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Progress & Preservation
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November 12, 2020

Katrina DeArmey
Phelan Development Company
450 Newport Center Dr. Suite 405
Newport Beach, CA 92660

RE: Biological Resource Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation,
Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment, Riverine/Riparian and Vernal Pool Assessment
Nance & Webster, Perris, Riverside County, CA
Assessor's Parcel Number 302-030-010

Dear Katrina:

On behalf of Phelan Development Company, Jericho Systems, Inc. (Jericho) conducted a biological resources assessment (BRA) and Jurisdictional Delineation (JD) for the Nance and Webster Warehouse Project (Project), located in the City of Perris, Riverside County, California.

The purpose of the BRA/JD was to identify sensitive or protected biological and hydrological resources that occur within, or adjacent to, the Project site and to determine if any project-related impacts would result to those resources. Attention was focused on sensitive species known to occur locally such as the BUOW. The results of Jericho's field surveys are intended to provide sufficient baseline information to the County of Riverside, City of Perris and, if required, to federal and State regulatory agencies, including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), respectively, to address potential effects to MSHCP covered species and resources such as riverine riparian areas and vernal pools, and resources protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), federal Clean Water Act (CWA) regulated by the USACE and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) respectively, and Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code (FCG) administered by the CDFW.

The City of Perris is a signatory to the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The MSHCP requires that a project comply with the MSHCP policies identified in Section 6 of the MSHCP.

For this Project site, habitat suitability assessments for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) [BUOW] (MSHCP section 6.3.2) and Riparian/Riverine Vernal Pool resources (MSHCP section 6.1.2) was conducted. The site was also evaluated for the presence jurisdictional waters, subject to the federal Clean Water Act (CWA), Porter-Cologne (Porter-Cologne) and California Fish and Game Code (FGC) regulations. Jurisdictional resources subject to the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) regulations include non-wetland waters and wetland waters of the U.S. (WoUS) whereas jurisdictional resources subject to Porter-Cologne include non-wetland waters and waters of the State (WoS). The California FGC encompasses the resources that constitute a stream or river, including associated riparian vegetation and

floodplain. Evaluation of Riparian/Riverine and Vernal Pool resources followed guidance provided in the MSHCP Section 6.1.2.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed Project site consists of 5 acres encompassing Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 302-030-010 located south of West Nance Street, east of North Webster Avenue, and west and north of vacant land, within the *Perris* U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographical map in Section 6, Township 4 South, Range 3 West (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

The Project site is located in the San Jacinto Management Unit of the MSHCP but is not located in within any MSHCP designated criteria cell, cell group, or area identified for conservation. Further, the Project site is not located in an amphibian, criteria area species, mammal, or narrow endemic plant survey area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is to construct one 109,250 combination office/warehouse with four bays. There are currently no designated tenants at this time. The office/warehouses are designed with two, grade level and 15 dock high doors, and to house one or two tenants.

METHODS

As stated above, the objective of this document is to determine whether the Project site supports special status or otherwise sensitive species and/or their habitat, and to address the potential effects associated with the proposed project on those resources. The species and habitats addressed in this document are based on database information and field investigation.

Prior to conducting the field study, species and habitat information was gathered from the relevant industry standard databases to determine which species and/or habitats would be expected to occur in the on the Project site for the *Perris* and *Steele Peak* 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles. The database search included the *Steele Peak* USGS Quad due to the Project site's proximity (less than 3 miles). These sources include:

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) threatened and endangered species occurrence GIS overlay;
- USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation System (IPaC);
- California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) *Rarefind 5*;
- CNDDB Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS);
- California Native Plant Society Electronic Inventory (CNPSEI) database;
- Calflora Database;
- USFWS Designated Critical Habitat Maps
- RCA MSHCP Information Map

Jericho biologists Shay Lawrey and Craig Lawrey conducted their field investigation on August 20, 2020 with an emphasis on special-status species known to occur in the area. Each surveyor has advance degrees, expertise and is experienced in conducting floristic and faunal field surveys, has knowledge in taxonomy and natural community ecology, is familiar with the habitats and sensitive species that occur locally and the applicable protective state and federal statutes, and has experience with analyzing impacts on natural communities.

The surveyors conducted surveys during calm weather which consisted of clear skies with temperatures ranging from 77° F to 91° F and 5 mph winds. Wildlife species were detected during field surveys by sight, calls, tracks, scat, or other sign. In addition to species observed, expected wildlife usage of the site was determined per known habitat preferences of regional wildlife species and knowledge of their relative distributions in the area. The focus of the faunal species surveys was to identify potential habitat for special status wildlife within the project area.

