



Appendix E

Biological Assessment

Biological Assessment
Soil Vapor Extraction System Upgrade Project
City of Burbank, California

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INTRODUCTION

Under contract to Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Hamilton Biological, Inc., has prepared this Biological Resources Assessment required by the City of Burbank for CEQA review of the Soil Vapor Extraction System Upgrade project, located at 1701/1705 North Victory Place; see Figures 1 and 2.

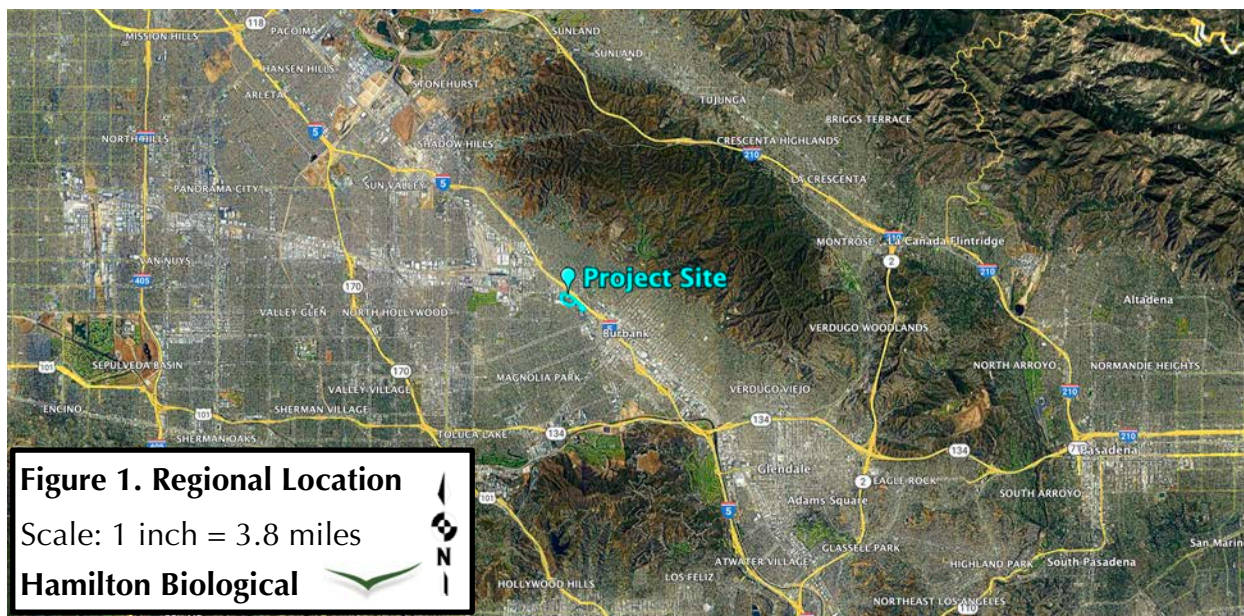


Figure 1, Regional Location. The project site is located in central Burbank. Aerial source: Google Earth Pro.

