HELIX
Environmental Planning

Borrego Springs Library and Park Project

Biological Technical Report

November 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County of San Diego, General Services Department is proposing the Borrego Springs Library and Park Project (Project) in the unincorporated community of Borrego Springs in San Diego County, California. The Project would be located southwest of Country Club Road and east and west of Church Lane.

In the study area for the proposed Project, a general biological survey, a jurisdictional waters assessment, and surveys for sensitive plants and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) were conducted, as well as a habitat assessment for flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*). The surveys and assessments were conducted in the spring and summer 2015.

The study area supports three vegetation communities/habitat types: Sonoran creosote bush scrub, disturbed habitat, and urban/developed. Sonoran creosote bush scrub is the only sensitive vegetation community/habitat type.

The proposed Project would permanently impact a total of 20.4 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub, 0.2 acre of disturbed habitat, and 0.01 acre of urban/developed. The project- and cumulative-level impacts on Sonoran creosote bush scrub within the Borrego Springs Community Plan area would be significant, and mitigation at a ratio of 1:1 would be required. Proposed mitigation includes preservation of 20.4 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub habitat located off site within an approximately 325-acre property owned by the County of San Diego in Borrego Springs. Impacts to disturbed habitat and urban/developed would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

No jurisdictional waters, sensitive plant species, or animal species were observed in the study area, although the burrowing owl is considered to have low potential to occur. Nesting birds also have potential to occur. Impacts to nesting birds, including the burrowing owl, would be significant and require mitigation. Proposed mitigation includes pre-construction surveys and burrow/nest avoidance. The proposed Project would also contribute to the loss of Sonoran creosote bush scrub habitat that is suitable for foraging raptors and the Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*), a non-listed California Species of Special Concern that has a moderate potential to occur. Potential impacts resulting from the loss of potential habitat for foraging raptors and the Palm Springs pocket mouse would be less than significant considering the large amount of available habitat in Borrego Springs for these species. Implementation of habitat-based mitigation for Sonoran desert creosote bush scrub would further reduce the impact on these species.

The proposed Project could have significant indirect impacts on native vegetation and wildlife from invasive, non-native plant species. Mitigation is required to reduce the potential impacts to less-than-significant levels.

With successful implementation of required mitigation for significant impacts to Sonoran creosote bush scrub, burrowing owl, and avian nesting, as well as those from invasive, non-native plant species, the proposed Project's impacts to sensitive biological resources would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

At the request of the County of San Diego (County), General Services Department, HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX) completed this biological resources technical report for the proposed Borrego Springs Library and Park Project (Project). The purpose of this report is to document the existing biological conditions within the study area for the proposed Project and provide an analysis of potential impacts to sensitive biological resources with respect to local, State, and federal policy. This report provides the biological resources technical documentation necessary for review under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by the County.

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The study area for the proposed Project includes the library/sheriff substation site (library site), the park site, off-site water and sewer line extensions, and a surrounding buffer of 100 feet.

1.2.1 Project Location

The 20.5-acre Project site (i.e., the 2.8-acre library site and the 17.7-acre park site) is generally located in the northwest and southwest quadrants of the intersection of Country Club Road and Church Lane within the unincorporated community of Borrego Springs in San Diego County, California (Figures 1 and 2). The Project site is located in Section 5, Township 11S, Range 6E of the U.S. Geological Service (USGS) 7.5-minute Borrego Palm Canyon Quad (Figure 3). Borrego Springs is in the Colorado Desert subregion of the larger Sonoran Desert, and Borrego Springs is within the East County Multiple Species Conservation Program (ECMSCP) Plan Area; however, the ECMSCP Subarea Plan is still in the development phase and has not been approved.

The Project site is immediately bordered by vacant, undeveloped land; a shopping center; and several churches. More specifically, the eastern edge of the Project site is approximately 0.23 mile southwest of Christmas Circle Community Park, which is considered the hub and gateway to Borrego Springs. A shopping center known as The Mall is located north of the library site across Country Club Road. The land immediately to the west of the library site is vacant and undeveloped. The land to the west and south immediately adjacent to the park site is occupied by four churches. The land to the east across Country Club Road is vacant and undeveloped, but County Highway S3 and residential development are just east of Country Club Road (Figure 2).

1.2.2 Project Description

The proposed Project would consist of two primary, separate elements: a new 2.8-acre public library facility, with a possible attached sheriff substation and expanded community room (Figure 4a); and a new 17.7-acre public park that includes 16.0 acres within the property limits and an additional 1.7 acres beyond the property limits for which the County would obtain right-of-entry (Figure 4b). Off-site utility extensions would also be necessary, and Church Lane between the library site and park site may be vacated. Each of these proposed Project elements is described in more detail below.

Library/Sheriff Substation

The library would occupy approximately 15,500 square feet on the 2.8-acre site to replace the current approximately 3,700-square-foot Borrego Springs Public Library (a branch of the San Diego County Library System) located in The Mall. The new library would include separate areas for children, teens, adults, and staff, as well as two community rooms, a great room, study rooms, a computer lab, up to three patios, restrooms, and other facilities, located in two wings on either side of a lobby rotunda, entry courtyard, and entry plaza. One of the community rooms may be up to 4,000 square feet in size. The proposed Project would include exterior restrooms attached to the library that would be open during and after library hours and available to members of the public, including those using the proposed park.

The Project may also include a 1,600-square-foot sheriff substation attached to the southwestern corner of the library, which would replace the current San Diego County Sheriff Borrego Springs Office located directly across Country Club Road in The Mall.

The library site would also include landscaping with species that are native or indigenous to the area and the desert southwest and a 92-space asphalt parking lot west of the library/sheriff substation building. Access to the library/sheriff substation would be from Country Club Road.

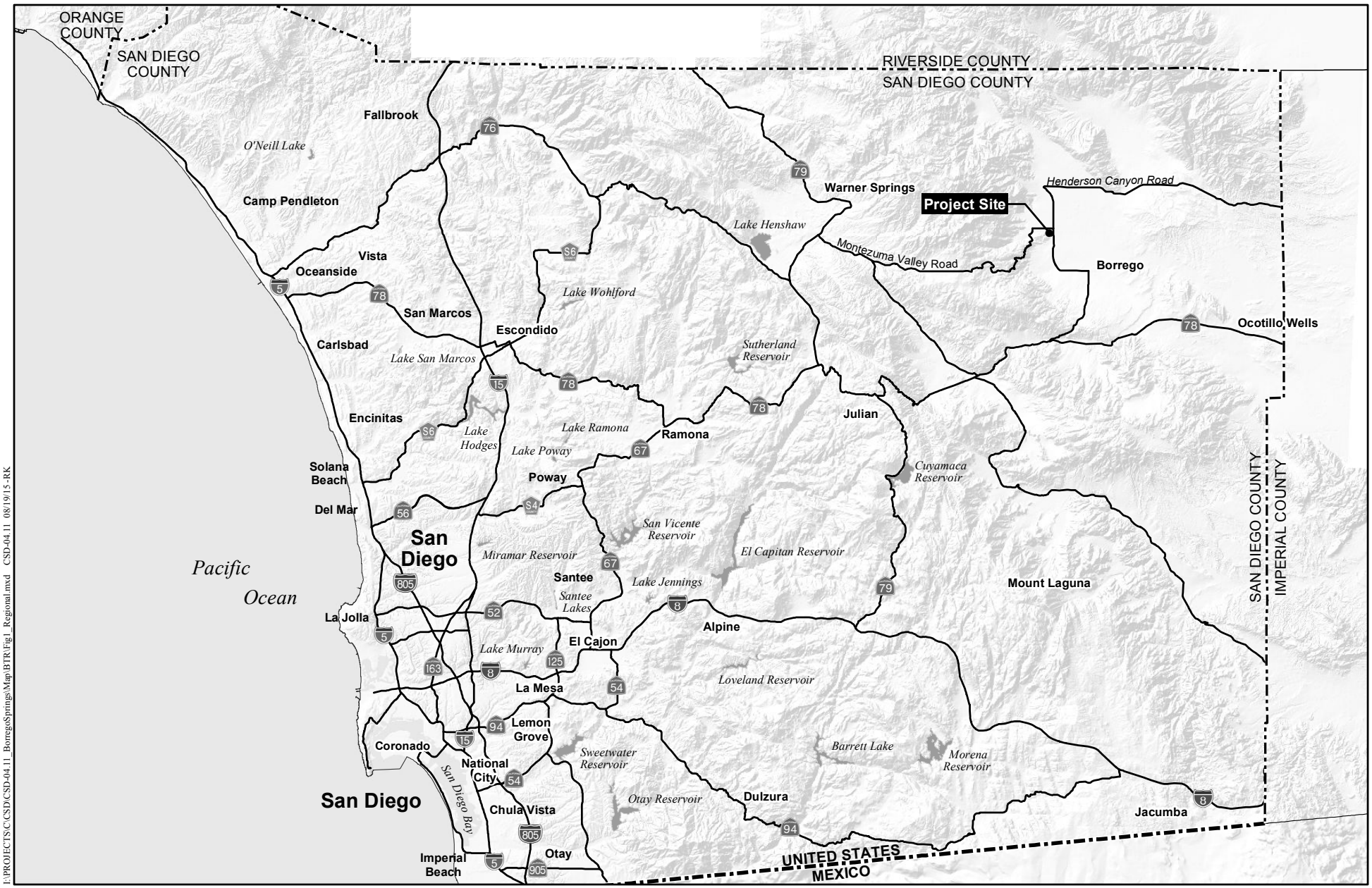
Park

The 17.7-acre public park would include a network of 8-foot-wide, decomposed granite paths connecting play areas, and other facilities; fire access roads would also cross the site. An entry plaza at the northeast corner of the park would include an information kiosk, seating, and shade. Two children's play areas (designed for different age groups); shaded picnic areas; and two multi-use courts for tennis and other sports, would also be located in the northeast quadrant of the park (closest to the library site) along with a drinking fountain, three- to 5-foot-high contoured berms, and parking areas.

The northwest quadrant of the park would include a meditation and sculpture garden with views of the nearby mountain range, a small observatory and outdoor amphitheater (with no sound amplification planned), a drinking fountain, a shaded picnic area, additional contoured berms, and a parking area. A fenced dog park with decomposed granite surfaces and contoured berms, a drinking fountain, and adjacent parking is planned for the southern portion of the park. A paved concrete pad adjacent to the southern portion of Church Lane would serve as an RV site for a volunteer park caretaker to live on site. The park concept plan calls for provision of water, a shade structure, and a photovoltaic/battery storage system for electricity use at the volunteer site.

Water catchments basins may be provided, if feasible. Lighted bollards would be placed along the internal park pathways, and shielded, low, overhead lighting would be provided near park features, as needed.

Native soils and scattered areas of tree and shrub species that are indigenous to the area and the desert southwest would dominate the remainder of the park. Proposed vegetation would be irrigated with underground drip systems.



Regional Location

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

N 0 10 Miles

Figure 1

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Project Vicinity Map (Aerial Photo)

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

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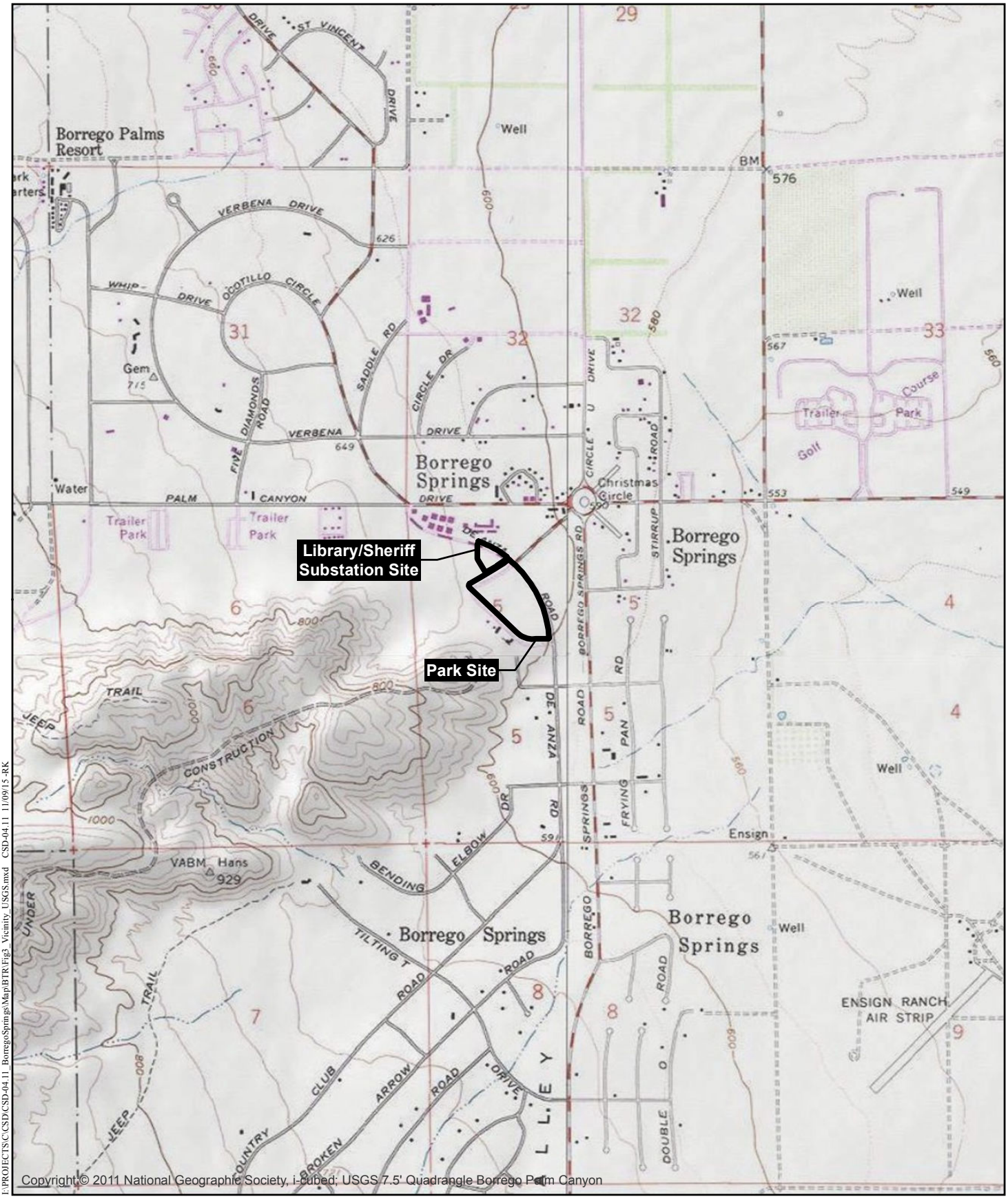
N 0 2,000 Feet

Figure 2



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Project Vicinity Map (USGS Topography)

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

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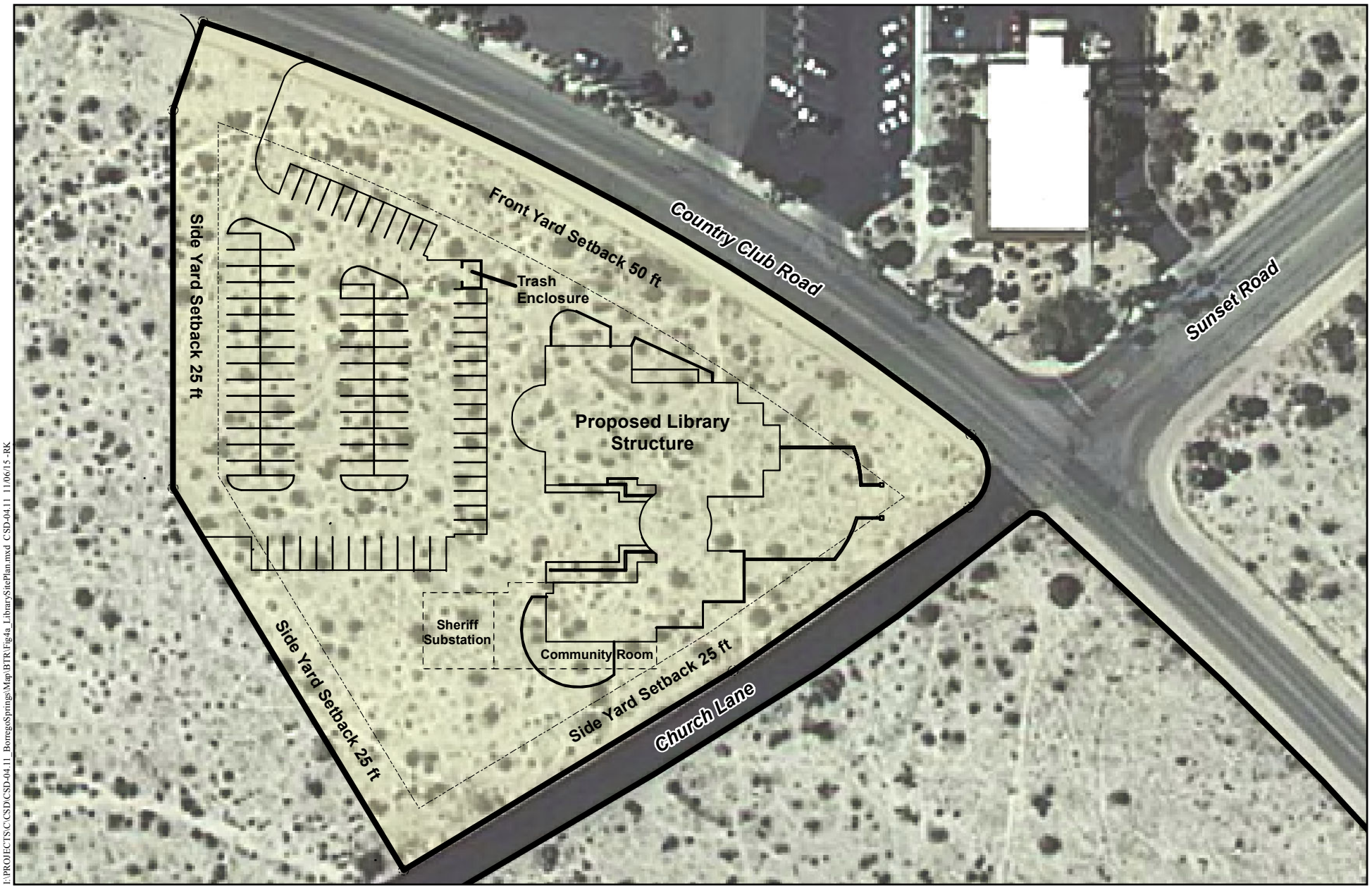
N 0 2,000 Feet

