SECTION B

INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

Job: LU07-0086

Requester: Drew Madrigal

Applicant: Granite Construction Company

Date: September 26, 2007

Survey Type: Field and Office

Rationale: Proposed Major Modification to CUP-5147 to install and operate an asphalt mixing plant and recycling facility on an 18.38 acre parcel zoned General Industrial (M-3)

Background: Granite Construction Company (Applicant) proposes to install and operate an asphalt mixing plant and recycling facility in an existing industrial area of the unincorporated portion of Ventura County. The proposed Project Site has an existing permit, Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 5147, which allows for the operation of a manufacturing facility for pre-cast concrete associated products. The Applicant is now seeking a major modification of the CUP for the proposed Project Site from Ventura County, to extend the duration of the CUP and to modify the Project description to be consistent with the proposed improvements. These improvements include the construction and operation of the following: a 450,000 ton per year asphaltic concrete plant; a 300,000 ton per year concrete and asphalt recycling plant; a 5,000 square foot office building; a construction yard; a rubberized blending system; and a lime treatment plant.

West Coast Environmental and Engineering (WCE) prepared a Biological Resources Assessment (BRA), dated June 26, 2007, as part of Granite Construction Company's Application CUP 5147 Major Modification (WCE, 2007). WCE's BRA is provided herein for reference as **Attachment D** and it supplements this Biological Resources Initial Study, prepared in accordance with the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, February 2006. In general, the description of existing biological resources for this Initial Study has been referenced from the WCE document; however, this information has been supplemented by the field study and review of Project documents conducted by ENSR staff.

Methodology: Prior to the site survey, ENSR staff reviewed the BRA prepared by WCE and the biological resource maps and Project grading and drainage plans provided by Ventura County (**Attachment A).** On September 13, 2007, ENSR staff conducted a reconnaissance-level biological resources survey of the proposed Project Site. The purpose of the survey was to confirm Project Site conditions as they relate to biological resources described in the WCE BRA and to assess the potential for special status species to occur at the site. The survey consisted of walking the entire Project Site by foot. The existing flora, vegetation characteristics and incidental wildlife observed were recorded. Vegetation communities were surveyed, classified, and mapped using a modified Sawyer-Keeler Wolf classification system. Representative photographs of the Project Site were taken during the field survey and are included in **Attachment B.**

Site Description: The Project Site (current A.P.N. # 090-0-190-315) is located at 999 Mission Rock Road, in an unincorporated area near the City of Santa Paula in Ventura County, California (**Map 1a, Attachment A**). The total area of the Project Site is 18.34 acres. The site is currently zoned M-3 (General Industrial) by the County of Ventura. Surrounding land uses include light industrial to the north and west, agricultural to the south, and a vehicle storage facility to the east. The Santa Clara River is located approximately 1,800 feet to the east/south east of the Project Site.

The grading and drainage plan and the proposed building pads, structures, storage areas, and stockpile areas (**Map 1b, Attachment A**), depict the location and general design of these improvements. **Figure 1, Attachment C** contains a map that depicts the vegetation communities occurring at the Project Site and **Attachment B** contains representative photographs of the Project Site. The majority of the Project Site consists of disturbed areas vegetated with ruderal plant species (**Photos 1 and 2, Attachment B**). The

dominant species in the disturbed areas include black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) and western ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*). A stand of giant reed (*Arundo donax*) occurs along the south east corner of the site (**Photo 1, Attachment B**). Along the southern boundary of the site is a stand of prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia sp.*) which forms a fence along the southern boundary (**Photo 3, Attachment B**).

At the southwestern corner of the Project Site, there is a cluster of young narrow leafed willows (*Salix exigua*) (**Photos 5, 6 and 9, Attachment B**). An ephemeral drainage channel occurs just beyond the Project Site's southwestern corner, and this drainage extends southwest for approximately 700 feet from the southwest corner of the Project Site (**Photos 7 and 8, Attachment B** and **Figure 1, Attachment C**). Dense stands of Arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*) occur on both banks of this drainage with a stand or two of mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*). The southern willow riparian scrub community associated with this drainage is approximately 75 feet wide (average). Within the Project Site boundary, the presence of narrow leaf willow stands (an "obligate" wetland indicator plant species) in the southwestern corner of the Project Site is an indication that this is potentially a wetland area, possibly formed from periodic saturation due to a high water table.

In the northcentral portion of the Project Site, there is a small (approximately 5 feet by 8 feet) area that can be characterized as a "seep" wetland (see **Photo 10, Attachment B**). This potential wetland exhibits some surface saturation and a circular ring of salt encrustation, indicative of prolonged saturation that may be contributed from an underground seep. This potential wetland is dominated by cattails (*Typha* sp.) and supports a few stands of rabbitsfoot grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis),* watercress (*Nasturtium* sp.) and one mulefat seedling. These plants are all wetland indicator plants.

This small "seep" wetland, the small area of willow stands in the southwestern corner of the Project Site, and the drainage with the associated southern willow scrub riparian vegetation, are all potentially subject to the jurisdictional authority of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the California Department of the Fish and Game and afforded protection as wetlands defined by the County of Ventura. Therefore, these resources are further discussed below in Section b - "Wetland Habitat".

Table 1 below presents a comprehensive list of the plant species documented at the Project Site. This list includes the plants documented from the May 25, 2007 WCE site survey. Likewise, Table 2 provides a list of all wildlife species observed during the site survey conducted by WCE on May 25, 2007. It should be noted that during the site survey conducted by ENSR staff on September 13, 2007, California black walnut and California fan palm were not observed on the Project Site. These plants which were reported in the WCE survey likely occur outside of the Project Site boundaries, and likely occur in the southwestern drainage area.

Table 1: List of Plant Species Observed at the Granite Construction Company Project Site

Common Name	Scientific Name
Arroyo willow	*Salix lasiolepis*
Avocado tree	*Persea americana*
Black mustard	*Brassica nigra*
Bottlebrush	*Callistemon sp.*
Cactus	*Opuntia sp.*
California black walnut	*Juglans californica*
California Fan Palm	*Washingtonia filifera*
Castor bean	*Ricinus communis*
Cattail	*Typha sp.*
Cocklebur	*Xanthium strumarium*
Common vervain	*Verbena lasiostachys*
Coyote brush	*Baccharis pilularis*
Giant reed	*Arundo donax*
Datura (western jimson weed)	*Datura wrightii*
English plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
Horehound	*Marrubium vulgare*
Italian thistle	*Carduus pycnocephalus*
Lemon tree	*Citrus limon*
Mulefat	*Baccharis salicifolia*
Mayweed	*Anthemis cotula*
Ornamental ivy	*Unknowon sp.*
Peruvian pepper tree	*Schinus molle*
Quailbush	*Atriplex lentiformis*
Red-stem filaree	*Erodium cicutarium*
Rabbitsfoot grass	*Polypogon monspeliensis*

Common Name	Scientific Name
Sandbar willow	*Salix exigua*
Sourclover	*Melilotus indica*
Stinging nettle	*Urtica dioica*
Sweet fennel	*Foeniculum vulgare*
Tansy mustard	*Descurainia pinnata*
Telegraph weed	*Heterotheca grandiflora*
Tree tobacco	*Nicotiana glauca*
Watercress	*Nasturtium sp.*
Western ragweed	*Ambrosia psilostachya*
Wild raddish	*Raphanus raphanistrum*

Table 2: List of Wildlife Species Observed At the Granite Construction Company Project Site

Common Name	Scientific Name
BIRDS	
American robin	*Turdus migratorius*
California towhee	*Pipilo crissalis*
Common raven	*Corvus corax*
Downy woodpecker	*Picoides pubescens*
Great egret	*Ardea alba*
House finch	*Carpodacus mexicanus*
Red-tailed hawk	*Buteo jamaicensis*
Western scrub-jay	*Aphelocoma californica*
Western wood-pewee	*Contopus sordidulus*
White-crowned sparrow	*Zonotrichia leucophrys*
MAMMALS	
Audubon cottontail	*Sylvilagus audubonii*
Small burrowing mammals (s)	*Unknown sp.*
REPTILES	
Western fence lizard	*Sceloporus occidentalis*
(s) identified from sign of species (feces, tracks, nests, mounds, diggings, tail drags, bones, etc.)	

SECTION C

DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES

	Project Impacts				Cumulative Impacts			
	Degree of Effect				Degree of Effect			
	N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
6. Biological Resources								
a. Endangered, threatened or rare species	✓				✓			
b. Wetland Habitat		✓				✓		
c. Coastal Habitat	✓				✓			
d. Migration Corridors	✓				✓			
e. Locally important species/communities	✓				✓			

N: No impact
LS: Less than significant
PS-M: Potentially significant, unless mitigated to a level of insignificance
PS: Potentially significant, even after mitigation

a. Endangered, Threatened or Rare Species

A standard nine-quadrangle California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB)/Rarefind 3 Report was generated for the Project Site (i.e., query of the USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle in which the Project Site is located as well as the eight surrounding topographic quadrangles: Ojai, Saticoy, Oxnard, Camarillo, Newbury Park, Moorpark, Fillmore, Santa Paula Peak and Santa Paula). The CNDDB/Rarefind 3 Report is presented in WCE's BRA (**Attachment D**) and referenced herein. The CNDDB query was conducted to determine special status plants and animal species potentially occurring in the proposed Project Site area. According to the CNDDB, several special-status species potentially occur within at least a quarter-mile of the proposed Project Site. However, no sensitive plant or wildlife species were detected during the site survey conducted on May 25, 2007, or during the site survey conducted on September 13, 2007.

Plants:

The CNDDB records identified the following eleven special-status plant species as potentially occurring in the region and considered to have some potential to occur on the Project Site (WCE, 2007). These species include:

Abram's oxytheca (*Oxytheca Parishii var. abramsii*), Blochman's dudleya (*Dudleya blochmaniae ssp. blochmaniae*), Coulter's goldfields (*Lasthenia globate ssp. coulter*), dune larkspur (*Delphinium parryi ssp. blochmaniae*), late-flowered mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii var. vestus*), Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*), mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cantata ssp. puerile*), Miles's milk-vetch (*Astragalus didymocarpus var. milesianus*), Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*), rayless ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*) and southern tarplant (*entromadia parryi ssp. Australis [a.k.a. Hemizonia parryi ssp. Australis]*).

These plants species, however, were not detected during site surveys within the Project Site. The Project Site is highly disturbed and is an active site subjected to periodic ongoing disturbance. Since the Project Site does not provide suitable habitat to support these special-status plant species, it is considered that proposed Project actions would not adversely affect endangered, threatened or rare plant species.

Animals:

CNDDB database records indicate that twenty-eight special-status wildlife species potentially occur in the region, and are considered to have some potential to occur on the site (WCE, 2007). These species include:

The American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), arroyo toad (*Bufo californicus*), bank swallows (*Riparia riparia*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*), California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestirs actia*), California least tern (*Sterna antillarum browni*), California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), coast (San Diego) horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum (blainvillei)*), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), coastal western whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), dulzura pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus californicus femoralis*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), silvery legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*), southwestern pond turtle (*Emys (=Clemmys) marmorata pallida*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*), western spadefoot toad (*Spea (=Scaphiopus) hammondii*), western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*) and yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*).

These wildlife species, however, were not detected during the site surveys. The willow riparian scrub habitat associated with the drainage occurring outside the southwestern corner of the Project Site potentially provides suitable nesting habitat for some avian species such as Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*), and yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*). However, the potential for these species to nest onsite is low, given the lack of suitable habitat and disturbed conditions existing on the Project Site. In addition, due to the disturbed nature of vegetation onsite, there is also very low potential for these avian species to forage on the Project Site. Therefore, proposed Project actions would not adversely affect endangered, threatened or rare wildlife species.

Plant Communities:

CDFG and CNPS have identified several native plant communities that are rare and/or diminishing within California. Substantial losses of these plant communities may be considered "significant" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

As identified earlier, the following sensitive plant community occurs southwest of the Project Site (**Map 3** of **Attachment A**):

- **Southern Riparian Scrub** is characterized by dense broad-leafed, winter-deciduous riparian thickets dominated by several willow shrub and tree species (*Salix* ssp.). Riparian trees also may occur with the association and may include, for example, scattered Fremont's cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), and western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*). Riparian woodland also may occur in small groves or in riverine corridors that drain into estuaries. As with other riparian habitats, riparian scrub supports a diverse assemblage of wildlife species, especially passerine bird species. The endangered least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) and southwestern willow flycatcher (*Epidonax traillii extimus*) as well as other sensitive species, such as yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*) and yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*) all depend on riparian woodlands for breeding. The riparian scrub community is characterized by loose, sandy or fine gravelly alluvium deposited near stream channels during floods.

This native plant community is associated with the drainage that occurs outside the Project Site footprint and will not be impacted by the proposed Project actions. The Project plans do not include encroachment into the

drainage area or the associated riparian community. Therefore, proposed Project will not adversely affect the southern (willow) riparian community associated with the drainage.

b. Wetland Habitat

Definition and Jurisdictional Applicability

- Ventura County (General Plan Goals, Policies and Programs) defines wetlands as:

"Lands which are transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is periodically covered with shallow water. The frequency of occurrence of water is sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetative or aquatic life that requires saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Wetlands include marshes, bogs, sloughs, vernal pools, wet meadows, river and stream overflows, mudflats, ponds, springs and seeps."

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has jurisdiction over waters of the United States (including wetlands). The jurisdictional limits over non-tidal waters extend to the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) and include all adjacent wetlands.[1] The Corps defines wetlands as:

"Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."

Federal (i.e., Corps) jurisdictional wetlands are determined to be present if each of the three following criteria is met at a location: wetland hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation. However, with respect to the California Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), wetland definition requires that only one of the wetland criteria is present to define wetlands and assumes that wetland hydrology is present if hydric soils or hydrophytic vegetation is present.

Significance Threshold

Policy 1.5.2.3 of the Ventura County General Plan requires that discretionary development proposed to be located within 300 feet of an intermittent stream or spring must be evaluated by a qualified biologist to determine impacts. Further, discretionary development that would result in significant impacts to significant wetland habitats are prohibited unless mitigation measures are adopted that would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. For the purposes of this Initial Study, significant wetland habitats are defined as performing one or more functions considered as important to the public interest (33 CFR 320.4):

- Wetlands which serve significant natural biological functions, including food chain production, general habitat and nesting, spawning, rearing and resting sites for aquatic or land species;

- Wetlands set aside for study of the aquatic environment or as sanctuaries or refuges;

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[1] A recent Supreme Court ruling called the "Rapanos" decision specifies that isolated ephemeral drainages, other isolated wetlands, small swales, and ditches which are generally characterized by low volume, infrequent, and low flow must establish a "significant nexus" with a navigable water body for these water bodies to be under Corps jurisdiction. Pursuant to this ruling, the ephemeral drainage outside the Project Site, the onsite willow wetland area, and the isolated "seep" wetland are likely non-jurisdictional wetlands. However, the decision of federal jurisdictional applicability over these potential wetlands is at the discretion of the Corps and is decided on a "case-by-case" basis. Therefore, consultation with the Corps is required if Proposed Project actions are likely to impact these resources.

- Wetlands that the destruction or alteration of which would detrimentally affect natural drainage characteristics, sedimentation patterns, salinity distribution, flushing characteristics, current patterns, or other environmental characteristics;

- Wetlands which are significant in shielding other areas from wave action, erosion, or storm damage. Such wetlands are often associated with barrier beaches, islands, reefs, and bars;

- Wetlands which serve as valuable storage areas for storm and flood waters;

- Wetlands which are ground water discharge areas that maintain minimum baseflows important to aquatic resources and those which are prime natural recharge areas;

- Wetlands which serve significant water purification functions; and

- Wetlands which are unique in nature or scarce in quantity to the region or local area.

Impact Assessment

The ephemeral drainage and the associated willow scrub riparian vegetation outside the Project Site boundary, the willow wetland area onsite in the southwestern corner, and the isolated "seep" wetland onsite all meet one or more agency definitions of a wetland.

The drainage ditch and the associated riparian vegetation are outside the Project footprint and no impacts to this resource are anticipated from Project implementation. Therefore, proposed Project actions would not adversely affect these potential wetlands.

Project plans indicate that the proposed driveway to the truck queing and staging area along the southwestern portion of the Project Site is directly adjacent to this potential willow wetlands area (see **Map 1b, Attachment A**). Construction of the proposed driveway may require removal of some willows occurring onsite. However, this potential wetland area is small, isolated, and does not provide significant wetland functions and values. Therefore, under the significant impact threshold defined above, implementation of proposed Project actions is considered to result in a less-than-significant impacts to these wetlands. Nonetheless, in support of general conservation of wetland resources, general mitigation measures for transplanting willows is recommended **(MM-1)** in the Mitigation Measures section.

The potential "seep" wetland area onsite (**Photo 10, Attachment B**) is a small, isolated area. This potential wetland area may have been established by a man-made source of irrigation. However, this seep wetland occurs in an active Project site area subject to periodic disturbance and facility operations, and it does not provide significant wetland functions and values. Therefore, under the significant impact threshold defined above, implementation of proposed Project actions is considered to result in a less-than-significant impact to this "seep" wetland area.

c. Coastal Habitat

The Project Site is not located within the Coastal Zone as defined by both Ventura County's Local Coastal Program and the California Coastal Act. Thus, the proposed Project will not impact coastal habitat.

d. Migration Corridors

Wildlife migration corridors are generally defined as connections between habitat patches that allow for physical and genetic exchange between otherwise isolated animal populations. Migration corridors may be local such as between foraging and nesting or denning areas, or they may be regional in nature. Migration corridors are not necessarily unidirectional in access routes and may have a network of routes in multiple directions. "Habitat linkages" are migration corridors that contain contiguous strips of vegetation between routes. Habitat linkages provide cover and forage sufficient for temporary inhabitation by a variety of ground

dwelling animal species. Wildlife movement corridors are essential to the regional ecology of an area as they provide avenues of genetic exchange and allow access to other territories in the region.