Field work included the following activities:

a) General wildlife survey and inventory
b) Assessment of habitat suitability for sensitive species
c) Riverine/riparian and vernal pool area assessment

Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment

The surveyors conducted the BUOW habitat suitability assessment in accordance with the Western Riverside County MSHCP, which follows the 1993 *"Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines"* prepared by the California Burrowing Owl Consortium. If suitable habitat is present, this protocol requires four (4) surveys between March 1 - August 31. The surveyors systematically searched the entire Project site by walking transects spaced at approximately 10 meters (30 feet) apart to allow for 100 percent visual coverage of the ground surface. The required 500-foot buffer survey area was surveyed with binoculars as the adjacent properties are not within the scope of the Project. The survey method was designed, to identify BUOW activity on site both historically and currently.

Natural and non-natural substrates were examined to identify surrogate burrows. All potential BUOW burrows encountered were examined for shape, size, molted feathers, whitewash, cast pellets and/or prey remains. Disturbance characteristics and all other animal sign encountered within the survey area were recorded. Date time and weather conditions were logged. A hand-held, global positioning system (GPS) unit was used to survey straight transects, to identify survey area boundaries, and for other pertinent information. Representative photographs of the survey area were taken, and Google Earth Pro was accessed to provide recent aerial photographs of the project site and surrounding area.

Riverine/Riparian Areas and Jurisdictional Waters

The surveyors also assessed the Project site for State and /or federal jurisdictional waters that are subject to Sections 404 and 401 of the federal CWA regulated by the USACE and RWQCB respectively; and/or Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code (FCG) administered by the CDFW and Riverine/Riparian and Vernal Pool habitat subject to Section 6.1.2 of the MSHCP. The methods used in this study to delineate the non-wetland WoUS at the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) in variable, ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial non-wetland waters followed guidance described in *A Field Guide to the Identification of the Ordinary High Water Mark in the Arid West Region of the Western United States* (Lichvar and McColley 2008) and the *Updated Datasheet for the Identification of the Ordinary High Water Mark in the Arid West Region of the Western United States* ("Updated Datasheet", Curtis and Lichvar 2010).

The RWQCB maintains jurisdiction over all waters of the State, including wetlands. For the purposes of Porter-Cologne, the methods used to determine federal jurisdiction over non-wetland waters were also used to determine the extent of RWQCB jurisdiction over non-wetland waters within the property.

Evaluation of FGC Section 1600 Streambed Waters followed guidance in the Mapping Episodic Stream Activity (MESA) protocols *[MESA Field Guide*], pursuant to which CDFW claims jurisdiction beyond traditional stream banks and the outer edge of riparian. Under MESA, the term stream is defined broadly to include "a body of water that flows perennially or episodically and that is defined by the area in which water currently flows, or has flowed, over a given course during the historic regime [i.e., 'circa 1800 to the present'], and where the width of its course can reasonably be identified by physical or biological indicators."

The methods used to determine any riparian/riverine or vernal pool areas were based on the above techniques as well as soils evaluations and vegetation classifications. This is because an area may be characterized as riparian based on its vegetative composition, but not meet the criteria of being federal or state jurisdictional water.

No limitations affected the results and conclusions given herein. Surveys were conducted during the appropriate season to observe the target species, in good weather conditions, by qualified biologists who followed all pertinent protocols.

RESULTS

Regional Setting

According to the EPA Regional map, the Project site is located in the Inland Valleys (85k) ecoregion. An ecoregion is a regional area that has similar ecosystems in terms of type, quality, and quantity of environmental resources. The Inland Valleys ecoregion is influenced less by marine processes, and more by alluvial processes. The ecoregion consists of alluvial fans and basin floors at the base of the San Bernardino and San Gabriel mountains and the San Jacinto and Perris Valleys in the south. The region was historically composed of Riversidean coastal sage scrub, valley grasslands, and riparian woodlands. The ecoregion is now heavily urbanized with some remaining agriculture.

Hydrologically, the Project site is located within the Perris hydrologic area, in the 106,456-acre Perris Valley hydrologic sub-area (HSA 802.11) within the Lower San Jacinto River watershed (HUC 180702020305).

The City of Perris is located in central western Riverside County in the Perris Valley. Perris is bordered by the Perris Reservoir on the northeast, Menifee on the south, and the Temescal Mountains on the west. The general climate of Perris is described as warm, dry summers and mild winters and is characterized as warm-summer Mediterranean with average temperatures ranging from a 97° Fahrenheit (F) to 35° F and an average annual rainfall of 10 inches.

