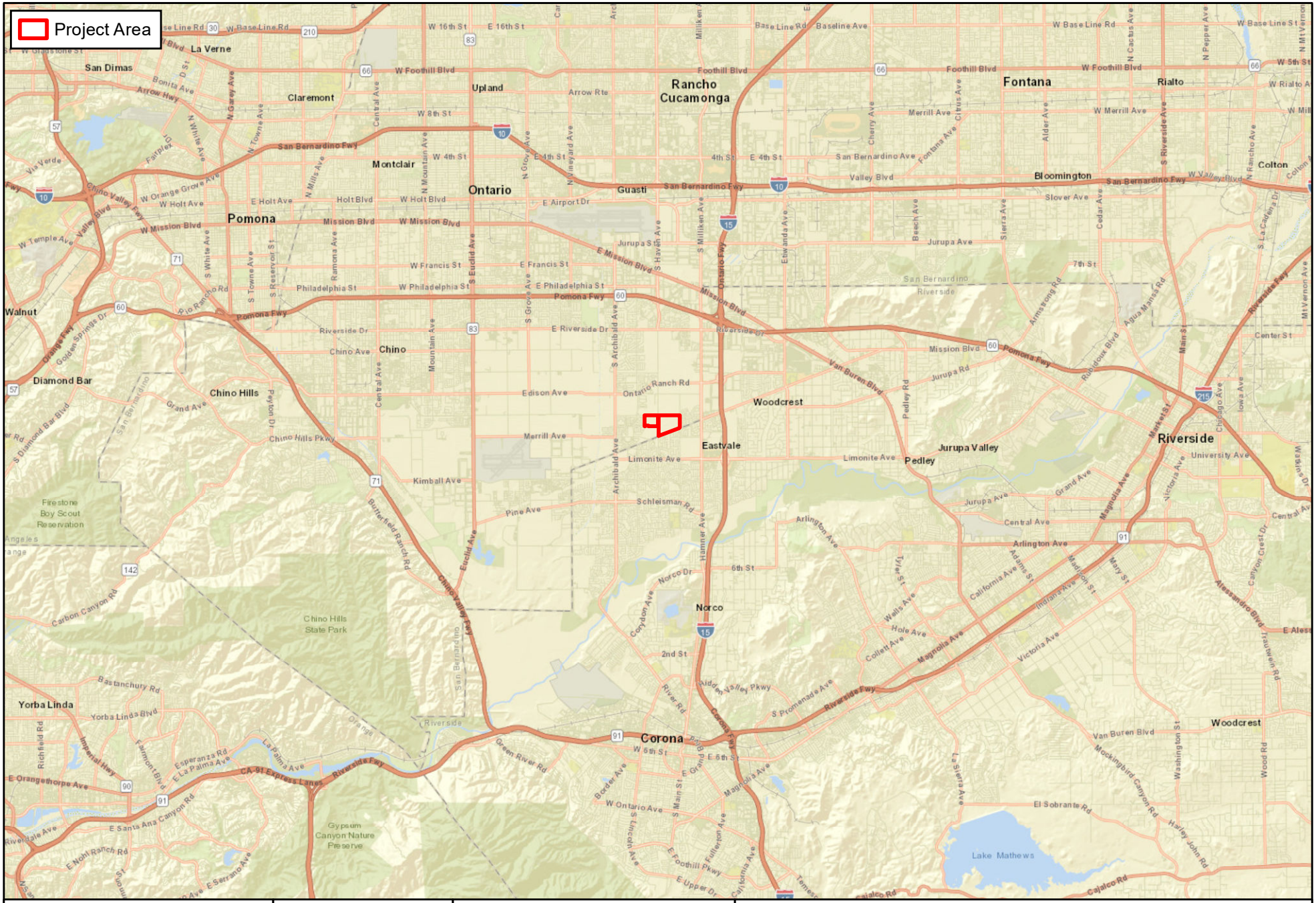
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2012. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. Dated March 7, 2012.