The land directly south of the Project Site is in agricultural development, and the land southeast of the Project Site is largely undisturbed, with natural areas extending both south and east toward the Santa Clara River basin located approximately 900 feet from the Project Site boundary, as seen in the Ventura County wildlife movement map (**Map 6, Attachment A**). Wildlife may travel to and fro between the Project Site area and these natural areas. The riparian area located adjacent to the southwest corner of the Project Site potentially serves as a marginal movement corridor connecting with the Santa Clara River basin. However, the agricultural areas south of the Project Site would limit wildlife movement to the Project Site area. Project actions would not adversely affect movement of wildlife along the Santa Clara River, which constitutes the more important wildlife corridor in the Project Site vicinity. Based on these factors, the proposed Project actions would not have adverse affects on wildlife migration or movement corridors in the Project Site area.

e. Locally Important Species/Communities

The County of Ventura has identified several plants, animals and vegetation communities that are considered to be locally important or characteristic of or unique to Ventura County. Substantial losses of these species or plant communities may be considered "significant" under the CEQA.

Based on the BRA report (WCE, 2007), the following plant species which are recognized as locally important are identified as having a low potential to occur in the Project area or on the Project Site:

- Davidson's saltscale (*Atriplex serenana var. davidsonii*)
- Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*)
- Weed mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii var. vestus*)
- Southern tarplant (*Centormadia parryi ssp. australis*)
- Umbrella larkspur (*Delphinium umbraculorum*)
- Blochman's Live-forever (*Dodleya blochmaniae ssp. blochmaniae*)
- Rayless goldfields (*Lasthenia glabrata ssp. coulteri*)
- Abrams' oxytheca (*Oxytheca Parishii var. abramsii*)
- Rayless ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*)

The majority of the area within the Project Site boundaries is highly disturbed, does not support natural conditions, and is subject to continuous facility operations. These locally important plant species were not detected onsite during Project surveys. No suitable habitat or conditions viable for these species to thrive exists onsite. Therefore, the proposed Project actions would not have adverse affects on these locally important plant species.

Cumulative Impacts

The proposed Project is a request to extend the operations within an existing facility and to implement facility improvements, all of which will be restricted to the existing Project facility boundaries. Project implementation will not result in impacts to natural areas outside of the Project Site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Project will not contribute to cumulative impacts to biological resources. In addition, a review of the BIOS database reveals that no other projects are planned in the Project vicinity.

References

Ventura County Resource Management Agency. 1988 (updated 2005). Ventura County Plan Goals, Policies and Programs.

West Coast Environmental and Engineering (WCE). 2007. Application: CUP-5147 Major Modification, Granite Construction Company Asphalt Mixing Plant and Recycle Facility, Attachment 3: Biological Resources Assessment. June 28, 2007.

SECTION D

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Based on the information contained within Sections B and C:	**YES/ MAYBE**	**NO**
1. Does the project have the potential to significantly degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		✓
2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one which occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the future).		✓
3. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (Several projects may have relatively small individual impacts on two or more resources, but the total of those impacts on the environment is significant).		✓
4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		✓

SECTION E

DETERMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☑ I find the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION should be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measure(s) described below will be applied to the project. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION should be prepared.

☐ I find the proposed project, individually and/or cumulatively MAY have a significant effect on the environment and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Mitigation Measures

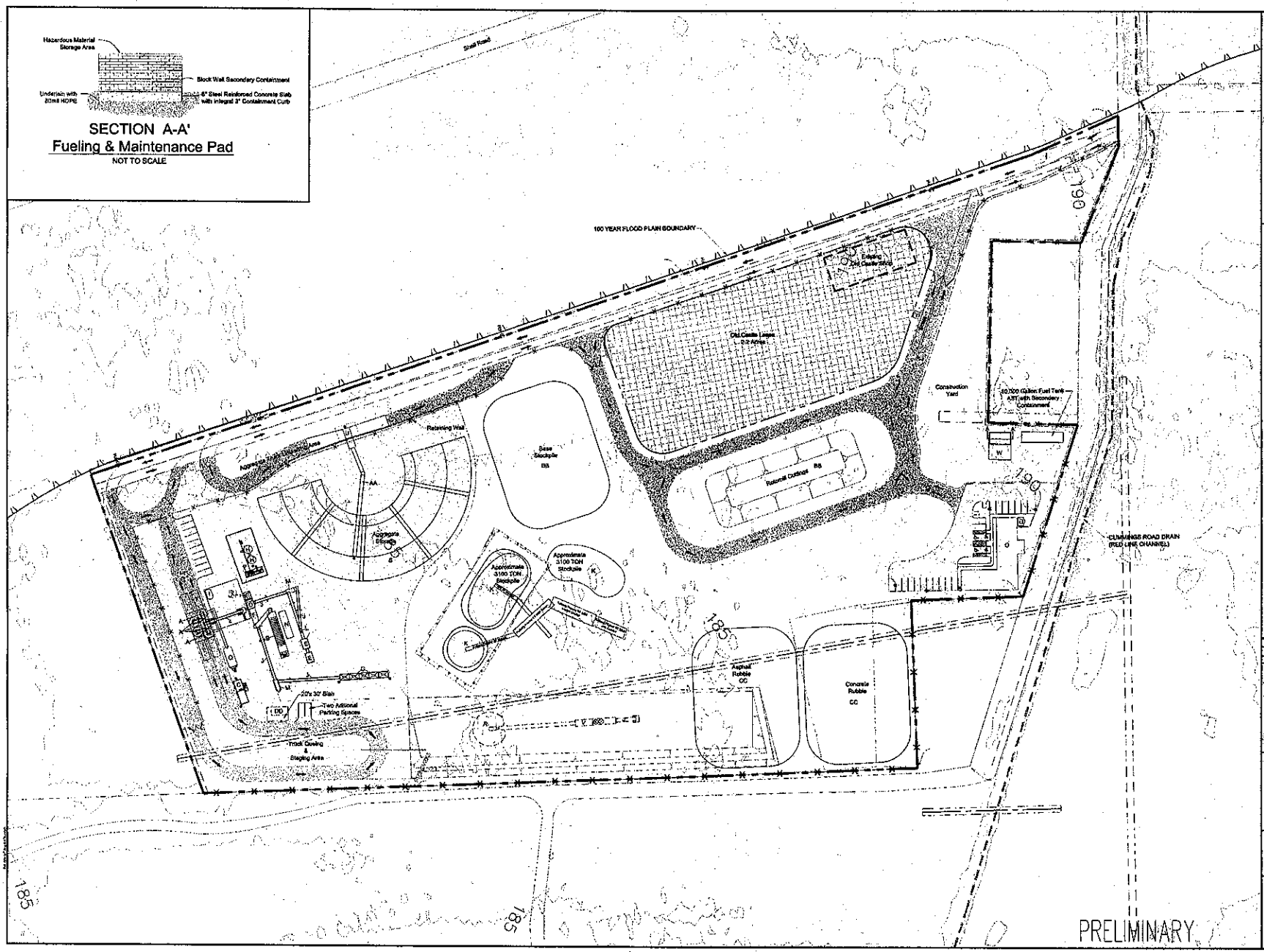
MM-1: Salvage and Transplantation of Willows

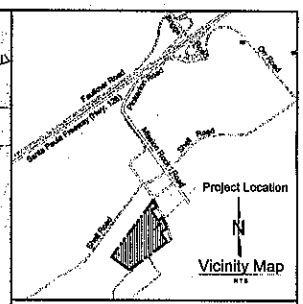
If proposed actions require the removal of the narrow leaf willows (*S. exigua*) occurring in the southwestern corner of the Project Site, it is recommend that the young willow plants be salvaged prior to disturbance and replanted in a suitable undisturbed location on the Project Site, where there are no future plans for disturbance or development. A more favorable location for transplanting these willow plants, however, may be along the ephemeral drainage south of the Project Site, which already supports a willow riparian scrub habitat. It is recommended that the Applicant hire a local restoration biologist to oversee the salvage and relocation of the willows.

ATTACHMENT A

Ventura County Resource Maps

SECTION A-A'
Fueling & Maintenance Pad
NOT TO SCALE





LEGEND:

- Property Boundary
- Old Castle Boundary (2.2 Acres)
- Cummings Road Drain (Red Line Channel)
- 100 Year Flood Plain Boundary
- Topographic Contours
- Chainlink Fence
- Chainlink Fence With Mesh
- Slide Gates
- Double Swing Gates
- Trash Enclosure
- Right of Way (Roads)
- Impervious Areas
- Paved Right of Way
- Retaining Wall
- Construction Yard Boundary
- Fire Hydrants
- Traffic Flow
- Cobra head Light Post (3 Units)
- Night Time Plant Operational Lights (7 Units)
- Parking Lot Lights (7 Units)
- Existing Easements (Refer to Jensen Design & Topographic Exhibit)

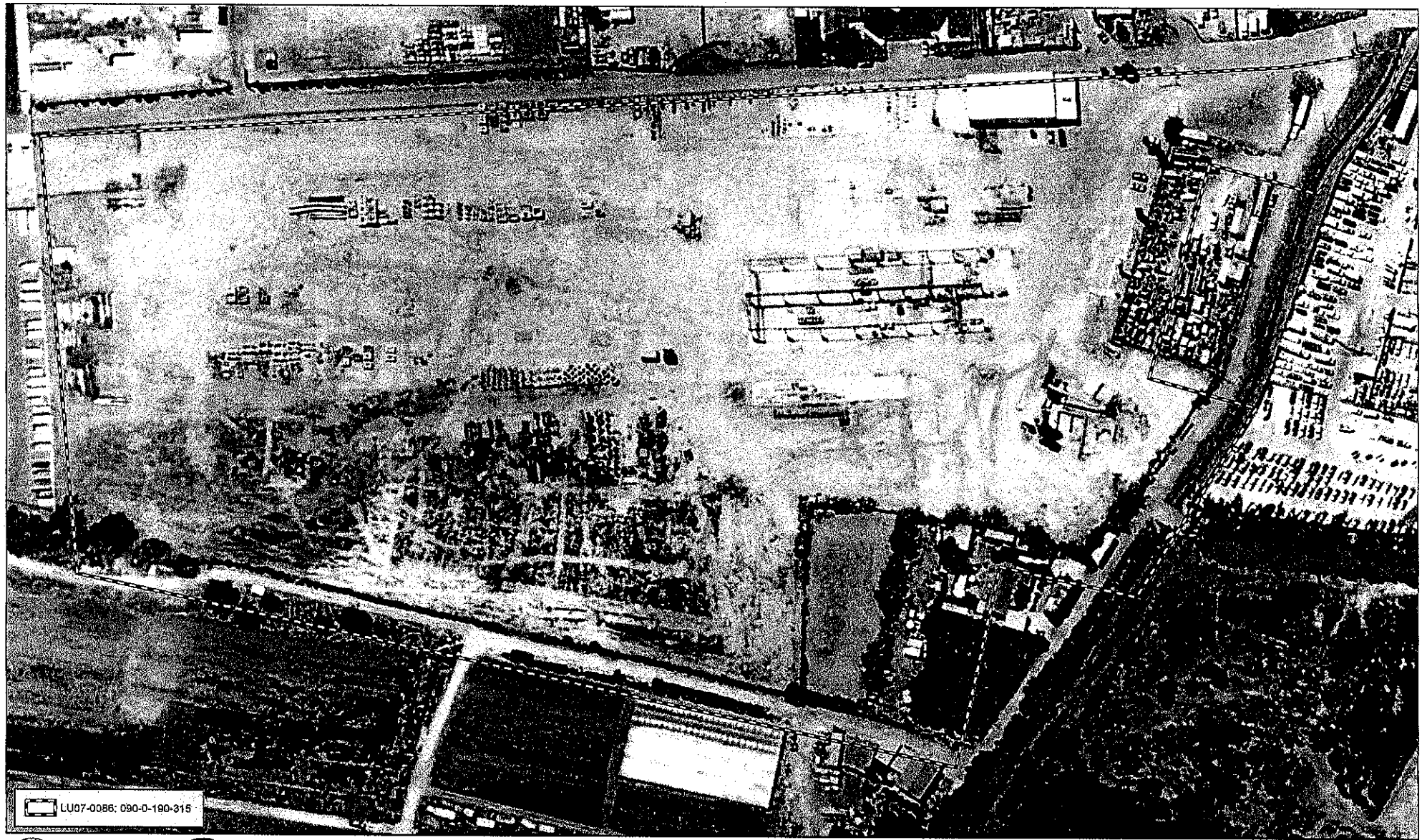
DATUM:	HORZ= NAD83 VERT=NAVD88
TOPOGRAPHY:	VENTURA COUNTY, LIDAR, AIRBORNE 2006
PHOTOGRAPHY:	AIRPHOTO 2006
ENGINEERING:	HAWKS & ASSOCIATES
SURVEYING:	JENSEN DESIGN & SURVEY, INC.

Site Plan
Granite Construction
Briggs Road
Ventura County, California

PROJECT: GRA150-002-07 | FIGURE 2
DRAWN BY: GDZ | DATE: 03/23/07 | REVISION: 06/14/07 GDZ
APPROVED BY: JEJ | DATE: 06/23/07 | PRINTED: 06/14/07

0 30 60
SCALE IN FEET

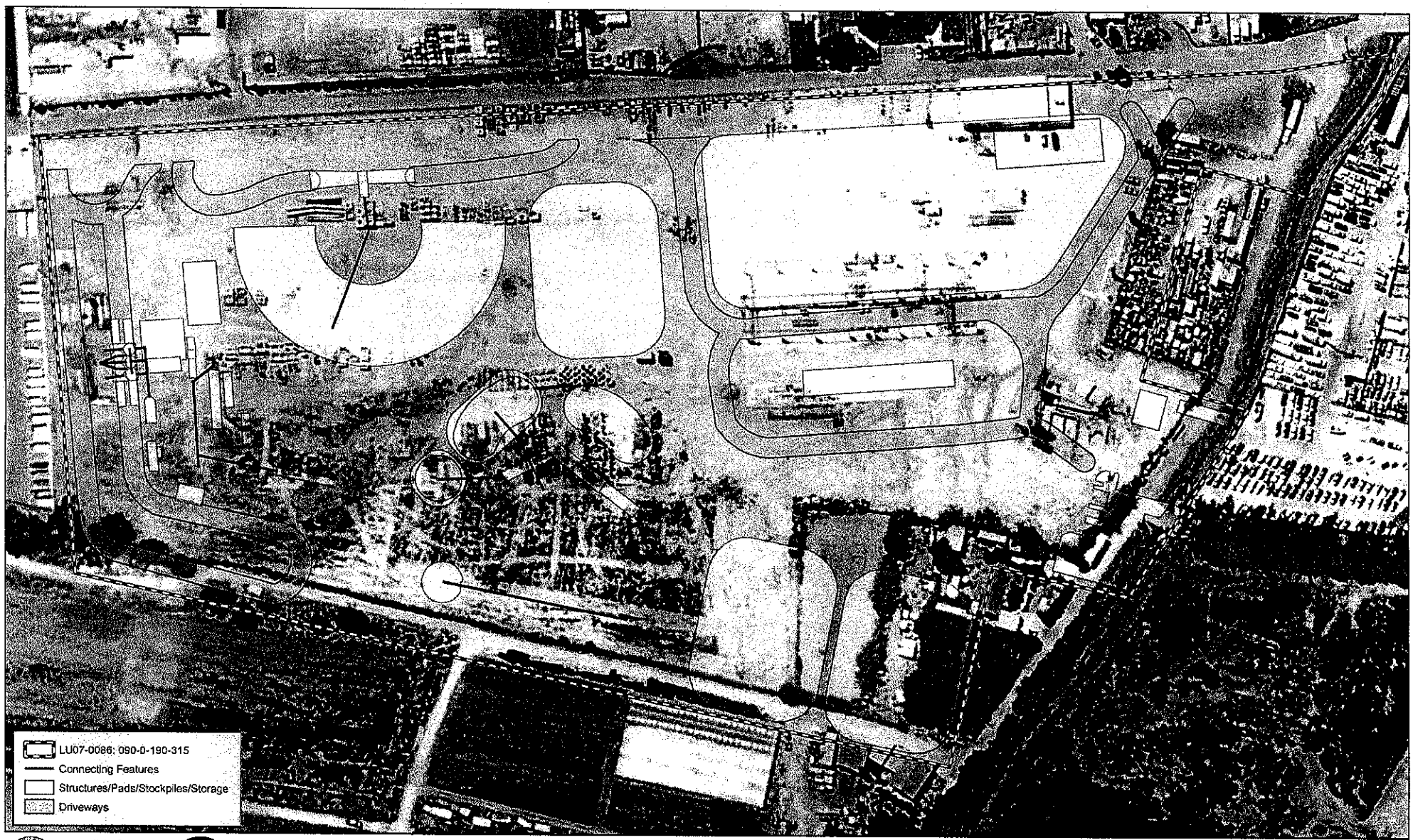
Site Plan for LU07-0086



Ventura County
Resource Management Agency
GIS Development & Mapping Services
Map created on 09/17/2007
This aerial imagery is under the copyrights of AirPhotoUSA
Source: AirPhotoUSA, June 2006

MAP 1a: LU07-0095
090-0-190-315
AERIAL BASE MAP

0 100 200 Feet



Ventura County
Resource Management Agency
GIS Development & Mapping Services
Map created on 09/17/2007
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MAP 1b: LU07-0095
090-0-190-315
PROJECT AREAS MAP

