

# KLUTZ BIOLOGICAL CONSULTING



Larry C. Dutton  
Principal  
28936 Old Town Front St., #205  
Temecula, CA 92590  
951-587-2020 (Office)  
619-787-1550 (Cell)  
June 20, 2024

**RE: Biological Resources Memo for the SOUTH VILLAGE STORAGE: PDS2023-STP-23-023; 28010 Valley Center Rd, Valley Center, CA - APN(S): 186-230-16-00; 186-230-22-00; 186-230-84-00**

The following is a Biological Resource Memorandum for a proposed storage facility located in the unincorporated community of Valley Center within the County of San Diego. The project includes Assessor Parcel Numbers (APN) 186-230-16-00, 186-230-84-00 and 186-230-22-00 (Figures 1 & 2). This memo presents the results of a general biological survey and draft impact analysis. This report also documents the landcover or vegetation types observed on-site (Figure 3).

The purpose for this initial biological resource analysis is to respond to the County's scoping letter dated September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The County's scoping letter was prepared by Kendalyn White and detailed the need to determine if existing site improvements were legally permitted. In addition, there was also a need to determine if the site currently supports or did support suitable coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) (CAGN) habitat. The CAGN is a federally threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). As detailed in the County's letter, if site improvements were legally approved and no impacts are anticipated to occur to CAGN, then the project may be exempt from further biological review.

Based on guidance by the County, the applicant contracted with Klutz Biological Consulting (KBC) to conduct a biological survey and impact analysis for the proposed project. A general biological resources survey was conducted by Korey Klutz on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

The survey consisted of walking the entire project site and assessing an approximately a 100-foot buffer from the APN boundary (study area) with binoculars. All plants and wildlife species observed during the survey were recorded and a biological resources map was prepared. The biological resources map includes observed vegetation communities and any sensitive or special status plant/wildlife species detected (Figure 3). During the survey, particular attention was given to assessing if suitable habitat for CAGN occurred on-site.

## **Results**

The study area is located west of west of Valley Center Road and south of Lilac Road (Figure 2). The project site lies at an elevation of approximately 1,320-feet above mean seal level (AMSL). The study area is relatively flat with the exception of a large mound which occurs between Valley Center Road and the gas station that is located within the southeastern portion of the site. An ephemeral drainage occurs just north of the northern property boundary. This drainage is fed from a culvert that transport water under Valley Center Road (Photograph 3). This drainage would qualify as a wetland by the County's Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO) and, if impacted, would be regulated by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) (Resource Agencies).

Based on the general survey of the site, four land cover types occur including: coast live oak woodland (CLOW), non-native grassland (NNG), eucalyptus woodland (EW) and urban/developed lands (DL) (Figure 3). Please note, that none of these landcover types are suitable to support CAGN.

Coast Live Oak Woodland – On-site, this habitat consists primarily of isolated coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) trees that are not part of a larger woodland complex. CLOW is also associated with the ephemeral drainage that occurs off-site along the northern property boundary.

Non-native grassland – A small portion of NNG was mapped along the northern boundary of the project site. This area extends north of the property boundary into a larger field, comprised primarily of non-native grasses and open CLOW.

Eucalyptus Woodland – A grove of mature eucalyptus trees occur in the northwestern portion of the property. This woodland is dense and could support nesting raptor species. The woodland is both on-site and off-site extending north of the project boundary.

Urban/Developed Lands comprise the majority of the site. Urban/Developed lands on-site include an existing gas station, parking lots, a single-family residence, storage yards, driveways and paved roads. All of the areas mapped as developed lands are routinely maintained and contain ornamental vegetation. Some of the ornamental vegetation is comprised of native plant species, including coast live oak trees and other native plants primarily associated with the Valley Center Road landscape plan.

## **Summary of Findings**

The project site contains primarily developed lands associated with an existing residence, gas station, parking lots and existing storage facility lot/yards. A review of historical aerial photographs, details that the project site has been maintained in a similar condition since at least 2002 which predates the current owner. The single-family home was constructed sometime in the late 1960s/early 1970s, prior to the establishment of the County's Grading Ordinance. However, Section 87.502 of the County Grading Ordinance provides an exemption for clearing up to a maximum of five acres on parcels zoned for single family residential use, if located outside of the South County MSCP Subarea. This property meets these criteria and therefore is exempt from the County Grading Ordinance for up to five acres of clearing associated with the development of the single-family home.

