



**DETERMINATION OF BIOLOGICALLY EQUIVALENT OR SUPERIOR  
PRESERVATION**

**PARCEL MAP NO. 36962  
PLOT PLAN NO. 25837  
(GPA 01151, EA 42802, CFG 06184, CZ 07872, LLA 05524)**

**ASSESSORS PARCEL NUMBERS  
314-020-010, 314-020-017, AND 314-020-019-4  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA**

**Prepared for:**

**Trammell Crow Southern California Development, Inc.  
3501 Jamboree Road, Suite 230  
Newport Beach, CA 92660**

**Prepared by:**

**Hernandez Environmental Services  
29376 North Lake Drive  
Lake Elsinore, CA 92530**

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(Revised February 2017)**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Hernandez Environmental Services (HES) was contracted to prepare a Western Riverside County Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) for an approximately 21.52-acre property that will include the construction of a warehouse and associated infrastructure as part of the Knox Logistics Center Master Plan located in Riverside County, California. The proposed Phase II Knox Logistics Center Master Plan (Parcel Map No. 36962) includes the construction of Building E, which will consist of 410,982-square-foot building area and associated parking.

### **1.1 Purpose of this DBESP Document**

The proposed project (Parcel Map 36962) is subject to compliance with the avoidance and minimization requirements identified for riparian/riverine areas pursuant to Section 6.1.2 of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP, 2003). Since the proposed project will impact a riparian/riverine area, a DBESP analysis is required pursuant to the MSHCP. All projects within the MSHCP area are required to prepare a DBESP when project alternatives that would avoid sensitive riparian/riverine resources are not feasible. The goal of the DBESP is to demonstrate that, with the implementation of the proposed project's design features and mitigation measures, the proposed project will result in an alternative that is biologically equivalent or superior to the impacted riparian/riverine resources, and to ensure that any lost functions and values of habitat for species covered by the MSHCP are replaced.

### **1.2 Project Location**

The property is located immediately southwest of the intersection of Ellsworth Street and Old Oleander Avenue in Riverside County, California (Figures 1 and 2). Specifically, the property is located within Township 4 South, Range 4 West in the northeastern portion of Section 2 of the *Steele Peak* United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' topographic quadrangle. The center point latitude and longitude coordinates for the property are 33°51'26.15" North and 117°16'18.82" West.

### **1.3 Project Description**

The proposed project consists of the construction of a 410,982-square-foot warehouse with associated offices and parking stalls (Figure 3). The project site consists of Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) of 314-020-010 and 314-020-017. Approximately 21.52 acres of the property will be impacted by the proposed project.

## 2.0 METHODS

An extensive literature review and field survey were conducted for the 21.52-acre project site. Existing information was gathered to obtain data on existing conditions and the potential for sensitive species to occur.

### 2.1 Literature Review

HES conducted a literature review of aerial photographs and topographic maps of the project location and surrounding areas. A three-mile radius to identify sensitive species with the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Endangered Species Lists, and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) rare plant lists. The CNDDDB and USFWS critical habitat databases were utilized, together with Geographic Information System (GIS) software, to locate the previously recorded locations of sensitive plant and wildlife occurrences and designated critical habitat and to determine the distance from the project site. Additionally, the Western Riverside County MSHCP was reviewed for information on known occurrences of sensitive species within Riverside County.

#### Riparian/Riverine Habitat

Aerial maps were reviewed prior to conducting general surveys in order to locate and inspect any potential natural drainage features and water bodies that may be considered riparian/riverine habitat. Under the MSHCP, riparian/riverine habitat is defined as lands that contain habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, or emergent mosses and lichens that occur close to, or which depend upon, soil moisture from a nearby fresh water source, or that have fresh water flow during all or a portion of the year.

### 2.2 Field Reconnaissance

On December 19, 2014, Juan Hernandez, Principal Biologist for HES, conducted a field survey of the approximately 21.52-acre project site. The ambient temperature at 9:30 a.m. was 52° Fahrenheit, sunny, with zero to three mile per hour winds from the northeast. The purpose of the field survey was to document the existing habitat conditions, obtain plant and animal species information, view the surrounding uses, assess the potential for state and federal waters, and assess the potential for wildlife movement corridors, sensitive species, and nesting habitat.

The entire project site was surveyed. Linear transects spaced approximately 50 feet apart were walked for 100 percent coverage. All species observed were recorded. Global Positioning System (GPS) waypoints were taken to delineate specific habitat types, species locations, and any other information that would be useful for the assessment of the property.

### 2.3 Riparian/Riverine/Vernal Pools and Fairy Shrimp Habitat Methods

Although the site is not located within any Criteria Cells, Narrow Endemic Plant Species Survey Areas, or proposed Conservation Areas, and is not subject to the focused species surveys associated with those

areas, all projects within the MSHCP area require an evaluation of potential impacts on riparian/riverine areas and vernal pools and the protected species associated with those habitats. Riparian/riverine areas and vernal pools are defined in the MSHCP as follows:

- Riparian/riverine areas include lands that contain habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, or emergent mosses and lichens, which occur close to or which depend upon soil moisture from a nearby fresh water source; or areas with fresh water flow during all or a portion of the year.
- Vernal pools are seasonal wetlands that occur in depression areas that have wetland indicators of all three parameters (soils, vegetation, and hydrology) during the wetter portion of the growing season, but normally lack wetland indicators of hydrology and/or vegetation during the drier portion of the growing season. Obligate hydrophytes and facultative wetland plant species are normally dominant during the wetter portion of the growing season, while upland species (annuals) may be dominant during the drier portion of the growing season.