0 150 300 Feet

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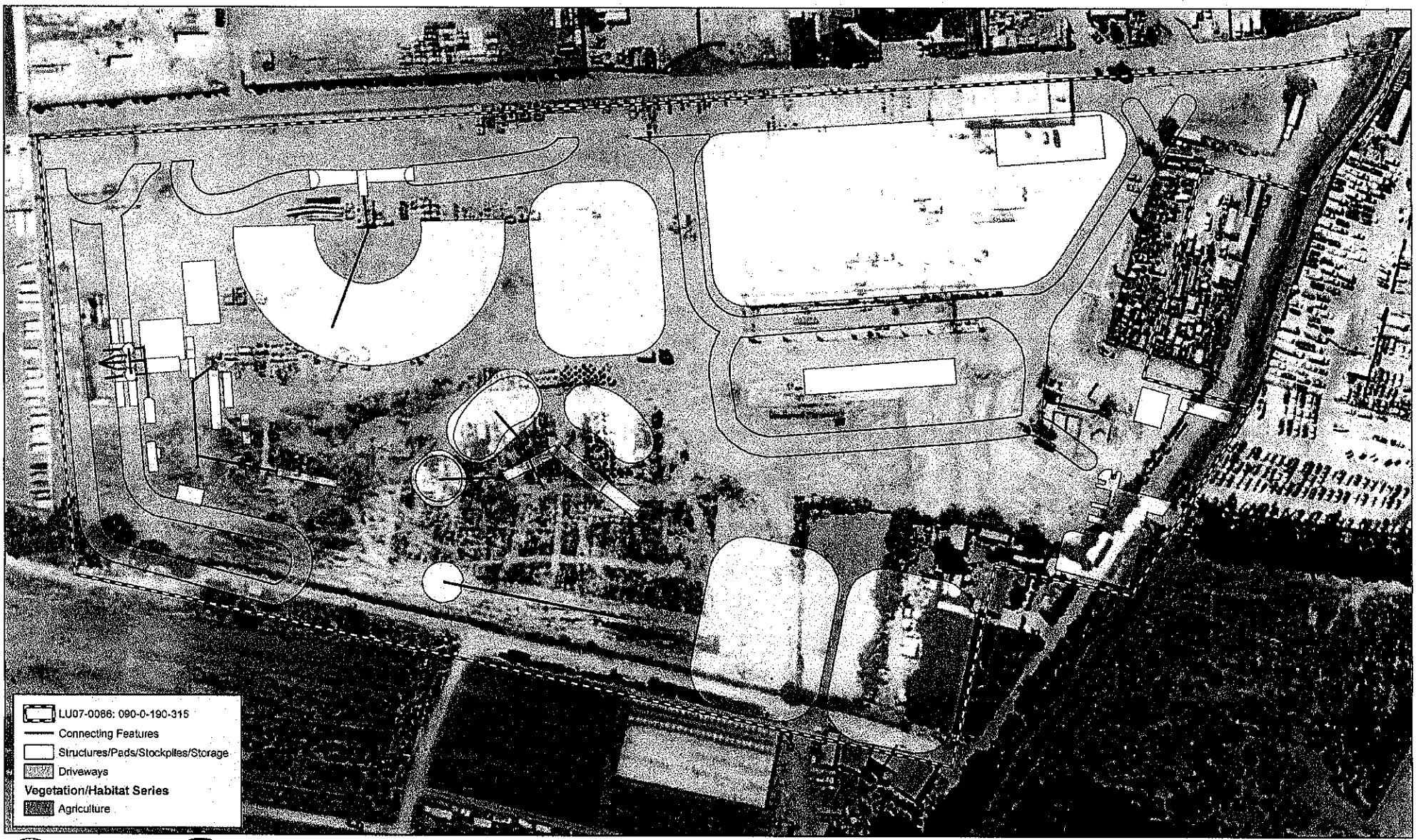

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MAP 2: LU07-0095
090-0-190-315
VEGETATION/HABITAT MAP

0 100 200 Feet

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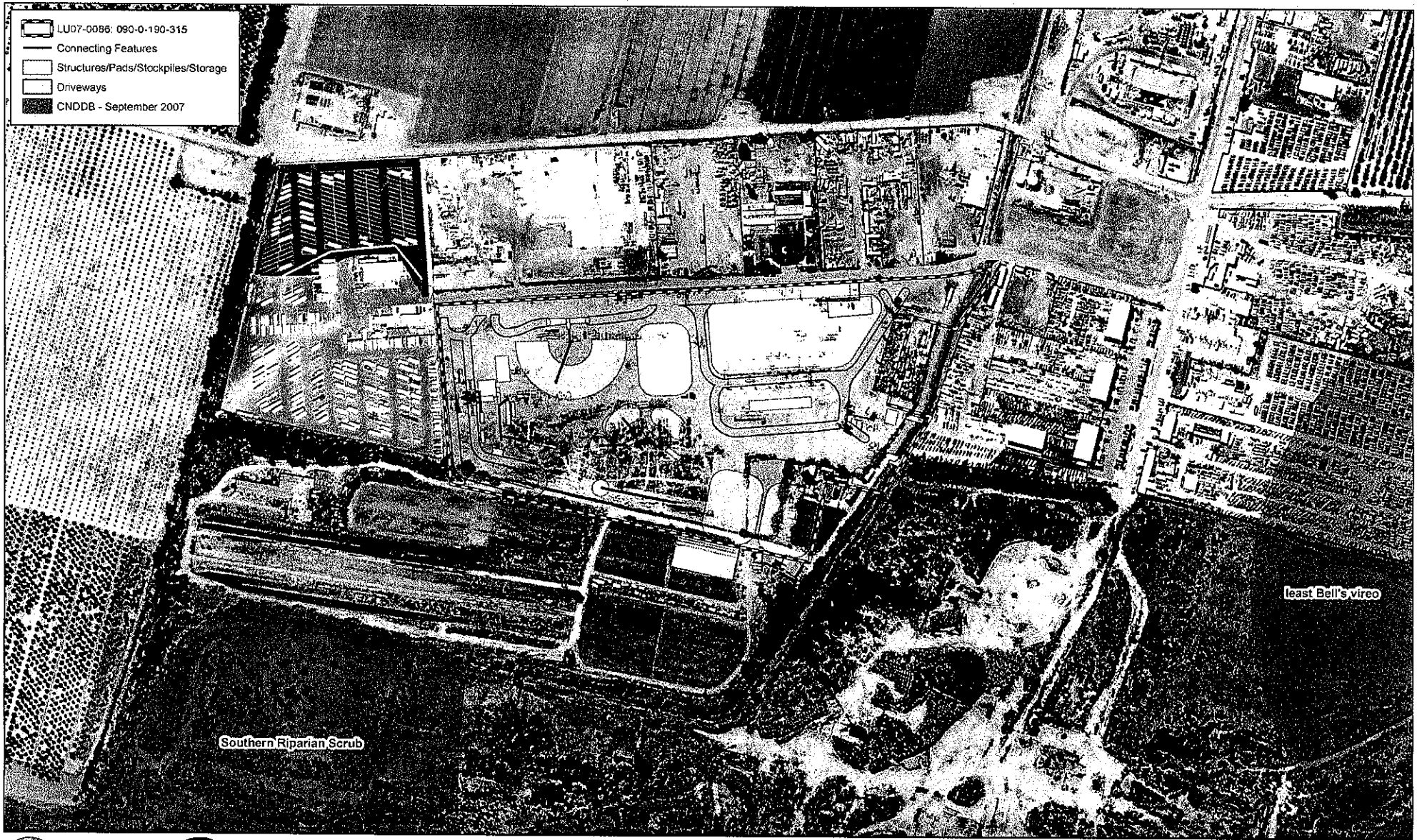

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MAP 3: LU07-0095
090-0-190-315
C.N.D.D.B. MAP

0 200 400 Feet

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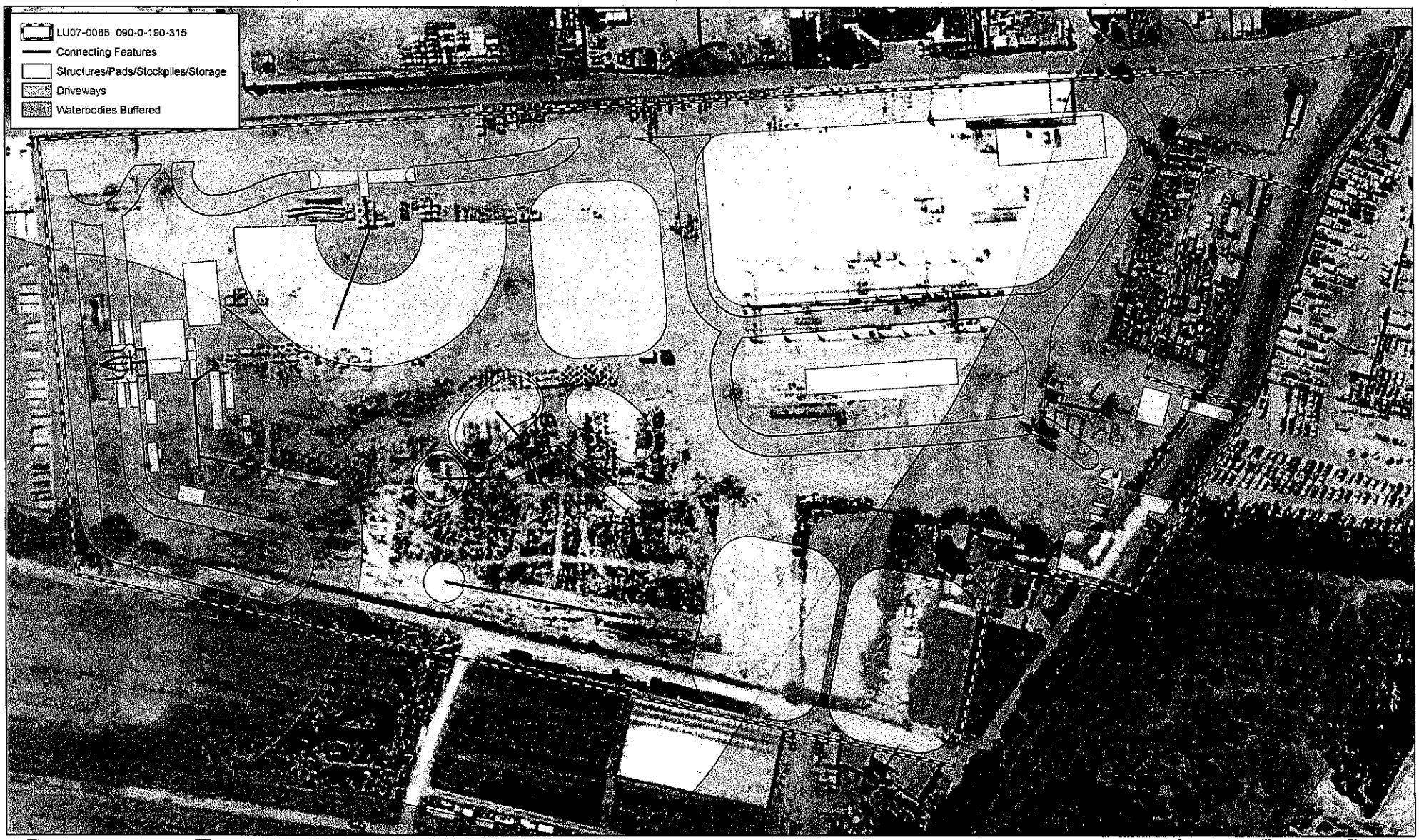

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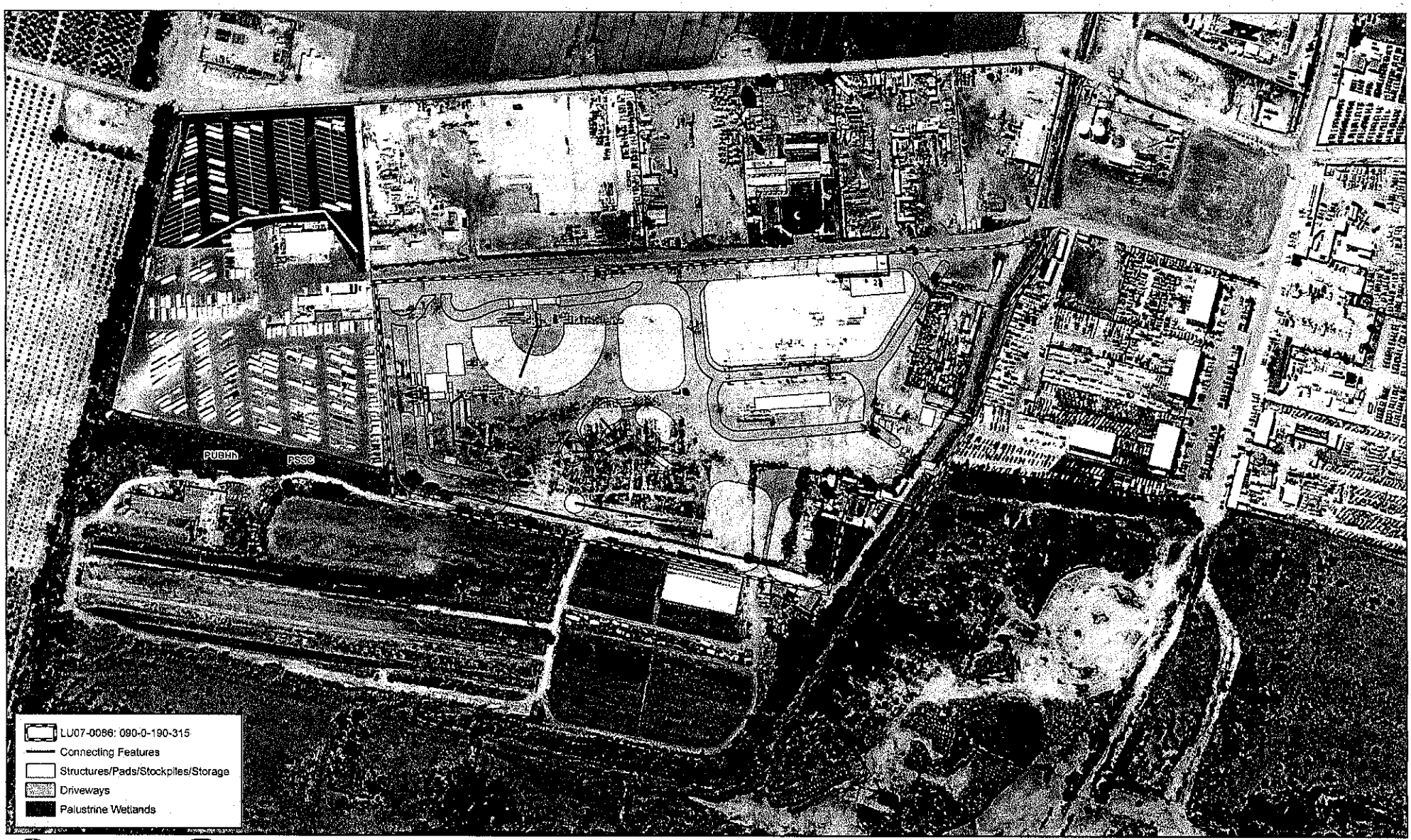
MAP 4: LU07-0095
090-0-190-315
WATERBODIES BUFFERED MAP

0 100 200 Feet



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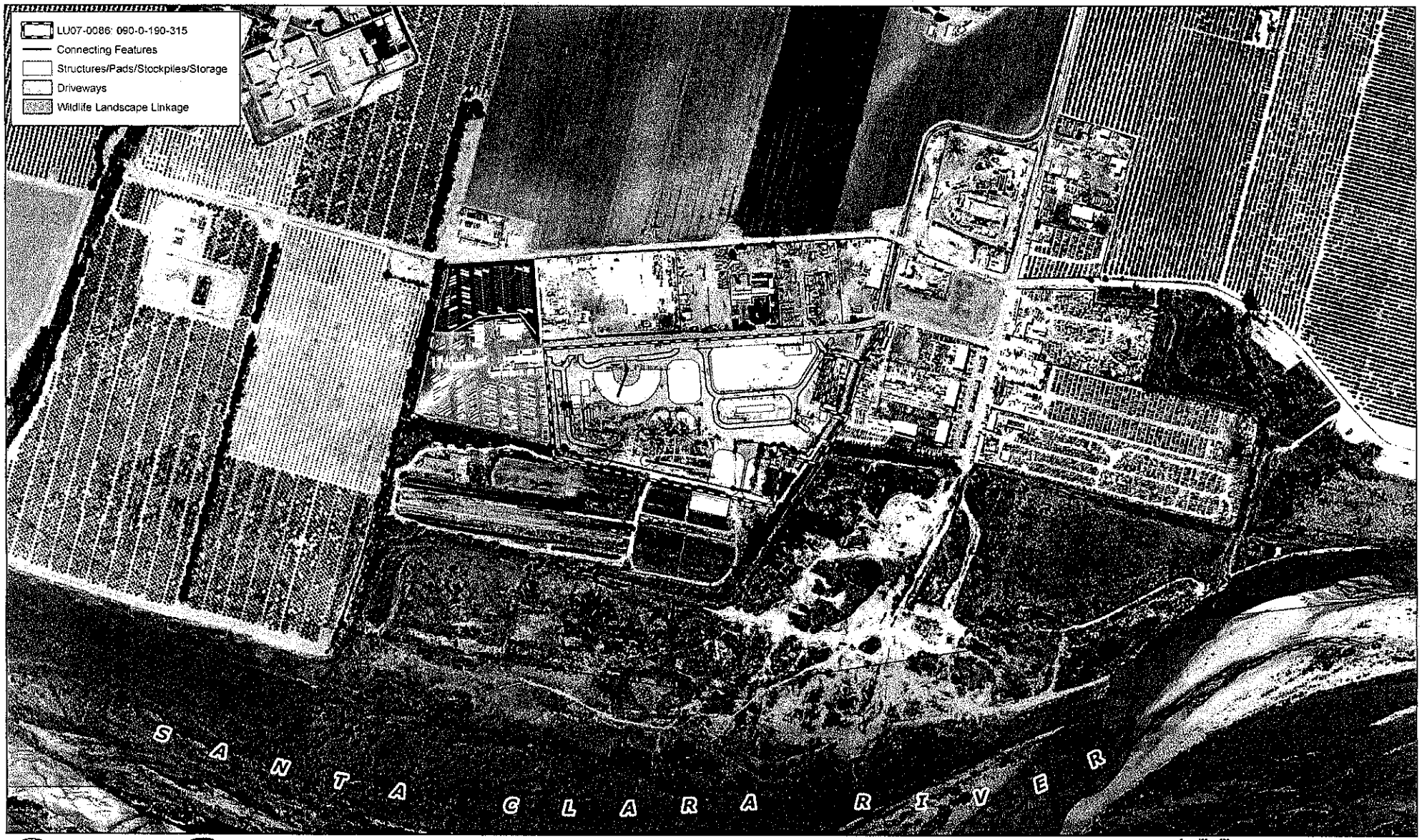
MAP 5: LU07-0095
090-0-190-315
WETLANDS MAP

0 200 400 Feet



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MAP 6: LU07-0095
090-0-190-315
WILDLIFE MOVEMENTS MAP

0 100 200 Feet

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ATTACHMENT B

Site Photographs

ENSR

PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG

Client Name:	Site Location:	Project No.
Ventura County Planning Division	Granite Construction Co., LU07-0086	07020-031

Photo No.	Date:
1	09/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

East

Description:

View of the Granite Construction Company Project Site. View shows stands of giant reed (*Arundo* sp.) along the southeast corner of the site.