CDFW. 2021. RareFind, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). State of California, The Natural Resources Agency, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Biogeographic Data Branch, California Natural Diversity Database, Sacramento, CA.

National Geographic Society. 2011. *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, 6th Ed. National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C.

Psomas. 2018. Biological Technical Report Subarea 29 Specific Plan Amendment Project. Prepared November 2018 and revised December 2018.

FIGURES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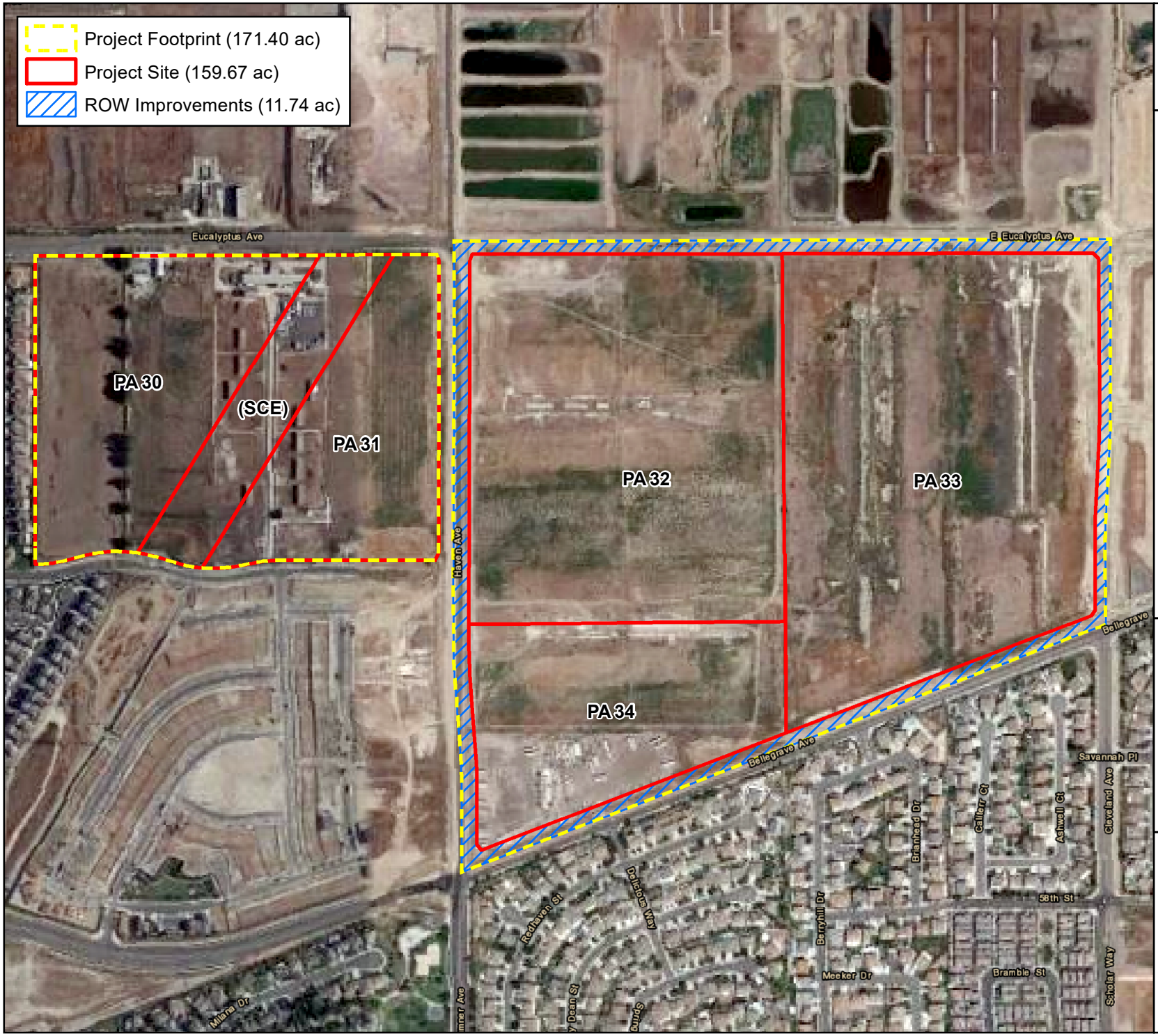
La Verne
San Dimas
Claremont
Upland
Rancho Cucamonga
Fontana
Rialto
Montclair
Ontario
Guasti
Bloomington
Colton
Pomona
Walnut
Chino
Diamond Bar
Chino Hills
Woodcrest
Eastvale
Jurupa Valley
Pedley