When a site supports suitable riparian/riverine areas and/or vernal pool habitats for the wildlife species covered by the MSHCP listed below, focused surveys are required to determine their presence or absence from the site.

#### Riparian Birds

- least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)
- southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)
- western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*)

#### Vernal Pool Invertebrates

- Santa Rosa Plateau fairy shrimp (*Linderiella santarosae*)
- Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus woottoni*)
- vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)

## **3.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS**

### **3.1 Environmental Setting**

The project site is relatively flat with elevations ranging from 1,601 to 1,650 feet above mean sea level. The project site is disturbed and evidence of recent weed management is apparent. The project site contains several areas of granite rock outcrops. A drainage feature runs from west to east down the center of the project site, terminating just west of the project site boundary and Decker Road to the east.

Surrounding land uses include a large open field to the north, a small residence and open field to the east, residences, an orchard, and open fields to the south, and a water tank and open field to the west.

The project site contains four habitat types: 20.43 acres of disturbed non-native vegetation, 0.67 acres of disturbed non-vegetated habitat, 0.31 acres of granitic rocky outcrops, and a 0.11-acre swale dominated by upland plant species (Figure 4).

#### Disturbed Non-Native Vegetation Habitat

The project site contains 20.43 acres of habitat characterized by disturbed non-native vegetation. This type of habitat is associated with areas characterized by high human use, vegetation maintenance, past disking, or previous ground-disturbing activities such as grading or grubbing. The disturbed non-native vegetation on the property is dominated by red brome (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), summer mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), and tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*). Native species present includes telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*), vinegar weed (*Trichostema lanceolatum*), dove weed (*Croton setigerus*), spurge (*Chamaesyce* sp.) common sandaster (*Corethrogyne filaginifolia*), Palmer's goldenbush (*Ericameria palmeri*), and coyote gourd (*Cucurbita palmate*).

#### Disturbed Non-Vegetated Habitat

The project site contains approximately 0.67 acres of disturbed non-vegetated habitat. This habitat type lacks vegetation and is associated with areas of high human use such as roads and trails.

#### Granitic Rocky Outcrops

The project site contains approximately 0.31 acres of areas characterized as granitic rocky outcrops. The outcrops are dominated by Palmer's goldenbush and dove weed.

#### Drainage Feature

The project site contains approximately 0.11-acre of a drainage feature vegetated with non-native upland plant species. Dominant plant species observed include red brome and summer mustard.

## **3.2 Soils**

None of the soils present on-site are classified as hydric soils. The property contains eight soil types:

- Cieneba rocky sandy loam (CkD2), 8 to 15 percent slopes, eroded;
- Cieneba rocky sandy loam (CkF2), 15 to 50 percent slopes, eroded;
- Fallbrook sandy loam (FbC2) shallow, 5 to 8 percent slopes, eroded;
- Fallbrook rocky sandy loam (FbD2), 8 to 15 percent slopes, eroded;
- Fallbrook fine sandy loam (FfC2), 2 to 8 percent slopes, eroded;
- Fallbrook fine sandy loam (FkD2), 8 to 15 percent slopes, eroded;
- Hanford coarse sandy loam (HcC), 2 to 8 percent slopes; and,
- Vista coarse sandy loam (Vsc), 2 to 8 percent slopes.

### 3.3 Riparian/Riverine Resources

The project site contains one small, isolated ephemeral drainage feature that meets the MSHCP definition of a riparian/riverine feature only because it receives fresh water flow during all or a portion of the year. The drainage feature lacks any semblance of riparian vegetation structure typically provided by riparian tree species such as cottonwood (*Populus* sp.), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*), and willow (*Salix* spp.). No additional riparian/riverine areas or vernal pools were identified on the site during the field survey.

The project site contains a 0.11 acre (690 linear foot) isolated ephemeral drainage feature that flows from west to east across the property (Figure 5). The drainage feature is vegetated with non-native upland plant species. Dominant plant species observed include red brome and summer mustard. The drainage feature appears to be the remnant of a historical drainage that previously conveyed water. The drainage feature terminates approximately 120 feet west of Ellsworth Street. At the point of termination, the drainage feature no longer contains a definable bed, bank, or channel. The drainage feature has no downstream connection, as it terminates prior to reaching Ellsworth Street.

During the field survey, a habitat assessment was conducted for the required MSHCP riparian/riverine wildlife species. The drainage feature does not support suitable habitat for least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, or western yellow-billed cuckoo. Due to the absence of suitable habitat, no focused surveys were required for these avian species. Additionally, the site does not support vernal pool or other seasonal wetland habitats. Therefore, focused surveys for Riverside fairy shrimp, Santa Rosa Plateau fairy shrimp, and vernal pool fairy shrimp were also not required.

### 3.4 Wildlife Species

General wildlife species documented on-site or within the vicinity of the site include burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennettii*), domestic dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), mountain bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*). For a full species list, refer to Appendix A.

### 3.5 MSHCP Conservation Area

The proposed project site is located within an unincorporated portion of Riverside County and the Mead Valley Area Plan. The site is not located within an MSHCP Criteria Cell or Area Plan Sub-unit (Figure 6).