Figure 3



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Library/Sheriff Substation Site Plan

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

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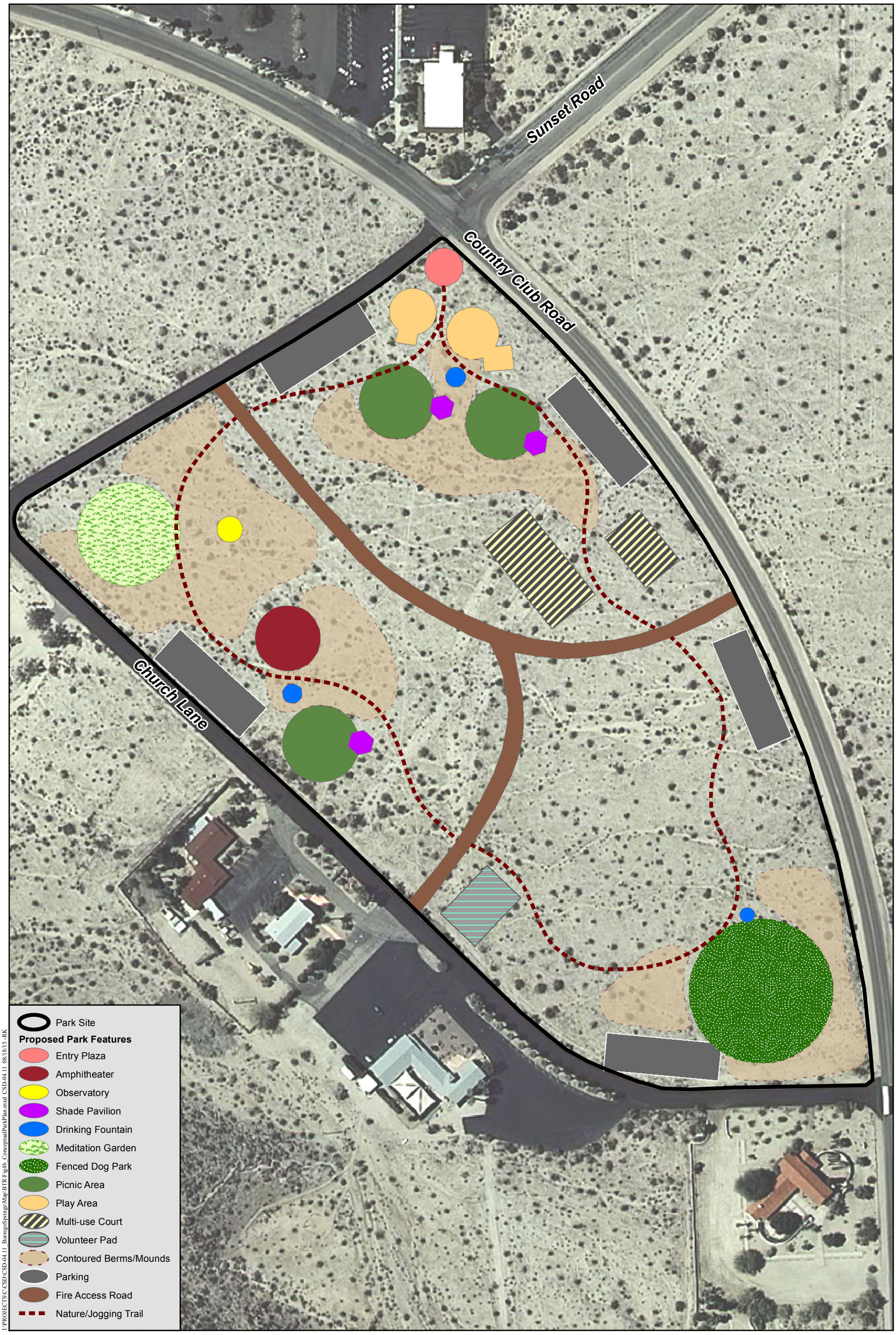
N 0 75 Feet

Figure 4a



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Conceptual Park Site Plan

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

Figure 4b

Vehicular access to the park would be from 2 locations along Country Club Road and 3 locations along Church Lane, with each access point entering into a parking lot. Fire access roads would extend into the park from 3 entry points: one along Country Club Road, one on the north-south portion of Church Lane, and one on the east-west portion of Church Lane near the library site. Pedestrian access would be available from additional locations along the park boundary.

Off-site Utility Extensions

The library site already has water meters. It would be necessary, however, to extend water infrastructure to the park site from Country Club Road and/or Church Lane. It is assumed herein that up to 3 water line connections could be made to the park from Country Club Road and up to 1 connection could be made from Church Lane.

Sewer service would be provided to the library/sheriff substation from sewer mains located in the Christmas Circle roundabout located approximately 0.2 mile to the northeast. No sewer is needed for the park site, since there will be no restrooms. It is anticipated that the sewer pipeline serving the library/sheriff substation would be extended from Christmas Circle in a trench constructed in the approximately four-foot-wide unpaved shoulder on the south side of the Sunset Road right-of-way, and then under Country Club Road to the library site.

Street Vacation Option

The proposed Project also includes an option to better integrate the library/sheriff substation and park by closing Church Lane between the library site and park site. The closure would facilitate access between the library/sheriff substation and the park, making it easier for park patrons to utilize the library's restrooms and other amenities, and for library patrons to take advantage of the park's facilities. To accomplish this goal, Church Lane would be vacated between Country Club Road and the east end of the Project site. It is anticipated that the remaining portion of Church Lane would terminate in a cul-de-sac near the Project boundary. Under the street vacation option, the above-described design of the park would be modified such that the proposed parking lot fronting this east-west segment of Church Lane would not be included in the Project, and the remaining parking lots for the park along Church Lane and Country Club would be resized accordingly.

1.3 METHODS

1.3.1 Literature Review

Prior to conducting its biological field surveys in 2015, HELIX conducted a search of the California Natural Diversity Database for information regarding sensitive species known to occur within five miles of the study area, as well as a review of U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS), SanBIOS, and MSCP sensitive species databases. A search of the San Diego Plant Atlas (San Diego Natural History Museum [SDNHM] 2010) was also conducted. The National Wetlands Inventory was queried for mapped wetlands in the study area (USFWS 2015), and the USGS 7.5-minute Borrego Palm Canyon Quad (Figure 3) and online aerial imagery (Google Maps) were studied for the presence of any blue-line streams or potential drainage features.

1.3.2 General Biological Survey

Following the literature review, a general biological survey of the study area was conducted by HELIX on April 10, 2015. Table 1 provides a summary of all of the biological surveys/assessments conducted for the proposed Project. During the general biological survey, the study area was surveyed on foot with the aid of binoculars. Vegetation was mapped on a 1"=100' scale aerial imagery based on Holland (1986) classifications. Plant and animal species observed or otherwise detected were recorded in a field notebook (Appendices A and B, respectively). Plant identifications were made in the field or in the lab through comparison with voucher specimens or photographs. Animal identifications were made in the field by direct, visual observation or indirectly by detection of calls, burrows, tracks, or scat.

Table 1
BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS IN 2015

SURVEY TYPE	DATE	HELIX PERSONNEL
General biological Vegetation community/habitat type mapping Jurisdictional waters assessment	April 10	George Aldridge
Special status plant		
Flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*) habitat assessment		
Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)	April 10	George Aldridge
	May 12	Katie Bellon, Benjamin Rosenbaum
	June 12	Katie Bellon
	July 6	Katie Bellon

The entire study area was examined for evidence of potential jurisdictional Waters of the U.S. (under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [USACE]) and Waters of the State (under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife [CDFW]). An examination of the study area for County Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) Wetlands was not conducted because the proposed Project is exempt from the RPO. The proposed Project is exempt from RPO because it includes an essential public facility (the library/sheriff substation) and essential recreational facility (the park; County 2009).

1.3.3 Focused Species Surveys/Assessment

HELIX also conducted a special status plant species survey, a flat-tailed horned lizard habitat assessment, and a survey for the burrowing owl as described below.

Special Status Plant Species Survey

A special status plant survey species was conducted in the study area on April 10, 2015 (Table 1). The survey was conducted on foot and included 100 percent visual coverage of the study area. A search was conducted for species listed as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or the CDFW; those with a Rare Plant Rank of 1 through 4 designated by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS); and those that are on the County Sensitive Plant List (County 2010a). Particular attention was paid, however, to those species for which potential habitat is present in the study area and that have been reported to the various databases within a five-mile radius of the study area (see Section 1.3.1, *Literature Review*).

Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Habitat Assessment

Borrego Springs is within the area of the Western Population of the flat-tailed horned lizard (USFWS 2011); therefore, the study area was assessed for the potential for this species to occur there on April 10, 2015 (Table 1). The study area was surveyed for flat-tailed horned lizard habitat components including, but not limited to: 1) low-relief areas with surface soils of packed, fine sand or low-relief areas of pavement (hardpan) overlain with loose, fine sand; 2) edges of vegetated sand dunes on barren clay soils; 3) sparse saltbush (*Atriplex* spp.) plant communities; and 4) areas supporting ants, particularly harvester ants (genera *Messor* and *Pogonomyrmex*; USFWS 2011).

Burrowing Owl Survey

A nesting season survey for the burrowing owl was conducted following the guidelines in the *CDFW 2012 Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (CDFW, formerly called California Department of Fish and Game [CDFG] 2012) and *Strategy for Mitigating Impacts to Burrowing Owls in the Unincorporated County* (Attachment A to County 2010b; Appendix C). Four site visits were made from April 10 through July 6, 2015 (Table 1) to survey potential burrowing owl habitat in the study area and an approximately 400-foot buffer surrounding the study area (for a total burrowing owl survey buffer of approximately 500 feet from the Project site). The church properties to the west of the park site and other urban/developed land (e.g., Country Club Road) were excluded from the survey, however.

The biologists slowly walked meandering transects through the burrowing owl survey area. Possible perching locations, as well as mammal burrows potentially suitable for use by burrowing owls were specifically searched for sign of recent burrowing owl use/occupation including pellets with regurgitated fur, bones, and insect parts; white wash (excrement); and feathers. Burrows with potential to be used by the burrowing owl were mapped.

1.3.4 Survey Limitations

Noted animal species were identified by direct observation, vocalizations, or the observance of scat, tracks, or other signs. However, the list of species identified in Appendix B is not necessarily a comprehensive account of all species that utilize the study area as species that are nocturnal, secretive, or seasonally restricted may not have been observed. Those species that are of special status and have potential to occur in the study area, however, are still addressed in this report in Section 1.4.10, *Special Status Animal Species*.

1.3.5 Nomenclature

Nomenclature used in this report generally comes from Holland (1986) for vegetation; Baldwin et al. (2012) for plants; Collins and Taggart (2006) for reptiles and amphibians; American Ornithologists' Union (2015) for birds; and Baker et al. (2003) for mammals. Plant species status is from the CNPS (2015), CDFW (2015a and b), and County (2010a). Animal species status is from CDFW (2015c) and County (2010a).

1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

1.4.1 Regional Context

The study area is located in northeastern San Diego County, north and east of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, east of Warner Springs, south of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto mountains, and west of the Salton Sea. Borrego Springs is within the ECMSCP Plan Area; however, the ECMSCP Subarea Plan is still in the development phase and has not been approved.

1.4.2 General Land Uses

General land uses in the study area include: undeveloped land on the Project site; road rights-of-way in the off-site utility extensions areas; and undeveloped land, commercial and office, spaced rural residential, and institutions around the Project site.

1.4.3 Disturbance

In addition to the existing commercial and institutional developments and paved roadways in the study area, there are also pedestrian/bike paths and evidence of off-road vehicle use in the undeveloped portions of the study area. Additionally, non-native palm trees (Mexican fan palm; *Washingtonia robusta*) have been planted along portions of Country Club Road and Sunset Road.

1.4.4 Topography and Soils

Elevations in the study area range from approximately 600 feet above mean sea level (amsl) to 640 feet amsl. The study area, therefore, is relatively level and exhibits no visibly discernible change in elevation when viewed in the field.

Two soil types have been mapped in the study area: Rositas loamy coarse sand and Carrizo very gravelly sand (U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS] 2015; Figure 5). Rositas soils dominate the study area. Carrizo soil only occurs in a sliver of the southwestern portion of the park site.

1.4.5 Vegetation Communities/Habitat Types

Three vegetation communities/habitat types occur in the study area as presented in Table 2 and shown on Figure 6. The numeric codes in parentheses following each community/habitat type are from Holland (1986) as presented in the County's Biology Guidelines (County 2010a).

Table 2
EXISTING VEGETATION COMMUNITIES/HABITAT TYPES

VEGETATION COMMUNITY/ HABITAT TYPE	LIBRARY SITE (acres)	PARK SITE (acres)	OFF-SITE UTILITIES (acres)[1]	TOTAL (acres)
Sonoran creosote bush scrub (33100)	2.7	17.7	0.0	20.4
Disturbed habitat (11300)	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2
Urban/developed (12000)	0.0	0.0	0.01	0.01
TOTAL[2]	**2.8**	**17.7**	**0.1**	**20.6**

[1]This only includes the impact footprints. Disturbed habitat and urban/developed acreages account for the four assumed water lines even though the lines are not depicted on Figure 6.
[2]Rounded to the nearest one-tenth of an acre.

Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub

Sonoran creosote bush scrub is the most common creosote scrub of the Colorado Desert and consists of widely spaced shrubs up to three meters tall. The vegetation community is very similar in appearance to Mojave creosote bush scrub (34100; Holland 1986) but with greater species and life form diversity including several succulents. Growth of typical species within this vegetation community/habitat type occurs from winter to early spring if rainfall is sufficient; otherwise, plant species may be dormant for long periods. Many species of ephemeral herbs may flower in late February and March if the winter rains have been adequate. Sonoran creosote bush scrub occurs in well-drained soils of slopes, fans, and valleys rather than upland sites with thin, residual soils. The dominant plant species in Sonoran creosote bush scrub in the study area are creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), white bursage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), and ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*).

Disturbed Habitat

Disturbed habitat in the study area includes the unpaved and largely unvegetated shoulders of Country Club Road and Sunset Road. A few scattered plant species such as non-native Mediterranean grass (*Schismus barbatus*) and Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) are present.

Urban/Developed

Urban/developed land includes areas that have been constructed upon or otherwise covered with a permanent, unnatural surface and may include, for example, structures, pavement, irrigated/maintained landscaping, or hardscape. Urban/developed land in the study area consists of Country Club Road; Sunset Road; Church Lane; church buildings, grounds, and parking lots; the Borrego Springs post office; and a portion of The Mall parking lot.

1.4.6 Flora

HELIX identified a total of 39 plant species in the study area, of which 7 (18 percent) are non-native species (Appendix A).