The project applicant and current property owner took over control of the three project parcels in 2008. At that time, the County was in the process of widening Valley Center Road. The County's DPW impacted a large portion of the eastern part of the property when widening Valley Center Road (2007-2009). During the construction of the road a culvert was installed that appears to have created a wetland that would likely be regulated by the County's RPO and the Resource Agencies. It is recommended that this wetland/water feature be avoided to ensure that further biological analysis is not needed and no permits/agreements from the Resource Agencies will be required.

Furthermore, the project site and study area currently does not support suitable CAGN habitat and does not appear to have supported suitable CAGN in the past. Aerial photographs dating back to 1996 show that the dominant landcover types within the study area has been primarily developed lands, with smaller amount of open coast live oak woodland and maintained non-native grassland.

If you have any questions regarding this biological memo or would like to discuss the results/mitigation approach, please feel free to call me at 760-492-3342.

**Preparer and Persons/Organizations Contacted**

Prepared by:



---

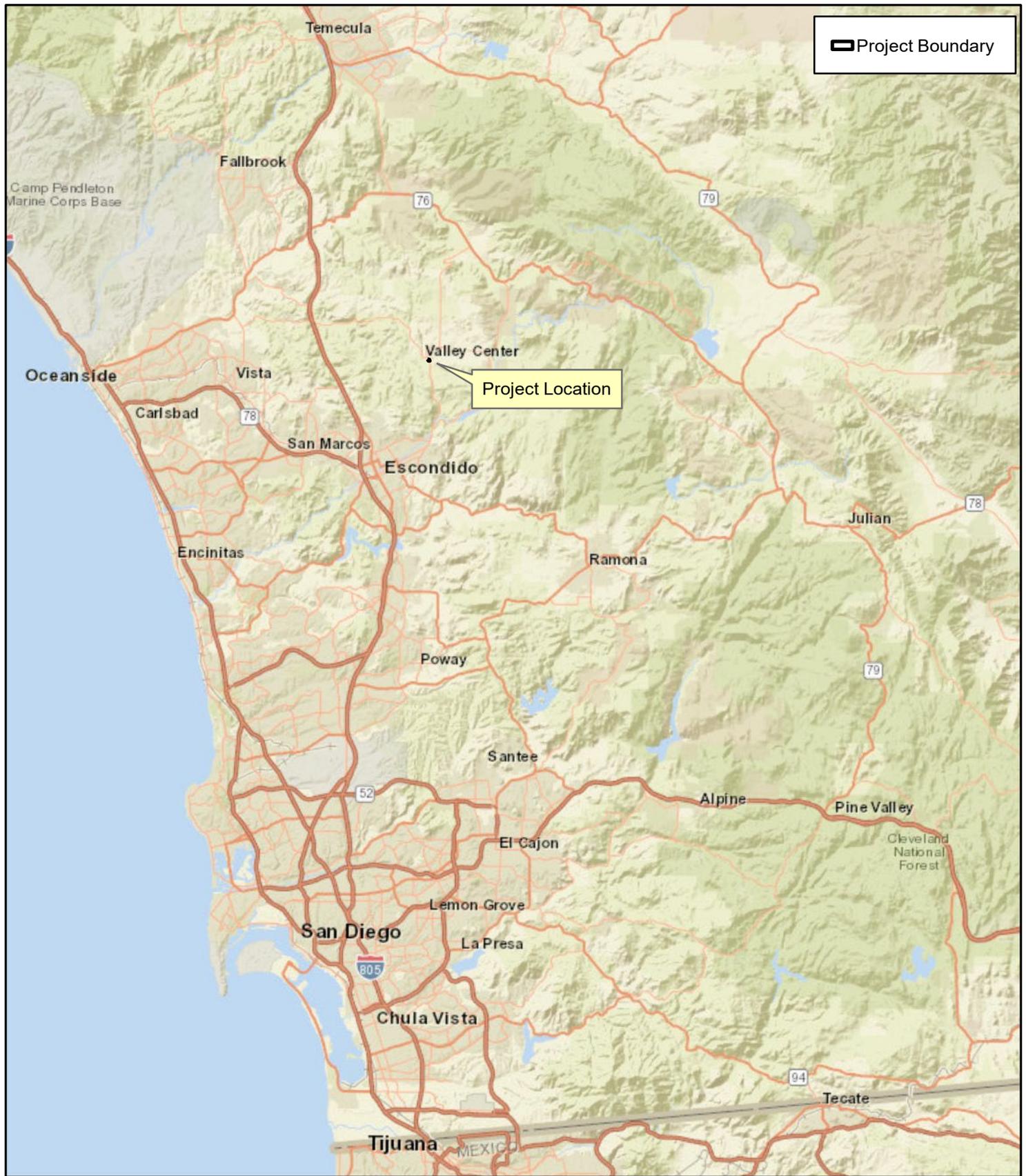
Korey Klutz, County Approved Biologist  
korey@klutzbio.net