### 3.6 Additional Survey Needs and Procedures

The proposed project site is within the Additional Survey Needs and Procedures area for the burrowing owl (BUOW). Focused BUOW surveys were conducted on the site in March and April of 2015. Suitable

BUOW nesting and foraging habitat was documented throughout the project site. One BUOW was observed outside of its burrow in the north central portion of the site (Figure 7). In addition to the observed BUOW, an owl pellet was found on a rock used for perching which was located in the northeastern portion of the site. The location of the BUOW and occupied burrow had UTM coordinates of 474708.33 and 3746481.58. The owl pellet was located at UTM coordinates 474832.33 and 3746466.49. The BUOW appeared to be nesting in the burrow, but the mate was not seen.

No other BUOW or BUOW sign was found on the remainder of the Parcel Map No. 36962 site; however, it was determined that the site is also used by BUOW to forage.

#### **4.0 UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS**

The proposed project (Parcel Map 36962) will permanently impact approximately 0.11 acre (690 linear feet) of the on-site, isolated, ephemeral drainage feature (Figure 8). While the drainage feature meets the definition of a riparian/riverine area according to the MSHCP, the channel does not support suitable habitat for least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, or western yellow-billed cuckoo. Additionally, the site does not support vernal pool or other seasonal wetland habitats. Therefore, the proposed project will not result in impacts to Riverside fairy shrimp, Santa Rosa Plateau fairy shrimp, or vernal pool fairy shrimp.

#### **5.0 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES/MITIGATION MEASURES**

In order to meet the goal and purpose of the proposed Parcel Map 36962, approximately 0.11 acre (690 linear feet) of the on-site, isolated, ephemeral drainage feature will be removed. Therefore, complete avoidance of the riparian/riverine resource is not feasible. Since there are no feasible avoidance alternatives available, the MSHCP requires the project to provide compensatory mitigation to ensure the replacement of any lost functions and values of habitat as it relates to the plant and wildlife species covered by the MSHCP.

To mitigate for permanent impacts to the 0.11 acre (690 linear feet) isolated ephemeral drainage feature, the project proponent proposes to pay into the Riverside Corona Resource Conservation District in-lieu fee program at a 2:1 ratio, totaling 0.22 acre. In general, in-lieu fee programs provide funding for future programs or projects designed to enhance, restore, establish, and/or preserve aquatic habitats. Unlike the on-site, isolated, ephemeral drainage feature, these aquatic resource projects typically include large areas of land with contiguous wetland habitats and natural upland buffers that provide many of the habitat components required by the MSHCP. Although the project is unable to avoid impacts to the on-site ephemeral drainage feature, the project's proposed mitigation would represent a biologically equivalent or superior preservation alternative to avoidance since the in-lieu mitigation fee would be expected to result in the restoration and preservation of an equivalent acreage of habitat with higher values in comparison to the drainage feature impacted by the project.



Further, a pre-construction survey for BUOW shall be conducted within 30 days prior to ground disturbance to reevaluate the locations of active burrowing owl burrows located adjacent to or within the project limits, and to avoid direct take of BUOW (MSHCP Species Specific Objective 6). If BUOWs are identified on site, avoidance measures will be developed in compliance with the MSHCP and in coordination with the CDFW and/or Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA). These measures would include the following as well as any others developed in coordination with CDFW and/or RCA:

- A biologist with knowledge of BUOW and its habitat will be retained to function as a biological monitor.
- The biological monitor will develop and implement a contractor education program with regard to the BUOW to be provided to all personnel (including temporary contractors and subcontractors) before beginning work on the project.
- The biological monitor will be present during vegetation clearing, grading, and construction, to monitor occupied BUOW burrows and any construction-related impacts.
- Prior to any ground disturbance, all limits of project construction will be delineated and marked so as to be clearly visible to personnel on foot and in heavy equipment. All construction-related activities (e.g., vegetation removal, grading, equipment lay-down and storage, and contractor parking) will occur inside the limits of construction and designated staging areas. Construction staging and equipment storage will be located outside of any occupied BUOW burrow locations. All movement of contractors, subcontractors, or their agents and equipment will be restricted to the limits of construction and staging areas.
- A qualified biologist will conduct any necessary BUOW passive relocation that may be required to avoid project effects to BUOW.
  - If BUOW must be moved away from the disturbance area, passive relocation techniques would be used rather than actual avian trapping. At least one or more weeks would be necessary to accomplish this and allow the birds to acclimate to alternate burrows.
  - The project would provide funding for long-term management and monitoring of the protected lands acquired for BUOW impacts. This monitoring would include an annual report submittal to the CDFW.

## **5.1 Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation**

Based on the analysis provided in this report, the proposed mitigation measures to be implemented for BUOW and the off-site purchase of 0.22 acre of rehabilitation credits at the Riverside Corona Resource

Conservation District in-lieu fee program would result in superior preservation and an increase in habitat function and value compared with pre-project conditions.