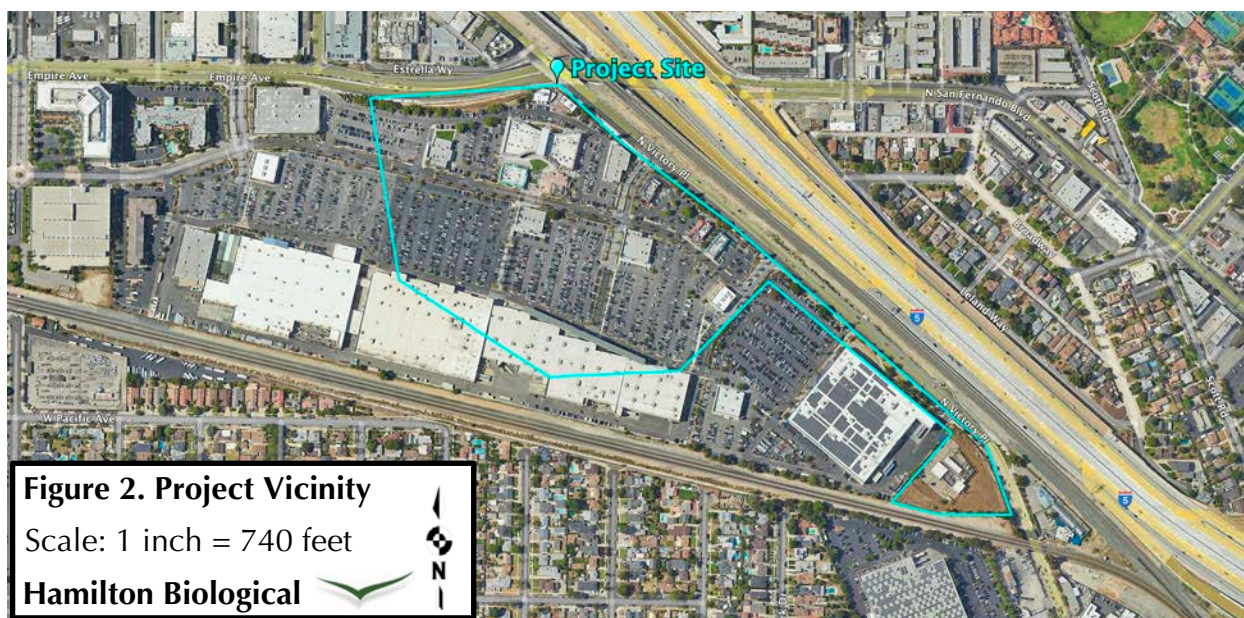


Figure 2, Project Vicinity. The Project Site consists of the existing Soil Vapor Extraction treatment plant property, which occupies approximately 2 acres in the southeastern corner of the site, and a portion of the existing Burbank Empire Center, which accounts for the remaining 28 acres. The site is bordered on the north by North Victory Place and Empire Avenue, and on the south by railroad tracks owned by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Amtrak. Aerial source: Google Earth Pro.

The goals of this study were: (1) to characterize the site's vegetation; (2) to identify the plant and wildlife species present, or potentially occurring, on the site, including listed and otherwise sensitive species; and (3) to evaluate the proposed actions in relation to CEQA and other relevant local, state, and federal land-use regulations pertaining to biological resources. This report describes the study's methods, provides the results, and specifies Hamilton Biological's recommendations and conclusions.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site occupies approximately 30 acres at 1234 North Victory Place, 1501 North Victory Place, 1800 West Empire Avenue, and 1301 North Victory Place in the City of Burbank (the City). The Project Site is located in the eastern third of Lockheed Martin's former Plant B-1, a 100-acre site used for fabrication and assembly of aircraft parts from 1928 to 1991. The use of fuels, oils, solvents, paints, acids, plating solutions, and other compounds resulted in contamination of soil and groundwater beneath the plant. The proposed project entails replacing a legacy Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) system on the site with a smaller, more efficient SVE system in compliance with Cleanup and Abatement Order No. 87-161 by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWCQB).

METHODS

On October 3, 2024, Robert Hamilton conducted a biological reconnaissance visit to the project site. The visit lasted from 12:15 to 3:15 p.m. Temperature was 89–92° F, skies were hazy, and winds were 3–5 miles per hour. Mr. Hamilton walked the proposed area of impact for the project, recorded all plant and wildlife species detected, mapped the plant communities present, and evaluated the potential for special-status plant or wildlife species to occur.

On October 5, 2024, Robert Hamilton reviewed the California Natural Diversity Data Base (2024a, 2024b, 2024c) to develop a list of special-status plant and wildlife species with potential to occur on the project site.

On October 12, 2024, Robert Hamilton reviewed soils information for the project site on Soilweb (<https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/gmap/>).

RESULTS

Topography

The project site consists of gently sloping land, with elevations ranging from approximately 630 feet above mean sea level at the northwestern corner of the site to 592 feet above mean sea level at the southeastern corner of the site. Nearly the entire site is fully developed in the existing condition.

Soils

The site's soils are classified as Urban land-Palmview-Tujunga complex, 0 to 5 percent slopes. Urban land consists of nearly level to moderately steep areas where the soils have been altered or obscured by urban works and structures. Buildings and pavement cover more than 85 percent of the surface. The Palmview series consists of very deep, well drained soils that formed in alluvium from granitic or related rock sources. The Tujunga series consists of very deep, somewhat excessively drained soils that formed in alluvium from granitic sources. Tujunga soils are on alluvial fans and floodplains, including urban areas.

Plant Communities/Land Cover

Figure 3, below, shows the site's plant communities and land cover, consisting of existing developed areas and two isolated patches of non-native grassland/disturbed (Holland 1986).