Riverside
Norco
Corona
Yorba Linda
Chino Hills State Park
Gypsum Canyon Nature Preserve
Lake Mathews
Firestone Boy Scout Reservation
San Bernardino
Riverside
Foothill Blvd
San Bernardino Fwy
Pomona Fwy
Riverside Fwy
Ontario Ranch Rd
Limonite Ave
Mission Blvd
Van Buren Blvd
Jurupa Ave
Merrill Ave
Edison Ave
Kimball Ave
Pine Ave
Schleisman Rd
Arlington Ave
Central Ave
Magnolia Ave
Victoria Ave
Hamner Ave
Archibald Ave
Euclid Ave
Milliken Ave
Haven Ave
Etiwanda Ave
Pedley Rd
Riverside Dr
Chino Ave
Norco Dr
6th St
2nd St
Hidden Valley Pkwy
S Promenade Ave
El Sobrante Rd
Cajalco Rd
Green River Rd
Temescal Canyon Rd
Carbon Canyon Rd
Bastanchury Rd
Yorba Linda Blvd
E Orangethorpe Ave
E Santa Ana Canyon Rd
E La Palma Ave
CA-91 Express Lanes
Prepared By:
VCS Environmental
Date: Aug 2021
0 1 2 3 Miles
Source: ESRI
Subarea 29 SPA
Figure 1
Regional Location Map