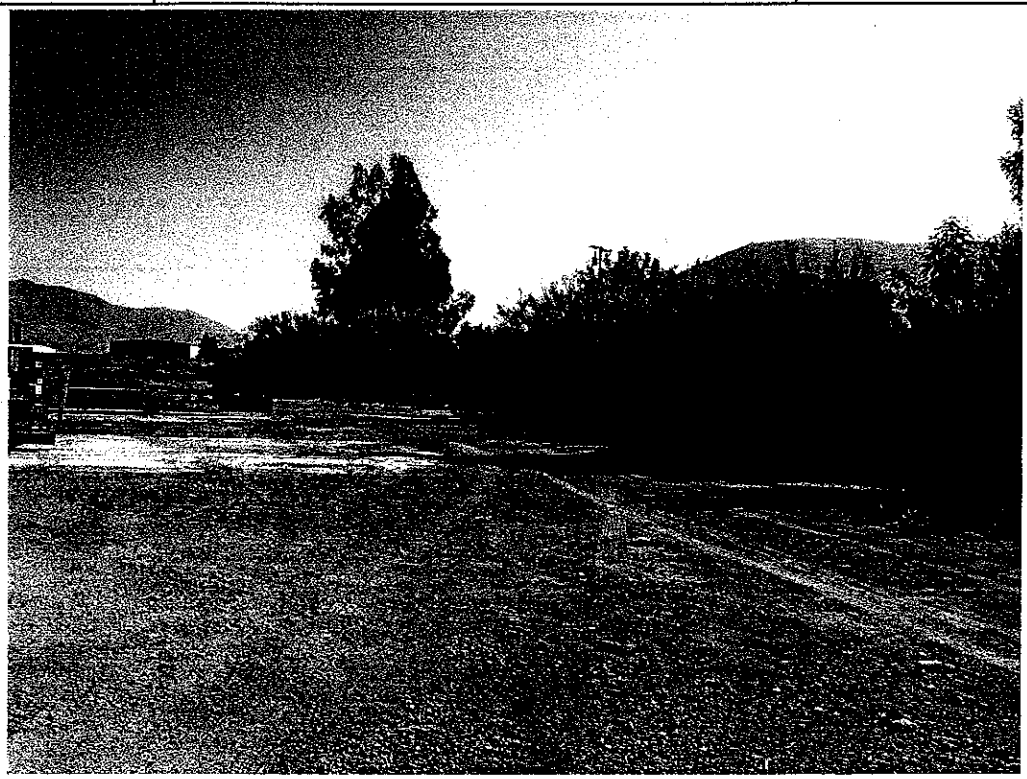


Photo No.	Date:
2	09/13/07

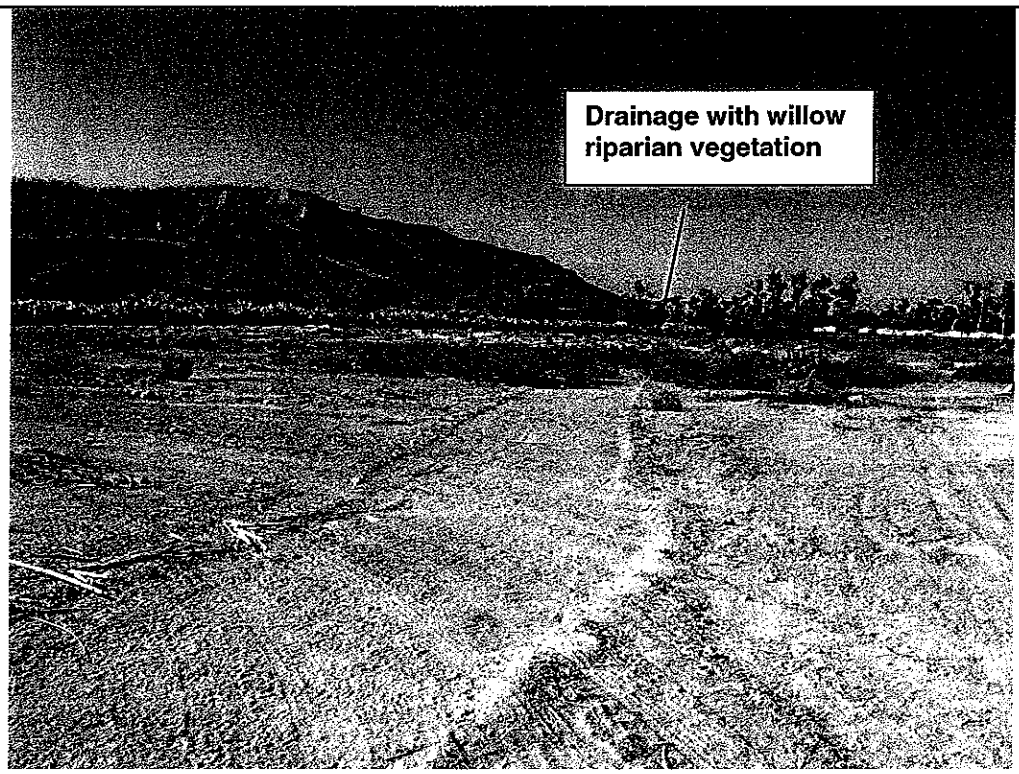
Direction Photo Taken:

Southwest

Description:

View of Project Site showing disturbed/ ruderal vegetation in the foreground.

A drainage extending south-southwest just beyond the Project Site boundary occurs. Dense stands of willow occur on both banks of this drainage.



ENSR

PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG

Client Name:	Site Location:	Project No.
Ventura County Planning Division	Granite Construction Co., LU07-0086	07020-031

Photo No.	Date:
3	09/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

West

Description:

View of prickly pear cactus along the southern boundary of the Project Site

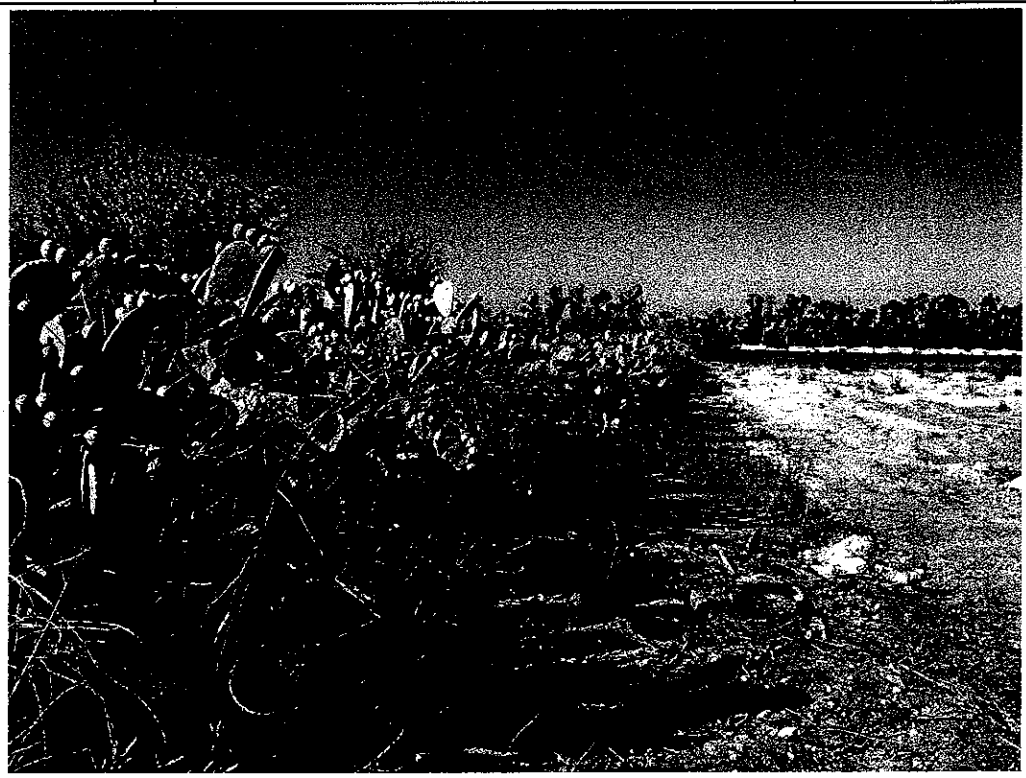


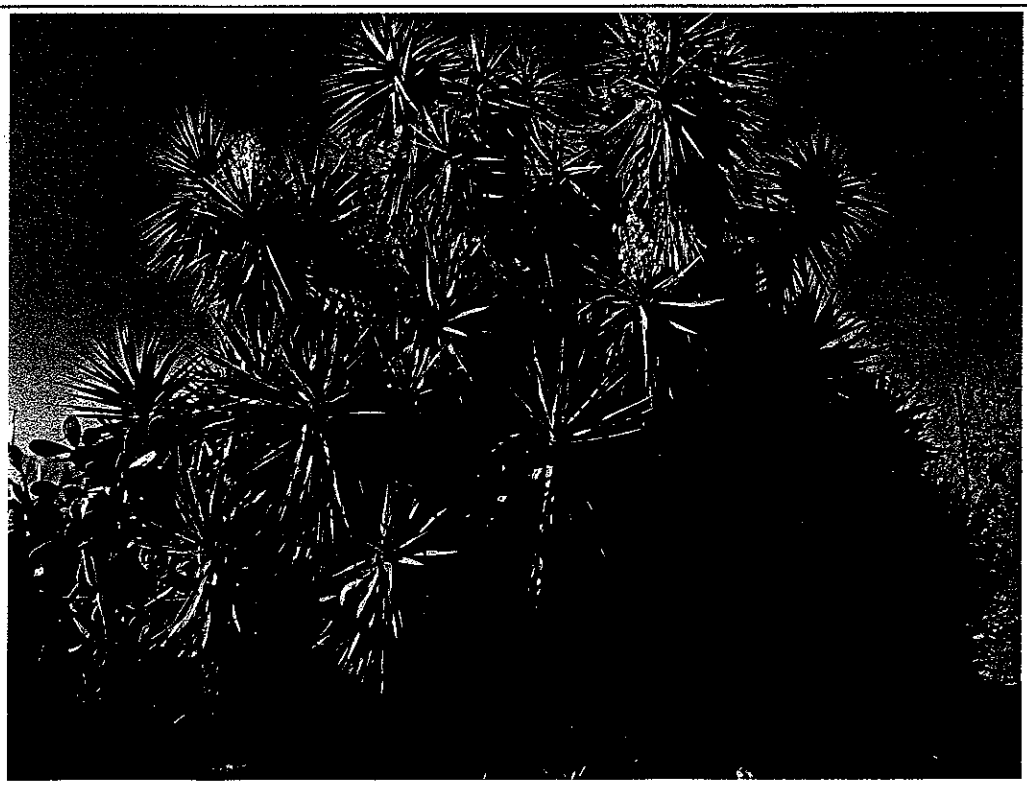
Photo No.	Date:
4	09/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

Southwest

Description:

View of prickly pear cactus and a non-native species of Yucca along the southern boundary of the Project Site. Willow trees can be seen at the right corner of the photo view.



ENSR

PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG

Client Name:	Site Location:	Project No.
Ventura County Planning Division	Granite Construction Co., LU07-0086	07020-031

Photo No.	Date:
5	9/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

Southwest

Description:

View of potential wetland area at the southwest corner of the Project Site. View shows a sand bar willow (*Salix exigua*) in the foreground and stands of arroyo willow (*S. lasiolepis*) in the background.

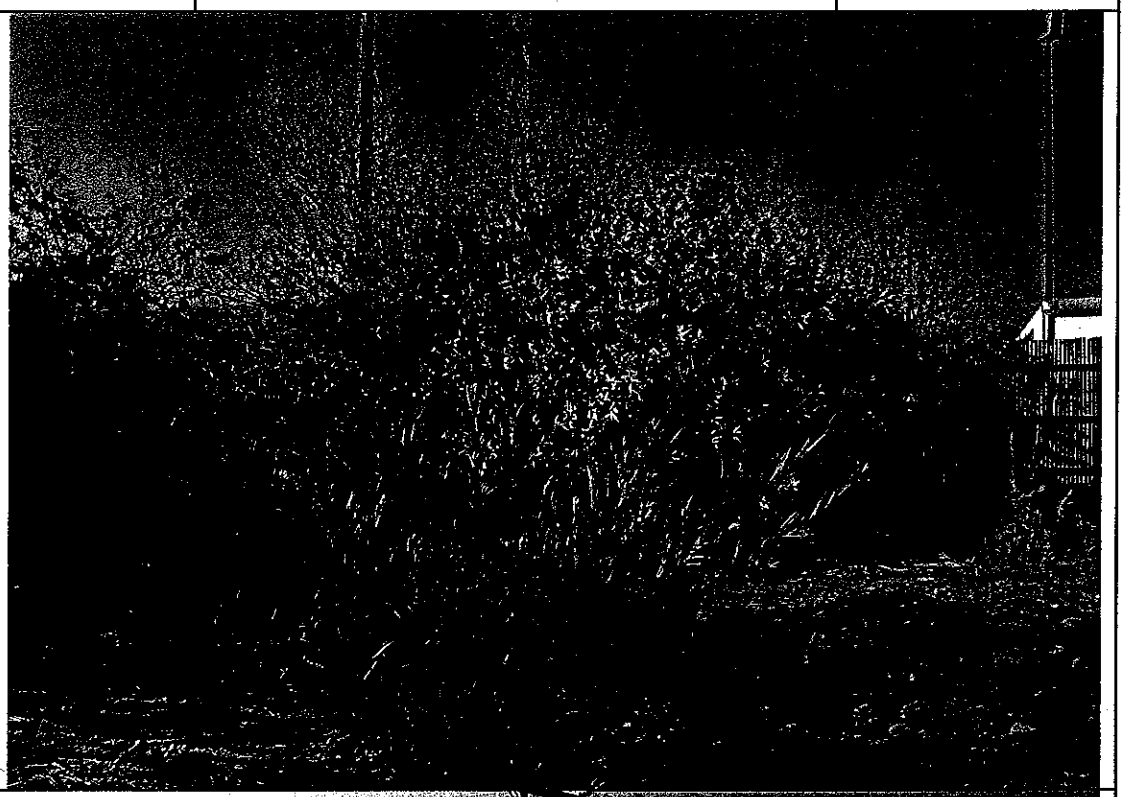


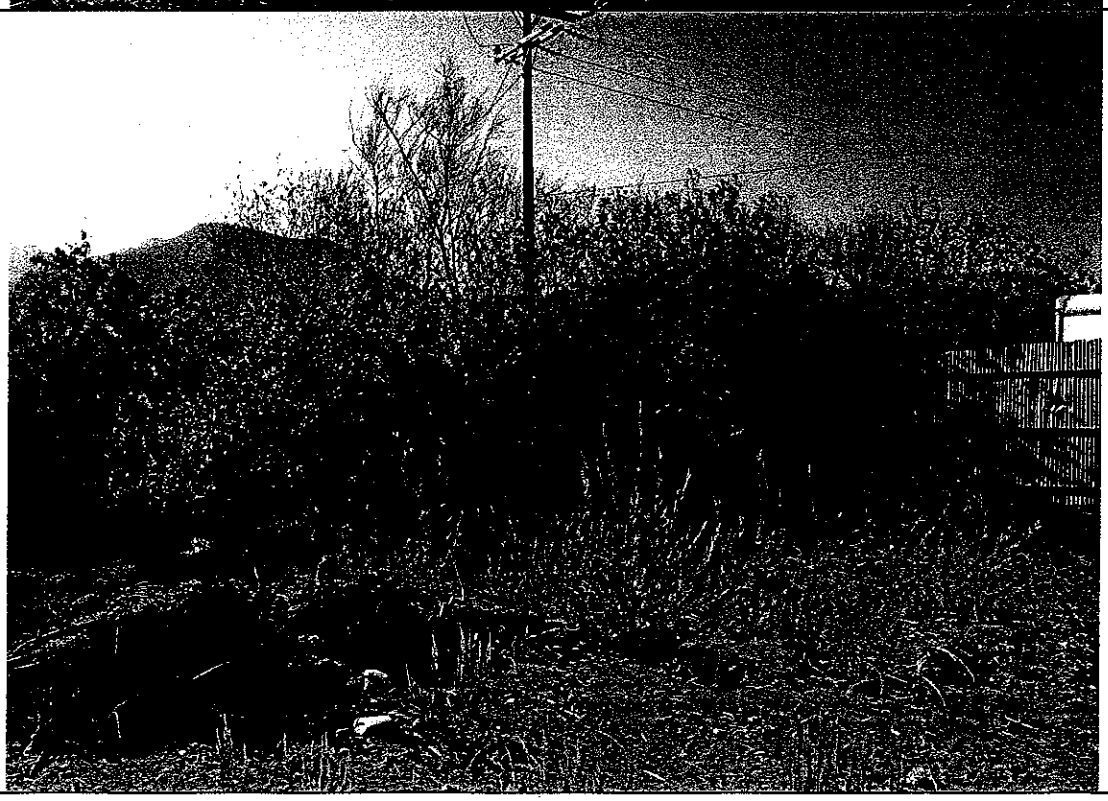
Photo No.	Date:
6	9/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

Southwest

Description:

Another view of the potential wetlands area in the southwest corner, showing stands of young sand bar willows and dense mature stands of arroyo willow associated with the drainage, in the background.