## 6.0 CERTIFICATION

*“CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present the data and information required for this biological evaluation, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.”*



DATE 2-10-17

SIGNED

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PROJECT MANAGER

Fieldwork Performed By:

Juan J. Hernandez

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PRINCIPAL BIOLOGIST

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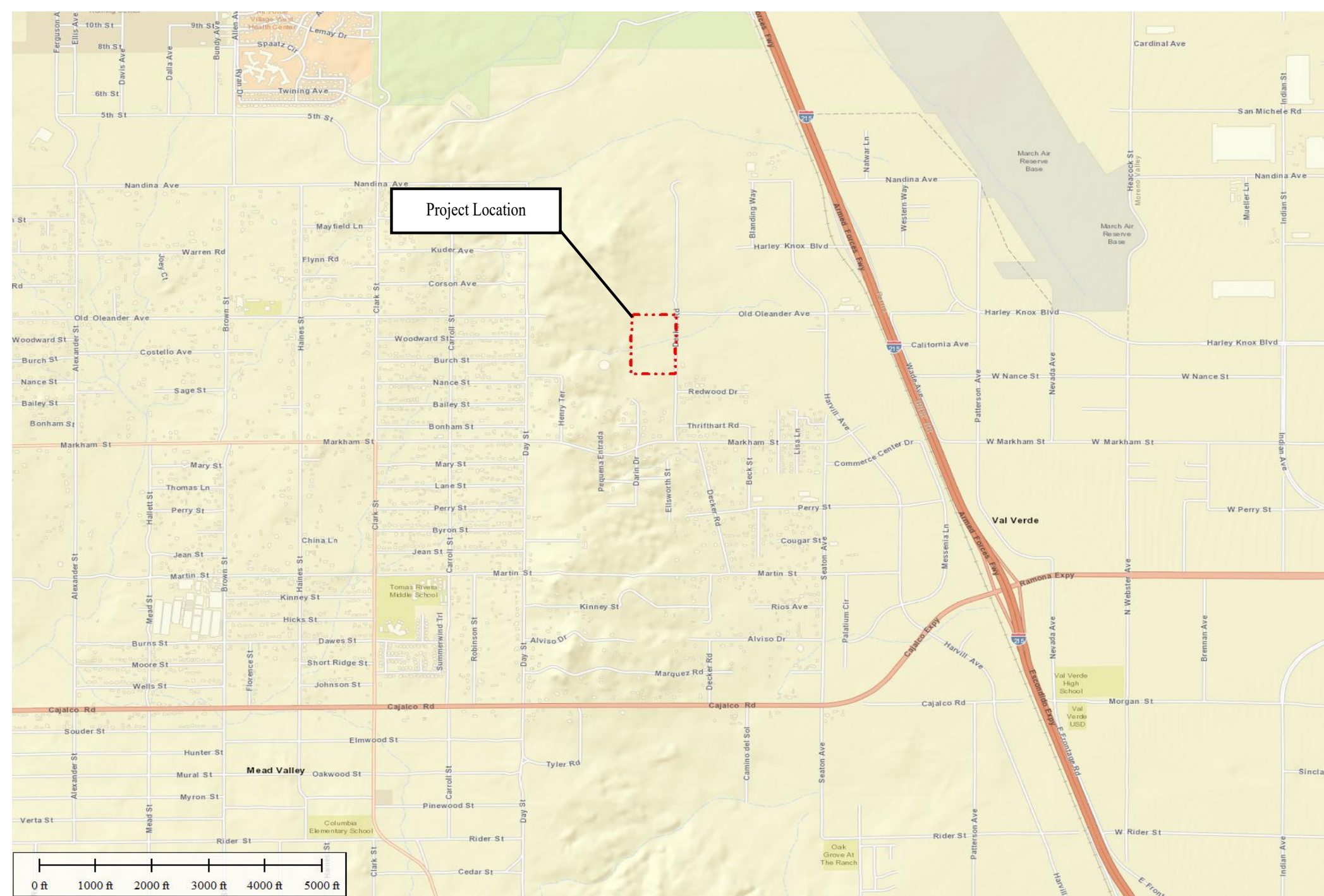
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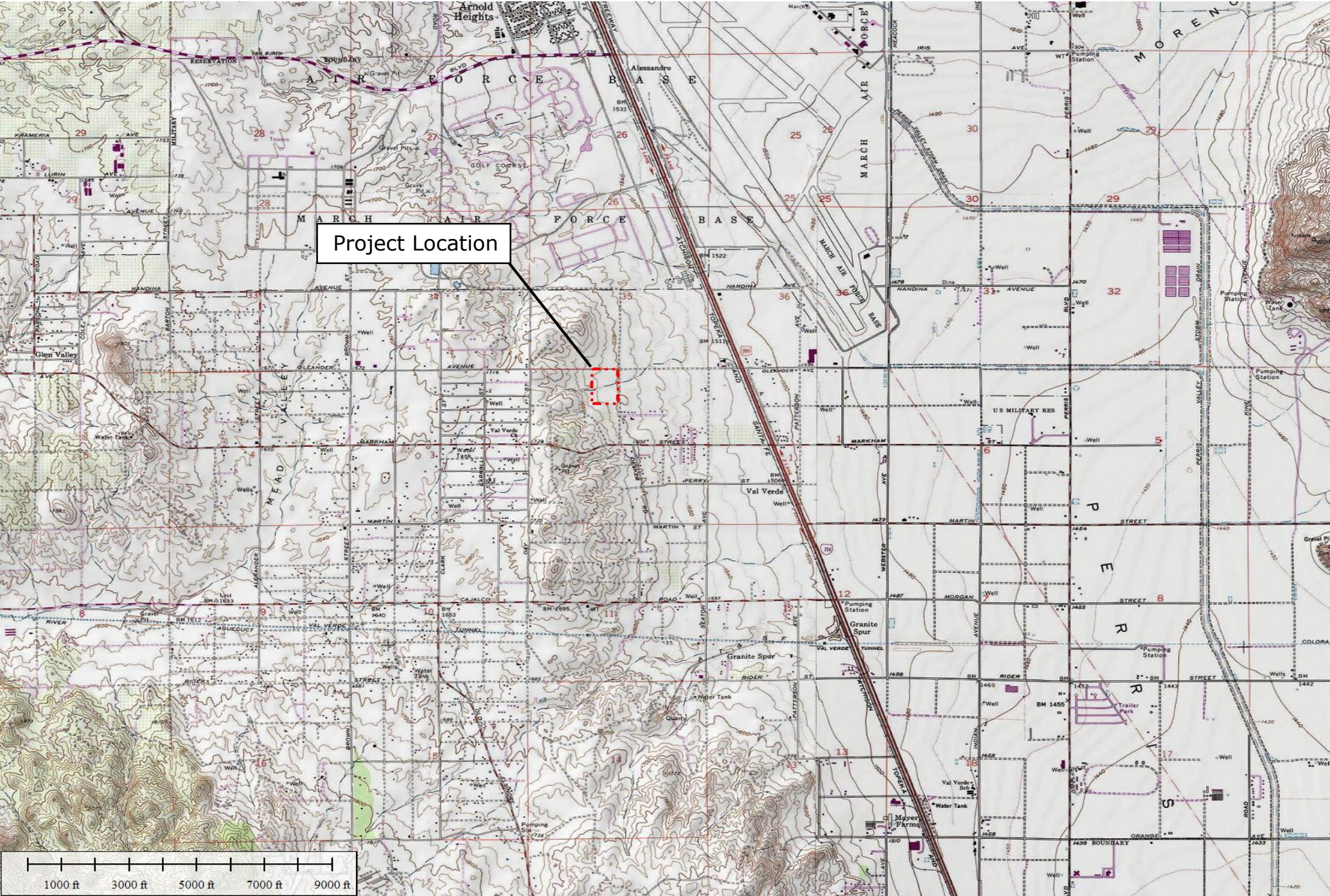
## **FIGURES**