1.4.7 Fauna

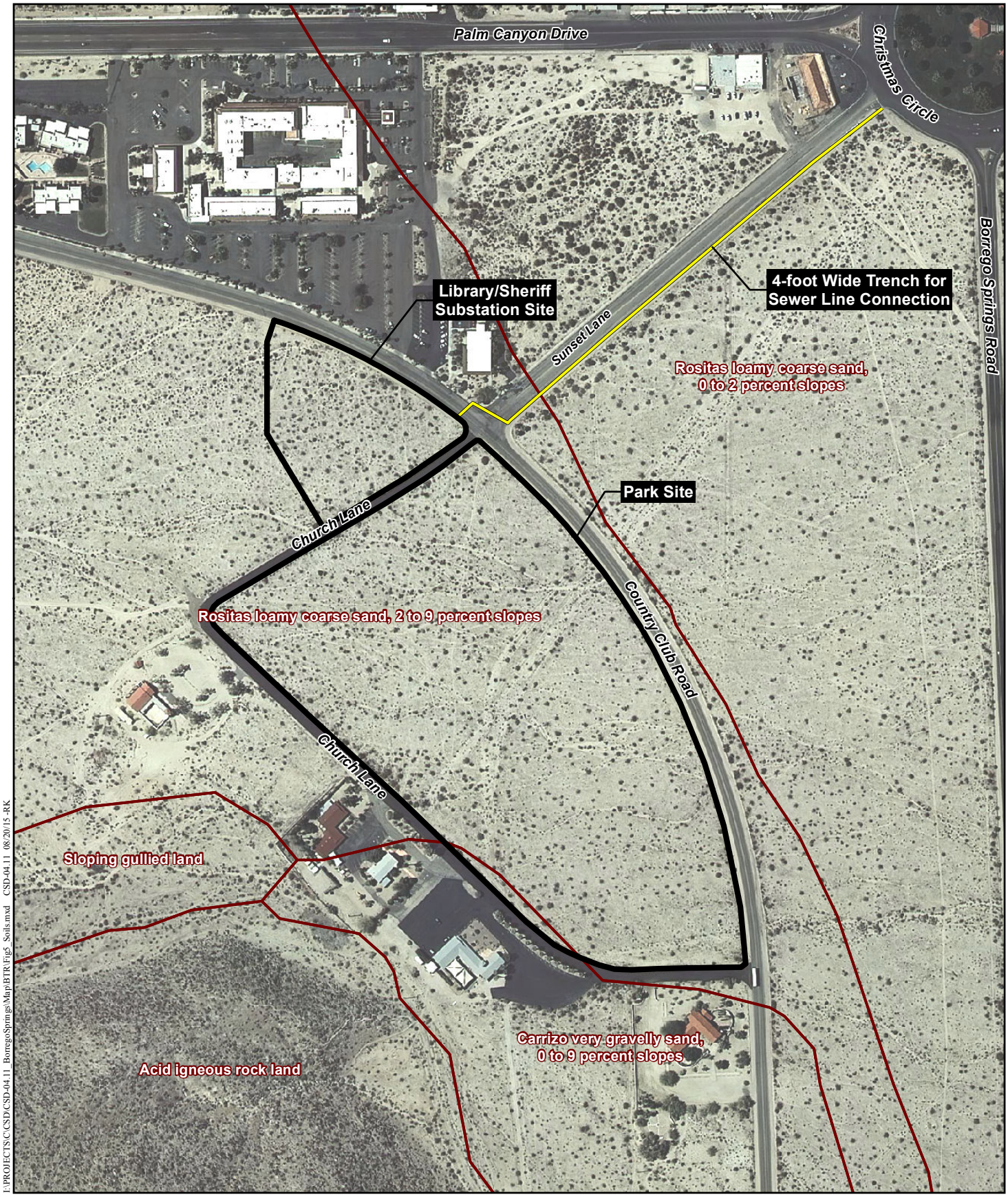
A total of 20 animal species was observed or otherwise detected in the study area during the biological surveys including one invertebrate, one reptile, 15 bird, and three mammal species (Appendix B).

1.4.8 Sensitive Vegetation Communities/Habitat Types

Sensitive vegetation communities/habitat types are defined as land that supports unique vegetation communities or the habitats of rare or endangered species or subspecies of animals or plants as defined by Section 15380 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Sensitive vegetation communities/habitat types requiring compensatory mitigation in unincorporated County lands outside of approved MSCP areas are specified within Table 5 of the County's Biology Guidelines (County 2010a). The only sensitive vegetation community/habitat type in the study area according to Table 5 of the County's Biology Guidelines is Sonoran creosote bush scrub.

1.4.9 Special Status Plant Species

Special status plant species have been afforded special status and/or recognition by the USFWS, CDFW, and/or the County and may also be included in the CNPS' Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (see Section 1.3.6, *Nomenclature*, for references). Their status is often based on one or more of three distributional attributes: geographic range, habitat specificity, and/or population size. A species that exhibits a small or restricted geographic range (such as those endemic to the region) is geographically rare. A species may be more or less abundant but occur only in very specific habitats. Lastly, a species may be widespread but exists naturally in small populations.



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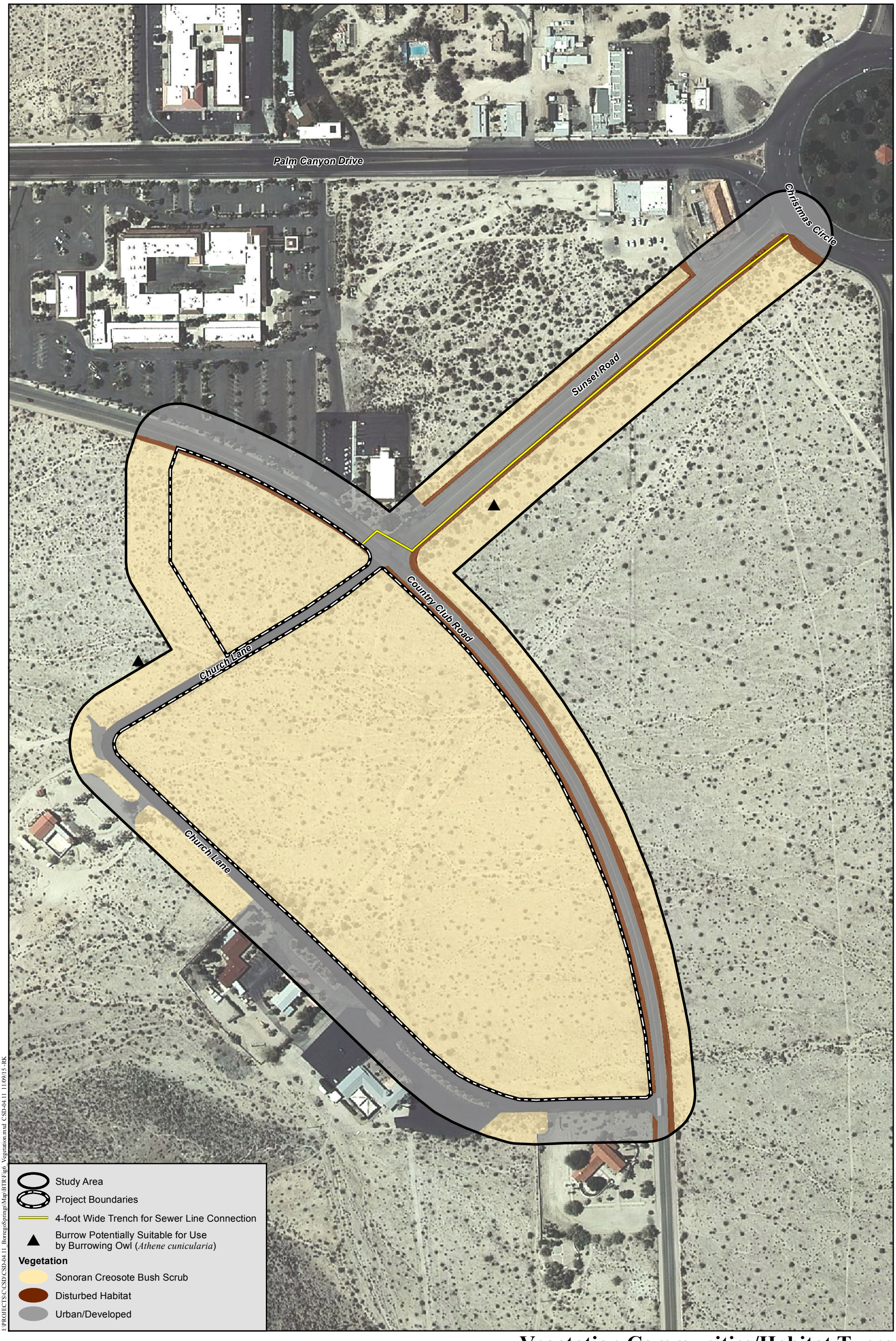
Soils Map

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

N 0 200 Feet

Figure 5



Vegetation Communities/Habitat Types

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

0 200 Feet

Figure 6

Special Status Plant Species Observed

No special status plant species were observed in the study area.

Special Status Plant Species with Potential to Occur

Twenty special status plant species that were not observed but were reported to at least one of the databases within five miles of the study area (see Section 1.3.1, *Literature Review*) were evaluated for their potential to occur in the study area. These species are listed in Appendix D. Ten of the species are considered to have low potential to occur because: 1) their habitats are present in the study area; 2) the special status plant species survey conducted on April 10 was during the blooming period for each of them; and 3) they were not found. The other 10 species are considered to have no potential to occur because their habitats are not present in the study area (and, consequently, they were not found).

1.4.10 Special Status Animal Species

Special status animal species include those that have been afforded special status and/or recognition by the USFWS, CDFW, and/or the County (see Section 1.3.6, *Nomenclature*, for references). In general, the principal reason an individual taxon (species or subspecies) is given such recognition is the documented or perceived decline or limitations of its population size or geographical extent and/or distribution, resulting in most cases from habitat loss.

Special Status Animal Species Observed or Otherwise Detected

No special status animal species were observed or detected in the study area. Two burrows with potential for use by the burrowing owl were observed, however. One is on the south side of Sunset Road, and one is north of the park site and west of the library site just outside the study area (Figure 6). No sign of recent (i.e., within the last three years [CDFW 2012]) burrowing owl use of these burrows was present. The survey conducted in 2015 confirmed the absence of burrowing owl from the study area.

Special Status Animal Species with Potential to Occur

Twenty-six special status animal species that were not observed but were reported to at least one of the databases within five miles of the study area (see Section 1.3.1, *Literature Review*) were evaluated for their potential to occur in the study area. These species are listed in Appendix E. Three of these species, Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), and Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*) are considered to have moderate potential to occur in the study area. The Swainson's hawk and prairie falcon are considered to have potential to forage in the study area only. The Swainson's hawk does not nest in southern California (Unitt 2004), and prairie falcon nests on cliff or bluffs not present in the study area. Potentially suitable habitat occurs in the study area for the Palm Springs pocket mouse that has been reported to occur in Borrego Valley; however, the study area occurs in the extreme southern limits of the species' range and no sign of Palm Springs pocket mouse was observed during 2015 surveys.

The 26 other species are considered to have low potential to occur because, for example, potential habitat is limited. Or, they are not expected to occur because potential habitat is not present in the study area.

Raptor Foraging

The non-special status American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) was the only species observed in the study area during the surveys conducted in April, May, June, and July 2015 (Table 1). As indicated above, the special status Swainson's hawk and special status prairie falcon are considered to have moderate potential to forage in the study area. The special status burrowing owl, while not observed in the study area during the focused survey for the species, is still considered to have low potential to nest and forage there (Appendix E). Similarly, the special status Cooper's hawk is considered to have low potential to forage in the study area (Appendix E). While not observed, the non-special status red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) is likely to forage in the study area.

The County (2010a) defines raptor foraging habitat as, "Land that is a minimum of 5 acres (not limited to project boundaries) of fallow or open areas with any evidence of foraging potential (i.e., burrows, raptor nests, etc.)." The Sonoran creosote bush scrub in the study area is considered raptor foraging habitat based on this definition since it occupies greater than five acres, and it supports burrows of small mammals, presumably those of kangaroo rats (*Dipodomys* sp.; Appendix B), which are potential prey for raptors.

1.4.11 Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways

The National Wetlands Inventory shows no mapped wetlands in the study area, and no blue-line streams or potential drainage features were identified on the USGS 7.5-minute Borrego Palm Canyon Quad for the study area. A jurisdictional waters assessment was conducted, and two short erosion feature segments were noted on the library site. These features were confirmed to also follow areas disturbed by foot traffic and off-highway vehicle use. The features appear to convey only short duration, low volume flows during heavy rain events through their short reach. They are both considered to be erosion features cut within the upland landscape of the site.

Neither erosion feature, however, exhibited the physical characteristics of Waters of the U.S. That is, for example, they did not support wetland vegetation and had no characteristics indicating an ordinary high water mark. Most importantly, they originate and terminate on site, and are geographically isolated from a traditional navigable waterway. Similarly, since they did not support riparian vegetation or contain regular surface flow and a discernible streambed and bank, they are not jurisdictional Waters of the State.

1.4.12 Habitat Connectivity, Wildlife Corridors, and Nursery Sites

Wildlife corridors connect otherwise isolated pieces of habitat and allow movement or dispersal of plants and animals. Local wildlife corridors allow access to resources such as food, water, and shelter within the framework of their daily routine. Regional corridors provide these functions over a larger scale and link two or more large habitat areas, allowing the dispersal of organisms

and the consequent mixing of genes between populations. A corridor is a specific route that is used for the movement and migration of species, and may be different from a linkage in that it represents a smaller or narrower avenue for movement. A linkage is an area of land that supports or contributes to the long-term movement of animals and genetic exchange by providing live-in habitat that connects to other habitat areas. Many linkages occur as stepping-stone linkages that are comprised of a fragmented archipelago arrangement of habitat over a linear distance. While common animal species that tolerate nearby development (such as those observed in the study area; Appendix B) likely use the study area as part of live-in habitat, these species tend to be ubiquitous and not reliant on particular corridors or linkages.

One animal species that occurs in the region of the proposed Project and is reliant on corridors for movement is the federal listed endangered Peninsular bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*; PBS), which is known to occur in the San Ysidro Mountains west of Borrego Springs in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park (USFWS 2000). PBS depend critically on the use of steep, rugged terrain but also rely on alluvial fans (e.g., the Borrego Palm Canyon alluvial fan) and washes for forage and water (USFWS 2000). Essential Habitat for the PBS includes mountainous terrain to the east, north, and south of the study area but excludes Borrego Springs (USFWS 2000).

As described in Section 1.2.1, *Project Location*, the eastern edge of the Project site is approximately 0.23 mile southwest of Christmas Circle Community Park, which is considered the hub and gateway to Borrego Springs, and existing development occurs between the Project site and Christmas Circle. The Project site is adjacent to Country Club Road, The Mall, and four churches. While some vacant, undeveloped land occurs immediately west of the library site, for all intents and purposes, the study area is considered to be in the center of the developed Borrego Springs community (Figure 2). Due to the PBS' dependence on steep, rugged terrain and associated alluvial fan and wash habitat, and the exclusion of Borrego Springs from Essential Habitat, the study area is not considered a corridor for movement for the PBS, nor is it a linkage that connects PBS habitat.

Wildlife nursery sites are specific, established locations used repeatedly by some wildlife species for breeding purposes. Examples of nursery sites include heron rookeries and bat maternal colony roosts. No such wildlife nursery sites were expected to occur in the study area based on the literature review and biologists' knowledge of the study area, and none was observed.

1.5 APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

Biological resources in the study area are subject to regulatory review by federal, State, and local agencies. Under CEQA, impacts associated with a proposed project or program are assessed with regard to significance criteria determined by the CEQA Lead Agency (in this case, the County) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines. Biological resources-related laws and guidelines that apply to the proposed Project include the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), California Fish and Game Code, CEQA, and the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance for Biological Resources (Guidelines; County 2010a).

The USFWS will be responsible for reviewing issues related to migratory birds pursuant to MBTA. The CDFW will be responsible for reviewing issues related to nesting birds and raptors

pursuant to California Fish and Game Code. The County is the lead agency for the CEQA environmental review process in accordance with State law and local ordinances. During CEQA review, the County will be responsible for reviewing Project issues per its Guidelines.

1.5.1 Federal Government

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The MBTA (16 U.S. Code Sections 703–711) includes provisions for protection of migratory birds, including the non-permitted take of migratory birds. The MBTA regulates or prohibits taking, killing, possession of, or harm to migratory bird species listed in Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations Section 10.13. Migratory birds include geese, ducks, shorebirds, raptors, songbirds, and many others. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (killing or abandonment of eggs or young) is considered a "take." The MBTA is an international treaty for the conservation and management of bird species that migrate through more than one country and is enforced in the United States by the USFWS. The MBTA was amended in 1972 to include protection for migratory birds of prey (raptors). In common practice, the MBTA is now used to place restrictions on disturbance of active bird nests during the nesting season. In addition, the USFWS commonly places restrictions on disturbances allowed near active raptor nests.

1.5.2 State of California

California Environmental Quality Act

Primary environmental legislation in California is found in CEQA and its implementing guidelines (State CEQA Guidelines), which require that projects with potential adverse effects (or impacts) on the environment undergo environmental review. Adverse environmental impacts are typically mitigated as a result of the environmental review process in accordance with existing laws and regulations. Under CEQA, impacts associated with a proposed project or program are assessed with regard to significance criteria determined by the CEQA Lead Agency (in this case, the County) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines.

California Fish and Game Code

The following California Fish and Game Code sections include protections for birds.

2000. It is unlawful to take any bird, mammal, fish, reptile, or amphibian except as provided in this code or regulations made pursuant thereto. Possession of a bird, mammal, fish, or reptile or parts thereof in or on the fields, forests, or waters of this state, or while returning therefrom with fishing or hunting equipment is prima facie evidence the possessor took the bird, mammal, fish or reptile or parts thereof.

3503. It is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto.

3503.5. It is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto.

3513. It is unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird as designated in the MBTA or any part of such migratory nongame bird except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the MBTA.

3800. (a) All birds occurring naturally in California that are not resident game birds, migratory game birds, or fully protected birds are nongame birds. It is unlawful to take any nongame bird except as provided in this code or in accordance with regulations of the commission or, when relating to mining operations, a mitigation plan approved by the department.

According to California Fish and Game Code, "take" means hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.