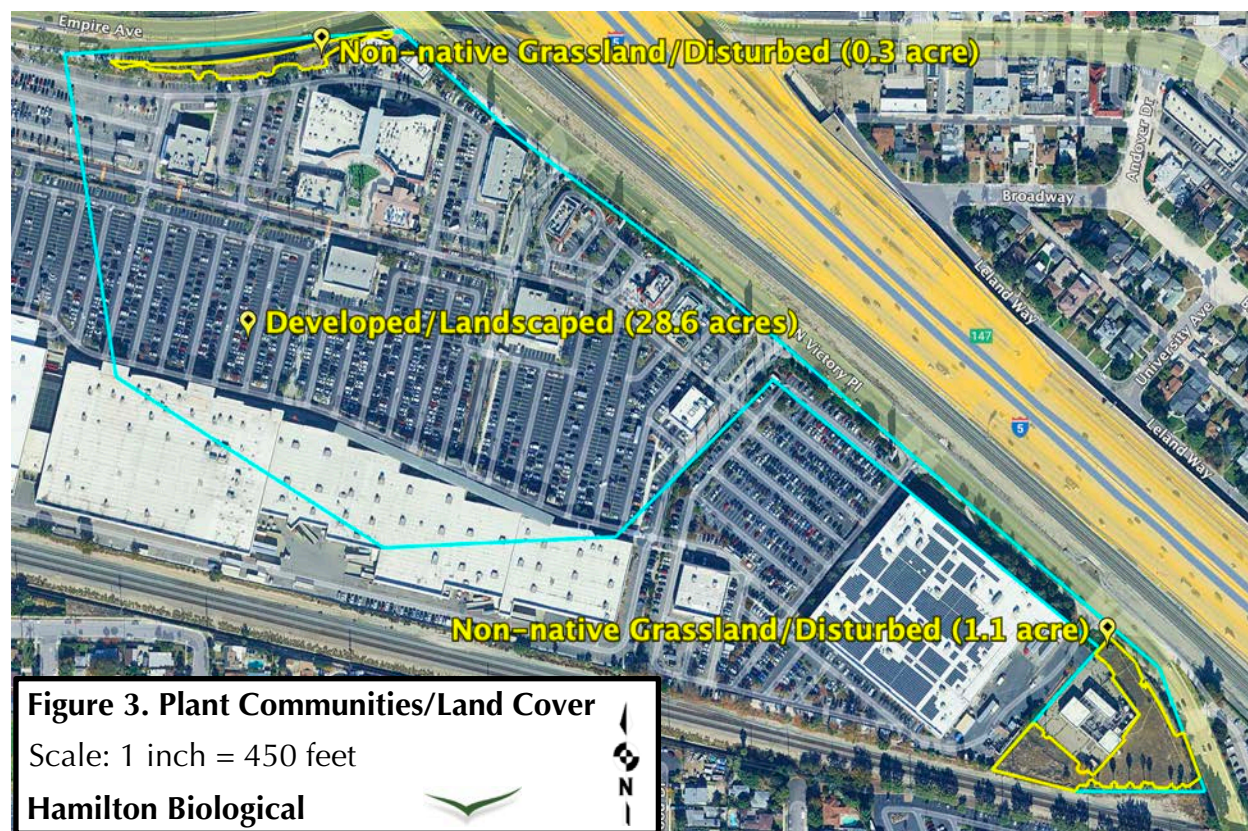


Figure 3, Plant Communities/Land Cover. The Project Site consists of 28.4 acres of existing developed and landscaped grounds, plus two areas of non-native grassland/disturbed ground covering approximately 1.4 acre in total. Aerial source: Google Earth Pro.

As shown in Figure 3, above, approximately 28.6 acres of the project site are fully developed, consisting of buildings, parking lots, and exotic landscaping associated with the Burbank Empire Center and the existing Soil Vapor Extraction treatment plant.

Many of the 65 non-native plant species identified during the field visit consisted of common landscape plants, such as Brazilian Peppertree (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*), Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*), Floss Silk Tree (*Ceiba speciosa*), Golden Rain Tree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*), Date Palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*), Mexican Bush Sage (*Salvia leucantha*), Society Garlic (*Tulbaghia violacea*), Red Yucca (*Hesperaloe parviflora*), Bird of Paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), and Indian Hawthorn (*Rhaphiolepis indica*).

The remaining 1.4 acres of the project site consist of two isolated areas of non-native grassland and disturbed ground, one near the northern site boundary and the other in the southeastern corner. These areas are dominated by non-native annual grasses, such as Wild Oats (*Avena fatua*), Ripgut Brome (*Bromus diandrus*), and Soft Brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*), mixed with some non-native perennial grasses, such as Bermuda Grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) and Smilo Grass (*Stipa miliacea*). Non-native weeds found in this community include Argentine Fleabane (*Erigeron bonariensis*), Tumbleweed (*Amaranthus albus*), Prickly Wild Lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), and Common Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*). Interspersed with these non-native dominants are disturbance-adapted native species, including Annual Bursage (*Ambrosia acanthicarpa*), Canadian Horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*), Telegraph Weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), and Seaside Heliotrope (*Heliotropium curassivicum*). These areas appear to be subject to regular mowing or other weed-control efforts.