Existing Site Conditions

Soils on site consist of Ramona sandy loam (0 to 2 percent slopes) and Pachappa fine sandy loam (0 to 2 percent slopes). Please refer to Figure 5 for a depiction of the soils on site. Soils on site have been graded and compressed.

The topography of the Project site is flat, with elevations ranging from 1473 feet above mean seal level (AMSL) to 1477 feet AMSL. The Project site is within a developing area, bordered by empty lots, industrial buildings, and low-density residential.

The Project site is within a developing area, with industrial buildings on the east, low density housing on the west, and empty graded land on the north and south. Historical images back to June of 2002 show consistent and ongoing clearing/grubbing activities on site. This has resulted in the site being overgrown by ruderal, annual vegetation.

Habitat

Vegetation on is extremely dense with 100 percent canopy coverage of ruderal, non-native species such as short-podded mustard (*Hischfeldia incana*), tocalote *(Centaurea melitensis*), and non-native grasses (*Bromus* ssp.) and oat (*Avena fatua*).
Wildlife

Wildlife observed at the time of survey included common raven, American crow, house finch, European starling and mourning dove. Coyote scat and stripped skunk tracks were also observed.

Burrowing owl

BUOW are known to occur locally within suitable habitat areas, with the closest occurrence being approximately 0.5 miles northwest of the survey area (CNDDB, 2009). The western BUOW is one of 18 New World Burrowing Owl subspecies, and one of only two in North America. BUOW, ranges from Texas to California and north to southern Canada. Individuals of resident populations in southern California, northern Mexico, and Florida breed and overwinter in an area without a significant migration (Haug et al. 1993). BUOW, a California Species of Special Concern (SSC), are found across American open landscapes, showing activity chiefly in the daytime. In California, preferred habitat is generally typified by short, sparse vegetation with few shrubs, level to gentle topography and well-drained soils. In addition, BUOW may occur in some agricultural areas, ruderal grassy fields, vacant lots and pastures, and flood control facilities if the surrounding vegetation structure is suitable and there are useable burrows and foraging habitat in proximity. Unique among North American raptors, the BUOW requires underground burrows or other cavities for nesting during the breeding season and for roosting and cover, year-round. Burrows used by the owls are usually dug by other species termed host burrowers. In California, California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*) and round-tailed ground squirrel (*Citellus tereticaudus*) burrows are frequently used by BUOW but they may use dens or holes dug by other fossorial species and/or human made structures such as cement culverts and pipes.

BUOW have a high fidelity to their birth territory and they often prefer nesting in areas of high burrow densities. Breeding pairs are easily located within the surrounding of their nests (usually 90 feet) due to their territorial behavior. They are active during the day and night and are generally observed in the early morning hours or at twilight. Their breeding season begins February 1 and extends to August 31. Pair formation can begin in February. Peak of the BUOW breeding season, commonly accepted in California, occurs between April 15 and July 15. April to mid-May is when most burrowing owls are in the egg laying and incubation stages. BUOW egg incubation period is about 27-28 days Chick rearing typically occurs between May 15 and July 1. July 15 is typically considered the late nestling period when most owls are spending time above ground. The non-breeding season (September 1 to January 31). BUOW are semi-colonial and will sometimes share a burrow for incubation and chick rearing.

“Burrowing owl habitat generally includes, but is not limited to, short or sparse vegetation (at least at some time of year), presence of burrows, burrow surrogates or presence of fossorial mammal dens, well-drained soils, and abundant and available prey. The vegetation on the Project site consists of thick,

annual grasses and ruderal vegetation. The density, structure, canopy cover and type of vegetation on site is not preferred by this species. Further, no potential surrogate burrows were found during survey.

Therefore, habitat on site and in the survey buffer is not suitable for BUOW. No burrowing owls or recent or historic sign (molted feathers, whitewash, cast pellets or prey remains, or whitewash) was observed during the habitat assessment. No further investigation is recommended or warranted.

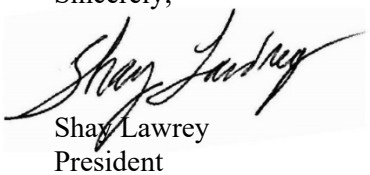
Riverine/Riparian Areas and Jurisdictional Waters

No Riverine/Riparian or jurisdictional resources occur on site. There is no evidence of flow and no hydric vegetation is present. No further investigation is recommended or warranted.