These regulations could require that construction activities (particularly vegetation removal or construction near nests) be reduced or eliminated during critical phases of the nesting cycle unless surveys by a qualified biologist demonstrate that nesting birds will not be disturbed, subject to approval by CDFW and/or USFWS. Disturbance can cause nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (e.g., killing or abandonment of eggs or young) that may be considered “take.”

2.0 PROJECT EFFECTS

2.1 SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

2.1.1 Special Status Plant Species

The proposed Project would not result in direct impacts any special status plants as none were found in the study area.

2.1.2 Special Status Animal Species

Special Status Animals Determined to Occupy the Site (Breeding)

The proposed Project is not anticipated to result in direct impacts to breeding (or roosting) special status animals because none was observed in the study area. However, two burrows with the potential to be used by the burrowing owl were found in the burrowing survey area.

In 2007, the maximum number of burrowing owl pairs in San Diego County was estimated to be at the most 46 (Lincer and Bloom 2007). About 25 of these pairs were in East Otay Mesa area; the others were at various locations in the County, including a few in the desert (County 2010b). The burrowing owl is considered to have low potential to occur in the Project study area. Still,

construction of the proposed Project could impact the burrowing owl should it occupy the burrows prior to, or during, construction.

Special Status Animals Determined to Use the Site (Non-Breeding)

The direct loss of potential foraging habitat for special status species would occur from construction of the proposed Project. Specifically, special status Swainson's hawk, prairie falcon, burrowing owl, and Cooper's hawk have potential to forage in the study area (see Section 1.4.10, *Special Status Animal Species, Raptor Foraging*). In addition, the non-listed California species of special concern Palm Springs pocket mouse was determined to have a moderate potential to occur, although the study area occurs within the extreme southern portion of the species' range and no sign of the species was observed during 2015 surveys.

2.2 RIPARIAN HABITAT OR SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITY

Table 3 provides a summary of all proposed Project impacts to vegetation communities/habitat types, including the only sensitive community/habitat type, Sonoran creosote bush scrub. Figure 7 graphically displays these impacts. Figure 7 does not, however, show the water line extensions since the exact number and locations of these extensions are still being developed. It has been assumed herein that up to three water line connections could be made to the park from Country Club Road and one connection could be made from Church Lane.

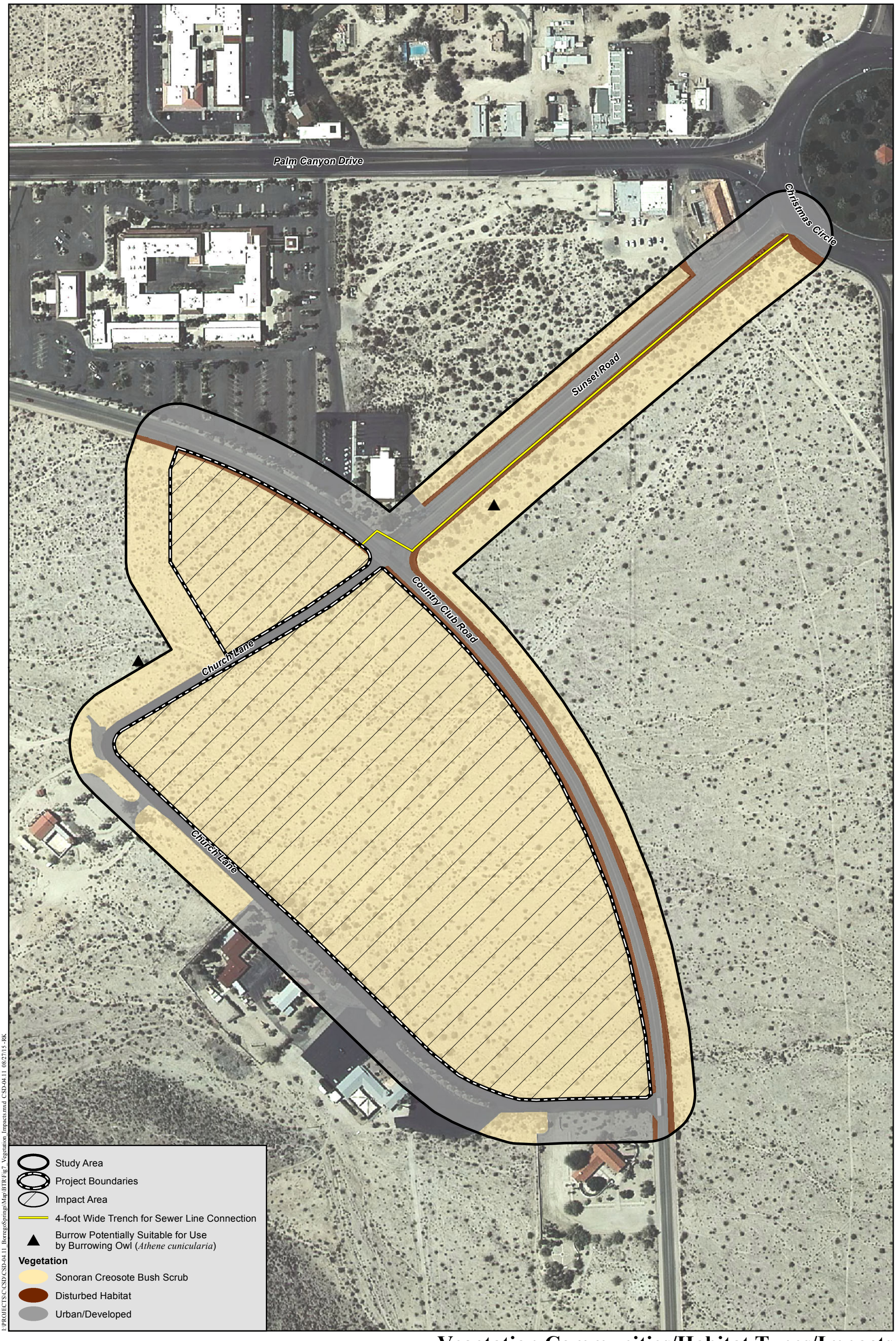
Table 3
IMPACTS TO VEGETATION COMMUNITIES/HABITAT TYPES

VEGETATION COMMUNITY/ HABITAT TYPE	LIBRARY SITE (acres)	PARK SITE (acres)	OFF-SITE UTILITIES (acres)	TOTAL (acres)
Sonoran creosote bush scrub (33100)	2.7	17.7	0.0	20.4
Disturbed habitat (11300)	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2
Urban/developed (12000)	0.0	0.0	0.01	0.01
TOTAL[2]	**2.8**	**17.7**	**0.1**	**20.6**

[1]This accounts for the four assumed water line impacts even though they are not depicted on Figure 7.
[2]Rounded to the nearest one-tenth of an acre.

2.3 JURISDICTIONAL WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS

As described in Section 1.4.11, *Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waterways*, there are no jurisdictional waters or wetlands in the study area; therefore, there would be no impacts to jurisdictional features.



Vegetation Communities/Habitat Types/Impacts

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

N 0 200 Feet

Figure 7

2.4 WILDLIFE MOVEMENT AND NURSERY SITES

As described in Section 1.4.12, *Habitat Connectivity, Wildlife Corridors, and Nursery Sites*, for all intents and purposes, the study area is considered to be in the center of the developed Borrego Springs community. Common animal species that tolerate nearby development tend to be ubiquitous and not reliant on particular corridors or linkages. Furthermore, Borrego Springs is excluded from Essential Habitat for the PBS, and the study area is not considered a corridor for movement for the PBS, nor is it a linkage that connects PBS habitat. Therefore, there would be no impacts to wildlife movement from the proposed Project. Additionally, there are no established wildlife nursery sites in the study area, so none would be impacted.

2.5 INDIRECT IMPACTS

Indirect impacts consist of secondary effects of a project. Potential indirect impacts from construction of the proposed Borrego Springs Library and Park Project include those from fugitive dust; night lighting; and invasive, non-native plant species. The magnitude of an indirect impact can be the same as a direct impact, but the effect usually takes a longer time to become apparent. Potential indirect impacts from the operation of the Project (i.e., use of the Project after it is built) include those from night lighting; invasive, non-native plant species; and public access.

Fugitive Dust

Fugitive dust produced by construction could disperse onto native vegetation beyond the Project site. A continual cover of dust can reduce the overall vigor of individual plants by reducing their photosynthetic capabilities and increasing their susceptibility to pests or disease. This, in turn, can affect animals dependent on these plants. Fugitive dust also may make plants unsuitable as structural habitat for insects and birds. Fugitive dust, if it is generated, would be a short-term, temporary impact of Project construction.

Night Lighting

Night lighting that shines on or spills into native habitats adjacent to the Project site can prevent nocturnal wildlife from using the habitat. It can also cause loss of native wildlife by providing nocturnal predators with an unnatural advantage over their prey. Night lighting has potential to cause these impacts over a short term during construction and long-term during operation of the Project.

Invasive, Non-native Plant Species

Invasive, non-native plant species are threats to native biological resources in that they can, for example, displace native plants, increase the threat of wildfire by increasing fuel load, and supplant plants used as forage by herbivorous species. Vehicles are the primary conduits for the spread of many invasive species, and activities and soil disturbance associated with construction of the proposed Project could spread invasive, non-native plant species (such as Sahara mustard that was observed in the study area; Appendix A), to adjacent areas supporting native vegetation. However, the adjacent undeveloped areas are like the Project site (and surrounding study area) in

plant species composition, so Project construction would not result in the spread of invasive, non-native plant species to those adjacent areas because they are already present. New invasive, non-native plant species could be introduced to the study area, however, in erosion control materials.

Landscaping associated with the Project would include species that are native or indigenous to the area and the desert southwest. Therefore, Project landscaping would not result in the spread of invasive, non-native plant species.

Public Access

Development of the proposed Project would attract the public, and the public may access the library/sheriff substation and park on foot or via bicycle. Since it is human nature to take short-cuts, it is possible that access to the Project would be made through adjacent, undeveloped properties that support native vegetation/habitat. This could result in the creation of trails and litter that can degrade the habitat value on those sites for wildlife. It should be noted, however, that some pedestrian/bike paths and off-road vehicle use are already present in these areas as observed in the study area.

3.0 SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

3.1 GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

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

Any of the following conditions would be considered significant if:

A. The project would impact 1 or more individuals of a species listed as federal or State endangered or threatened.

B. The project would impact an on-site population of a County List A or B plant species, or a County Group 1 animal species, or a species listed as a State Species of Special Concern.

C. The project would impact the local long-term survival of a County List C or D plant species or a County Group 2 animal species.

D. The project may impact arroyo toad aestivation, foraging or breeding habitat.

E. The project would impact golden eagle habitat.

F. The project would result in a significant loss of functional foraging habitat for raptors.

G. The project would impact the viability of a core wildlife area, defined as a large block of habitat (typically 500 acres or more not limited to project boundaries, though smaller areas with particularly valuable resources may also be considered a core wildlife area) that supports a viable population of a sensitive wildlife species or supports multiple wildlife species.

H. The project would cause indirect impacts, particularly at the edge of proposed development adjacent to proposed or existing open space or other natural habitat areas, to levels that would likely harm sensitive species over the long term.

I. The project would impact occupied burrowing owl habitat.

J. The project would impact occupied cactus wren habitat, or formerly occupied coastal cactus wren habitat that has been burned by wildfire.

K. The project would impact occupied Hermes copper butterfly habitat.

L. The project would impact nesting success of the following sensitive bird species through grading, clearing, fire fuel modification, and/or other noise generating activities such as construction:

- Coastal cactus wren
- Coastal California gnatcatcher
- Least Bell's vireo
- Southwestern willow flycatcher
- Tree-nesting raptors
- Ground-nesting raptors
- Golden eagle
- Light-footed clapper rail

3.2 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EFFECTS

The proposed Project would result in significant impacts under the above guidelines for the following reasons:

B. The Project would impact an on-site population of a County List A or B plant species, or a County Group 1 animal species, or a species listed as a State Species of Special Concern (Appendix F).

No County List A or B plant species, County Group 1 animal species, or State Species of Special Concern were observed in the study area. Two burrows with potential to be used by the burrowing owl (County Group 1, State Species of Special Concern; Appendix F) were observed in the burrowing owl survey area. Should either burrow or both burrows become occupied by the burrowing owl prior to, or during, proposed Project construction, impacts to the burrowing owl would be significant. In addition, the non-listed California Species of Special Concern Palm Springs pocket mouse has a moderate potential to occur. Potential

impacts resulting from the loss of suitable Sonoran creosote bush scrub habitat for the Palm Springs pocket mouse would be less than significant considering the great expanses of remaining open habitat in and around Borrego Springs. Impacts to Sonoran creosote bush scrub are significant, however, as explained below in Section 4.2, *Analysis of Project Effects*, and mitigation is required that would provide comparable habitat that is suitable for the Palm Springs pocket mouse.

H. The Project would cause indirect impacts, particularly at the edge of proposed development adjacent to proposed or existing open space or other natural habitat areas, to levels that would likely harm sensitive species over the long term.

The proposed Project could cause indirect impacts to adjacent native habitat areas from fugitive dust; night lighting; invasive, non-native plant species; and public access as described above in Section 2.5, *Indirect Impacts*. Project-related lighting would be required to adhere to Division 9 of the San Diego County Light Pollution Code. Project lighting adjacent to undeveloped habitat would be of the lowest illumination allowed for human safety, selectively placed, shielded, and directed away from such habitat. As such, no impacts from Project light would occur. Potential impacts from the use of invasive, non-native plant species for temporary erosion control during construction would be potentially significant because the adjacent native habitats, outside the study area, could support sensitive species. Impacts from fugitive dust, if they occur, would be a short-term effect of construction and, therefore, would be less than significant. Impacts from public access attributable to the Project would represent an incremental increase over public access in its existing condition in and around the Project site. The incremental increase in public access impacts on adjacent native habitat areas would, therefore, be less than significant.

I. The Project would impact occupied burrowing owl habitat.

Two burrows with potential to be used by the burrowing owl were observed in the burrowing owl survey area. Should either burrow or both burrows become occupied by the burrowing owl prior to, or during, construction, and Project grading occur within 300 feet of an occupied burrow, the impact would be significant. The County prohibits grading within 300 feet of an active burrowing owl burrow (County 2010b).

The Project would not result in significant impacts under the above guidelines for the following reasons:

A. The Project would not impact 1 or more individuals of a species listed as federal or State endangered or threatened.

No species listed as federal or State endangered or threatened were observed in the study area.

C. The Project would not impact the local long-term survival of a County List C or D plant species or a County Group 2 animal species (Appendix F).

No County List C or D plant species or County Group 2 animal species were observed in the study area.

D. The Project would not impact arroyo toad aestivation, foraging, or breeding habitat.

There is no suitable habitat for the arroyo toad in the study area.

E. The Project would not impact golden eagle habitat.

The golden eagle has not been reported to any of the databases within five miles of the study area (see Section 1.3.1, *Literature Review*).

F. The Project would not result in a significant loss of functional foraging habitat for raptors.

The proposed Project would impact 20.4 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub that is open and supports burrows of small mammals (potential prey for raptors) and, therefore, meets the County's definition of raptor foraging habitat. The impact as raptor foraging habitat, however, is considered less than significant considering the great expanses of remaining open habitat in and around Borrego Springs that is available for raptor foraging. Impacts to Sonoran creosote bush scrub are significant, however, as explained below in Section 4.2, *Analysis of Project Effects*, and mitigation is required that would provide comparable raptor foraging habitat.

G. The Project would not impact the viability of a core wildlife area, defined as a large block of habitat (typically 500 acres or more not limited to project boundaries, though smaller areas with particularly valuable resources may also be considered a core wildlife area) that supports a viable population of a sensitive wildlife species or supports multiple wildlife species.

As described in Section 1.4.12, *Habitat Connectivity, Wildlife Corridors, and Nursery Sites*, there would be no impacts to habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors from the Project.

J. The Project would not impact occupied cactus wren habitat, or formerly occupied coastal cactus wren habitat that has been burned by wildfire.

The study area is outside the range of the coastal subspecies of the cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis*).

K. The Project would not impact occupied Hermes copper butterfly habitat.

The study area is outside the range of the Hermes copper butterfly.

L. The Project would not impact nesting success of the following sensitive bird species through grading, clearing, fire fuel modification, and/or other noise generating activities such as construction.

- **Coastal cactus wren**
- **Coastal California gnatcatcher**
- **Least Bell's vireo**
- **Southwestern willow flycatcher**
- **Tree-nesting raptors**
- **Ground-nesting raptors**
- **Golden eagle**
- **Light-footed clapper rail**

The study area is outside the range of the coastal cactus wren, coastal California gnatcatcher, and light-footed clapper rail. There is no suitable (riparian) nesting habitat in the study area for the least Bell's vireo or southwestern willow flycatcher. The trees in the study area (Mexican fan palms along Sunset Road and other trees and palms associated with existing development) are short and/or structurally inappropriate or insufficient to support a tree-nesting raptor nest.

The only potential ground-nesting raptor (the burrowing owl nests underground) is the northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), and there are no records of northern harrier nesting in or around Borrego Springs (Unitt 2004). Additionally, the northern harrier was not reported to any of the databases within five miles of the study area (see Section 1.3.1, *Literature Review*).

The golden eagle has also not been reported to any of the databases within five miles of the study area, and no suitable golden eagle nest sites (e.g., high cliffs, large deciduous or coniferous trees, or tall transmission towers) occur there.