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Subarea 29 - Rais

Figure 2

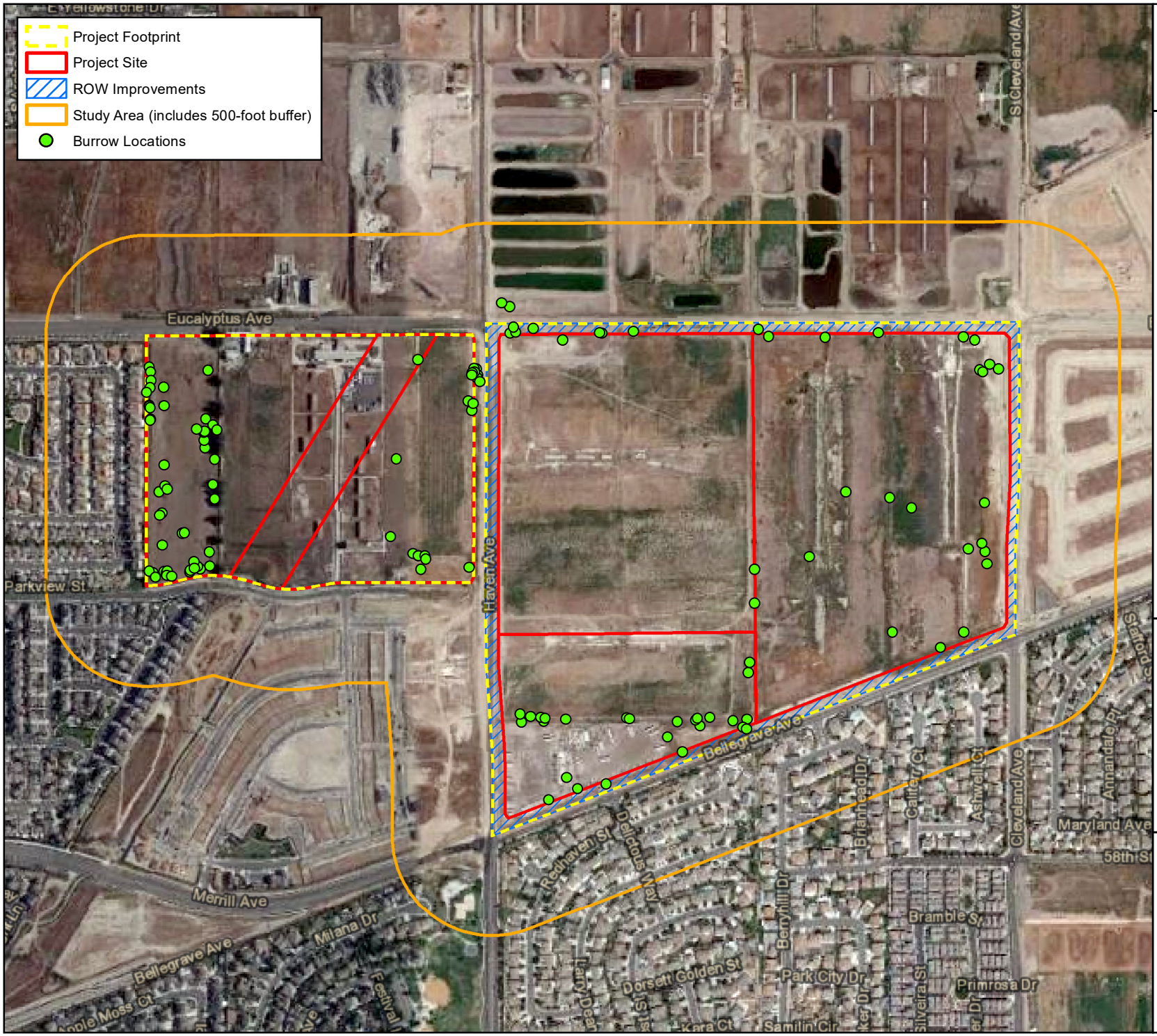
Aerial Map

N
W E
S

0 300 600
Feet

1:6,500

Map Date: July 2022
Data Sources: ESRI, Google Earth, Richland, Lewis Op.



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Subarea 29 - Rais

Figure 3

Burrowing Owl (BUOW) Study Area

N
W E
S

0 400 800
Feet

1:8,000

Map Date: July 2022
Data Sources: ESRI, Google Earth, Richland, Lewis Op.