Site Photos

Photos 1–9 show the site conditions during the field survey. All photos taken by Robert Hamilton on October 3, 2024. Figure 4 on page 9 shows the location of each photo.



Photo 1. Southeastern corner of the project site, facing northwest. Non-native grassland/disturbed in the southern part of the existing treatment plant.



Photo 2. Southeastern corner of the project site, facing east. Non-native grassland/disturbed in the southern part of the existing treatment plant.

Photo 3. Eastern part of the project site, facing south toward the existing treatment plant building with non-native grassland/disturbed in the foreground.

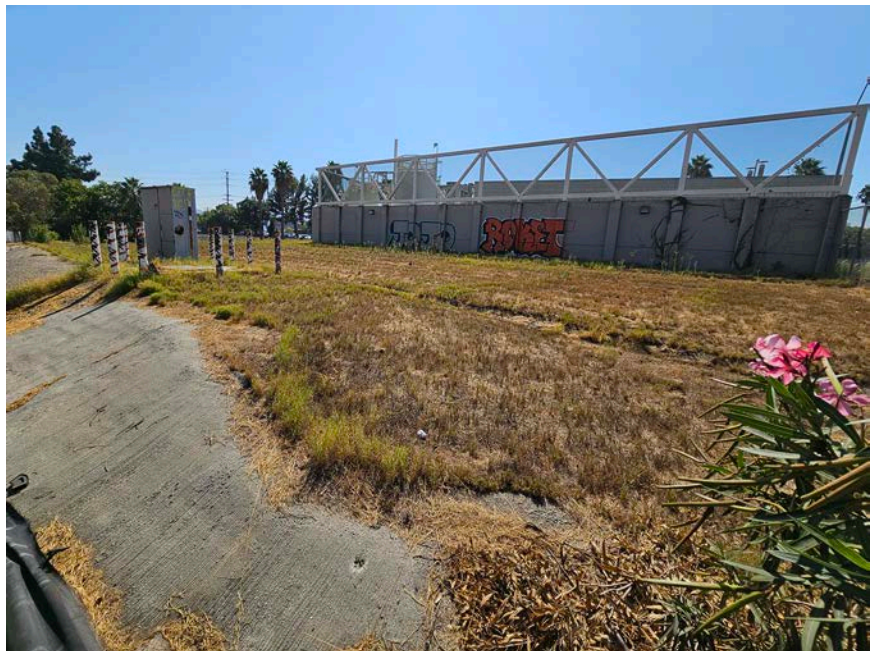




Photo 4. Eastern part of the project site, facing east. Non-native landscaping is in the foreground and the existing treatment plant is in the background.

Photo 5. Eastern of the project site, facing northwest. Landscaping between Walmart and North Victory Place.

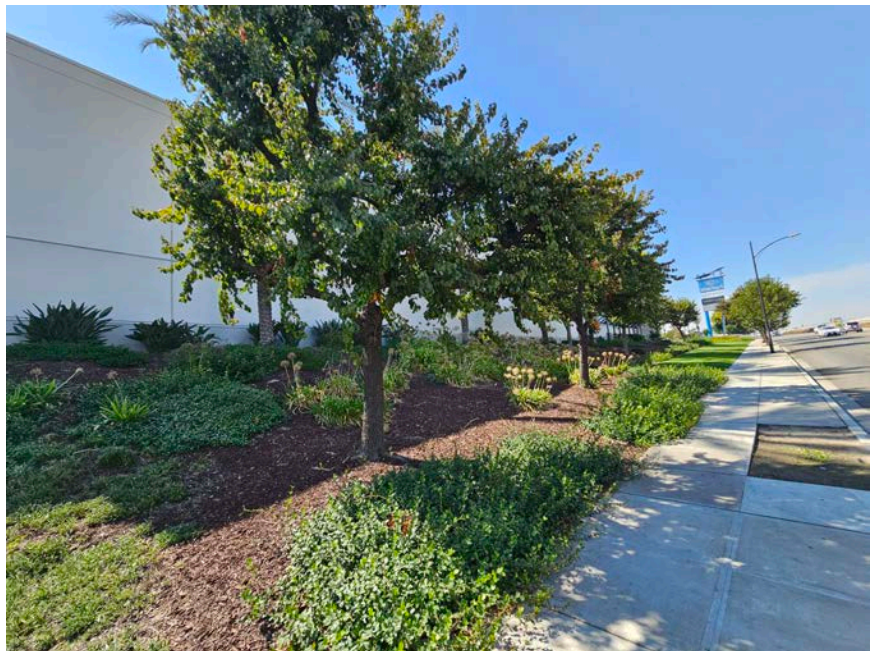




Photo 6. North-central part of the project site, facing southeast. Burbank Empire Center with non-native landscaping.