3.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

This cumulative impact analysis addresses the quantifiable direct impacts addressed in Section 3.2, *Analysis of Project Effects*. The quantifiable direct impacts are those to raptor foraging habitat. The area of consideration for cumulative impacts is the Borrego Springs Community Plan Area. A total of 22 projects (including the proposed Project) were reviewed for this cumulative analysis (Table 4). Of these 22 cumulative projects, 10 would contribute to significant or potentially significant cumulative impacts to a minimum of five acres Sonoran creosote bush scrub that is raptor foraging habitat per the County (2010a). No other potential raptor foraging habitats are present on those nine cumulative project sites. The remaining 12 projects either would not result in impacts to raptor foraging habitat, or information on impacts is not available. The proposed Project would contribute to the cumulative impact on raptor foraging habitat as addressed below.

The 22 cumulative projects (including the proposed Project) with available data would impact 492.6 acres of raptor foraging habitat. The proposed Project would contribute 20.4 acres toward this impact total. Projects in the Borrego Springs Community Plan Area are required to compensate impacts to Sonoran creosote bush scrub at a 1:1 ratio, which ensures that the loss of this raptor foraging habitat is compensated. Since the loss from the proposed Project would be

compensated at the required 1:1 ratio, the proposed Project's contribution to the cumulative impact would be less than significant.

Table 4
CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ON BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

PROJECT NUMBER[1]	PROJECT NAME	SONORAN CREOSOTE BUSH SCRUB RAPTOR FORAGING HABITAT	
		Impacts (acres)	Mitigation (acres)
TM	Borrego Springs Country Club	--	--
TM 5319, R03-006, SPA 05-002	Borrego Country Club	95.0	95.0
TM 5487, S 07-052	Borrego Country Club Estates	210.62	210.62
TM 5512, S 06-039	Borrego Springs Senior Condos	9.72	9.72
TPM 21017	Desert Diamond	8.5	8.5
TPM 21027	Bowen Jonas	39.08	39.08
P04-034	Borrego Sand and Rock Borrow Pit	--	--
TM 5511, S 07-019	Borrego 50	46.46	46.46
MUP Min Dev 79-130-05 MOD/ Deviation Montesoro Development Lot 1, 40-Lot Subdivision TM	Rams Hill	--	--
GPA 08-005, TM 5552, AD 08-033 R08-006, S08-021	Yaqui Pass	32.72	32.72
TM	Yaqui Pass	--	--
TPM 21038	Miller	20.3	20.3
Pre-App TM MUP P99	Road Runner Club	--	--
TPM 21137	Rainshadow	9.8	9.8
P06-101, TM 5528	Borrego 138	--	--
TPM	Bole	--	--
TM 5559	Friestedt	(3.99)[2]	(3.99)[2]
TPM 21058	Henderson Canyon	(1.1)[2]	(1.1)[2]
P10-026	NRG Solar	(2.6)[2]	(2.6)[2]
P10-030	Avalon Solar	--	--
P09-012, 09-014	Eurus Solar	--	--
	Subtotal	**472.2**	**472.2**
--	Borrego Springs Library and Park Project	20.4	20.4
	TOTAL	**492.6**	**492.6**

[1]TM = Tentative Map; TPM = Tentative Parcel Map; MUP = Major Use Permit; SPA = Specific Plan Amendment; AD = Administrative Permit; GPA = General Plan Amendment; -- = Information Not Available or Not Applicable.
[2]Acreage not included in the total because the impacts are to less than five acres.

3.4 MITIGATION MEASURES AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

BIO-1 A single-visit, pre-grading survey shall be completed no more than 30 days before initial grading activities to determine if the burrowing owl has colonized the on- and off-site Project areas since the spring/summer 2015 burrowing owl survey. For purposes of the single-visit pre-grading survey, "grading" is defined as any disturbance to the land including brushing, clearing, grubbing, removing rubbish, and moving earth. The pre-grading survey shall cover the library site and park site and the sewer line trench area adjacent to Sunset Road, plus a buffer of 300 feet. The results of the pre-grading survey must be immediately reported to the County Mitigation Monitoring Coordinator, CDFW, and USFWS prior to grading and must be provided in writing (as by e-mail). If the burrowing owl or recent sign of burrowing owl is not found, then no further mitigation shall be required. Recent is defined as within the previous three years (CDFW 2012). If the burrowing owl or recent sign of burrowing owl is found, then the following measures shall be implemented (County 2010b).

- If one or more burrowing owls are using burrows on or within 300 feet of the proposed grading, the County Mitigation Monitoring Coordinator shall be contacted. The County Mitigation Monitoring Coordinator will contact the USFWS and CDFW regarding evicting the owls and collapsing the burrows and will enlist the help of a County staff biologist to continue with the coordination with the wildlife agencies and a qualified biologist regarding burrowing owls. No grading shall occur within 300 feet of an active burrow.

- If an owl is using a burrow, and it is not the breeding season, the owl may be evicted (as described in section 4.5.4 of County 2010b) after a qualified burrowing owl biologist has ensured, by using a fiber optic camera or other appropriate device, that no eggs or young are in the burrow. Eviction requires written concurrence from the USFWS and CDFW prior to implementation.

- If a burrow is being used, and it is the breeding season, grading shall not occur within 300 feet of the burrow until the young have fledged and are no longer dependent on the burrow, at which time the burrowing owls may be evicted as described above.

- Grading closer than 300 feet may occur with concurrence from the USFWS, CDFW, and County Mitigation Monitoring Coordinator. This distance shall depend on the burrow's location in relation to the site's topography and other physical and biological characteristics.

- Burrowing owls shall not be injured or killed.

BIO-2 No species on the California Invasive Plant Council's "Invasive Plant Inventory" list shall be used in any erosion control plan.

3.5 CONCLUSIONS

Proposed Project implementation could result in significant impacts to the burrowing owl should it be present. Potential significant impacts could also result from night lighting and invasive, non-native plant species. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-1** and **BIO-2** would reduce the impacts to less-than-significant levels.

4.0 RIPARIAN HABITAT OR SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITY

4.1 GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

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

Any of the following conditions would be considered significant if:

A. Project-related grading, clearing, construction or other activities would temporarily or permanently remove sensitive native or naturalized habitat (as listed in Table 5 in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance [County 2010a], excluding those without a mitigation ratio) on or off the project site.

B. Any of the following will occur to or within jurisdictional wetlands and/or riparian habitats as defined by the USACE, CDFW, and County: vegetation removal; grading; obstruction or diversion of water flow; adverse change in velocity, siltation, volume of flow, or runoff rate; placement of fill; placement of structures; road crossing construction; placement of culverts or other underground piping; any disturbance of the substratum; and/or any activity that may cause an adverse change in native species composition, diversity, and abundance.

C. The project would draw down the groundwater table to the detriment of groundwater-dependent habitat, typically a drop of 3 feet or more from historical low groundwater levels.

D. The project would cause indirect impacts, particularly at the edge of proposed development adjacent to proposed or existing open space or other natural habitat areas, to levels that would likely harm sensitive habitats over the long term.

E. The project does not include a wetland buffer adequate to protect the functions and values of existing wetlands.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EFFECTS

The Project would result in significant impacts under the above guideline for the following reason:

A. Project-related grading, clearing, construction or other activities would temporarily or permanently remove sensitive native or naturalized habitat (as listed in Table 5 in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance [County 2010a], excluding those without a mitigation ratio) on or off the Project site.

Impacts to sensitive native habitat include 20.4 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub. The impact would be significant because the Sonoran creosote bush scrub is listed in County (2010b) Table 5, which requires mitigation for the impacts at a 1:1 ratio. Disturbed habitat and urban/developed, which would also be impacted by the Project, are not sensitive.

The Project would not result in significant impacts under the above guidelines for the following reasons:

B. The following would not occur to or within jurisdictional wetlands and/or riparian habitats as defined by the USACE, CDFW, and County: vegetation removal; grading; diversion of water flow; placement of fill; placement of structures; road crossing construction; placement of culverts; disturbance of the substratum; and activities that may cause an adverse change in native species composition, diversity, and abundance.

There are no jurisdictional USACE, CDFW, or County wetlands and/or riparian habitats in the study area.

C. The Project would not draw down the groundwater table to the detriment of groundwater-dependent habitat, typically a drop of 3 feet or more from historical low groundwater levels.

There is no groundwater-dependent vegetation in the study area.

D. The Project would not cause indirect impacts, particularly at the edge of proposed development adjacent to proposed or existing open space or other natural habitat areas, to levels that would likely harm sensitive habitats over the long term.

As stated in Section 3.2 (letter H), *Analysis of Project Effects*, impacts from night lighting and invasive, non-native plant species would be significant (including for natural habitat areas). Impacts from fugitive dust and public access would be less than significant.

E. The Project does not include a wetland buffer adequate to protect the functions and values of existing wetlands.

There are no jurisdictional USACE, CDFW, or County wetlands and/or riparian habitats in the study area, so there are none that require a buffer.

4.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

As addressed in Section 3.3, *Cumulative Impact Analysis*, a total of 22 projects (including the proposed Project) were reviewed (Table 4). Of these 22 cumulative projects, 13 would contribute to significant or potentially significant cumulative impacts to Sonoran creosote bush scrub. The remaining nine projects either would not result in impacts to Sonoran creosote bush scrub, or information on impacts is not available. The proposed Project would contribute to the cumulative impact as addressed below.

The 22 cumulative projects (including the proposed Project) with available data would impact 492.6 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub. The proposed Project would contribute to 20.4 acres toward this impact total. Projects in the Borrego Springs Community Plan Area are required to compensate impacts to Sonoran creosote bush scrub at a 1:1 ratio, which ensures that the loss of this raptor foraging habitat is compensated. Since the loss from the proposed Project would be compensated at the required 1:1 ratio, the proposed Project's contribution to the cumulative impact would be less than significant.

4.4 MITIGATION MEASURES AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

BIO-3 Mitigation for impacts to 20.4 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub shall occur through the preservation of 20.4 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub habitat located off site within an approximately 325-acre property owned by the County of San Diego in Borrego Springs.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The proposed Project would result in a significant impact to one sensitive natural community; however, implementation of Project mitigation measure **BIO-3** would fully compensate for its loss and would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

5.0 JURISDICTIONAL WETLANDS AND WATERWAYS

5.1 GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

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

5.2 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EFFECTS

The Project would not result in any impacts to wetland Waters of the U.S. subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the USACE pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act since they do not occur in the study area.

5.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The Project would not result in any impacts to federally protected wetlands because they are not present in the study area. Therefore, the Project would not contribute to cumulative wetland impacts.

5.4 MITIGATION MEASURES AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

None required.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The Project would not result in impacts to federally protected wetlands, and no mitigation is required.

6.0 WILDLIFE MOVEMENT AND NURSERY SITES

6.1 GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

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

Any of the following conditions would be considered significant if:

A. The project would impede wildlife access to foraging habitat, breeding habitat, water sources, or other areas necessary for their reproduction.

B. The project would substantially interfere with connectivity between blocks of habitat, or would potentially block or substantially interfere with a local or regional wildlife corridor or linkage.

C. The project would create artificial wildlife corridors that do not follow natural movement patterns.

D. The project would increase noise and/or nighttime lighting in a wildlife corridor or linkage to levels proven to affect the behavior of the animals identified in a site-specific analysis of wildlife movement.

E. The project does not maintain an adequate width for an existing wildlife corridor or linkage and/or would further constrain an already narrow corridor through activities such as (but not limited to) reduction of corridor width, removal of available vegetative cover, placement of incompatible uses adjacent to it, and placement of barriers in the movement path.

F. The project does not maintain adequate visual continuity (i.e., long lines-of-site) within wildlife corridors or linkage.

6.2 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EFFECTS

The Project would not result in significant impacts under the above guidelines for the following reasons:

A. The Project would not impede wildlife access to foraging habitat, breeding habitat, water sources, or other areas necessary for their reproduction.

As described in Section 1.2.1, *Project Location*, for all intents and purposes, the study area is considered to be in the center of the developed Borrego Springs community, and great expanses of open habitat that provide these resources are present in and around Borrego Springs. Development of the Project in its proposed location near Christmas Circle, the hub of the community, would not impede wildlife access to resources necessary for reproduction.

B. The Project would not substantially interfere with connectivity between blocks of habitat and would not potentially block or substantially interfere with a local or regional wildlife corridor or linkage.

The proposed Project would not interfere with connectivity between blocks of habitat and would not potentially block or substantially interfere with a local or regional wildlife corridor or linkage because the Project would be built in the center of the developed Borrego Springs community.

C. The Project would not create artificial wildlife corridors that do not follow natural movement patterns.

The proposed Project, which would be built in the center of the developed Borrego Springs community, is not part of a wildlife corridor, nor is it a linkage between blocks of habitat. The Project would not, therefore, create an artificial corridor for wildlife movement.

D. The Project would not increase noise and/or nighttime lighting in a wildlife corridor or linkage to levels proven to affect the behavior of the animals identified in a site-specific analysis of wildlife movement.

The Project study area is not part of a wildlife corridor, nor is it a linkage between blocks of habitat. Therefore, the Project would not increase noise and/or nighttime lighting in a corridor or linkage.

E. The Project maintains an adequate width for an existing wildlife corridor or linkage and would not further constrain an already narrow corridor through activities such as (but not limited to) reduction of corridor width, removal of available vegetative cover, placement of incompatible uses adjacent to it, or placement of barriers in the movement path.

The Project study area is not part of a wildlife corridor, nor is it a linkage between blocks of habitat. Additionally, no corridors or linkages occur in the immediate vicinity of the Project. Therefore, there is no width to maintain.

F. The Project maintains adequate visual continuity (i.e., long lines-of-site) within wildlife corridors and linkage.

The Project study area is not part of a wildlife corridor, nor is it a linkage. The Project would not, therefore, impair visual continuity within corridors or linkages in the local area.

6.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

With the Project's proposed small footprint and location, the contribution of the Project to the cumulative impact on wildlife movement would be less than significant.

6.4 MITIGATION MEASURES AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

None required.

6.5 CONCLUSION

The Project study area is not part of a wildlife corridor or linkage, and the proposed Project would, therefore, have no impacts on corridors or linkages.

7.0 LOCAL POLICIES, ORDINANCES, AND ADOPTED PLANS

7.1 GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, NCCP plan, or other approved local, regional or state HCP?

Any of the following conditions would be considered significant if:

A. For lands outside of the MSCP, the project would impact Diegan coastal sage scrub vegetation in excess of the County's 5 percent habitat loss threshold, as defined by the Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP Guidelines.

B. The project would preclude or prevent the preparation of the subregional NCCP. For example, the project proposes development within areas that have been identified by the County or resource agencies as critical to future habitat preserves.

C. The project will impact any amount of wetlands or sensitive habitat lands as outlined in the RPO.

D. The project would not minimize and/or mitigate coastal sage scrub habitat loss in accordance with Section 4.3 of the Natural Community Conservation Planning Guidelines.

E. The project does not conform to goals and requirements outlined in any applicable HCP, Resource Management Plan (RMP), Special Area Management Plan, Watershed Plan, or similar regional planning effort.

F. For lands within the MSCP, the project would not minimize impacts to Biological Resource Core Area, as defined in the Biological Mitigation Ordinance (County 2010c).

G. The project would preclude connectivity between areas of high habitat values, as defined by the Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP Guidelines.

H. The project does not maintain existing movement corridors and/or habitat linkages, as defined by the BMO.

I. The project does not avoid impacts to MSCP narrow endemic species and would impact core populations of narrow endemics.

J. The project would reduce the likelihood of survival and recovery of listed species in the wild.

K. The project would result in the killing of migratory birds or destruction of active migratory bird nests and/or eggs (MBTA).

L. The project would result in the take of eagles, eagle eggs, or any part of an eagle (Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; BGEPA).

7.2 ANALYSIS OF PROJECT EFFECTS

The Project would result in significant impacts under the above guidelines for the following reason:

K. The Project would result in the killing of migratory birds or destruction of active migratory bird nests and/or eggs (MBTA).

Vegetation clearing and grading for the Project could potentially result in the killing of migratory birds or destruction of active migratory bird nests and/or eggs protected under the MBTA. Project construction could directly impact individuals or cause breeding birds to temporarily or permanently leave their territories, which could lead to reduced reproductive success and increased mortality. These impacts would be significant.

The Project would not result in significant impacts under the above guidelines for the following reasons:

A. The Project would not impact Diegan coastal sage scrub vegetation outside of the MSCP in excess of the County's 5 percent habitat loss threshold, as defined by the Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP Guidelines.

The Project would not impact Diegan coastal sage scrub vegetation.

B. The Project would not preclude or prevent the preparation of the subregional NCCP. For example, the project proposes development within areas that have been identified by the County or resource agencies as critical to future habitat preserves.

Borrego Springs is in the ECMSCP Plan Area. While the ECMSCP Subarea Plan is still in the development phase, a Working Draft Focused Conservation Area map is available (County 2008). The library site is identified as draft Agricultural or Natural Upland Outside the Focused Conservation Area. The park site is identified as draft Baseline Preserve. The Project would impact 17.7 acres of draft Baseline Preserve. The Project would not, however, impact federal or State listed plant or animal species since they are not present, and the burrowing owl is considered to have low potential to occur. Additionally, areas targeted for conservation in the ECMSCP Plan Area are primarily located east of Borrego Springs in Borrego Sink and adjoining Anza-Borrego State Park. Therefore, the park site is not critical to the future habitat preserve in the ECMSCP Plan Area, and the Project would not preclude or prevent the preparation of the ECMSCP Subarea Plan.