**Figure 1**

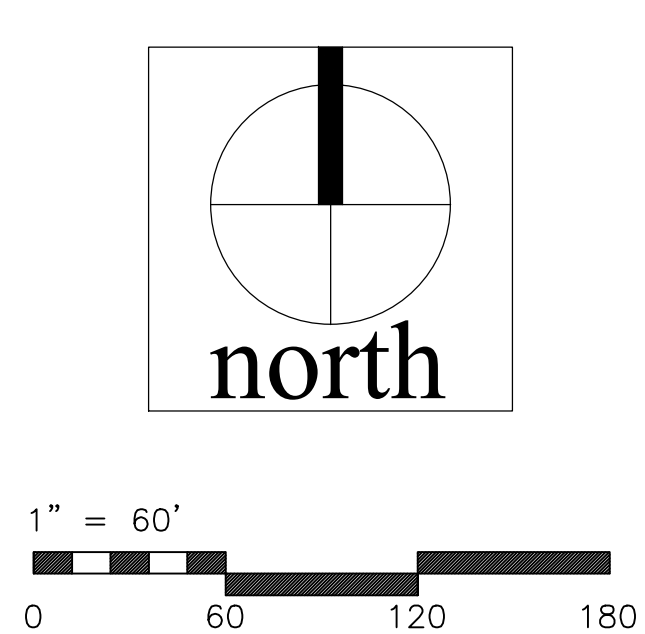
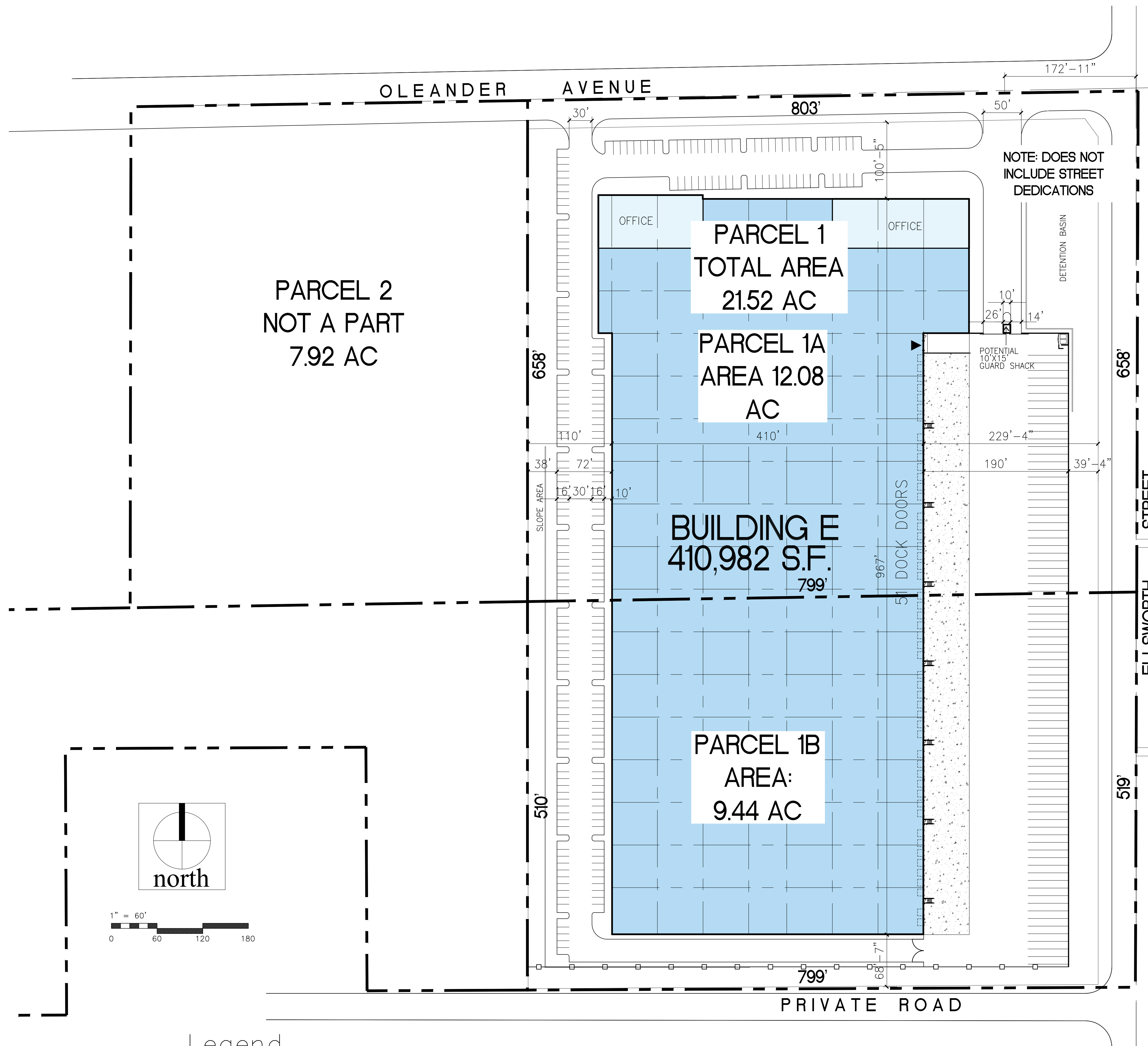
Project Location Map  
 Decker Parcels II Project  
 County of Riverside, California