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Figure 1 Regional Vicinity  
Figure 2 Project Vicinity  
Figure 3 Biological Resources  
Photograph

## **REFERENCES REVIEWED AND/OR CITED**

- American Ornithologists' Union (AOU). 1998. *Checklist of North American Birds, 7th ed.* American Ornithologists' Union, Washington, D.C.
- AOU. 2004. *Forty-fifth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds.* *The Auk* 121(3):985–995, 2004.
- Baker, R.J., et al. 2003. *Revised Checklist of North American Mammals North of Mexico, 2003.* Occasional Papers The Museum Texas Tech. University. Number 229. December 1, 2003.
- Bowman, R. H. 1973. Soil Survey, San Diego Area, California, Part 1. United States Department of Agriculture. 104 pp. + appendices. Available online, accessed June 2018: [https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_MANUSCRIPTS/california/CA638/0/part1.pdf](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MANUSCRIPTS/california/CA638/0/part1.pdf)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFG). 2018a. *Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List, November 2018.* Biogeographic Data Branch, California Natural Diversity Database. Quarterly publication. 140 pp.
- CNDDDB. 2024. Biogeographic Data Branch. Biogeographic Data Branch, California Natural Diversity Database. Sacramento, CA.
- California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2024. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (online edition, v8-03 0.39). Rare Plant Program.
- County of San Diego (County). 2010a. County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance: Biological Resources. Department of Planning and Land Use, September 15, 2010.
- County. 2010b. County of San Diego Report Format and Content Requirements: Biological Resources. Department of Planning and Land Use, September 15, 2010.
- Holland, R. F. 1986. *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California.* Non-game Heritage Program, State of California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, CA. 157 pp.
- Jennings, M. R. 1983. An Annotated Checklist of the Amphibians and Reptiles of Southern California. California Department of Fish and Game 69(3):151-171.
- Jepson Flora Project (eds.) 2024. *Jepson eFlora.* Accessed on February 6, 2024. <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/eflora/>