C. The Project would not impact wetlands outlined in the RPO.

The Project would not impact any wetlands outlined in the RPO.

D. The Project would minimize and mitigate coastal sage scrub habitat loss in accordance with Section 4.3 of the NCCP Guidelines.

The Project would not impact coastal sage scrub.

E. The Project does not conform to goals and requirements outlined in any applicable HCP, Resource Management Plan (RMP), Special Area Management Plan, Watershed Plan, or similar regional planning effort.

No adopted HCP, RMP, Special Area Management Plan, Watershed Plan, or other regional planning efforts are applicable to the Project. As such, the Project would not conflict with adopted plans.

F. For lands within the MSCP, the project would not minimize impacts to Biological Resources Core Area, as defined in the Biological Mitigation Ordinance (County 2010c).

The Project does not occur within an adopted MSCP planning area; therefore, the BMO does not apply. No impact would occur.

G. The Project would not preclude connectivity between areas of high habitat values, as defined by the Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP Guidelines.

The Project is located outside of the southern California coast sage scrub habitat range. As such, the Project would not preclude connectivity between high habitat value areas in the region.

H. The Project does not maintain existing movement corridors and/or habitat linkages, as defined by the BMO.

The Project does not occur within an adopted MSCP planning area; therefore, the BMO does not apply.

I. The Project does not avoid impacts to MSCP narrow endemic species and would impact core populations of narrow endemics.

The Project does not occur within an adopted MSCP planning area; therefore, protection of MSCP narrow endemics does not apply.

J. The Project would not reduce the likelihood of survival and recovery of listed species in the wild.

The Project would not reduce the likelihood of survival and recovery of any listed species in the wild since none occur in the Project study area.

L. The Project would not result in the take of eagles, eagle eggs, or any part of an eagle (Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act; BGEPA; Appendix F).

There are no reports of the golden eagle to any of the databases within five miles of the Project study area (see Section 1.3.1, *Literature Review*). The study area does not contain a golden eagle nest site and is not within any known golden eagle territory. Therefore, no impacts would occur to the golden eagle.

7.3 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The cumulative projects would be required to conform to County Guidelines 7.1.A through 7.1.L and provide mitigation, as appropriate. Mitigation is required to reduce the Project-level impacts on nesting birds. Conformance or mitigation, as appropriate, would be required for the other cumulative projects in order to obtain a recommendation for approval. Therefore, cumulative impacts on local policies, ordinances, and adopted plants would be less than significant.

7.4 MITIGATION MEASURES AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

BIO-4 No grubbing, clearing, or grading shall occur during the general avian breeding season for the Colorado Desert and breeding season for tree-nesting and ground-nesting raptors in San Diego County (January 15 – July 15 [Table 8-3 in

California Partners in Flight and PRBO Conservation Science 2009; County 2010a]). All grading permits, improvement plans, and the final map shall state the same. If grubbing, clearing, or grading would occur during the general avian and raptor breeding season, a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if active bird nests are present in the affected areas. If there are no nesting birds (includes nest building or other breeding/nesting behavior) within this area, clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed. If active nests or nesting birds are observed within the area, the biologist shall flag the active nests or area of nesting activity with an appropriate buffer for the species, and construction activities shall avoid the buffer until nesting behavior has ceased, nests have failed, or young have fledged, as determined by the qualified biologist.

7.5 CONCLUSION

Implementation of the Project would result in potentially significant impacts to breeding birds. Implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-4**, which proposes avoiding clearing of vegetation during the breeding season or protection for avian nesting, would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level.

8.0 SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

Development of the Project would result in significant impacts to special status animal species, sensitive natural communities, and local policies. Table 5 provides a summary of project impacts and mitigation pertaining to sensitive natural communities. Table 6 provides a summary of the proposed mitigation measures for all significant, or potentially significant, impacts from the Project.

Table 5
SUMMARY OF VEGETATION COMMUNITIES/HABITAT TYPES, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION FOR THE BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

VEGETATION COMMUNITY/HABITAT TYPE	TOTAL EXISTING (acres)	TOTAL IMPACTS (acres)	MITIGATION (acres)			
			Ratio	Required	Preserved On Site	Provided Off Site
Sonoran creosote bush shrub (33100)	20.4	20.4	1:1	20.4	--	20.4
Disturbed Habitat (11300)	0.2	0.2	0:1	--	--	--
Urban/developed (12000)	0.01	0.01	0:1	--	--	--
TOTAL[1]	**20.6**	**20.6**	--	**20.4**	--	**20.4**

[1]Rounded to the nearest one-tenth of an acre.

Table 6
SUMMARY OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

PROPOSED MITIGATION	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION	GUIDELINE NUMBER
BIO-1 A single-visit, pre-grading survey shall be completed no more than 30 days before initial grading activities to determine if the burrowing owl has colonized the on- and off-site Project areas since the spring/summer 2015 burrowing owl survey. For purposes of the single-visit pre-grading survey, "grading" is defined as any disturbance to the land including brushing, clearing, grubbing, removing rubbish, and moving earth. The pre-grading survey shall cover the library site and park site and the sewer line trench area adjacent to Sunset Road, plus a buffer of 300 feet. The results of the pre-grading survey must be immediately reported to the County Mitigation Monitoring Coordinator, CDFW, and USFWS prior to grading and must be provided in writing (as by e-mail). If the burrowing owl or recent sign of burrowing owl is not found, then no further mitigation shall be required. Recent is defined as within the previous three years (CDFW 2012). If the burrowing owl or recent sign of burrowing owl is found, then the following measures shall be implemented (County 2010b). • If one or more burrowing owls are using burrows on or within 300 feet of the proposed grading, the County Mitigation Monitoring Coordinator shall be contacted. The County Mitigation Monitoring Coordinator will contact the USFWS and CDFW regarding evicting the owls and collapsing the burrows and will enlist the help of a County staff biologist to continue with the coordination with the wildlife agencies and a qualified biologist regarding burrowing owls. No grading shall occur within 300 feet of an active burrow. • If an owl is using a burrow, and it is not the breeding season, the owl may be evicted (as described in section 4.5.4 of County 2010b) after a qualified burrowing owl biologist has ensured, by using a fiber optic camera or other appropriate device, that no eggs or young are in the burrow.	Less than significant	3.2 B 3.2 I

Table 6 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

PROPOSED MITIGATION	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION	GUIDELINE NUMBER
BIO-1 (cont.) Eviction requires written concurrence from the USFWS and CDFW prior to implementation. • If a burrow is being used, and it is the breeding season, grading shall not occur within 300 feet of the burrow until the young have fledged and are no longer dependent on the burrow, at which time the burrowing owls may be evicted as described above. • Grading closer than 300 feet may occur with concurrence from the USFWS, CDFW, and County Mitigation Monitoring Coordinator. This distance shall depend on the burrow's location in relation to the site's topography and other physical and biological characteristics. • Burrowing owls shall not be injured or killed.		
BIO-2 No species on the California Invasive Plant Council's "Invasive Plant Inventory" list shall be used in any erosion control plan.	Less than significant	3.2 H
BIO-3 Mitigation for impacts to 20.4 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub shall occur through the preservation of 20.4 acres of Sonoran creosote bush scrub habitat located off site within an approximately 325-acre property owned by the County of San Diego in Borrego Springs.	Less than significant	4.2 A

Table 6 (cont.)
SUMMARY OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES MITIGATION MEASURES FOR THE BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

PROPOSED MITIGATION	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION	GUIDELINE NUMBER
BIO-4 No grubbing, clearing, or grading shall occur during the general avian breeding season for the Colorado Desert and breeding season for tree- and ground nesting raptors in San Diego County (January 15 – July 15 [Table 8-3 in California Partners in Flight and PRBO Conservation Science 2009; County 2010a]). All grading permits, improvement plans, and the final map shall state the same. If grubbing, clearing, or grading would occur during the general avian and raptor breeding season, a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if active bird nests are present in the affected areas. If there are no nesting birds (includes nest building or other breeding/nesting behavior) within this area, clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed. If active nests or nesting birds are observed within the area, the biologist shall flag the active nests or area of nesting activity with an appropriate buffer for the species, and construction activities shall avoid the buffer until nesting behavior has ceased, nests have failed, or young have fledged, as determined by the qualified biologist.	Less than significant	7.2 K

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Appendix A

PLANTS SPECIES OBSERVED

Appendix A
PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED – BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

FAMILY	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	HABITAT**
Arecaceae	*Washingtonia robusta**	Mexican fan palm	SCBS, DH
	Ambrosia dumosa	white bursage	SCBS
	Ambrosia salsola	burrobrush	SCBS
	Chaenactis stevioides	desert pincushion	SCBS
	Encelia farinosa	brittlebush	SCBS
	Eriophyllum lanosum	white Easter bonnets	SCBS
	Malacothrix glabrata	desert dandelion	SCBS
	Palafoxia arida var. *arida*	Spanish-needle	SCBS
	Perityle emoryi	Emory's rockdaisy	SCBS
	Stephanomeria pauciflora	desert straw	SCBS
	Uropappus lindleyi	silver puffs	SCBS
Boraginaceae	*Cryptantha micrantha*	cryptantha	SCBS
	Pectocarya heterocarpa	hairy-leaved comb-bur	SCBS
	Phacelia crenulata var. *ambigua*	purplestem phacelia	SCBS
	Phacelia distans	wild heliotrope	SCBS
Brassicaceae	*Brassica tournefortii**	Sahara mustard	DH
	Lepidium lasiocarpum var. *lasiocarpum*	sand peppergrass	SCBS
Cactaceae	*Cylindropuntia echinocarpa*	golden cholla	SCBS
Chenopodiaceae	*Salsola tragus**	Russian thistle	DH
Euphorbiaceae	*Chamaesyce polycarpa*	desert sand mat	SCBS
	Croton californicus	California croton	SCBS
Fabaceae	*Dalea mollissima*	silky dalea	SCBS
	*Parkinsonia aculeate**	Mexican palo verde	DH
	Psorothamnus spinosus	smoke tree	DH
Fouquieriaceae	*Fouquieria splendens*	ocotillo	SCBS
Geraniaceae	*Erodium botrys**	long-beak filaree	SCBS, DH
Krameriaceae	*Krameria bicolor*	white rhatany	SCBS
Nyctaginaceae	*Abronia villosa*	desert sand verbena	SCBS
Onagraceae	*Eremothera boothii* ssp. *condensata*	Booth's evening primrose	SCBS
	Eulobus californicus	false-mustard	SCBS
Plantaginaceae	*Plantago ovata*	island plantain	SCBS
Poaceae	*Pennisetum setaceum**	purple fountain grass	DH
	*Schismus barbatus**	Mediterranean grass	DH
Polemoniaceae	*Eriastrum eremicum* ssp. *eremicum*	desert woollystar	SCBS
	Loeseliastrum matthewsii	desert calico	SCBS

Appendix A (cont.)
PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED – BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

FAMILY	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	HABITAT**
Polygonaceae	*Chorizanthe brevicornu*	brittle spineflower	SCBS
	Eriogonum inflatum	desert trumpet	SCBS
	Eriogonum reniforme	kidneyleaf buckwheat	SCBS
Zygophyllaceae	*Larrea tridentata*	creosote bush	SCBS

*Non-native Species
**SCBS=Sonoran creosote bush scrub; DH=disturbed habitat

Appendix B

ANIMALS SPECIES OBSERVED OR DETECTED

Appendix B
ANIMAL SPECIES OBSERVED OR DETECTED –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

ORDER/FAMILY	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
INVERTEBRATES		
Hymenoptera		
Formicidae	*Linepithema humile*	Argentine ant
VERTEBRATES		
Reptiles		
Squamata	--	unidentified lizard
Birds		
Apodiformes		
Trochilidae	*Calypte costae*	Costa's hummingbird
Columbiformes		
Columbidae	*Zenaida macroura*	mourning dove
	Zenaida asiatica	white-winged dove
Cuculiformes		
Cuculidae	*Geococcyx californianus*	greater roadrunner
Falconiformes		
Falconidae	*Falco sparverius*	American kestrel
Passeriformes		
Corvidae	*Corvus brachyrhynchos*	American crow
	Corvus corax	common raven
Emberizidae	*Amphispiza bilineata*	black-throated sparrow
Fringillidae	*Haemorhous mexicanus*	house finch
Mimidae	*Mimus polyglottos*	northern mockingbird
	Toxostoma redivivum	California thrasher
Sylviidae	*Chamaea fasciata*	wrentit
Troglodytidae	*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*	cactus wren
Tyrannidae	*Sayornis saya*	Say's phoebe
	Tyrannus vociferans	Cassin's kingbird
Mammals		
Carnivora		
Canidae	*Canis latrans*	coyote
Lagomorpha		
Leporidae	*Sylvilagus audubonii*	desert cottontail
Rodentia		
Heteromyidae	*Dipodomys* sp.	kangaroo rat

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Appendix C

BURROWING OWL SURVEY REPORT

HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc.
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La Mesa, CA 91942
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619.462.0552 **fax**
www.**helixepi**.com

November 11, 2015 CSD-04.10

Mr. Marc Cass
County of San Diego
Department of General Services
5560 Overland Avenue, Suite 410
San Diego, CA 92123

Subject: Results of Burrowing Owl Survey for the Borrego Springs Library and Park Project

Dear Mr. Cass:

This letter report presents the methods and results for the 2015 habitat assessment and focused burrow and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) survey conducted by HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX) for the Borrego Springs Library and Park Project (Project). The burrowing owl survey area included the 20.5-acre Project site and a 500-foot-wide buffer surrounding the Project site.

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The 20.5-acre Project (Assessor's Parcel Numbers 1980203600, 1980203000, 1980203400) is generally located in the northwest and southwest quadrants of the intersection of Country Club Road and Church Lane within the unincorporated community of Borrego Springs in San Diego County, California (Figures 1 and 2). Regionally, the Project is located north of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, east of Warner Springs, south of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto mountains, and west of the Salton Sea. The Project is located in Section 5, Township 11S, Range 6E of the U.S. Geological Service (USGS) 7.5-minute Borrego Palm Canyon Quad (Figure 3). Borrego Springs is in the Colorado Desert subregion of the larger Sonoran Desert, and Borrego Springs is within the East County Multiple Species Conservation Program Plan (ECMSCP) Area. However, the ECMSCP Subarea Plan is still in the development phase and has not been approved.

The proposed Project would consist of two primary, separate elements: a new 2.8-acre public library facility with a possible attached sheriff substation and expanded community room, and a new 17.7-acre public park. Off-site utility extensions would also be necessary, and Church Lane

between the library site and park site may be vacated. Each of these proposed Project elements is described in more detail below.

Library/Sheriff Substation

The library would occupy up to 15,500 square feet on the 2.8-acre site (library site) to replace the approximately 3,700-square-foot Borrego Springs Public Library (a branch of the San Diego County Library System) located in The Mall shopping center.

The Project may also include a 1,600-square-foot sheriff substation attached to the southwestern corner of the library, which would replace the San Diego County Sheriff Borrego Springs Office located directly across Country Club Road in The Mall.

Park

The new 17.7-acre public park would include play areas; shaded picnic areas; multi-use courts for tennis, pickleball and other sports; a meditation and sculpture garden; a small observatory and outdoor amphitheater; and a fenced dog park along with other amenities and parking.

Off-site Utility Extensions

The library site has water meters. It would be necessary, however, to extend water infrastructure to the park site from Country Club Road and/or Church Lane. It is assumed that up to 3 water line connections could be made to the park from Country Club Road and up to 1 connection could be made from Church Lane.

Sewer service would be provided to the library/sheriff substation from sewer mains located in the Christmas Circle roundabout. No sewer is needed for the park site. It is anticipated that the sewer pipeline serving the library/sheriff substation would be extended from Christmas Circle in a trench constructed in the unpaved shoulder on the south side of the Sunset Road right-of-way, and then under Country Club Road to the library site.

Street Vacation Option

The proposed Project also includes an option to better integrate the library/sheriff substation and park by closing Church Lane between the library site and park site. The closure would facilitate access between the library/sheriff substation and the park, making it easier for park patrons to utilize the library's restrooms and other amenities, and for library patrons to take advantage of the park's facilities. To accomplish this goal, Church Lane would be vacated between Country Club Road and the east end of the Project site. It is anticipated that the remaining portion of Church Lane would terminate in a cul-de-sac near the Project boundary.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The library and park sites (that make up the Project site) support desert scrub vegetation and are bordered by vacant, undeveloped land; a shopping center; and several churches. More specifically, the eastern edge of the Project site is approximately 0.23 mile southwest of Christmas Circle Community Park, which is considered the hub and gateway to Borrego Springs. A shopping center known as The Mall is located north of the library site across Country Club Road. The land immediately to the west of the library site is vacant and undeveloped. The land to the west and south immediately adjacent to the park site is occupied by four churches. The land to the east across Country Club Road is vacant and undeveloped, but County Highway S3 and residential development are just east of Country Club Road (Figure 2). Many trails and dirt roads traverse the Project site, and there is evidence of off-road vehicle enthusiasts, dirt bike riders, bicyclists, equestrians, and joggers currently using the Project site.