**Figure 2**  
 Vicinity Map  
 Decker II Parcels Project  
 County of Riverside, California





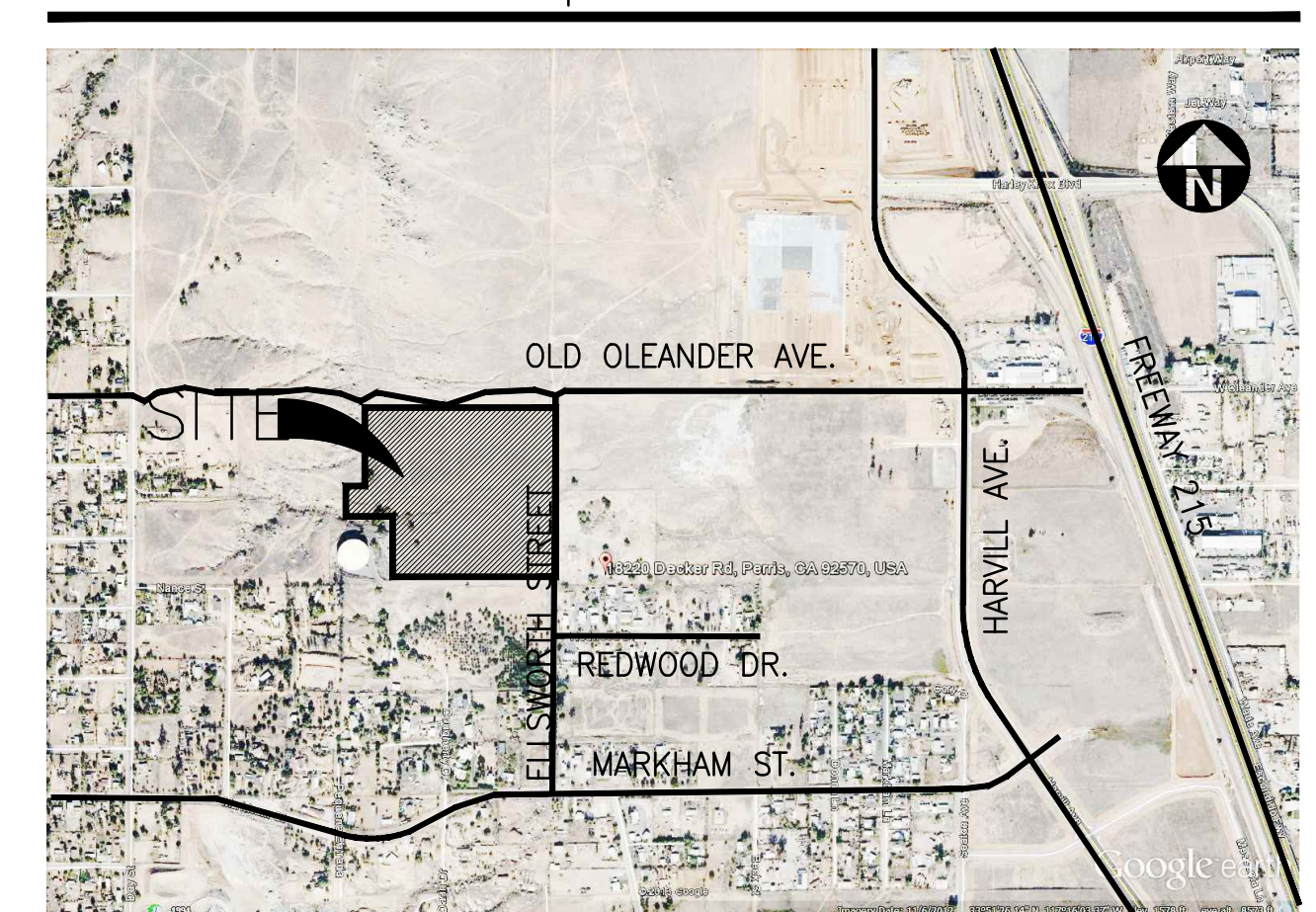
Legend

- POTENTIAL OFFICE
- WAREHOUSE

Building E – Conceptual Site Plan  
 KNOX BUSINESS PARK

County of Riverside, CA

Aerial Map



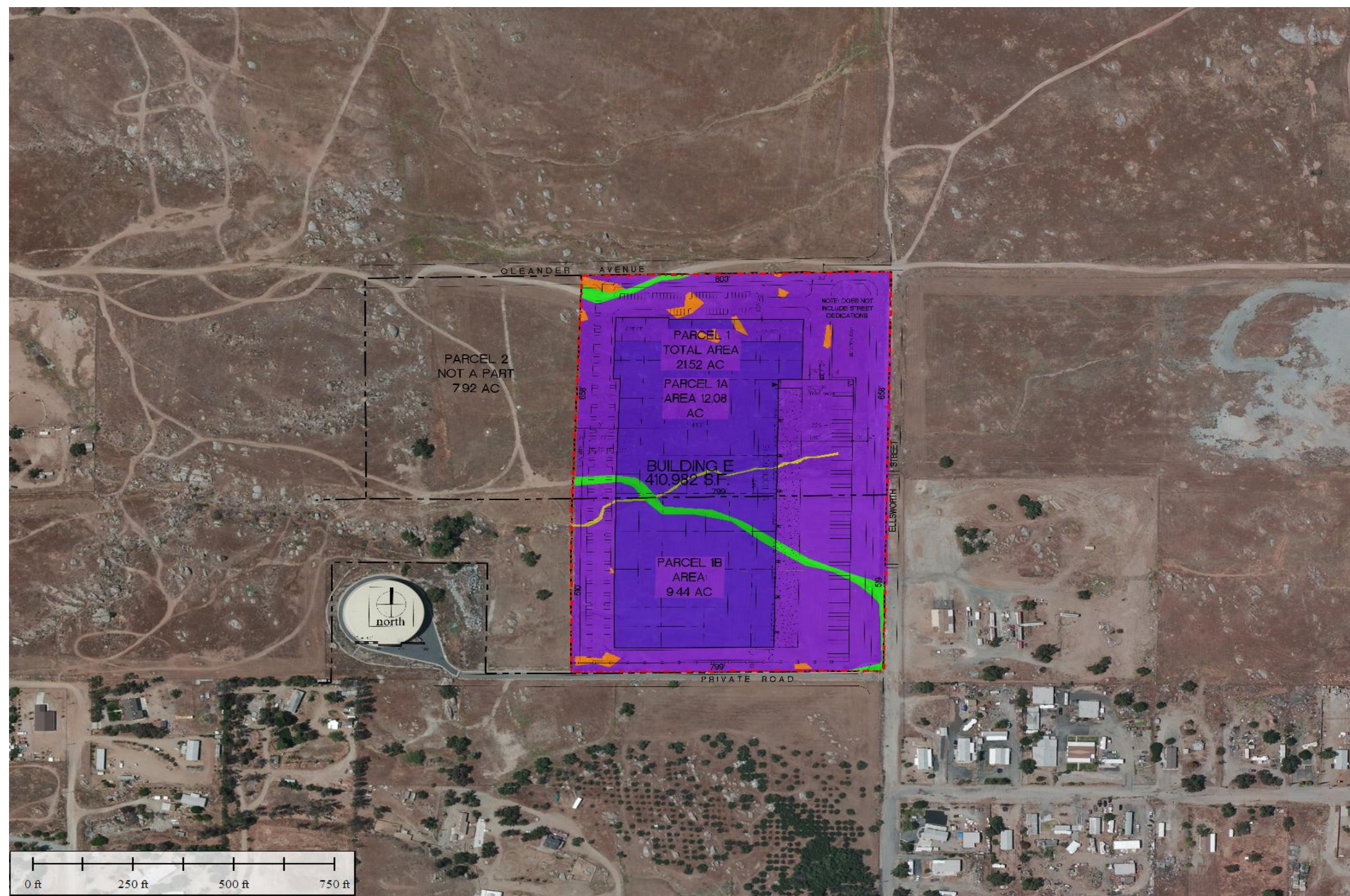
Tabulation

SITE AREA		BUILDING E	
<b>Net Site Area</b>			
in sq. ft.		849,404	s.f.
in acres		19.5	ac
<b>BUILDING AREA</b>			
Office		15,000	s.f.
Warehouse		395,982	s.f.
<b>Total</b>		<b>410,982</b>	<b>s.f.</b>
<b>COVERAGE</b>		48.4%	
<b>AUTO PARKING REQUIRED</b>			
Office @ 1/250 s.f.		60	stalls
Whse @ 1/2,000 s.f.		198	stalls
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>258</b>	<b>stalls</b>