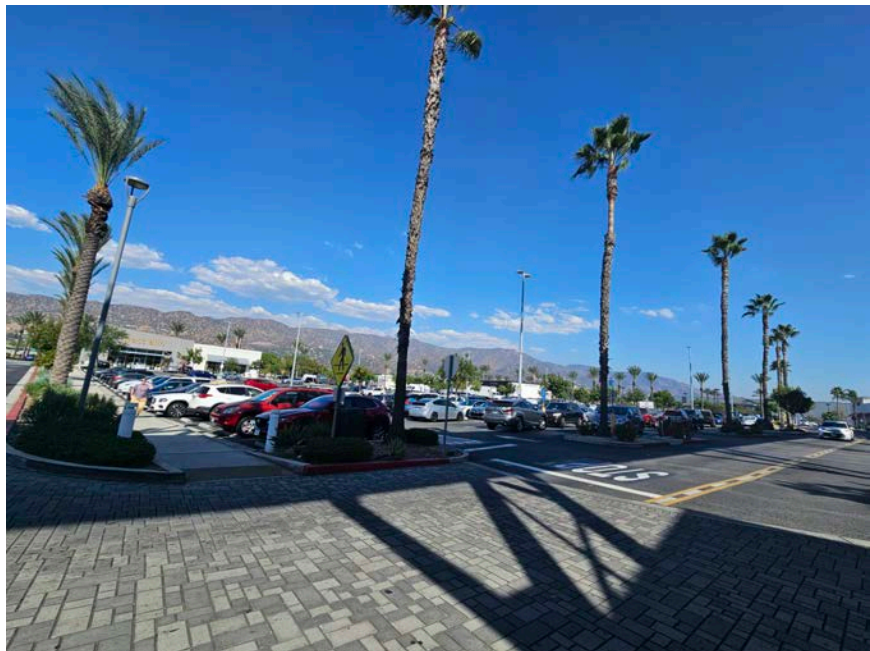
Photo 7. Northwestern corner of the project site, facing east. Burbank Empire Center to the right and non-native grassland/disturbed on the left.





Photo 8. Northwestern corner of the project site, facing southeast, showing the Burbank Empire Center with non-native landscaping.

Photo 9. South-central part of the project site, facing northeast, showing the Burbank Empire Center with non-native landscaping.