ENSR

PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG

Client Name:	Site Location:	Project No.
Ventura County Planning Division		

Photo No.	Date:
7	09/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

West

Description:

Stands of Arroyo willow. Photo taken outside of the Project Site boundary.

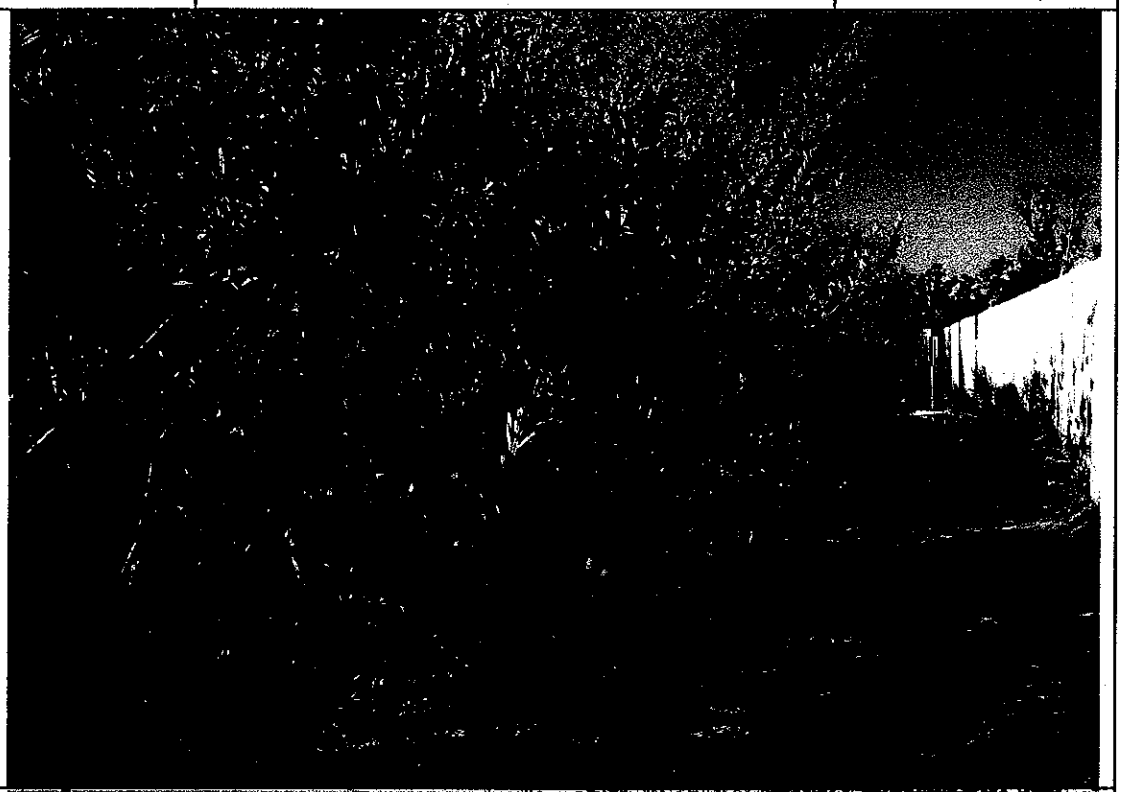


Photo No.	Date:
8	09/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

East

Description:

Another view of the Arroyo willow stands associated with the drainage. View looking towards the southwest corner of the Project Site.

ENSR

PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG

Client Name:	Site Location:	Project No.
Ventura County Planning Division	Granite Construction Co., LU07-0086	07020-031

Photo No.	Date:
9	9/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

South

Description:

View of the potential wetlands area the southwest corner of the Project Site. Stands of young sand bar willow seen in the foreground.

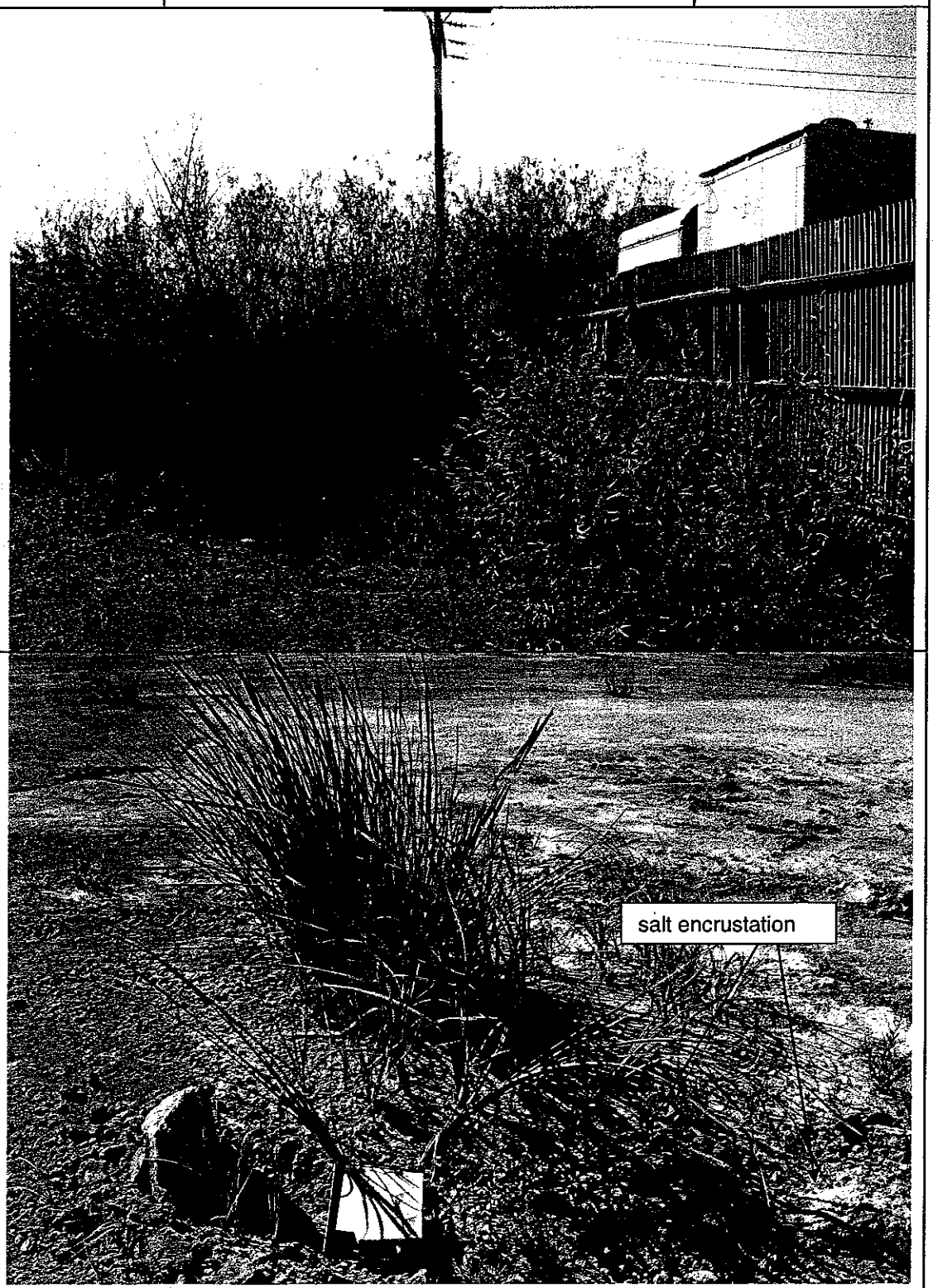
Photo No.	Date:
10	9/13/07

Direction Photo Taken:

North

Description:

Photo view shows a small potential "seep" wetland, occurring in the central portion of the Project Site. This small area (approximately 5 feet by 8 feet) is dominated by cattails (*Typha* sp.). This area exhibits surface saturation and a circular ring of salt encrustation, indicating saturation over time.



ATTACHMENT C

Vegetation Map

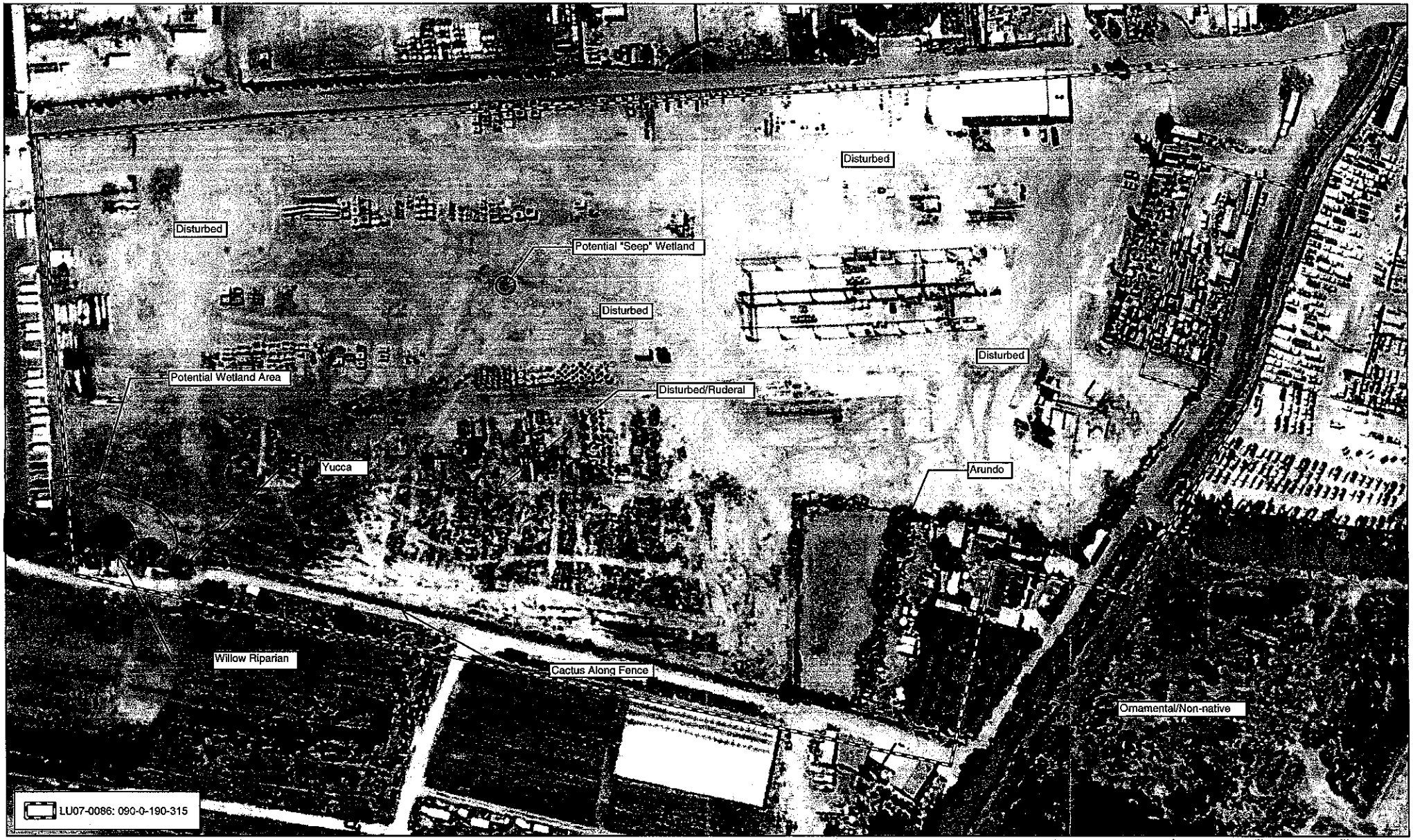


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FIGURE 1

090-0-190-315

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES MAP

0 100 200 Feet

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ATTACHMENT D

Biological Resources Assessment (BRA)

Biological Resources Assessment

Granite Construction Company
999 Mission Rock Road
Santa Paula, CA

June 26, 2007

Prepared for: Granite Construction Company
PO Box 6744
Santa Barbara, CA 93160
805-331-8196
Contact Person: Mr. Bruce McGowan

Prepared by: West Coast Environmental
and Engineering
1838 Eastman Avenue, Suite 200
Ventura, CA 93003
805-644-7976
Contact Person: Mr. Jared Varonin

GRA110

GRANITE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT
999 MISSION ROCK ROAD
SANTA PAULA, CALIFORNIA

June 26, 2007

Prepared by:
West Coast Environmental and Engineering
1838 Eastman Avenue, Suite 200
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 644-7976

Jared J. Varonin, AFP
Senior Staff Biologist

Carolyn Casavan
Senior Principal Engineer/CEO

Granite Construction Company
Biological Resources Assessment
999 Mission Rock Road
Santa Paula, California

June 26, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLES

APPENDICES

Granite Construction Company
Biological Resources Assessment
999 Mission Rock Road
Santa Paula, California

June 26, 2007

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A reconnaissance-level biological resource assessment and survey was conducted on May 25, 2007 as part of the preliminary assessment of potential impacts from the proposed installation of a portable stand-alone asphaltic concrete plant and asphalt recycling facility. The Proposed Project Site is located at 999 Mission Rock Road (Project Site) in a section of unincorporated Ventura County near the City of Santa Paula (Attachment 1, Figure 1). The Project Site is located in the southwest quadrant of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Santa Paula 7.5-minute quadrangle, 7.5 Minute Series. (Attachment 1, Figure 2).

The entire Project Site and adjacent areas were evaluated during the course of the reconnaissance survey for special-status plants and animals and a preliminary analysis of potential biological constraints was prepared to be considered in project permitting.

2.0 SURVEY METHODS

2.1 Species Considered In Review

This assessment defines special-status plants and animals as follows:

- Those listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as endangered, threatened, a candidate for listing or proposed for listing.
- Those listed by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) as endangered, threatened, fully protected, a candidate for state listing, rare or a species of special concern.
- Plant species classified by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) as List 1A: plants presumed extinct in California, List 1B: plants considered rare, threatened or endangered in California and elsewhere, List 2: plants considered rare, threatened or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere or List 3 plants consisting of species for which more information is needed to be properly categorized, and includes an assemblage of taxa that have been transferred from other lists or have been suggested to CNPS for consideration.
- Birds listed by the Audubon WatchList 2002 which lists species with the greatest conservation needs and those that are at the greatest risk.
- Those listed by the County of Ventura as locally important species.

The above lists are updated, at the minimum, on an annual basis.

2.2 Initial Review of Species Information

A standard nine-quadrangle California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB)/Rarefind 3 Report was generated for the Project Site (i.e., query of the USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle in which the Project Site is located as well as the eight surrounding topographic quadrangles: Ojai, Saticoy, Oxnard, Camarillo, Newbury Park, Moorpark, Fillmore, Santa Paula Peak and Santa Paula).

The CNDDB contains records for special-status species, as well as sensitive natural communities, which have been reported to the CDFG. The Rarefind 3 Report for the Project Site is provided in Attachment 3. Each of the species identified in the Rarefind 3 Report was evaluated in terms of its likelihood of occurrence within the Project Site. This evaluation considered the known distribution and habitat requirements of the species identified in the report and the following findings were prepared:

- **Known to Occur in Area** - the species has previously been documented on or immediately adjacent to the site.
- **High Potential to Occur in Area** - the species has not been documented on or immediately adjacent to the site, but it has been documented in similar habitat types within eight miles of the site. A high likelihood of occurrence is expected if surveys were to be conducted during appropriate times of the year.
- **Moderate Potential to Occur in Area** - the species has not been documented on or immediately adjacent to the site and has no known recent occurrences within eight miles of the site. However, the site contains some suitable habitat which should be investigated further.
- **Low Potential to Occur in Area** - the species has not been documented on or immediately adjacent to the site, and has no known recent or historical occurrences within eight miles of the site. The habitat requirements for the species are not well understood. The site contains little known suitable habitat for the species but lies within the known range of the species making it difficult to discount the possibility of the species occurring on-site.
- **No Potential to Occur in Area** - the known range and habitat requirements of the species are well understood. The site lies outside the known range of the species and does not contain any suitable habitat.

Table 2-1 presents the determination of the documented or potential for a special-status plant or animal species to occur on the Project Site.

Table 2-1 Observed or Potentially Occurring Special-Status Species on or near the Project Site.