No vernal pool resources occur on site. The soils are well drained and no evidence of pooling or ponding is present. Further historical imagery provides no evidence of past ponding or pooling. No further investigation is recommended or warranted.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide information on this important Project. Please contact me if you have questions or need further information at (909) 915-5900 or via email at shay@jericho-systems.com

Sincerely,



Shay Lawrey
President

Attachments:

Site Photos

Figures
- Figure 1 – Site Vicinity
- Figure 2 – Project Location-Topo Base
- Figure 3 – 3-Mile CNDDB Occurrences
- Figure 4 – National Hydrography Dataset Blueline Streams & Waterbodies
- Figure 5 – Soils

Site Photos

Photo 1. Close up view of density of vegetation.

Photo 2. View of trash pile on site.

Photo 3. Panned out view of habitat conditions.

Photo 4. Panned out view of density of vegetation.

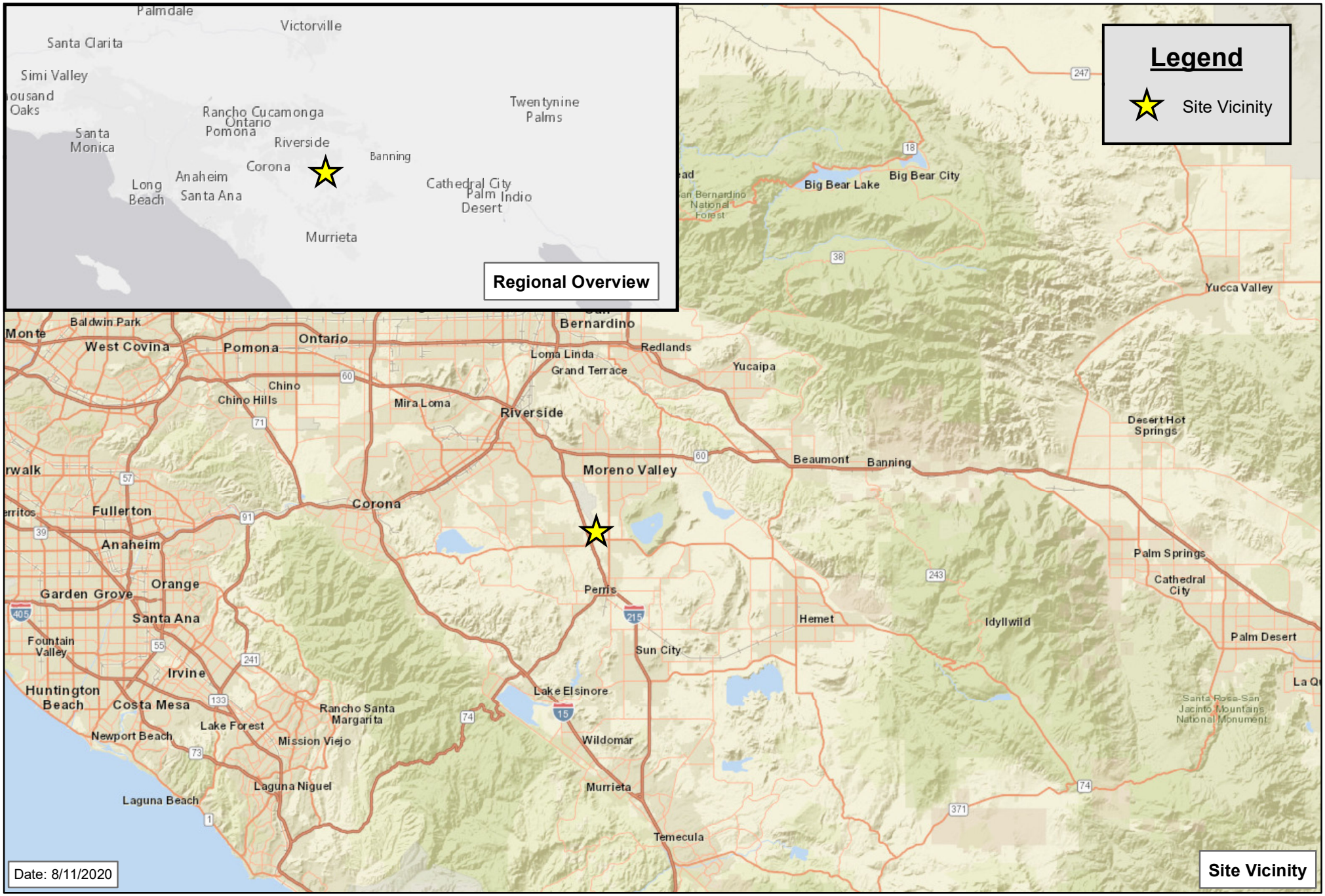


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Figure 1 - Regional Overview
Site Vicinity