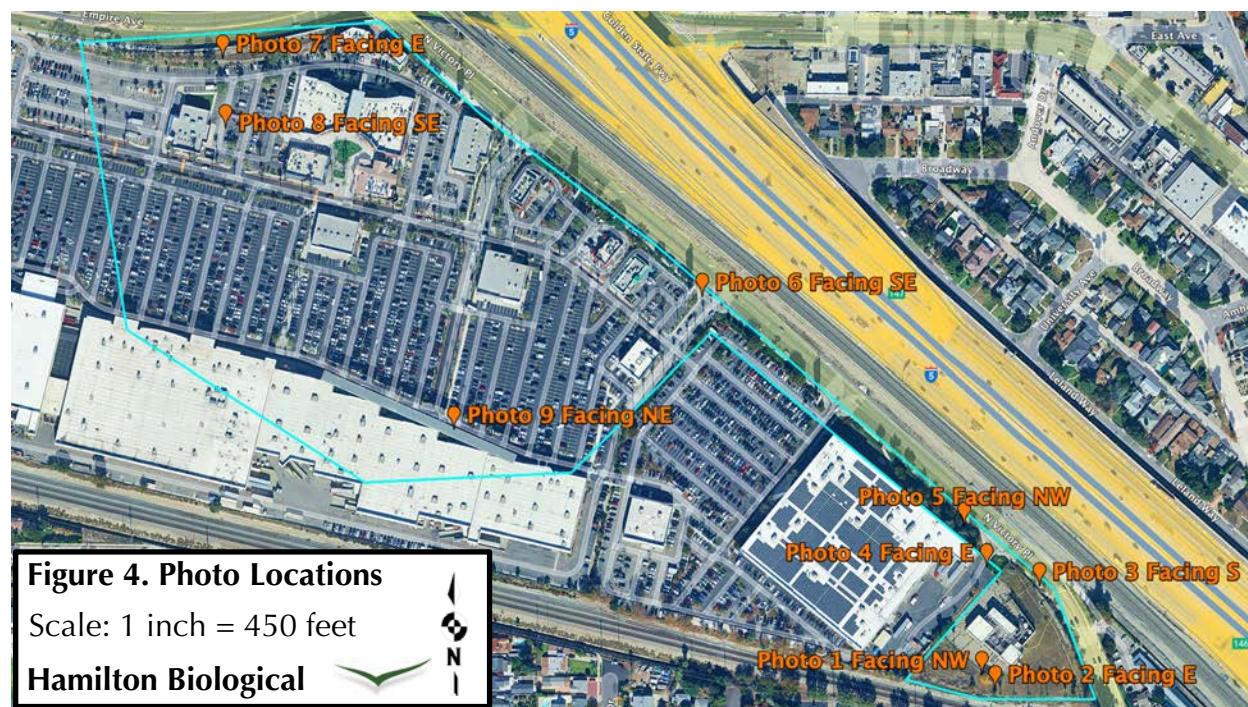


Figure 4, Photo Locations. Showing the locations where the nine site photos were taken by Robert Hamilton during the field visit on October 3, 2024. Aerial source: Google Earth Pro.

Wildlife

Because extent of undeveloped habitat on the site is very limited, with intensive urban development surrounding small fragments of disturbed habitat, only human-tolerant wildlife species adapted to urban areas in the region are expected to occur on the site.

One widespread reptile species, the Common Side-blotched Lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), was detected in non-native grassland/disturbed habitat in the southeastern part of the site during the survey. It is likely that one other lizard species, the Western Fence Lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), also occurs. Snakes are unlikely to persist in this area because only a small fragment of habitat remains, surrounded by intensive development.

Six bird species were observed: Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*), Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), Common Raven (*Corvus corax*), House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), and Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*). Various other human-tolerant species are likely to occur, and migratory birds undoubtedly make some minor use of non-native landscape trees on the site.

No mammals were observed on the site, but it is likely that such species as Botta's Pocket Gopher (*Thomomys bottae*), Norway Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), House Mouse (*Mus musculus*), California Ground Squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), Desert Cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), Virginia Opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), and Coyote (*Canis latrans*) occur.

SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Special-Status Species

Special-status species are listed as threatened or endangered by state or federal governments, or are of current local, regional or state concern (see California Natural Diversity Database 2024a, 2024b, 2024c). Legal protection for special-status species varies widely, from the relatively comprehensive protection extended to listed threatened/endangered species to no legal status at present. Species that are clearly not rare or threatened statewide or regionally, but whose local populations are sparse, rapidly dwindling or otherwise unstable, may be considered to be of “local interest.”

Review of the California Natural Diversity Database for records of special-status species from the Burbank 7.5' USGS quadrangle and surrounding quadrangles produced an extensive list of plant and wildlife species recorded in the general project vicinity.

No special-status species are associated with developed land, which accounts for 28.6 acres on the project site.

The fragments of non-native grassland/disturbed habitat present on the site are too limited in size (1.1 acre and 0.3 acre), and too disconnected from a surrounding matrix of natural communities, to provide potentially suitable habitat for any special-status wildlife species. Fencing around the larger fragment, and regular mowing/weed-whipping of this area, further preclude the ability of wildlife to make use of the larger area of disturbed grassland.

The following Table A identifies three special-status plants that were historically recorded in the general vicinity of the project, and that are judged to have very low potential to persist in the small fragments of disturbed grassland on the site. Their potential to occur is considered to be very low because these species generally do not persist in small habitat fragments. Table A uses the following abbreviations:

- **E Endangered** (listed by State or Federal governments). “Take” of the species or disturbance of occupied habitat are prohibited unless specifically authorized.
- **CNPS California Native Plant Society.** Table B includes plant species assigned the following ranks by CNPS:
 - **1B.1**, referring to species CNPS considers to be rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat).
 - **4.1**, referring to species of limited distribution or infrequent throughout a broader area in California, whose status should be monitored regularly; moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat).
 - **4.2**, referring to species of limited distribution or infrequent throughout a broader area in California, whose status should be monitored regularly; not very threatened in California

(less than 20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known).

Table A. Special-Status Species

Latin name	Common name	Fed.	State	CNPS	Local and/or Regional Status	Discussion
Plants						
<i>Astragalus brauntonii</i>	Braunton's Milk-Vetch	E	—	1B.1	Associated with calcareous soils; historical record from "Hollywood."	Very low potential to occur in fragments of disturbed grassland on the project site.
<i>Convolvulus simulans</i>	Small-flowered Morning-glory	—	—	4.2	Scattered records from the region; historical record from "Burbank."	Very low potential to occur in fragments of disturbed grassland on the project site.
<i>Lepidium virginicum</i> var. <i>robinsonii</i>	Robinson's Peppergrass	—	—	4.3	Scattered records from the region; historical records from "Los Angeles," "San Fernando," "Sunland."	Very low potential to occur in fragments of disturbed grassland on the project site.

WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Nearly the entire project site is fully developed in the existing condition, and the site is entirely surrounded by existing urban development. For these reasons, the site is not expected to play any role in the movement of native terrestrial wildlife through the natural open space matrix in the general project vicinity.

ANTICIPATED EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed actions would impact approximately 28.6 acres of existing development and 1.4 acres of non-native grassland/disturbed habitat around the edges of the project site. No special-status plant or wildlife species are considered to have even a low potential for occurrence on the site, and the site does not serve any potential function as part of a wildlife movement corridor or pathway.

Existing landscaping on the project site provides potential nesting sites for birds, and the disruption of the nesting of any native bird species would represent a violation of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and Sections 3503 and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code, a potentially significant impact under CEQA.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 1 would avoid or mitigate any potentially significant impacts of the project upon nesting birds.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation Measure 1. Protection of Nesting Birds

To avoid potential impacts to nesting birds, any necessary impacts to vegetation associated with project implementation should be conducted outside of the typical nesting season for native birds in the region. This period is variable, but generally extends from March 1 to August 31. If vegetation removal must be conducted during the nesting bird season, a qualified biologist should first conduct a survey to determine whether any native birds are nesting in the area. If any active nests are found (i.e., complete nests with at least one egg), they should be avoided until after all young have fledged from the nest, or work should be carefully monitored by a biologist to ensure against impacts to nesting birds.

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

With implementation of Mitigation Measure 1, the proposed actions would not entail any potentially significant adverse effects on biological resources.

LITERATURE CITED

- California Natural Diversity Database. 2024a. Special Animals List. Current list of wildlife taxa considered to be rare, threatened, endangered, or otherwise “sensitive” by the State of California. List dated October 2024.
- California Natural Diversity Database. 2024b. Special Vascular Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List. Current list of vegetative taxa considered to be rare, threatened, endangered, or otherwise “sensitive” by the State of California. List dated October 2024.
- California Natural Diversity Data Base. 2024c. Rarefind data accessed online on October 5, 2024, for the U.S. Geologic Survey’s Burbank 7.5’ topographic quadrangle.
- Holland, R. F. 1986. *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California*. Nongame-Heritage Program, California Department of Fish and Game.

APPENDIX A

LISTS OF PLANT AND WILDLIFE SPECIES DETECTED

The following lists identifies plant and wildlife species detected by Hamilton Biological, Inc., during the field visit.

Taxonomy and nomenclature follow iNaturalist.

- * Taxon not native to the study area.
- ? Taxon identified to genus; species possibly native.
- † Special-status species.

VASCULAR PLANTS

SECTION: EUDICOTS

Amaranthaceae – Amaranth Family

- * *Amaranthus albus*, Tumbleweed

Anacardiaceae – Cashew Family

- * *Schinus terebinthifolius*, Brazilian Peppertree

Apocynaceae – Dogbane Family

- * *Carissa macrocarpa*, Natal Plum
- * *Nerium oleander*, Oleander
- * *Trachelospermum jasminoides*, Star Jasmine

Asphodelaceae – Asphodel Family

- * *Dianella ensifolia*, Flax Lily
- * *Hemerocallis lilioasphodelus*, Lemon Daylily

Asteraceae – Sunflower Family

- Ambrosia acanthicarpa*, Annual Bursage
- Baccharis salicifolia*, Mule Fat
- * *Erigeron bonariensis*, Argentine Fleabane
- Erigeron canadensis*, Canadian Horseweed
- * *Gazania rigens*, Gazania
- Heterotheca grandiflora*, Telegraphweed
- * *Lactuca serriola*, Prickly Wild Lettuce
- Malacothrix saxatilis* var. *tenuifolia*, Short-leaved Cliff Aster
- Pseudognaphalium californicum*, California Rabbit-Tobacco
- * *Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum*, Jersey Cudweed
- * *Senecio antandroi*, Dwarf Clone
- * *Sonchus oleraceus*, Smooth Sowthistle
- * *Taraxacum officinale*, Common Dandelion