FEDERAL	FE	Federally listed as Endangered
	FT	Federally listed as Threatened
	FC	Federal Species of Concern
STATE	SE	State listed as Endangered
	SR	State listed as Rare
	SC	CDFG Species of Special Concern
LOCAL	VC	Listed as a Ventura County locally important species.
AUDUBON WATCHLIST	AW	Species listed on the Audubon Watchlist 2002
CNPS	1A	Plants presumed extinct in California
	1B	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
	2	Plants rare, threatened or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
	3	Plants species for which more information is needed to be properly categorized, and includes an assemblage of taxa that have been transferred from other lists or have been suggested to CNPS for consideration.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
BIRDS				
Accipiter cooperii	Cooper's hawk	SC	Inhabits deciduous, mixed, or coniferous forests throughout the United States. Year round resident across California.	**Low potential.** No history of this species on or in the vicinity of the site. Habitat necessary for nesting and foraging not present on-site.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Agelaius tricolor	tricolored blackbird	SC/AW	Found as a resident species in annual grasslands, oak savannahs and freshwater marshes within the Central Valley and coastal California from Sonoma to San Diego Counties. Nesting habitat is typically emergent freshwater marshes, but may also include dense stands of willows, blackberries, thistles, nettles, or grasses. Grasslands or rangelands providing an abundant source of food (e.g., grasshoppers or butterfly larvae); often are within at least three miles of nest colonies.	**Moderate potential.** Although suitable nesting habitat is not present on-site, adjacent areas near the Santa Clara River may provide such locations. This species may be present within the project boundary, if only temporarily.
Aquila chrysaetos	golden eagle	SC	Inhabits open and semi-open areas from sea level to 11,800 feet in elevation. Habitat types include tundra, shrublands, grasslands, woodlands-brushlands, and coniferous forests. Primarily found in mountainous areas, but species also nest in wetland, riparian and estuarine habitats.	**Low potential.** None have been observed on-site, and no suitable habitat is present on-site, though this species has been known to forage along hillsides along Santa Paula Creek, upstream of the Project Site, north of the City of Santa Paula.
Athene cunicularia	burrowing owl	SC	This species is a year-long California resident of dry grasslands and desert habitats characterized by low-growing vegetation. Breeding habitats include native prairie, pasture, hay fields, fallow fields, road and railway right-of-ways, and some urban habitats.	**Low potential.** Species has not been observed on or in close proximity to the site. The habitat present is not ideal for this species, however species does visit this part of the coast during the winter.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus	western snowy plover	FT/SC/AW	Nests from early March to late September on coastal beaches with sandy or saline substrate. Nesting areas sparse or lacking vegetation. Ranges from Washington to southern Baja California, Mexico.	**No potential.** No suitable breeding or foraging habitat present on site. Species range limited to coastal beach areas.
Coccyzus americanus occidentalis	western yellow-billed cuckoo	FC/SE	Known to breed in most parts of California excluding parts of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Great Basin and the Colorado Desert. Nests in riparian forests, along the broad lower flood-bottom of larger river systems. Nests in riparian willow woodlands, often mixed with cottonwoods with lower story of blackberries, nettles or wild grapes.	**Low potential.** Ideal habitat not present on-site. Formerly occurred along the Santa Clara River several decades ago, but no longer known to occur in this region.
Dendroica petechia brewsteri	yellow warbler	SC	Once a resident of riparian areas throughout most of the state. Prefers willows, cottonwoods, aspens, sycamores, and alders for nesting and foraging. Also known to nest in montane shrubbery in open conifer forests.	**Low potential.** Suitable habitat is not present on site. Other nearby areas of the Santa Clara River may satisfy habitat requirements, resulting in the potential transitory presence of this species on the Project site.
Elanus leucurus	white-tailed kite	FC	Ranges throughout California coastal areas. Species prefers agricultural areas, grasslands, marshlands, savannas, and other open land or sparsely wooded areas. Forages over open grasslands and scrub.	**Moderate potential.** While this species may forage in the open lands to the east of the site and along the Santa Clara River, ideal habitat is not present on the site. The species has been observed on the south side of Santa Clara River east of the City of Santa Paula.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Empidonax traillii extimus	southwestern willow flycatcher	FE/SE/AW	Species inhabits dense riparian growths of willows and mulefat with a herbaceous understory.	**Low potential.** This species has not been identified in the vicinity of the Project site, however, suitable habitat likely exists along the Santa Clara River.
Eremophila alpestirs actia	California horned lark	SC	Ranges throughout much of California in areas of open sparse grasslands and forbs with an absence of trees and large shrubs. Will often form large flocks following breeding which forage and roost together.	**Low potential.** Suitable breeding habitat is not present and none have been identified on-site. However, species has been documented in an adjacent quadrangle and may occur in flocks as a winter visitor.
Gymnogyps californianus	California condor	FE/SE	A recently reintroduced species to the mountains of Ventura, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles counties. Individuals are known to be wide-ranging and have been seen as far as the Tehachapi and southern Sierra Nevada mountains. The species is strictly a scavenger and may travel up to 35 miles or more from roost sites in search of carrion. Most foraging occurs in open habitats that facilitate landings and takeoffs. Traditional roost sites are on cliffs or ledges, but snags and trees in old growth coniferous forest may also be used.	**Low potential.** Highly unlikely, but these birds have the ability to range over a vast area and they could occasionally fly over the site form their hatch sites in northern Ventura County.
Icteria virens	yellow-breasted chat	SC	Summer resident of riparian thickets of willow and other brushy tangles near watercourses. Forages and nests within ten feet of the ground.	**Moderate potential.** Suitable nesting habitat is not present on the Project Site but does occur nearby along the Santa Clara River.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi	Belding's savannah sparrow	SE	Endemic and perennial resident of Southern California and northern Baja California, Mexico coastal salt marshes. Typically nests in higher elevations of salt marsh pickleweed habitat.	**No potential.** Salt marsh habitat is not present on or near the site.
Polioptila californica californica	coastal California gnatcatcher	FT/SC/AW	The population of this species is limited to the coastal areas of California from Ventura and San Bernardino counties as far south as the Mexican border. They prefer coastal sage scrub habitats. During dry summers and wet winters they have been known to reside in chaparral areas.	**Low potential.** No coastal sage scrub or chaparral habitat is present on-site; however, the CNDDB reports an occurrence of the species 2.5 miles west of the City of Santa Paula.
Riparia riparia	bank swallow	ST	This species breeds in California from April to August and spends the winter months in South America. They are locally common only in restricted areas of California where sandy, vertical bluffs near streams, rivers, lakes or the ocean are available for the birds to dig their burrows and nest in colonies.	**Low potential.** While the last recorded sighting of this species occurred in 1976 in the Oxnard quad there is suitable habitat along the Santa Clara River. It is possible that the species may visit the site.
Sterna antillarum browni	California least tern	FE/SE	Migratory breeding colonies are present from late April – mid October along coastal marine and estuarine shores. Nests on barren to sparsely vegetated sites near water, usually on sandy or gravelly substrates. Feeds primarily in shallow estuaries or lagoons where small fish are abundant.	**Low potential.** Suitable nesting and foraging habitat not present on site; however it is possible that individuals may pass through as temporary visitors.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Vireo bellii pusillus	least Bell's vireo	FE/SE/AW	This species is most commonly present in cottonwood-willow habitats with moist bottomlands and is primarily a summertime resident of California.	**High potential.** Suitable habitat is present in the riparian scrub nearby along the Santa Clara River. This species has been documented in relatively close proximity to the site.
MAMMALS				
Antrozous pallidus	pallid bat	SC	Found as a resident in all desert, grassland, shrub, woodland, and forest habitats from sea level to approximately 6,000 feet. Day roosts are typically found in buildings, bridges, rock outcrops, mines, caves, and trees. Night roosts are generally provided by bridges, mines, and caves.	**Low potential.** While the last recorded sighting, near the Project Site, of this species occurred in 1942 in an adjacent quad there is suitable habitat along the Santa Clara River. It is possible that the species may visit the site.
Chaetodipus californicus femoralis	Dulzura pocket mouse	SC	Ranges in California from San Francisco Bay to the border of Mexico eastward to the Great Valley. Also inhabits the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains from Auburn to the Tehachapi Mountains. Species occupies a variety of habitats from sea level to 7,900 feet, including coastal scrub, chaparral, and grassland, but prefers habitats where brushy areas and grassland exist in close proximity.	**Low potential.** No records exist of this species being observed in the near vicinity of the Project Site and preferred habitat is not represented on-site.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Neotoma lepida intermedia	San Diego desert woodrat	SC	Associated with coastal southern California from San Diego to San Luis Obispo Counties. This species requires moderate to dense canopies and are particularly abundant in rock outcrops and rocky cliffs and slopes. This species eats buds, fruits, seeds, bark, leaves and young shoots of many plant species.	**Low potential.** Habitat present on-site is not ideal, though it is possible that this species may occasionally be present.
Taxidea taxus	American badger	SC	Historically this species was found throughout the state but is now rarely observed. Prefers drier open shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats with friable soils in which to forage for prey and dig burrows.	**Low potential.** None have been observed on-site and ideal habitat is not present but may be present in adjacent areas..
REPTILES				
Anniella pulchra pulchra	Silvery legless lizard	SC	This species is near-endemic to California and has historically been found throughout the state. This lizard prefers areas with sandy or loose loamy soils under the sparse vegetation of beaches, chaparral, pine-oak woodland, or sycamore, cottonwoods and oaks that grow on stream terraces. The preferred diet includes insect larvae, small adult insects and spiders.	**Moderate potential.** None were observed during the site assessment; however, suitable habitat does exist in areas near the Project Site.
Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri	coastal western whiptail	None	Species inhabits sparsely vegetated and sandy areas along gravelly arroyos or washes.	**Moderate potential.** None were observed during the site assessment; however, suitable habitat does exist in areas near the Project Site.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Emys (=Clemmys) marmorata pallida	southwestern pond turtle	SC	Historic range of western pond turtle extended throughout California in most Pacific drainages. This species requires a slow-water habitat below 6,000 feet with adequate basking areas and a suitable upland nesting site.	**Low potential.** None have been observed on-site, nor are any expected given the disturbed habitat and lack of water. Potentially present south of the site along the Santa Clara River.
Phrynosoma coronatum (blainvillei)	coast (San Diego) horned lizard	SC	This species inhabits a wide range of habitats throughout much of California south of Kern County into Baja, Mexico. It occurs in scrublands, grasslands, coniferous forests and broadleaf woodlands. The primary factors of these habitats are loose, sandy soils with abundant prey, open areas for basking, and dense shrubs for refuge.	**Low potential.** No record of species in the vicinity of the site and no coastal sage scrub or chaparral habitat present on-site. However, it is possible that this species may occur nearby areas.
Thamnophis hammondii	two-striped garter snake	SC	This species, with high aquatic tendencies, ranges in California from the vicinity of Salinas in Monterey County south to Baja, Mexico. It inhabits areas of permanent or intermittent streams with rocky bottoms bordered by thick riparian vegetation.	**Low potential.** None have been observed in the vicinity and suitable habitat is not present on-site. Potentially present in the riparian scrub along the Santa Clara River.
AMPHIBIANS				
Bufo californicus	arroyo toad	FE/SC	Species inhabits semi-arid regions near washes or intermittent streams, including valley foothills, desert riparian, desert washes, etc. Habitat also includes rivers with sandy banks, willows, cottonwoods, and sycamores and loose, gravelly areas of streams in the drier parts of its range.	**Low potential.** This species has not been identified in the vicinity of the project site, though it has been documented upstream in the Santa Clara River.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Rana aurora draytonii	California red-legged frog	FT/SC	Inhabits lowlands and foothills in or near permanent deep water sources with dense, shrubby or emergent vegetation. Requires 11 – 20 weeks of permanent water for larval development and must have access to aestivation habitat.	**Low potential.** Suitable habitat is not present on-site, although it may be present in other areas along the Santa Clara River.
Rana muscosa	mountain yellow-legged frog	FE/SC	Federal endangered listing refers to those populations in the San Gabriel, San Jacinto, and San Bernardino Mountains only. Generally found above 4,000 feet.	**No potential.** No record of species on or near the Project Site and suitable habitat not present on-site or nearby.
Spea (=Scaphiopus) hammondii	western spadefoot toad	SC	This species ranges from Shasta County to Baja, Mexico, exclusively west of the Sierran-desert range axis. Habitat includes grasslands and valley-foothill woodlands with vernal pools in which to breed and lay eggs.	**Low potential.** Suitable vernal pool habitat not present on-site. No species observed near Project Site however suitable habitat may be present in adjacent areas.
FISH				
Catostomus santaanae	Santa Ana sucker	FT/SC	Endemic to the Los Angeles basin south coastal streams. Habitat generalists, but prefer sand-rubble-boulder bottoms, cool, clear water, and algae.	**No potential.** Although this species has been identified in the Santa Clara River near the City of Santa Paula no aquatic habitat exists on the Project Site.
Eucyclogobius newberryi	tidewater goby	FE/SC	This species is distributed throughout coastal California in brackish environments. It inhabits fairly still, low salinity waters of shallow lagoons and the lower reaches of coastal streams.	**No potential.** Although this species has been identified in the Santa Clara River no aquatic habitat exists on the Project Site.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Gila orcutti	arroyo chub	SC	This species inhabits slow-moving sections of streams with muddy or sandy substrates throughout the Los Angeles Basin. Feeds heavily on aquatic vegetation and associated invertebrates.	**No potential.** Although this species has been identified in the Santa Clara River near the City of Santa Paula no aquatic habitat exists on the Project Site.
Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus	southern steelhead trout	FE/SC	The historical distribution for this species spans from northern Baja California up to parts of the Alaskan coast. Prefers waters with a temperature of 50°F to 60°F, a stable substrate ranging in depth from one to three inches and a water depth of one to two feet. As adults, this species prefers to reside in small to large pools.	**No potential.** Although this species has been documented in the Santa Clara River and Santa Paula Creek near the City of Santa Paula no aquatic habitat exists on the Project Site.
INSECTS				
Cicindela hirticollis gravida	sandy beach tiger beetle	None	Burrows in moist sand near the ocean, such as in swales behind dunes or beach above normal high tide. Presumed extant from most of its range, Marin to San Diego Counties.	**No potential.** Habitat absent from site. Only recorded sighting in the area was along the coast more than 15 miles from the Project site.
Coelus globosus	globose dune beetle	None	Species inhabits coastal sand dune habitat. Burrows beneath dune surface, most often beneath vegetation. Ranges from Sonoma County to Ensenada, Mexico.	**No potential.** Habitat absent from site. Only recorded sighting in the area was along the coast more than 15 miles from the Project site.
Danaus plexippus	monarch butterfly	None	Occupies winter roost sites along the California coast ranging from Northern Mendocino to Baja California, Mexico. Roost sites are located in wind	**Low potential.** Tree groves preferred for roosting are not present on-site. It is possible that this species may be

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
			protected tree groves usually consisting of eucalyptus, Monterey pine or cypress trees.	observed on the site in a transitory capacity.
Trimerotropis occidentaloides	Santa Monica grasshopper	None	Found on bare hillsides and along dirt trails in chaparral habitat. Exclusive to the Santa Monica Mountains.	**No potential.** Chaparral habitat and mountain topography preferred by species not present on the Project Site.
PLANTS				
Astragalus didymocarpus var. milesianus	Miles's milk-vetch	1B	Annual herb native to California. Inhabits coastal sage scrub habitats up to 297 feet with clay to sandy soils. Blooms March – May.	**Low potential.** Sage scrub habitat preferred by this species is absent from the site. It is unlikely that this species would be present.
Astragalus pycnostachyus var. lanosissimus	Ventura marsh milk-vetch	FE/SE/1B	Coastal salt marsh between 1 – 115 feet in elevation. This perennial herb historically inhabited much of coastal Southern California; now known at one site in Ventura County. Within reach of high tide or protected by barrier beaches, more rarely near seeps on sandy bluffs. Blooms June – October. Perennial herb.	**No potential.** Coastal salt marsh habitat required by this species is not present on-site. The nearest such habitat is over 15 miles away.
Atriplex serenana var. davidsonii	Davidson's saltscale	1B	Annual herb native to coastal sage scrub habitat near the coast in California. Ranges from sea level to 750 feet.	**No potential.** Coastal sage scrub habitat not present and the only CNDDB documentation is from an adjacent quad in 1971.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Calochortus plummerae	Plummer's mariposa lily	1B/VC	Perennial herb that inhabits coastal scrub, chaparral, valley and foothill grasslands, cismontane woodlands, and lower montane coniferous forests. Occurs on rocky and sandy sites from 200 – 1,500 feet in elevation, usually of granite or alluvial material. Fire follower, blooming from May – July.	**Low potential to occur.** Habitat requirements are not met on-site however may be present in adjacent areas.
Calochortus weedii var. vestus	late-flowered mariposa lily	1B/VC	This perennial herb inhabits chaparral, cismontane woodlands, and riparian woodlands from 900 – 3,000 feet. Blooms from June to August.	**Low potential to occur.** Species has not been identified on or near the site. Habitat requirements are not met within the Project Site and its lower elevation range is well above that of the Project Site.
Centromadia parryi ssp. Australis (a.k.a. Hemizonia parryi ssp. australis)	southern tarplant	1B/VC	Annual herb inhabits the margins of coastal salt-marshes and vernal pools and valley or foothill grasslands. Ranges in elevation from 0 – 1,400 feet. Blooms from May – November.	**Low potential to occur.** None were identified on or near the site. The preferred habitat is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site.
Cordylanthus maritimus ssp. maritimus	salt marsh bird's-beak	FE/SE/1B	Annual herb native to California in coastal strand and coastal salt marsh plant communities. Ranges in elevation from 0 – 95 feet and blooms from May – October.	**No potential.** Coastal salt marsh habitat required by this species is not present on-site.
Delphinium parryi ssp. blochmaniae	dune larkspur	1B/VC	This species is a perennial herb native to and endemic to California. This plant is usually found in plant communities consisting of coastal strands or chaparral in or near coastal dunes.	**Low potential.** Species typically found closer to the coast. Ideal habitat not-present on-site.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Delphinium umbraculorum	umbrella larkspur	1B/VC	Perennial herb native to California. Inhabits foothill woodlands from 1,300 – 5,300 feet. Flowers from April – June.	**No potential.** Project Site is well below the lower end of the elevation range for this species. Preferred habitat is not present on-site.
Dudleya blochmaniae ssp. blochmaniae	Blochman's dudleya	1B/VC	This species is found in coastal sage scrub, chaparral, coastal bluff scrubs and valley and foothill grassland habitats within the immediate influence of the coast. Ranges in elevation from 15– 1,485 feet and flowers from April – June.	**Low potential to occur.** None were identified on or near the site. The preferred habitat is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site.
Dudleya cymosa ssp. marcescens	marcescent dudleya	FT/SR/1B	Perennial herb inhabits chaparral habitats with volcanic soils ranging in elevation from 500 – 1,700 feet. Blooms from April – June.	**No potential.** Habitat requirements are not represented on-site. Suitable soils are absent and the Project Site lies below the lower end of the elevation range for this species.
Dudleya parva	Conejo dudleya	FE/1B	A perennial herb found in coastal sage scrub, valley and foothill grassland habitats with rocky, gravelly or clay soils. Species prefers to grow between 200 – 1,475 feet in elevation and flowers from May – June.	**No potential.** Suitable habitat is not present on-site. Suitable soils are absent. The Project Site lies just below the lower end of the elevation range for this species.
Dudleya verityi	Verity's dudleya	FT/1B	Perennial herb inhabits chaparral, coastal sage scrub, cismontane woodlands between 200 and 400 feet. Prefers volcanic rock outcrops. Blooms from May – June.	**No potential.** Suitable habitat is not present on-site. No occurrences on or adjacent to the Project Site have been reported to the CNDDB.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Eriogonum crocatum	Conejo buckwheat	SR/1B/VC	A perennial herb native to and endemic to California. This species is usually found between 200 – 1,900 feet in chaparral, valley grasslands, and/or coastal sage scrub habitats with volcanic outcrops and rocky areas. Blooms April – July.	**No potential.** Suitable habitat is not present on-site. No occurrences on or adjacent to the Project Site have been reported to the CNDDB.
Fritillaria ojaiensis	Ojai fritillary	1B	Habitat includes rocky sites in broadleaved upland forest (mesic), chaparral, and lower montane coniferous forests. Prefers 950 – 2,200 foot elevation range. Perennial herb that blooms from March – May.	**No potential.** Suitable habitat is not present on-site. Project Site not within elevation range.
Horkelia cantata ssp. puerile	mesa horkelia	1B	Perennial herb inhabits chaparral, cismontane woodlands and coastal scrub habitats with sandy/gravelly substrates. Ranges in elevation from 230 – 2,675 feet. Blooms from February – September.	**Low potential.** Suitable habitat not present on-site. Unlikely that species would be present.
Lasthenia globate ssp. coulter	Coulter's goldfields	1B/VC	This perennial herb inhabits coastal salt marshes, playas, vernal pools, and valley and foothill grasslands from 0 – 4,026 feet. Blooms February – June.	**Low potential.** Suitable habitat not present on-site. Unlikely that species would be present.
Lepechinia rossii	Ross' pitcher sage	1B	This is a relatively new species, endemic to the transverse ranges of southern California and can be found in chaparral habitat from 1,000 – 2,585 in elevation. One population is known to occur in the Topatopa Mountains of Ventura County.	**No potential.** Suitable habitat is not present on-site. Project Site not within elevation range.