Service Layer Credits: Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors

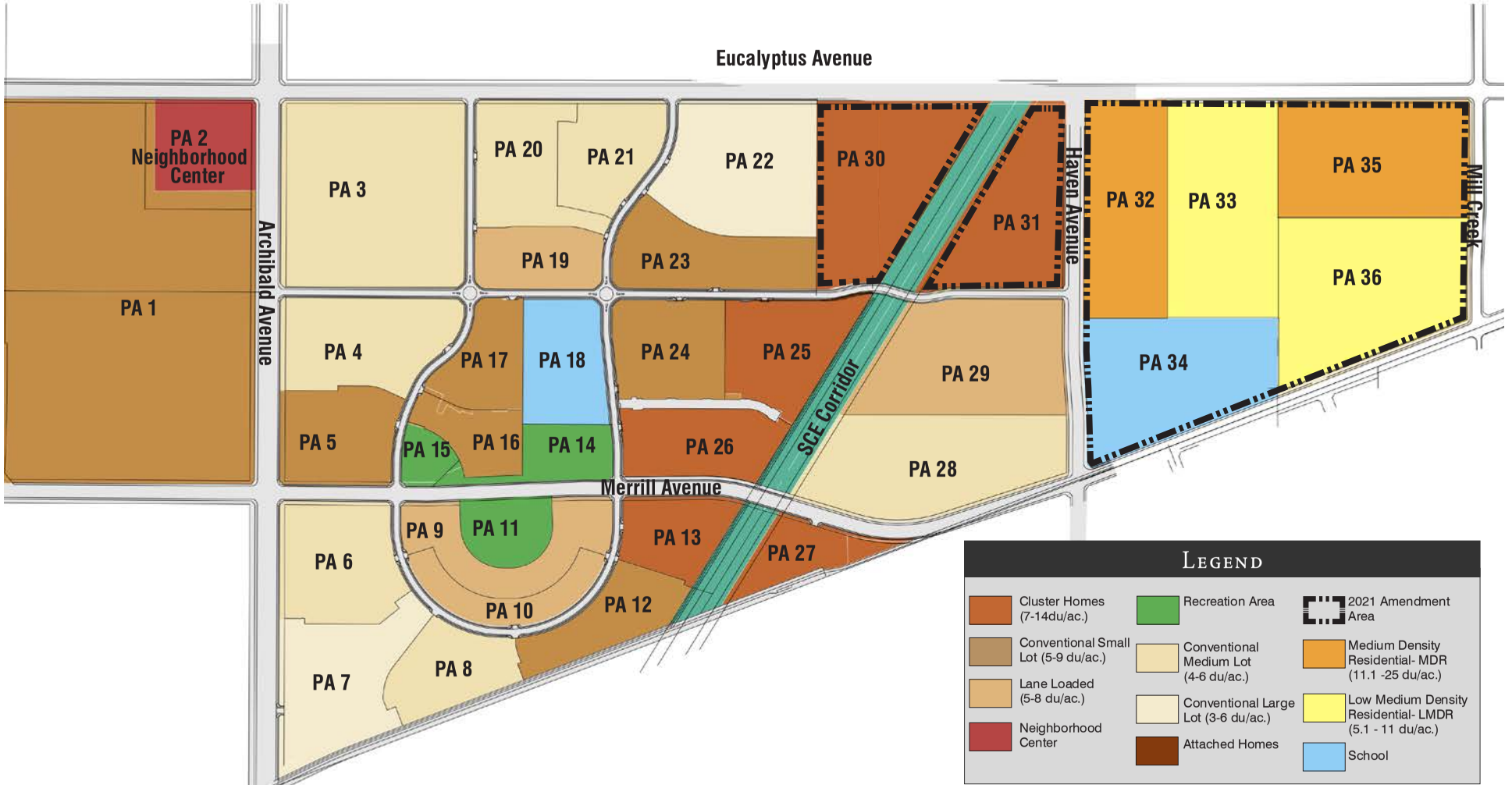

Figure 4 — Site Plan

EXHIBIT A

Site Photographs

Photo 1: View of agricultural – row crops land cover on the eastern portion of the Project Footprint; facing north. March 2022.

Photo 2: View of disturbed/developed land cover in the middle portion of the Project Footprint, east of Haven Avenue; facing north. March 2022.

Photo 3: Typical view of the northeastern portion of the Project Footprint (east of Haven Avenue); facing south. March 2022.

Photo 4: View of former dairy farm within the western portion of the Project, west of Haven Avenue; facing northwest. SCE easement in the background. March 2022.

Photo 5: View of non-native herbaceous forbs and grasses characterized by non-native ruderal weedy species, west of Haven Avenue; facing west. March 2022.

Photo 6: View of non-native herbaceous forbs and grasses within the western portion of the Project Footprint; facing west. May 2022.

Photo 7: View of disturbed/developed land cover within the southwestern portion of the project, east of Haven Avenue. Residential development located adjacent to the site can be seen in the background; facing northwest. March 2022.

Photo 8: View of flood control channel located south of the Project Footprint, east of Haven Avenue; facing east. June 2022.

Photo 9: Representative photo of a suitable burrow observed within the study area with no signs of burrowing owl occupation. June 2022.