Bignoniaceae – Trumpet Vine Family

- * *Pandorea jasminoides*, Bower Vine
- * *Bignonia capreolata*, Crossvine

Chenopodiaceae – Goosefoot Family

- * *Chenopodium album*, Lamb's Quarter
- * *Salsola tragus*, Russian Thistle

Crassulaceae – Stonecrop Family

- * *Kalanchoe tetraphylla*, Paddle Plant

Ericaceae – Heather Family

- * *Arbutus unedo*, Strawberry Tree

Euphorbiaceae – Spurge Family

- * *Euphorbia maculata*, Spotted Spurge
- * *Euphorbia milii*, Crown of Thorns
- * *Euphorbia peplus*, Petty Spurge

Fabaceae – Pea Family

- * *Parkinsonia aculeata*, Palo Verde
- * *Robinia pseudoacacia*, Black Locust
- * *Trifolium repens*, White Clover

Geraniaceae – Geranium Family

- * *Erodium cicutarium*, Redstem Filaree

Heliotropiaceae – Heliotrope Family

Heliotropium curassivicum, Seaside Heliotrope

Lamiaceae – Mint Family

- * *Salvia leucantha*, Mexican Bush Sage
- * *Salvia yangii*, Russian Sage

Lythraceae – Loosestrife Family

- * *Lagerstroemia indica*, Crape Myrtle

Onagraceae – Evening Primrose Family

- * *Oenothera lindheimeri*, White Gaura

Malvaceae – Mallow Family

- * *Ceiba speciosa*, Floss Silk Tree
- * *Hibiscus × rosa-sinensis*, Chinese Hibiscus

Myrtaceae – Myrtle Family

- * *Corymbia citriodora*, Lemon-scented Gum
- * *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, Red River Gum

Oleaceae – Olive Family

- Fraxinus velutina*, Arizona Ash
- * *Ligustrum japonicum*, Wax-leaf Privet
- * *Olea europaea*, European Olive

Plantaginaceae – Plantain Family

- * *Plantago major*, Greater Plantain

Platanaceae – Plane Family

- * *Platanus* × *hispanica*, London Planetree

Rosaceae – Rose Family

- * *Photinia serratifolia*, Chinese Photinia
- * *Prunus mahaleb*, Mahaleb Cherry
- * *Pyracantha fortuneana*, Chinese Firethorn
- * *Pyrus communis*, Common Pear
- * *Raphiolepis indica*, Indian Hawthorn

Rubiaceae – Bedstraw Family

- Galium aparine*, Cleavers

Sapindaceae – Soapberry Family

- * *Cupaniopsis anacardioides*, Carrotwood Tree
- * *Koelreuteria paniculata*, Golden Rain Tree

Simaroubaceae – Quassia Family

- * *Ailanthus altissima*, Tree of Heaven

Solanaceae – Nightshade Family

- ? *Solanum* sp., nightshade

SECTION: MONOCOTS

Amaryllidaceae – Amaryllis Family

- * *Agapanthus praecox*, Common Agapanthus
- * *Tulbaghia violacea*, Society Garlic

Arecaceae – Palm Family

- * *Phoenix dactylifera*, Date Palm
- * *Washingtonia robusta*, Mexican Fan Palm

Asparagaceae – Lizardtail Family

- * *Agave americana*, American Centuryplant
- * *Cordyline australis*, Cabbage Tree
- * *Hesperaloe parviflora*, Red Yucca

Poaceae – Grass Family

- * *Avena fatua*, Wild Oats
- * *Bromus diandrus*, Ripgut Brome
- * *Bromus hordeaceus*, Soft Brome
- * *Cenchrus setaceus*, Fountain Grass
- * *Cynodon dactylon*, Bermuda Grass
- * *Ehrharta erecta*, Panic Veldtgrass
- * *Festuca glauca*, Blue Fescue
- * *Stenotaphrum secundatum*, St. Augustine Grass
- * *Stipa miliacea*, Smilo Grass

Strelitziaceae – Bird-of-paradise Family

- * *Ravenala madagascariensis*, Traveller's Palm
- * *Strelitzia reginae*, Bird of Paradise

VERTEBRATE WILDLIFE

Phrynosomatidae – North American Spiny Lizard Family

Uta stansburiana, Common Side-blotched Lizard

Columbidae – Pigeon and Dove Family

- * *Columba livia*, Rock Pigeon

Trochilidae – Hummingbird Family

Calypte anna, Anna's Hummingbird

Tyrannidae – Tyrant Flycatcher Family

Sayornis nigricans, Black Phoebe

Corvidae – Jay and Crow Family

Corvus corax, Common Raven

Fringillidae – True Finch Family

Haemorhous mexicanus, House Finch

Parulidae – Wood-Warbler Family

Setophaga coronata, Yellow-rumped Warbler