Genus/Species	Common Name	Status	Habitats and Distribution in California	Potential to Occur on Project Site or in Area
Oxytheca Parishii var. abramsii	Abrams' oxytheca	1B/VC	As a dicot in the Asteraceae family this annual herb is native to California from 0 – 1312 feet in elevation. Flowers from January – April and is generally found in drying alkaline flats in chaparral, cismontane woodland and coastal scrub communities.	**Low potential.** Suitable habitat not present on-site. Unlikely that species would be present.
Pentachaeta lyonii	Lyon's pentachaeta	FE/SE/1B/VC	An annual herb found in chaparral, valley and foothill grasslands from 100 – 2,070 feet. Flowers from March – August.	**Low potential.** Suitable habitat not present on-site. Unlikely that species would be present.
Senecio aphanactis	rayless ragwort	2/VC	Annual herb native to California and Baja California, Mexico. Habitat includes foothill woodlands, northern coastal scrub and coastal sage scrub communities.	**Low potential.** Suitable habitat does not exist on Project Site but may occur in nearby areas. No historical occurrences have been reported in the area.
Texosporium sancti-jacobi	woven-spored lichen	None	Found in open chaparral areas from 1,000 – 2,180 feet. Associated with certain plant species or small mammal pellets.	**No potential.** Suitable habitat not present on-site. Project Site outside of elevation range.

2.3 Site Survey

A reconnaissance level survey for special-status plants and animals was performed by a West Coast Environmental (WCE) biologist on May 25, 2007. The Project location was mapped using a Trimble GeoXT Global Positioning System (GPS). This GPS unit uses a Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS) reaching an accuracy of 2 foot or better depending on satellite coverage. When necessary, waypoints were taken at several locations within the Project Site to identify major vegetation types and important landmark features. When possible, vegetation types were classified using Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf's *A Manual of California Vegetation* (1995) nomenclature and were mapped in the field.

The wildlife survey was conducted during the morning when most local species are active, involved in reproductive activities, and therefore more likely to be observed and documented. The plant survey was conducted throughout the Project Site in a manner that allowed potential identification of all observed species (either in the field or later, after collection of specimens and comparison, to appropriate taxonomic keys). All surveys were conducted on foot as random meander transects.

3.0 RESULTS OF THE BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

3.1 General

The Project Site occupies 18.34 acres in a mixed-use industrial area off Mission Rock Road. Access to the area is provided off the Santa Paula Freeway (126), at the Briggs Road exit. The site is occupied by Utility Vault (UV), a Division of Oldcastle Precast, Inc., a manufacturer of concrete vaults and related products for use in the telecommunications and utilities industries. Currently, the Site is used for inventory storage of concrete vaults, boxes, and related materials which are periodically transported to and from the Site to other locations. Surrounding land uses include light industrial to the north and west, agricultural to the south, and a vehicle storage facility to the east.

During the site visit on May 25, 2007, the Project Site consisted of dry, sandy, mostly disturbed areas with varying percentages (0% - 80%) of vegetative cover. The Project Site is depicted on Figure 3 in Attachment 1. Section 3.3 and 3.4 in this report discuss vegetation and wildlife present on the Project Site.

3.2 Topography

The USGS Santa Paula Topographic Quadrangle 1951 (Photo revised 1967) shows the Project Site to be relatively flat with an elevation of approximately 185 feet above mean sea level (msl).

3.3 Sitewide Vegetation and Vegetative Series

The vegetative series used in this report are those developed by Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf in *A Manual of California Vegetation* (1995). A series is derived from a general classification, such as a tree dominated forest. Within this forest, a more discrete classification can be characterized, such as a sycamore forest, or a California walnut forest. The series classification incorporates the most dominant plant species present in a defined location. Vegetative series present on the Project Site consist of the following:

3.3.1 Ruderal/Disturbed Areas

Disturbed areas occupy the entire Project Site. The dominant species in these areas were black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) and western ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*).

3.3.2 Sitewide Vegetation

The plant species observed during the survey are listed below:

Table 3-2 Plant Species Observed On-Site on May 25, 2007

Common Name	Scientific Name
Arroyo willow	*Salix lasiolepis*
Avocado tree	*Persea americana*
Black mustard	*Brassica nigra*
Bottlebrush	*Callistemon sp.*
Cactus	*Opuntia sp.*
California black walnut	*Juglans californica*
California Fan Palm	*Washingtonia filifera*
Castor bean	*Ricinus communis*
Cocklebur	*Xanthium strumarium*
Common vervain	*Verbena lasiostachys*
Coyote brush	*Baccharis pilularis*
Giant reed	*Arundo donax*
Datura (western jimson weed)	*Datura wrightii*
English plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
Horehound	*Marrubium vulgare*
Italian thistle	*Carduus pycnocephalus*
Lemon tree	*Citrus limon*
Mulefat	*Baccharis salicifolia*
Mayweed	*Anthemis cotula*
Ornamental ivy	*Unknowon sp.*
Peruvian pepper tree	*Schinus molle*
Quailbush	*Atriplex lentiformis*
Red-stem filaree	*Erodium cicutarium*
Sandbar willow	*Salix exigua*
Sourclover	*Melilotus indica*
Stinging nettle	*Urtica dioica*
Sweet fennel	*Foeniculum vulgare*
Tansy mustard	*Descurainia pinnata*
Telegraph weed	*Heterotheca grandiflora*
Tree tobacco	*Nicotiana glauca*
Western ragweed	*Ambrosia psilostachya*
Wild raddish	*Raphanus raphanistrum*

3.4 Site Wildlife

The reconnaissance-level survey for wildlife, conducted on May 25, 2007, resulted in the observation of 12 different species of wildlife on the Project Site. The small number of wildlife species noted on the Project Site can be attributed to the disturbed nature of the site and surrounding land uses. The species observed are listed below:

Table 3-3 Wildlife Species Observed on May 25, 2007.

Common Name	Scientific Name
BIRDS	
American robin	*Turdus migratorius*
California towhee	*Pipilo crissalis*
Common raven	*Corvus corax*
Downy woodpecker	*Picoides pubescens*
Great egret	*Ardea alba*
House finch	*Carpodacus mexicanus*
Red-tailed hawk	*Buteo jamaicensis*
Western scrub-jay	*Aphelocoma californica*
Western wood-pewee	*Contopus sordidulus*
White-crowned sparrow	*Zonotrichia leucophrys*
MAMMALS	
Audubon cottontail	*Sylvilagus audubonii*
Small burrowing mammals (s)	*Unknown sp.*
REPTILES	
Western fence lizard	*Sceloporus occidentalis*
(s) identified from sign of species (feces, tracks, nests, mounds, diggings, tail drags, bones, etc.)	

3.5 Special-Status Plant Species

No special-status plant species were observed on the Project Site during the plant survey. Based on the plant survey results, previous field experience, and examination of pertinent literature for the special-status plant species that have some potential to occur in the Project vicinity, there appears to be some potential (low, moderate or high) for eleven special-status plant species to occur on the Project Site. The status of each of these special-status plant species were evaluated in Table 2-1 above. The following descriptions, based on CDFG Species Accounts, USFWS Species Accounts and other cited sources, are provided for those plant species that were judged to have some potential to occur on the Project Site.

Miles's milk-vetch is considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere by the CNPS. This species is an annual herb, native to California, and is generally found in coastal sage scrub habitats with clay to sandy soils ranging from sea level to 4,026 feet in elevation. While no coastal sage scrub habitat exists on the project site it is likely to be found in nearby areas providing a low potential for occurrence.

The Plummer's mariposa lily is considered to be rare or endangered in California and elsewhere by the CNPS and is listed by the County of Ventura as a locally important species. This lily is a perennial herb, which flowers in May – July, and can be found in coastal sage scrub, chaparral and yellow pine forest from 300 – 5,580 in elevation. Habitat requirements are not met on-site however they may be present in adjacent areas. It is likely to be found in nearby areas providing a low potential for occurrence.

Late-flowered mariposa lily has no state or federal protection, but is included on the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) 1B list, which includes plants that the CNPS considers rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere. This perennial lily has inch-long petals

that are cream, deep yellow, purplish, or red-brown in color when in flower from June to August. It has been found growing in Monterey, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Ventura counties in a variety of habitats including chaparral, cismontane woodland, and riparian woodland. It can be associated with serpentine geology/soils and is typically found at elevations ranging from 900 to 3,000 feet. This species has not been identified on or near the site. Habitat requirements are not met within the Project Site and its lower elevation range is well above that of the Project Site providing only a low potential of occurrence.

Southern tarplant is considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere by the CNPS and as a locally important species by the County of Ventura. This species is an annual herb, native to California and to Baja California, and is usually found in salt-marshes, vernal-pools and often occurs in wetlands. The preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site providing a low potential of occurrence.

The dune larkspur is considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere by the CNPS and as a locally important species by the County of Ventura. This species is a dicot in the family *Ranunculaceae*. The dune larkspur is a perennial herb native and endemic to California. This plant is usually found in plant communities consisting of coastal strand or chaparral in or near coastal dunes. The preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site providing a low potential of occurrence.

Blochman's dudleya is considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere by the CNPS and as a locally important species by the County of Ventura. This species, flowering from April – June, is found in coastal sage scrub, chaparral, coastal bluff scrub, valley and foothill grassland within the immediate influence of the coast from 16 – 1,475 feet in elevation. The preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site providing a low potential of occurrence.

Mesa horkelia is considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere by the CNPS. This species is a perennial herb, native and endemic to California, preferring to inhabit chaparral, cismontane woodland and coastal scrub areas in elevation from 230 – 2,675 feet. The preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site providing a low potential of occurrence.

Coulter's goldfields is considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere by the CNPS and as a locally important species by the County of Ventura. This perennial herb inhabits coastal salt marshes, playas, vernal pools, and valley and foothill grasslands from 0 – 4,026 feet. Blooms February – June. The preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site providing a low potential of occurrence.

Abrams' oxytheca is considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere by the CNPS and as a locally important species by the County of Ventura. This annual herb blooms during June to August, and has been found in chaparral habitats on sandy or shale substrates. It is

known to occur in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. The preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site providing a low potential of occurrence.

Lyon's pentachaeta is federally and state listed as endangered. The CNPS considers this species rare or endangered in California and elsewhere and the County of Ventura lists it as a locally important species. This plant is an annual herb found in chaparral, valley and foothill grasslands from 100 – 2,070 feet in elevation. Lyon's pentachaeta can be found flowering from March – August. The preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site providing a low potential of occurrence.

Rayless ragwort is considered rare or endangered in California but is more common elsewhere and as a locally important species in the County of Ventura. A dicot in the family *Asteraceae*, this species is an annual herb native to California and Baja California. The species can be found growing in foothill woodland, northern coastal scrub and coastal sage scrub. The preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site. It is possible that this species may be present within areas adjacent to the Project Site providing a low potential of occurrence.

3.6 Special-Status Wildlife Species

No federal, state, endangered or threatened species were found during the survey. Although not observed or otherwise documented during the May 25, 2007 survey, 28 special-status wildlife species are considered to have some potential to occur on the Project Site. The following descriptions, based on CDFG Species Accounts, USFWS Species Accounts and other cited sources, are provided for those wildlife species that were judged to have some potential to occur on the Project Site.

The American badger is a CDFG Species of Special Concern. Historically this species was found over the entire State of California but it is now uncommon to find one in the wild. The habitat requirements for the American badger are simple in that they need a food source and open areas. The American badger will dig a large burrow in the soil and will often dig a new burrow each night during the warmer months. The diet of this species consists mainly of burrowing rodents such as gophers, ground squirrels, marmots and kangaroo rats. In the absence of those food types, they have been known to prey on mice, woodrats, reptiles, birds and their eggs, bees and other insects. This species has not been documented in the Project area and it is not expected to occur on the Project Site but historical occurrences in adjacent quadrangles provide for a low potential of occurrence.

The arroyo toad is historically found on sand and gravel terraces and overflow pools located adjacent to larger Coast Range streams and rivers from the upper Salinas River system (San Luis Obispo County) to the San Diego River system (San Diego County). The species has also been found at six locations on desert slopes. While no aquatic resources exist on the Project Site this species has been documented upstream in the Santa Clara River. Given the proximity of the Project Site to the Santa Clara River there is a low potential of occurrence for this species.

Bank swallows are state listed as threatened. This species breeds in California from April to August and spends the winter months in South America. They are locally common only in restricted areas of California where sandy, vertical bluffs near streams, rivers, lakes or the ocean are available for the birds to dig their burrows and nest in colonies. While the last recorded sighting of this species occurred in 1976 in the Oxnard quad there is suitable habitat along the Santa Clara River providing a low potential of occurrence.

Burrowing owls are listed as a CDFG Species of Special Concern. Once a fairly common species, its numbers have been drastically reduced in recent decades. The owl is typically a year-long resident of dry grasslands and desert habitats. This species of owl occupies small rodent or reptile burrows for cover, roosting, and protection from extreme temperatures or weather. The owl is an opportunistic feeder with a diet consisting of insects, small mammals, reptiles, and some small birds. This species will hunt during day or night by air, and by hopping to its prey on the ground. The preferred habitat for this species does not exist on the Project site. The burrowing owl may be a temporary winter visitor of the site providing a low potential for occurrence.

The California condor is state and federally listed as endangered. The last wild condors were captured in 1987 and taken into captivity to halt the precipitous decline of the species (fewer than 20 remaining individuals). The condors successfully reproduced in captivity and those offspring, as well as some of the originally captured condors, have been slowly reintroduced into the wild since 1992. The first California condors born in the wild in more than 15 years were hatched during the last two years, but did not survive due to the inexperience of the nesting pairs. However, indications are that successful recruitment will likely occur as these and other pairs gain additional experience. The reintroductions in California have been focused on an area in northeastern Ventura County that includes the Sespe Condor Sanctuary.

The species, which is considered a permanent resident of the semi-arid, rugged mountain ranges surrounding the southern San Joaquin Valley (i.e., Coast Range from Santa Clara County south to Los Angeles County, Transverse Ranges, Tehachapi Mountains, and southern Sierra Nevada), travels over a wide area when foraging. The species is known to regularly fly 35 miles or more from roost sites and occasionally travels even greater distances. Individuals that normally confine their activities to Ventura and Santa Barbara counties have occasionally been observed over the southern Sierra Nevada. The California condor roosts on cliffs and in large trees and snags in remote areas. Nest sites have historically been observed in caves, crevices, behind rock slabs, or on large ledges on high sandstone cliffs. The nest is often surrounded by brush. The first California condors produced in the wild in more than 15 years were hatched during the last two years, but did not survive due to the inexperience of the nesting pairs. In addition, one nestling was found to have died from the ingestion of broken glass, bottle tops, and other items that were littered in the nest cave (Baumgardner, 2003). However, indications are that successful recruitment will likely occur as these and other pairs gain additional experience.

The species was not observed nor is expected to occur on the Project site. Given that the species is wide-ranging, and occurs in the mountains north of the Project site, its presence cannot be discounted, though the probability that it will occur on site is extremely low.

The California horned lark, a California species of special concern, occurs as a nesting species in coastal California from Sonoma County south to San Diego County. It also occurs as a nesting species in the central Coast Range, San Joaquin Valley, and adjacent foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Preferred nesting habitat for the taxon is generally level or rolling low, sparse grassland or open shrub vegetation types without a woody overstory. The taxon has been recorded nesting in open shrub communities elsewhere in California. The taxon breeds from March through July with peak activity in May. Nest territories vary in size from 1 to 13 acres (Zeiner et al., 1990). Horned larks are not expected to nest on the Project Site given the abundance of more ideal nesting habitat in the vicinity (i.e., grassland). Therefore, they cannot be completely discounted from occurring on site.