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0 0.025 0.05 0.1 0.15 0.2 Miles

1 inch = 333 feet

Imagery Date: 7/5/2019

Service Layer Credits: Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

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Figure 2
Site Location

Nance & Webster
Phelan Development

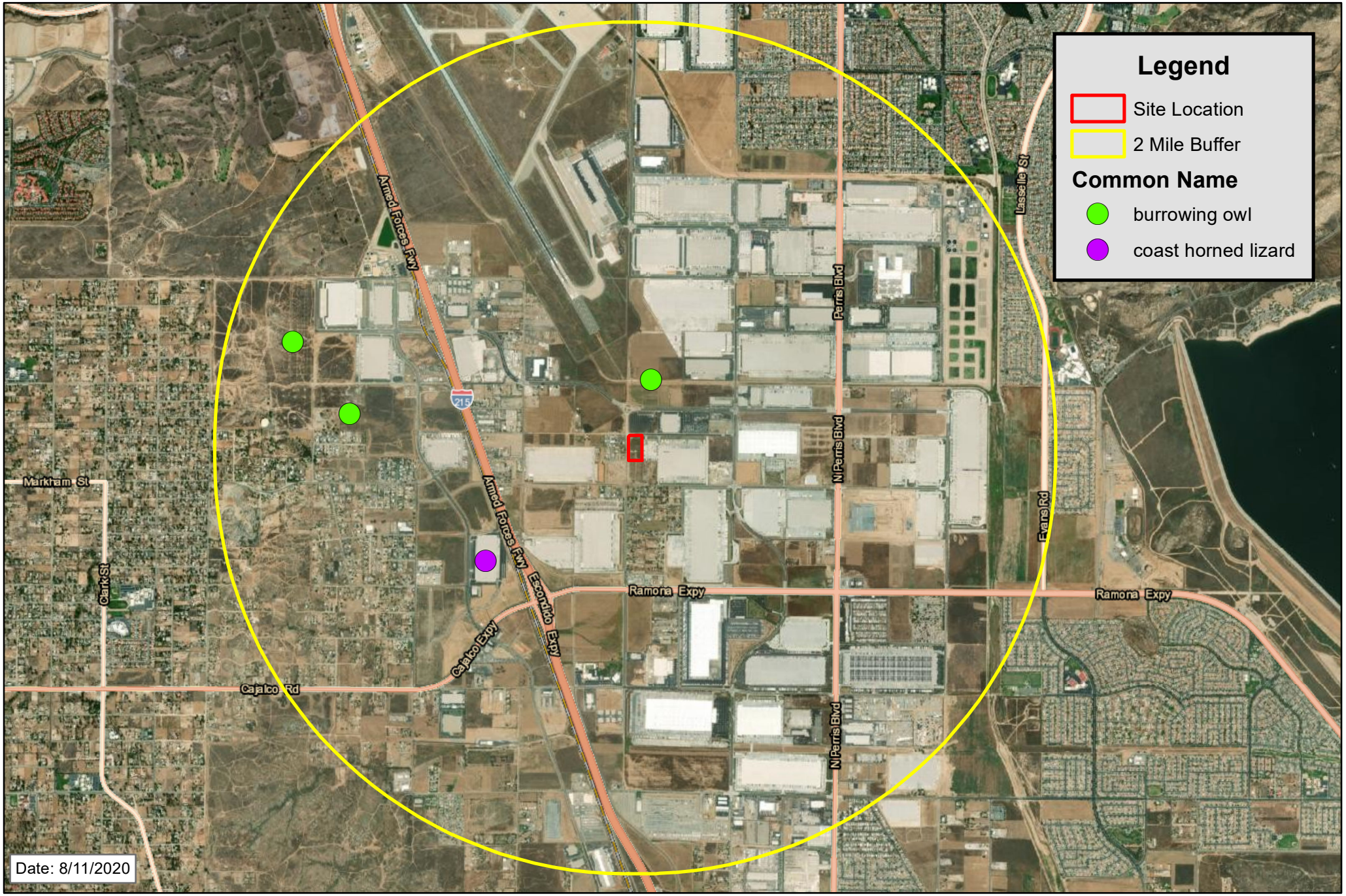

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Figure 3
CNDDB

Nance & Webster
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0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Miles

1 inch = 667 feet

Imagery Date: 7/5/2019

Service Layer Credits: Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

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Figure 4
National Hydrography Data

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0 0.0075 0.015 0.03 0.045 0.06 Miles

1 inch = 104 feet

Imagery Date: 7/5/2019

Service Layer Credits: Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

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Figure 5
USDA Soils Data

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