The Project site slopes generally west and south, from a high point of 1,167 feet (ft) above mean sea level (amsl) in the northeast to a low point of 957 ft amsl in the northwest, with elevations of approximately 1,000 ft amsl in the southwest. Two soil types have been mapped on the Project site: Rositas loamy coarse sand and Carrizo very gravelly sand. These two soil types, along with small areas of acid igneous rock and sloping gullied land, occur in the burrowing owl survey area (U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service 2015). The vast majority of soil in the burrowing owl survey area (and on the Project site) is Rositas loamy coarse sand.

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

Three vegetation communities occur in the burrowing owl survey area: Sonoran creosote bush scrub, disturbed habitat, and urban/developed (Figure 4). A brief description of each community is provided below.

Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub

Sonoran creosote bush scrub is the most common creosote scrub of the Colorado Desert and consists of widely spaced shrubs up to 3 meters tall. The vegetation community is very similar in appearance to Mojave creosote bush scrub but with greater species and life form diversity including several succulents. Growth of typical species within this vegetation community/habitat type occurs from winter to early spring if rainfall is sufficient; otherwise, plant species may be dormant for long periods. Many species of ephemeral herbs may flower in late February and March if the winter rains have been adequate. Sonoran creosote bush scrub occurs in well-drained soils of slopes, fans, and valleys rather than upland sites with thin, residual soils. The dominant plant species in Sonoran creosote bush scrub in the survey area are creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), white bursage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), and ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*).

Disturbed Habitat

Disturbed habitat includes the unpaved and largely unvegetated shoulders of Country Club Road and Sunset Road, as well as areas adjacent to development. A few scattered, non-native plant species such as Mediterranean grass (*Schismus barbatus*) and Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) are present.

Urban/Developed

Urban/developed land includes areas that have been constructed upon or otherwise covered with a permanent, unnatural surface and may include, for example, structures, pavement, irrigated/maintained landscaping, or hardscape. Urban/developed land in the survey area consists of Country Club Road; Sunset Road; Church Lane; Palm Canyon Drive; church buildings, grounds, and parking lots; the Borrego Springs post office; a portion of The Mall; and Christmas Circle.

METHODS

Habitat Assessment

A burrowing owl habitat assessment was completed on April 10, 2015 by HELIX biologist George Aldridge to determine the presence or absence of burrowing owl habitat on the Project site and within a 500-foot-wide buffer surrounding the Project site (i.e., the survey area). Areas within the 500-foot-wide buffer that were inaccessible because they were on private property were surveyed using binoculars. Locations of burrows potentially suitable for burrowing owl use were recorded with a hand-held Global Positioning System unit. Potential burrow sites included fossorial mammal burrows, earthen berms, and debris piles composed of both vegetation and rock. Because suitable habitat was observed (i.e., areas with low density shrub cover and gentle slopes), it was determined that a focused burrowing owl survey should be completed and is described below.

Focused Burrow and Burrowing Owl Survey

HELIX biologists George Aldridge, Katie Bellon, and Benjamin Rosenbaum conducted a focused survey for the burrowing owl, as well as for burrows and burrowing owl sign within the survey area. Mr. Aldridge, Ms. Bellon, and Mr. Rosenbaum all hold degrees in biology and have experience conducting a wide variety of biological field surveys in southern California, including habitat assessments and nesting and wintering season surveys for burrowing owl, and are familiar with the species and its ecology.

A total of 4 site visits were made following survey guidelines in the Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation prepared by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife ([CDFW], formerly known as the California Department of Fish and Game [CDFG] 2012; Table 1). The biologists slowly walked meandering transects spaced no more than 100 feet apart, closely examining any possible perching locations as well as mammal burrows. Burrows potentially suitable for use by

burrowing owls were checked for signs of recent owl occupation, which includes pellets (e.g., regurgitated fur, bones, and insect parts), white wash (excrement), and feathers.

All site visits took place in daylight hours, beginning either immediately before or immediately after sunrise, and spanned a 3-month period during the burrowing owl nesting season (February 1 to August 31; CDFG 2012). The survey was conducted during periods when visibility was not limited by fog. The survey was not conducted during periods of high winds or rain. No part of survey area was inaccessible due to difficult terrain; however, private property was inaccessible, so it was surveyed using binoculars (Figure 5).

Table 1
SURVEY TIMES AND CONDITIONS

DATE	TIME (START/ STOP)	BIOLOGIST	SURVEY TYPE	CONDITIONS[1]
4/10/2015	0615/0745	George Aldridge	Habitat Assessment, Focused Survey Site Visit 1	Partly cloudy, 55-65°F, wind 0-2 mph
5/12/2015	0700/0880	Katie Bellon Ben Rosenbaum	Focused Survey Site Visit 2	Partly cloudy, 66-73°F, wind 2-5 mph
6/12/2015	0532/0745	Katie Bellon	Focused Survey Site Visit 3	Clear, 69-78°F, wind 1-6 mph
7/9/2015	0530/0830	Katie Bellon	Focused Survey Site Visit 4	Clear, 66-72°F, wind 5-10 mph

[1] °F = degrees Fahrenheit; mph = miles per hour

A list of all animal species observed or detected during the survey is provided in Appendix A. Representative photographs of the burrowing owl survey area are included in Appendix B.

RESULTS

Habitat suitable for burrowing owl was observed in the survey area and included Sonoran creosote bush scrub and disturbed habitat (Figure 5). Burrowing species such as kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys* sp.) were detected in the survey area; however, only two burrows potentially suitable for use by the burrowing owl were observed, and neither was on the Project site (Figure 5). No burrows examined during the survey had any sign of use by burrowing owls. Therefore, the burrowing owl is currently presumed to be absent from the survey area.

Please contact me or Karl Osmundson at (619) 462-1515 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Katie Bellon
Biologist

Enclosures:

Figure 1: Regional Location
Figure 2: Project Vicinity Map (Aerial Photo)
Figure 3: Project Vicinity Map (USGS Topography)
Figure 4: Vegetation Communities/Habitat Types
Figure 5: Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) Survey Results

Appendix A: Animal Species Observed or Detected
Appendix B: Representative Site Photos

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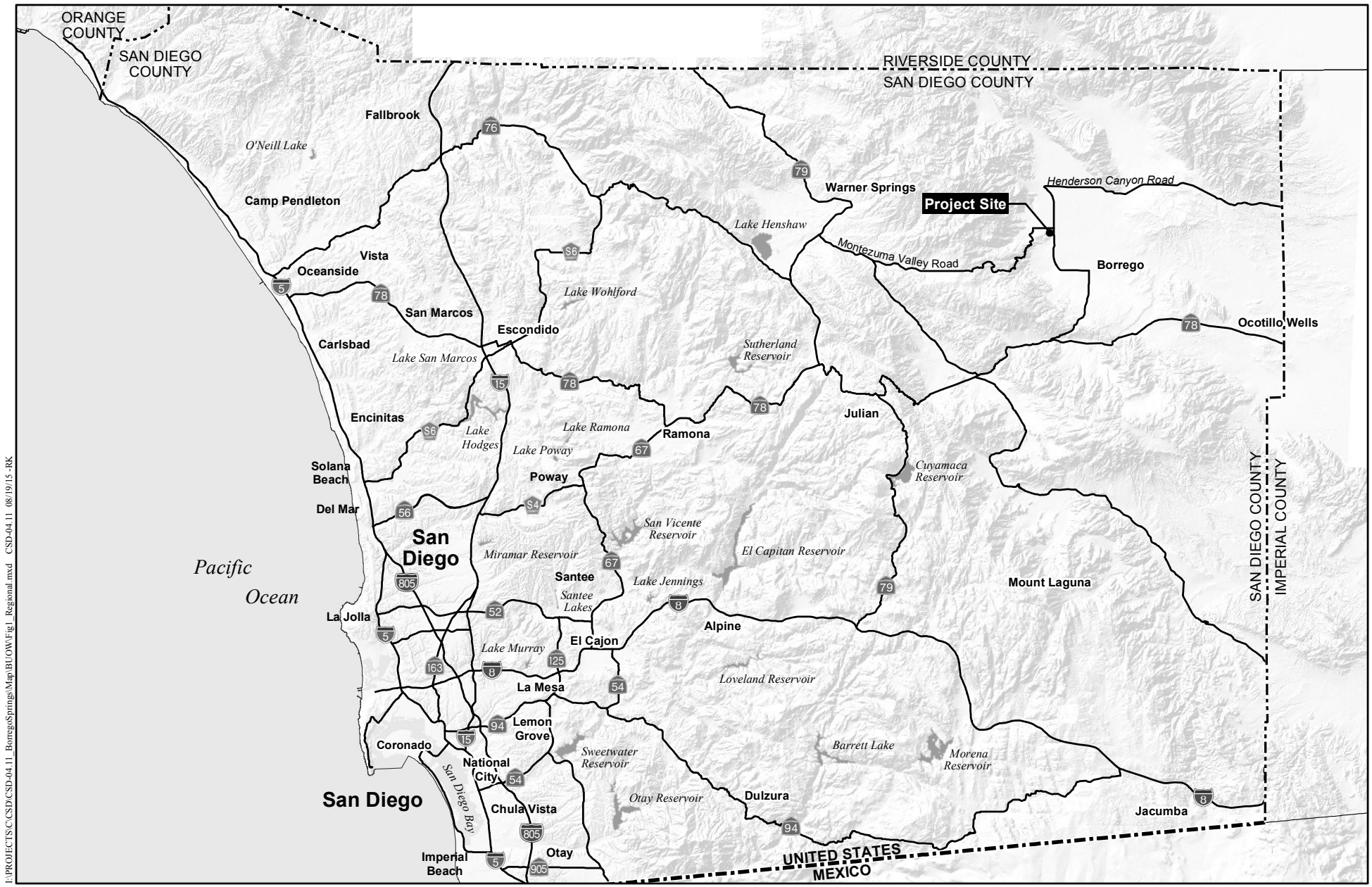

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Regional Location

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

Figure 1

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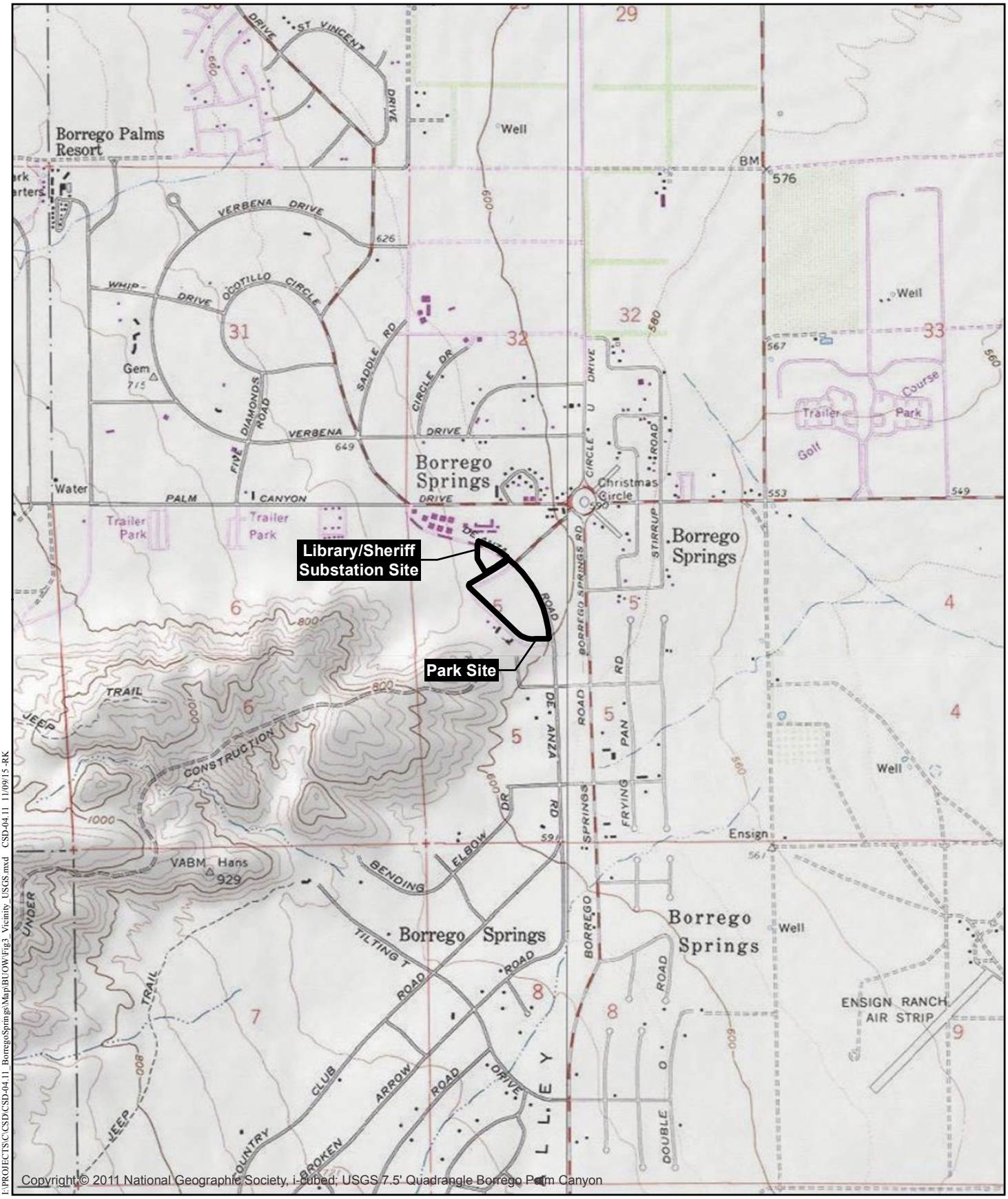
Project Vicinity Map (Aerial Photo)

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

N 0 2,000 Feet

Figure 2



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Project Vicinity Map (USGS Topography)

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

N

0 2,000 Feet

Figure 3

Vegetation Communities/Habitat Types

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

N 0 300 Feet

Figure 4

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Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) Survey Results

BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

HELIX Environmental Planning

Figure 5

Appendix A
ANIMAL SPECIES OBSERVED OR DETECTED – BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

ORDER/FAMILY	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
INVERTEBRATES		
Hymenoptera		
Formicidae	*Linepithema humile*	Argentine ant
VERTEBRATES		
Reptiles		
Squamata	--	unidentified lizard
Birds		
Apodiformes		
Trochilidae	*Calypte costae*	Costa's hummingbird
Columbiformes		
Columbidae	*Zenaida macroura*	mourning dove
	Zenaida asiatica	white-winged dove
Cuculiformes		
Cuculidae	*Geococcyx californianus*	greater roadrunner
Falconiformes		
Falconidae	*Falco sparverius*	American kestrel
Passeriformes		
Corvidae	*Corvus brachyrhynchos*	American crow
	Corvus corax	common raven
Emberizidae	*Amphispiza bilineata*	black-throated sparrow
Fringillidae	*Haemorhous mexicanus*	house finch
Mimidae	*Mimus polyglottos*	northern mockingbird
	Toxostoma redivivum	California thrasher
Sylviidae	*Chamaea fasciata*	wrentit
Troglodytidae	*Campylorhynchus brunneicapilus*	cactus wren
Tyrannidae	*Sayornis saya*	Say's phoebe
	Tyrannus vociferans	Cassin's kingbird
Mammals		
Carnivora		
Canidae	*Canis latrans*	coyote
Lagomorpha		
Leporidae	*Sylvilagus audubonii*	desert cottontail
Rodentia		
Heteromyidae	*Dipodomys* sp.	kangaroo rat

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Photo 1 – Southeast corner of the Sonoran creosote bush scrub Project area (facing north).

Photo 2 – Southwest corner of the Project area and urban development in background (facing west).

Appendix D

SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR

Appendix D
SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS	HABIT, ECOLOGY AND LIFE HISTORY	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Arizona carlowrightia	*Carlowrightia arizonica*	--/-- CNPS 2B.2 County List B	Perennial, deciduous shrub that blooms from March to May. Found in sandy, granitic alluvium in Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**None:** A perennial shrub that would have been observed if present.
Arizona spurge	*Euphorbia arizonica*	--/-- CNPS 2B.3	Perennial herb that blooms from March to April. Found in sandy habitats in Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**Low:** Species not found.
Borrego bedstraw	*Galium angustifolium borregoense*	--/SR CNPS 1B.3 County List A	Perennial herb that blooms in March. Found in rocky habitats in Sonoran creosote bush scrub and Borrego Palm Canyon.	**None:** Rocky habitats are not present in the study area.
Borrego Valley pepper-grass	*Lepidium flavum felipense*	--/-- CNPS 1B.2 County List A	Annual herb that blooms from March to May. Found in sandy habitats in pinyon and juniper woodlands, dry lake bottoms, and Sonoran creosote bush scrub within Little Blair Valley.	**Low:** Species not found.
Bristly scaleseed	*Spermolepis echinata*	--/-- CNPS 2B.3 County List B	Annual herb that blooms from March to April in sandy or rocky habitats in Sonoran creosote bush scrub in Borrego Valley.	**Low:** Species not found.
Brown turbans	*Malperia tenuis*	--/-- CNPS 2B.3 County List B	Annual herb that blooms from February to April. Found in sandy and gravelly habitats in desert pavement and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**Low:** Species not found.