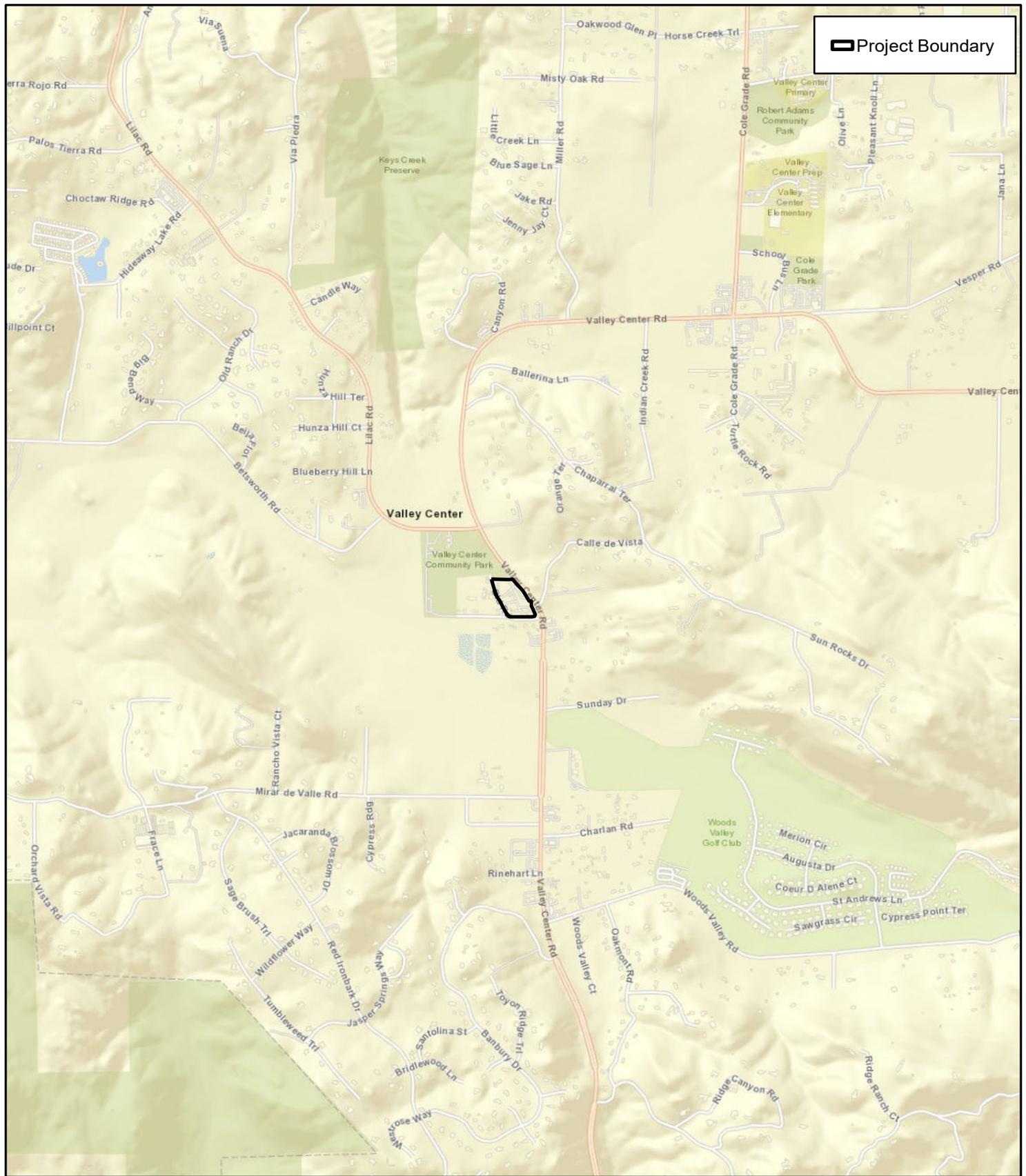
Project Boundary

Project Location

Date Printed: 6/20/2024	Author: klutch

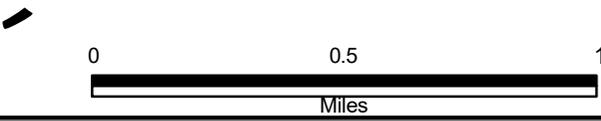


**Figure 1**  
**Regional Vicinity**



 Project Boundary

Date Printed: 6/20/2024	Author: klutch



**Figure 2**  
**Project Vicinity**



- Coast Live Oak Woodland
- Eucalyptus Woodland
- Non-Native Grassland
- Developed Lands
- Project Boundary

[Redacted]	
Date Printed: 6/20/2024	Author: klutch



**Figure 3**  
**Biological Resources**

## Photographs – Valley Center Gas Station & Proposed Storage Facility

Photograph 1 – Historical aerial photo from 2008 detailing the County’s road improvement impacts.



Photograph 2 – Mound located between Valley Center Road and the gas station. Vegetation associated with the mound includes primarily African daisy (erosion control seed mix applied by County and property owner).



Photograph 3 Walkway and culvert north of the project site – Site improvements installed by the County during their road widening project.



Photograph 4 Driveway to existing single-family residence.



Photograph 5 Parking Lot and Storage Facility/Yard Located in northwestern portion of the Project Site.



Photograph 6 Storage yard - northern portion of the project site.



Photograph 7 – Non-native grassland north of the project site and adjacent to ephemeral drainage.



Photograph 8 – storage yard, construction related equipment.