The California least tern is federally and state listed as endangered. This species prefers to occupy areas along marine and estuarine shores. They primarily feed in shallow estuarine waters or lagoons with a preferred diet of small fish. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur on the Project site. Given the proximity of the Project Site to the Santa Clara River and coastline this species has a low potential for occurrence as a transitory visitor.

California red-legged frogs, federally listed as threatened and state listed as a California species of special concern, inhabits quiet pools of streams, marshes, and occasionally ponds occurring west of the Sierra Nevada and along the Coast Ranges of the entire California coast. This species is generally found below 3,936 feet in elevation. Adult frogs have a diet consisting mostly of aquatic and terrestrial insects, crustaceans and snails as well as worms, fish, tadpoles and smaller frogs. Suitable habitat for this species does not exist on the Project Site but does exist nearby along the Santa Clara River. However, due to the documented sightings in the Santa Clara watershed, it is given a low potential of occurrence.

The coast (San Diego) horned lizard is a CDFG species of special concern. This lizard is found in a wide range of habitats, including coastal sage scrub, chaparral, grassland, riparian and oak woodlands, and coniferous forest. The primary feature of its habitat is loose or sandy soils in which it can bury itself at night or during winter hibernation. It also requires an abundance of prey, primarily ants, and adequate open space for basking as well as low ground cover for refuge. In California, this species ranges from the Transverse Ranges in Kern, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties south into Baja, Mexico. The numbers of coast horned lizards have been greatly reduced due initially to collection for the pet trade and subsequently destruction of habitat for agriculture and urbanization. The preferred habitat for this species does not exist on the Project site, however, some areas, while not ideal, may sustain some individuals providing a low potential for occurrence.

The Coastal California gnatcatcher is federally listed as a threatened species, listed as a species of special concern by the CDFG and is on the 2002 Audubon Watchlist. The proposed rule for the designation of critical habitat from the Federal Register states the coastal California gnatcatcher typically occurs in or near sage-scrub habitat, which is a broad category of vegetation that includes the following plant communities: Venturan coastal sage scrub, Diegan coastal sage scrub, maritime succulent scrub, Riversidean sage scrub, Riversidean alluvial fan scrub, southern coastal bluff scrub, and coastal sage-chaparral scrub. Coastal California gnatcatchers also use chaparral, grassland, and riparian habitats where they occur in proximity to sage-scrub. These non sage-scrub habitats are used for dispersal and foraging. The coastal California gnatcatcher generally avoids dense chaparral, and is rarely found in habitats that do

not support California sagebrush. The breeding season for species occurs between February and July. As this species is non-migratory, they remain in the same areas during the winter months, expanding their summer home range outward as the summer season arrives. The diet of the California gnatcatcher consists almost exclusively of insects which they glean from vegetation in the understory. Due to the lack of suitable habitat, this species is not expected to occur on the Project Site. Suitable habitat likely exists in surrounding areas, however, providing a low potential for occurrence.

Coastal western whiptail, although not federally or state listed, appears in the CNDDB. This species is associated with arid coastal sage scrub and chaparral communities. This species is often found in open sandy areas with abundant ant populations. While the preferred habitat for this species is not present on the Project Site it does exist in nearby areas giving it a moderate potential of occurrence.

Cooper's hawks are a CDFG species of special concern and a breeding resident throughout most of the wooded portion of California. This hawk breeds in the southern Sierra Nevada foothills, New York Mountains., Owens Valley, and other local areas in southern California. It is most often found from 0 – 9,000 feet in elevation in dense stands of live oak, riparian deciduous or other forest habitats near water. This species relies on small birds (especially young during nesting season), small mammals, reptiles and amphibians as its major food source. The hawk hunts in broken woodland and habitat edges, catches prey in the air, on the ground, and in vegetation. This species has been known to dash suddenly from perches in dense cover and pursue prey in the air through branches. Sometimes this species can be found running prey down in dense thickets. The Cooper's hawk uses cover to hide, attack, and approach prey. They will also soar and make low, gliding search flights. Nesting occurs from March through August with peak activity occurring from May through July. Suitable habitat for this species does not exist and it is not expected to occur on the Project site, however, it is known to be a year round resident across California and therefore has a low potential to occur on the Project site.

Dulzura pocket mice are listed as a CDFG species of special concern. This species occupies a variety of habitats from sea level to 7,900 feet, including coastal scrub, chaparral, and grassland, but prefers habitats where brushy areas and grassland exist in close proximity. It ranges in California from the San Francisco Bay to the border of Mexico eastward to the Great Valley. This species also inhabits the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains from Auburn to the Tehachapi Mountains. Suitable habitat for this species does not exist on the Project site, however, it may occur in nearby areas near the Project Site resulting in a low potential for occurrence.

The golden eagle is listed as a CDFG species of special concern and occurs as an uncommon breeding resident throughout the state with the exception of the valley floor of the Central Valley. The species is fully protected within California. As such, the species cannot be taken at any time and permits authorizing take cannot be issued. Nest sites are generally located on secluded cliffs, in large trees, in rugged, open canyons, or on escarpments. Nesting occurs from January - August with peak activity occurring during March through July. Nest territories have been documented ranging in size from 22 to 74 square miles (Bumgardner, 2003) where size is probably a function of prey density and the openness of the habitat surrounding the nest site (which affects prey availability during hunting). Although the species was not observed on

or in the vicinity of the Project site, it has some potential, albeit low, to occur on the Project Site given the presence of suitable nesting and foraging habitat in the surrounding mountains.

The least Bell's vireo is federally and State listed as endangered and appears on the 2002 Audubon Watchlist. Individuals have been reported to the CNDDB as recent as 2003 in and near the Santa Clara River watershed in Ventura County (CDFG, 2003). The least Bell's vireo is a small, olive-grey migratory songbird that nests and forages almost exclusively in riparian woodland habitats. This species is a summer resident of cottonwood-willow forest, oak woodland, shrubby thickets and dry washes with willow thickets at the edges. The cottonwood-willow habitat is the more commonly used habitat (CDFG, 2000). They prefer areas of dense vegetation with well-developed over and understories. The diet of the least Bell's vireo consists almost exclusively of insects which they glean from vegetation in the understory. This species generally migrates from its winter home in Baja California to its southern California breeding grounds in mid to late March. In general they appear to depart from breeding areas by the third week of September. The vireo is threatened by loss and degradation of its habitat through human and human-induced activities and by nest parasitism of the brown-headed cowbird (*Molothrus ater).* The riparian habitat nearby along the Santa Clara River provides excellent habitat for this species. Least Bell's vireo has been documented in areas just upstream from Project Site providing for a high potential of occurrence.

The monarch butterfly is neither federally or state listed, however, it does appear in the CNDDB search results. This species occurs throughout the lower elevations of California north of the desert regions during the spring and summer. The species lays its eggs on various species of plants in the milkweed family (i.e., Asclepiadaceae). The larvae then develop while feeding on the milkweed plant, pupate, and eventually emerge as adult butterflies. Adult monarchs are migratory and during the fall many individuals migrate to the coast of central and southern California where individuals eventually congregate in wintering masses that may include thousands of individuals roosting in wind-protected groves of trees. Most wintering areas are located within a few miles of the coast and occur in groves of *Eucalyptus*, *Pinus*, or *Cypress* sp. While this species has not been documented on-site, the eucalyptus trees present in nearby areas provide for a low potential of occurrence.

The Pallid bat, listed as a CDFG species of special concern, is found as a resident in all desert, grassland, shrub, woodland, and forest habitats from sea level to approximately 6,000 feet. Day roosts are typically found in buildings, bridges, rock outcrops, mines, caves, and trees. Night roosts are generally provided by bridges, mines, and caves. While the last recorded sighting, near the Project Site, of this species occurred in 1942 in an adjacent quad there is suitable habitat along the Santa Clara River. It is possible that the species may visit the site providing for a low potential of occurrence.

The San Diego desert woodrat, a California species of special concern, inhabits virtually all of southern California, with ranges extending northward along the coast to Monterey Co., and along the Coast Range to San Francisco Bay. The preferred habitat types for this species include Joshua tree, pinyon-juniper, mixed and chamise-redshank chaparral, sagebrush, and most desert habitats. The woodrat is most abundant in rocky areas with Joshua trees. This species is found from 0 – 8,500 feet in elevation. The diet of the woodrat consists of buds, fruits, seeds, bark, leaves, and young shoots of many plant species. In coastal scrub habitats, they prefer live oak, chamise, and buckwheat as food plants. Habitat for this species, although

not ideal, may occur in limited areas near the Project Site providing a low potential for occurrence.

Silvery legless lizards are a CDFG Species of Special Concern. This lizard is near-endemic to California and has historically been found throughout the state. This lizard prefers areas with sandy or loose loamy soils under the sparse vegetation of beaches, chaparral, pine-oak woodland, or sycamore, cottonwoods and oaks that grow on stream terraces. The preferred diet includes insect larvae, small adult insects and spiders. Marginally suitable habitat may occur near the Project Site. None were observed during the site assessment; however, suitable habitat does exist in areas near the Project Site providing a moderate potential of occurrence.

Southwestern pond turtles are listed as a CDFG species of special concern. In California, this turtle's historic range included most Pacific drainages from the Oregon to the Mexican border; however, studies have indicated that very few viable populations continue to exist in southern California. This marked reduction in population is due in part to alteration of habitat by human interference such as agriculture and cattle grazing as well as predation and competition from introduced species such as bullfrogs (*Rana spp.*), bass (*Micropterus spp.*), and sunfishes (*Lepomus spp.*). This species' preferred habitat is comprised of slow-water habitat in permanent or nearly permanent bodies of water with suitable above-water and aquatic basking sites. Turtles seem to proliferate in areas where abundant basking sites are available. The presence of adequate nesting sites is also required. Nests are typically dug on unshaded slopes with a clay or silt-rich substrate. This species has not previously been documented on the Project Site but given its proximity to the Santa Clara River there is a low potential for occurrence.

The Southwestern willow flycatcher is federally and state listed as endangered and appears on the 2002 Audubon Watchlist. The preferred habitat for the flycatcher consists of dense riparian habitats along rivers, streams or wetlands. The vegetation is usually dominated by willows or other medium sized trees. This species has been known to nest in tamarisk (*Tamarix sp.*) dominated habitats when trees are not present. Flycatchers are insectivores hunting from the air or gleaning for prey in the foliage. Due to the lack of suitable habitat this species is not expected to occur on the Project Site however suitable habitat in the surrounding area may result in occasional sightings of this species resulting in a low potential to occur.

Tricolored blackbirds are a federal species of concern and a California species of special concern. The species historically nested in extremely large colonies ranging in size from 50 to more than 10,000 nests. Most historic nests were located in cattail or tule marsh. Many colonies have been found to occur in willow thickets, blackberry or wild rose thickets, thistles, or nettles. In addition, a small number of colonies have been found in giant cane, safflower, alfalfa, oats, tamarisk, saltbush, elderberry/poison oak riparian, and lemon orchards (Beedy et al., 1991). These latter nesting habitats are considered to be less suitable for the species since they do not provide significant protection from nest predators (an important factor for colonial nesters). Important criteria for the selection of nesting sites and successful recruitment of young include a nearby source of water and abundant concentrated supply of insects (e.g., grasshoppers or butterfly larvae). These latter resources are typically within less than four miles of the colony (Orians, 1961). Suitable habitat for this species exists near the Project Site along the Santa Clara River therefore providing a moderate potential to occur as a temporary visitor.

The Two-striped garter snake is a CDFG species of special concern. This snake's range in California reaches from the Salinas Valley and Diablo Range of Monterey and Kern counties, respectively, south to the Mexican border. It has also been found in several perennial desert slope streams in Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties, as well as on Santa Catalina Island. This species prefers to inhabit perennial and intermittent streams and man-made aquatic habitats with rocky or sandy beds, provided that they are bordered by willow thickets or other dense vegetation. Suitable habitat for this species does not exist on the Project Site but does exist nearby along the Santa Clara River providing a low potential of occurrence.

Western spadefoot toads, a California species of special concern, is considered to be near endemic to California and ranges from the vicinity of Redding, Shasta County, southward into northwestern Baja California, Mexico. It generally occurs from 0 – 4,470 feet in elevation. In California, the known range of the spadefoot toad is entirely west of the Sierran-desert range axis. This species is almost solely terrestrial as it generally only enters the water to breed. The toad requires, at the minimum, temporary pools lasting for at least three weeks to allow tadpoles to metamorphose successfully. Pools are sought out that are absent of fish and other wildlife that may prey on newly laid eggs and hatched tadpoles. The food source for the toad consists mostly of crickets, butterflies, beetles, flies, ants, and earthworms. Suitable habitat for this species was not observed during the May 25, 2007 survey. The proximity of the Project Site to the Santa Clara River, which may provide suitable habitat, gives the species a low potential of occurrence.

The western yellow-billed cuckoo is a federal species of concern and listed as state endangered. The cuckoo can often be found nesting in walnut and almond orchards; however, its historical nesting habitat consists of cottonwood and willow riparian forests. This species prefers to forage on grasshoppers, caterpillars and other large insects. Ideal habitat is not present on the Project Site. This species formerly occurred along the Santa Clara River several decades ago, but is no longer knows to occur in this region providing it with only a low potential of occurrence.

White-tailed kite is a California fully-protected species (under paragraph 3511 of the California Fish and Game Code) and a federal species of concern. As such the species cannot be taken at any time and permits authorizing take cannot be issued. The species is resident throughout the Central Valley and much of coastal California. This species' preferred habitat types consist of lowland grasslands, agriculture fields, wetlands, oak woodlands, savannah habitats and riparian zones associated with open areas. The kite prefers to hunt from the air and can generally be found foraging during the early morning and late afternoon or early evening hours. White-tailed kites forage in open grasslands, meadows, agricultural lands, and emergent wetlands where they feed almost exclusively on small, diurnal rodents (e.g., voles [*Mocrotus* ssp]). Foraging has been documented to occur within an area that is up to 1.9 square miles in size (Warner and Rudd, 1975). In addition, the species seldom hunts more than 0.5 miles from the nest site during the breeding season (Hawbecker, 1942) which extends from February to October (peak occurs from May to August). Nest sites are typically located in the tops of dense trees where the nest can be concealed and protected from other birds (e.g., great horned howls [*Bubo virginianus*], American crows [*Corvus brachyrynchos*], yellow-billed magpies [*Pica nuttali*], etc.). Due to the lack of suitable habitat this species is not expected to occur on the Project

Site, however, suitable habitat in surrounding areas provide a moderate potential for temporary occurrence on the Project site.

The yellow-breasted chat is designated as a California species of special concern (particularly in regards to nesting). It is considered to be an uncommon summer resident in coastal California and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada where it occurs in riparian thickets or other dense, brushy thickets near water. The species nests from early May to August with a peak in June. Nest territories have been documented to range in size from 0.1 to more than 3.1 acres (Brewer, 1955; Thompson and Nolan, 1973). Suitable nesting habitat is not present on the Project Site but does occur nearby along the Santa Clara River providing a Moderate potential for occurrence.

The yellow warbler, a CDFG species of special concern, is a California resident during the months of April through October. The destruction of riparian habitat is the largest cause in the reduction of numbers for this species. This warbler is usually found in deciduous riparian habitats consisting of cottonwoods, willows, alders, and other small trees and shrubs. The diet of the yellow warbler is comprised of mostly insects and spiders. This species has been observed gleaning and/or hovering in the upper canopy of trees and shrubs. The yellow warbler has also been known to prey on insects from the air. Suitable habitat for this species does not exist on the Project Site but does exist nearby along the Santa Clara River providing a low potential of occurrence.

4.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No special status plant species or rare plant communities were recorded during the May 25, 2007 plant survey. Eleven special-status plant species that occur in the region are considered to have some potential to occur on the site, though none were documented. These species include Abram's oxytheca (*Oxytheca Parishii var. abramsii*), Blochman's dudleya (*Dudleya blochmaniae ssp. blochmaniae*), Coulter's goldfields (*Lasthenia globate ssp. coulter*), dune larkspur (*Delphinium parryi ssp. blochmaniae*), late-flowered mariposa lily (*Calochortus weedii var. vestus*), Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*), mesa horkelia (*Horkelia cantata ssp. puerile*), Miles's milk-vetch (*Astragalus didymocarpus var. milesianus*), Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*), rayless ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*) and southern tarplant (*entromadia parryi ssp. Australis (a.k.a. Hemizonia parryi ssp. australis)*),

No special status animal species were recorded during the May 25, 2007 wildlife survey. Twenty eight special status wildlife species that occur in the region are considered to have some potential to occur on the site, though none were documented at the time of the survey. These species include the American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), arroyo toad (*Bufo californicus*), bank swallows (*Riparia riparia*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*), California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestirs actia*), California least tern (*Sterna antillarum browni*), California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), coast (San Diego) horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum (blainvillei)*), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), coastal western whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), dulzura pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus californicus femoralis*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), silvery legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*), southwestern pond turtle (*Emys*

(=Clemmys) marmorata pallida), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*), western spadefoot toad (*Spea (=Scaphiopus) hammondii*), western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*) and yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*).

The Project will not substantially affect rare or endangered species of animals, plants or their habitats and will not substantially interfere with the movement of any resident of migratory fish or wildlife species. Due to the current state of the Project Site, surrounding land uses and the buffer between the Project Site and potential habitat, activities related to the project will not pose a hazard to animal or plant populations and will not cause populations to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten or eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal.

We recommend a qualified biologist survey the Project Site for special status plant and animal species immediately prior to the initial phase of construction activities. If any special status species are found in the path of construction activities, the biologist shall make appropriate recommendations to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

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