Appendix D (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS	HABIT, ECOLOGY AND LIFE HISTORY	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
California ayenia	*Ayenia compacta*	--/-- CNPS 2B.3 County List B	Perennial herb that blooms from March to April. Found in rocky habitats in desert canyons and Mojavean and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**Low:** Species not found.
Chaparral sand-verbena	*Abronia villosa aurita*	--/-- CNPS 1B.1 County List A	Annual herb that blooms from January to September. Found in sandy habitats in chaparral, coastal scrub, and desert dunes.	**None:** Chaparral, coastal scrub, and desert dunes are not present in the study area.
Charlotte's phacelia	*Phacelia nashiana*	--/-- CNPS 1B.2	Annual herb that blooms from March to June. Usually found in granitic, sandy habitats in Joshua tree woodlands, Mojavean desert scrub, and pinyon and juniper woodlands.	**Low:** Species not found.
Desert spike-moss	*Selaginella eremophila*	--/-- CNPS 2B.2 County List B	Perennial, rhizomatous herb that blooms from May to July. Found in gravelly or rocky habitats on desert slopes in chaparral and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**None:** Gravelly or rocky habitats on desert slopes do not occur in the study area.
Gander's cryptantha	*Cryptantha ganderi*	--/-- CNPS 1B.1 County List A	Annual herb that blooms from February to May. Found in sandy habitats in desert dunes and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**Low:** Species not found.

Appendix D (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS	HABIT, ECOLOGY AND LIFE HISTORY	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Gravel milk-vetch	*Astragalus sabulonum*	--/-- CNPS 2B.2	Annual/perennial herb that blooms from February to June. Usually found in sandy, sometimes gravelly, flats, washes, and roadsides; desert dunes; and Mojavean and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**Low:** Species not found
Hairy stickleaf	*Mentzelia hirsutissima*	--/-- CNPS 2B.3 County List B	Annual herb that blooms from March to May. Found in sandy and rocky habitats in Sonoran creosote bush scrub and the low desert.	**Low:** Species not found.
Orcutt's woody-aster	*Xylorhiza orcuttii*	--/-- CNPS 1B.2 County List A	Perennial herb that blooms from March to April. Found in gypsum soils in desert canyons and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**None:** Gypsum soils are not present in the study area.
Palmer's jackass clover	*Wislizenia refracta palmeri*	--/-- CNPS 2B.2	Perennial, deciduous shrub that blooms from January to December. Found in chenopod scrub, desert dunes, Sonoran creosote bush scrub, and Sonoran thorn woodland habitats.	**None:** A perennial shrub that would have been observed if present.
Parish's desert-thorn	*Lycium parishii*	--/-- CNPS 2B.3 County List B	Perennial shrub that blooms from March to April. Found in low desert flats, coastal scrub, and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**None:** A perennial shrub that would have been observed if present.

Appendix D (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS	HABIT, ECOLOGY AND LIFE HISTORY	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Peirson's milk-vetch	*Astragalus magdalenae peirsonii*	FT/SE CNPS 1B.2 County List A	Perennial herb that blooms from December to April. Found in desert dune habitats.	**None:** Dune habitats are not present in the study area.
Peirson's pincushion	*Chaenactis carphoclinia peirsonii*	--/-- CNPS 1B.3 County List A	Annual herb that blooms from March to April. Found in sandy habitats in Sonoran creosote bush scrub on desert slopes near Santa Rosa Mountains.	**Low:** Species not found.
Pygmy lotus	*Acmispon haydonii*	--/-- CNPS 1B.3	Perennial herb that blooms from January to June. Found in rocky habitats in pinyon and juniper woodlands and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**None:** Rocky habitats are not present in the study area.
Spearleaf	*Matelea parvifolia*	--/-- CNPS 2B.3 County List B	Perennial herb that blooms from March to May. Found in rocky habitats in desert washes, canyons, and Mojavean and Sonoran creosote bush scrub.	**None:** Rocky habitats, desert washes, and canyons are not present in the study area.

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

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

[3] County of San Diego Sensitive Plant Lists: A – rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; B – rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere; C – may be quite rare but need more information; D – limited distribution and may be uncommon, but not presently endangered.

Appendix E

SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR

Appendix E
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1 2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Reptiles				
Barefoot gecko	*Coleonyx switaki*	--/ST	Occurs primarily in rocky areas at the heads of canyons from the east face of the Peninsular Ranges to Scissors Crossing near Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.	**Not Expected:** Rocky areas and the heads of canyons are not present in the study area.
Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard	*Uma notata*	--/SSC	Restricted to fine, loose, wind-blown sand dunes, dry lakebeds, sandy beaches or riverbanks, desert washes, and sparse desert scrub.	**Not Expected:** There is no habitat for this species in the study area.
Flat tailed horned lizard	*Phrynosoma mcallii*	--/SC	The best habitats for this species are generally low-relief areas with surface soils of packed, fine sand or low-relief areas of pavement (hardpan) overlain with loose, fine sand. Also known to occur at the edges of vegetated sand dunes, on barren clay soils, and within sparse saltbush (*Atriplex* spp.) plant communities (USFWS 2011).	**Not Expected:** The best habitats for this species do not occur in the study area. The study area is comprised of compact, course sand and gravelly sand and does not support sand dunes, clay soils, or saltbush communities. While the California Natural Diversity Database does show a record of the flat-tailed horned lizard from the year 2000 "near Borrego Springs," it also says "near Date Ranch." There is no Date Ranch in the vicinity of

Appendix E (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1 2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Reptiles (cont.)				
Flat tailed horned lizard (cont.)				the study area. The USFWS states that continued urban development in Borrego Springs would be in an area small enough that it is unlikely that it, combined with agricultural development in or around this limited area, would pose a significant threat to the flat-tailed horned lizard (USFWS 2011). This would seem to conclude that the potential for the species to occur in the more developed areas of Borrego Springs, such as the study area, is very low.
Red diamond rattlesnake	*Crotalus ruber*	--/SSC County Group 2	Found in chaparral, coastal sage scrub, along creek banks, particularly among rock outcrops or piles of debris with a supply of burrowing rodents for prey.	**Not Expected:** There is no habitat for this species in the study area.
San Diego banded gecko	*Coleonyx variegatus abbottii*	--/-- County Group 1	Chaparral and coastal sage scrub in areas with rock outcrops.	**Not Expected:** There is no habitat for this species in the study area

Appendix E (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1 2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Birds				
American peregrine falcon	*Falco peregrinus anatum*	BCC/FP County Group 1	Generally, areas with cliffs near water where prey (shorebirds and ducks) is concentrated. Preferred hunting areas are agricultural fields, meadows, marshes, and lakes. Nesting usually occurs on cliff ledges or in a scrape in debris and occasionally in the old nests of other birds.	**Not Expected:** There is no habitat for this species in the study area
Burrowing owl	*Athene cunicularia*	BCC/SSC County Group 1	Typical habitat is grasslands, open scrublands, agricultural fields, and other areas where there are ground squirrel burrows or other areas in which to burrow.	**Low:** In 2007, the maximum number of burrowing owl pairs in San Diego County was estimated to be at the most 46 (Lincer and Bloom 2007). About 25 of these pairs were in East Otay Mesa area; the others were at various locations in the County, including a few in the desert (County of San Diego 2010). No burrowing owl or burrowing owl sign was observed in the study area during the focused survey.

Appendix E (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1 2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Birds (cont.)				
Cooper's hawk	*Accipiter cooperii*	--/WL County Group 1	Tends to inhabit lowland riparian areas and oak woodlands in proximity to suitable foraging areas such as scrublands or fields. Unitt (2004) noted, however, that in the 1980s Cooper's hawks began adapting to urban environments. These areas may be more attractive particularly if an increase in prey items like rock pigeon (*Columba livia*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), etc. is present (Unitt 2004).	**Low:** Not observed but still could be present in the study area to forage.
Crissal thrasher	*Toxostoma crissale*	--/SSC	Occupies predominately riparian scrub or woodland at lower elevations and the low, dense scrub at higher elevations.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.
Ferruginous hawk	*Buteo regalis*	BCC/WL County Group 1	Found in open country, primarily prairies, plains, and badlands breeding in trees near streams or on steep slopes, sometimes on mounds in open desert.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.

Appendix E (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1 2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Birds (cont.)				
Harris' hawk	*Parabuteo unicinctus*	--/WL	Inhabits semi-open desert scrub, desert wash, and desert riparian habitats for nesting and foraging. Needs scattered small trees or saguaro cacti for hunting perches and nest structures.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.
Lucy's warbler	*Oreothlypis luciae*	--/SSC	Occurs in desert wash and desert riparian habitats, especially those dominated by mesquite; also ranges into saltcedar and other thickets.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.
Prairie falcon	*Falco mexicanus*	BCC/WL County Group 1	Inhabits dry, open terrain, either level or hilly. Nests on cliffs or bluffs and forages over open desert scrub or grassland.	**Moderate:** Suitable foraging habitat occurs in the study area. No nesting potential.
Southern California rufous crowned sparrow	*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*	--/WL County Group 1	Occurs in coastal sage scrub and sparse mixed chaparral on rocky hillsides and in canyons; also found in open sage scrub/grassy areas of successional growth.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.
Swainson's hawk	*Buteo swainsoni*	--/ST County Group 1	Typically found in open grasslands. Most commonly observed in the Borrego Valley located along a migration corridor (Unitt 2004) in late winter/spring.	**Moderate:** Known to use a migration corridor over Borrego Valley near the study area and to stop to roost in trees and feed on flying ants, dragonflies, or moth caterpillars (Unitt 2004). Could forage in the study area.

Appendix E (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1 2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Mammals				
American badger	*Taxidea taxus*	--/SSC County Group 2	Uncommon resident in California that occurs in herbaceous, shrub, and open stages of most habitats with dry, friable soils.	**Low:** Badger dens would have been observed during the study area surveys.
San Diego desert woodrat	*Neotoma lepida intermedia*	--/SSC County Group 1	Common to abundant in Joshua tree, pinyon-juniper, mixed and chamise-redshank chaparral, sagebrush, and most desert habitats. Most abundant in rocky areas with Joshua trees. Builds large, stick nests in rock outcrops or around clumps of cactus or yucca.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.
Dulzura pocket mouse	*Chaetodipus californicus femoralis*	--/SSC County Group 2	Primarily associated with mature chaparral. It has, however, been trapped in mule fat scrub and is known to occur in coastal sage scrub. In San Diego County, this mouse ranges eastward to the desert transition zone. Some localities near the eastern edge of its range are Banner, San Felipe Valley, and Campo.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area, and the study area is east of the desert transition zone.
Mountain lion	*Felis concolor*	--/-- County Group 2	Typically inhabits remote hilly or mountainous areas in forest and shrub habitats.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area for the mountain lion or its primary prey, mule deer (see below).

Appendix E (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1 2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Mammals (cont.)				
Mule deer	*Odocoileus hemionus*	--/-- County Group 2	In the southwestern U.S., mule deer occur in a range of habitats including desert shrublands at the lowest elevations, semi-desert shrubland-grassland communities, chaparral, mountain shrub, and woodlands at middle elevations; and some forests at high elevations. Desert grasslands without shrubs do not support mule deer unless they contain rugged topography or riparian areas. Dry washes are important to mule deer in semi-desert grasslands because they provide food as well as resting, escape, and travel cover throughout the year.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.
Pallid San Diego pocket mouse	*Chaetodipus fallax pallidus*	--/SSC	In San Diego County, occurs along the western edge of the Colorado Desert south to the U.S.-Mexico border in sparse desert shrublands to dense coastal scrub. Generally exhibits a strong affinity for moderately gravelly and rocky substrates.	**Low:** While sparse desert shrubland is present in the study area, gravelly soil is extremely limited, and rocky soil is absent.

Appendix E (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1 2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Mammals (cont.)				
Palm Springs pocket mouse	*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*	--/SSC	Occurs in the lower Sonoran life zone from the San Gorgonio Pass area east to the Little San Bernardino Mountains and south along the eastern edge of the Peninsular Ranges to Borrego Valley and the east side of the San Felipe Narrows (Hall 1981). Inhabits areas with flat to gently sloping topography, sparse to moderate vegetative cover, and loosely packed or sandy soils.	**Moderate:** Suitable habitat occurs in the study area. The study area is located in the extreme southern portion of this species' range. No pocket mouse sign was observed during surveys.
Peninsular bighorn sheep	*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*	FE/ST, FP County Group 1	Inhabit rocky slopes and cliffs, canyons, washes and alluvial fans. Prefers rugged, open habitat.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.
Ringtail	*Bassariscus astutus*	--/-- County Group 2	Various riparian habitats and in brush stands of moist forest and shrub habitats at low to middle elevations. Less common in wooded areas with hollow trees, sometimes around buildings.	**Not Expected:** No suitable habitat occurs in the study area.
San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit	*Lepus californicus bennettii*	--/SSC County Group 2	Found primarily in open habitats including coastal sage scrub, chaparral, grasslands, croplands, and open, disturbed areas if there is at least some shrub cover present. Found from southern Santa Barbara	**Not Expected:** The study area is outside the range of this subspecies.

Appendix E (cont.)
SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES AND THEIR POTENTIAL TO OCCUR –
BORREGO SPRINGS LIBRARY AND PARK PROJECT

COMMON NAME	SPECIES NAME	STATUS [1] [2]	HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS	POTENTIAL TO OCCUR
Mammals (cont.)				
			County, south on the coastal slope to the vicinity of San Quintin, Baja California, Mexico. Localities on the eastern edge of its range include Jacumba and San Felipe Valley in San Diego County.	
Western yellow bat	*Lasiurus xanthinus*	--/SSC	Recorded in valley foothill riparian, desert wash, desert riparian, and palm oasis habitats. Range includes San Diego, Riverside, and Imperial counties in California. In California, this species appears to roost exclusively in the skirts of palm trees and seems to be limited in its distribution by the availability of palm habitat (Pierson and Rainey 1998).	**Low:** While some individual palm trees are present, there are no palm oases in the study area.

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

[2] County of San Diego Sensitive Animal List: Group 1 = Animals that have a very high level of sensitivity, either because they are listed as threatened or endangered or because they have very specific natural history requirements that must be met; Group 2 = Animals that are becoming less common, but are not yet so rare that extirpation or extinction is imminent without immediate action; these species tend to be prolific within their suitable habitat types.

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Appendix F

EXPLANATION OF STATUS CODES FOR PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES

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EXPLANATION OF STATUS CODES FOR PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES

FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL CODES

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

FE	Federally listed endangered
FT	Federally listed threatened
FC	Federal candidate species
BCC	Birds of Conservation Concern (discussed in more detail, below)
BGEPA	Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (discussed in more detail below)

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

SE	State listed endangered
SR	State listed rare
ST	State listed threatened
SSC	State species of special concern
WL	Watch List

Fully Protected — Fully Protected species refer to all vertebrate and invertebrate taxa of concern to the Natural Diversity Data Base regardless of legal or protection status. These species may not be taken or possessed without a permit from the Fish and Game Commission and/or CDFW.

County of San Diego

Plant sensitivity:

List A	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California or elsewhere
List B	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere
List C	Plants that may be quite rare, but more information is needed to determine rarity status
List D	Plants of limited distribution and are uncommon, but not presently rare or endangered

Animal sensitivity:

Group 1	Animals that have a very high level of sensitivity, either because they are listed as threatened or endangered or because they have very specific natural history requirements that must be met.
Group 2	Animals that are becoming less common, but are not yet so rare that extirpation or extinction is imminent without immediate action. These species tend to be prolific within their suitable habitat types.

OTHER CODES AND ABBREVIATIONS

California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Ranks

Ranks

1A Plants Presumed Extirpated in California and Either Rare or Extinct Elsewhere

1B Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere

2A Plants Presumed Extirpated in California, But Common Elsewhere

2B Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, But More Common Elsewhere

3 Plants About Which More Information is Needed

4 Plants of Limited Distribution

Threat Ranks

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

0.2 Moderately threatened in California (20 to 80 percent occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)

0.3 Not very threatened in California (less than 20 percent of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

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

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

USFWS Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA)

In 1782, Continental Congress adopted the bald eagle as a national symbol. During the next one and a half centuries, the bald eagle was heavily hunted by sportsmen, taxidermists, fisherman, and farmers. To prevent the species from becoming extinct, Congress passed the Bald Eagle Protection Act in 1940. The Act was extremely comprehensive, prohibiting the take, possession, sale, purchase, barter, or offer to sell, purchase, or barter, export or import of the bald eagle "at any time or in any manner."

In 1962, Congress amended the Eagle Act to cover golden eagles, a move that was partially an attempt to strengthen protection of bald eagles, since the latter were often killed by people mistaking them for golden eagles. The golden eagle, however, is accorded somewhat lighter protection under the Act than the bald eagle. Another 1962 amendment authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to grant permits to Native Americans for traditional religious use of eagles and eagle parts and feathers.

USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC)

This report from 2002 aims to identify accurately the migratory and non-migratory bird species (beyond those already designated as federally threatened or endangered) that represent USFWS' highest conservation priorities and draw attention to species in need of conservation action. USFWS hopes that by focusing attention on these highest priority species, the report will promote greater study and protection of the habitats and ecological communities upon which these species depend, thereby ensuring the future of healthy avian populations and communities. The report is available online at http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/reports/bcc2002.pdf.

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