<b>AUTO PARKING PROVIDED</b>			
Standard (9'x16' w with 2' overhang)		230	stalls
Handicapp (9'x16' w with 2' overhang)		6	stalls
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>236</b>	<b>stalls</b>
<b>TRAILER PARKING PROVIDED</b>			
Trailer (10'x53')		80	stalls
<b>ZONING ORDINANCE FOR CITY</b>			
<b>Current Zoning Designation :</b>			
Industrial Park (I-P)			
Rural Residential 1/2 - Acre Lot Sizes (R-R 1/2)			
<b>Proposed Zoning</b>			
Industrial Park (I-P)			
<b>MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA RATIO</b>			
F.A.R. .60			
<b>BUILDING HEIGHT ALLOWED</b>			
Height - 50'			
<b>SETBACKS</b>			
Street Side = 25'			
Side = 5'			
Rear = 5'			
Abuts Residential/commercial zone = 50'			

**Note:** This is a conceptual plan. It is based on preliminary information which is not fully verified and may be incomplete. It is meant as a comparative aid in examining alternate development strategies and any quantities indicated are subject to revision as more reliable information becomes available.







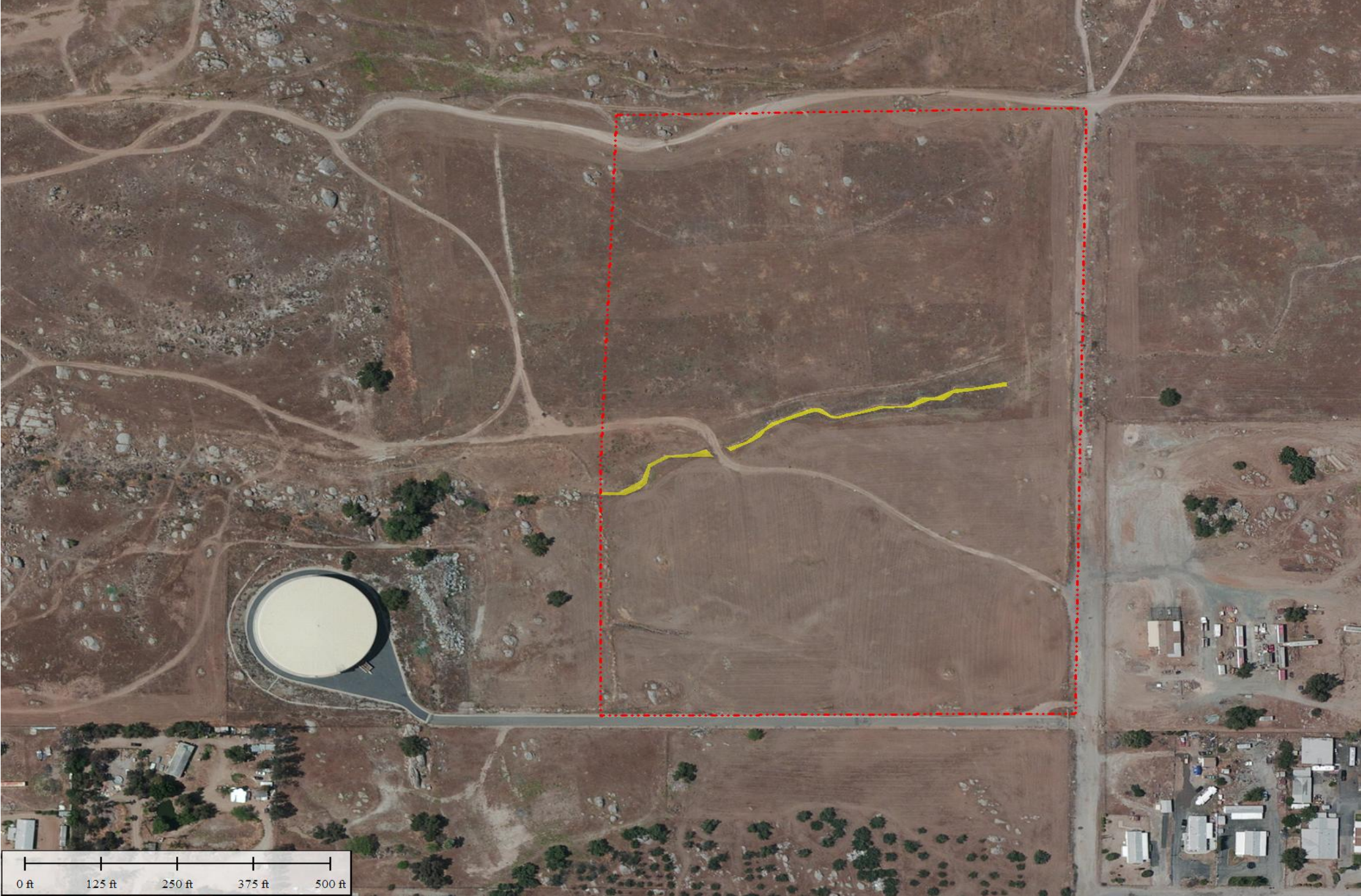
**Figure 4**

Habitat Map  
Decker Parcels II Project  
County of Riverside, California



**Legend**

- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | 20.43 Acres of Disturbed Non-Native Vegetation |  | 0.11 Acre Swale                               |
|  | 0.31 Acres of Granitic Outcrops                |  | 0.67 Acres of Disturbed Non-Vegetated Habitat |



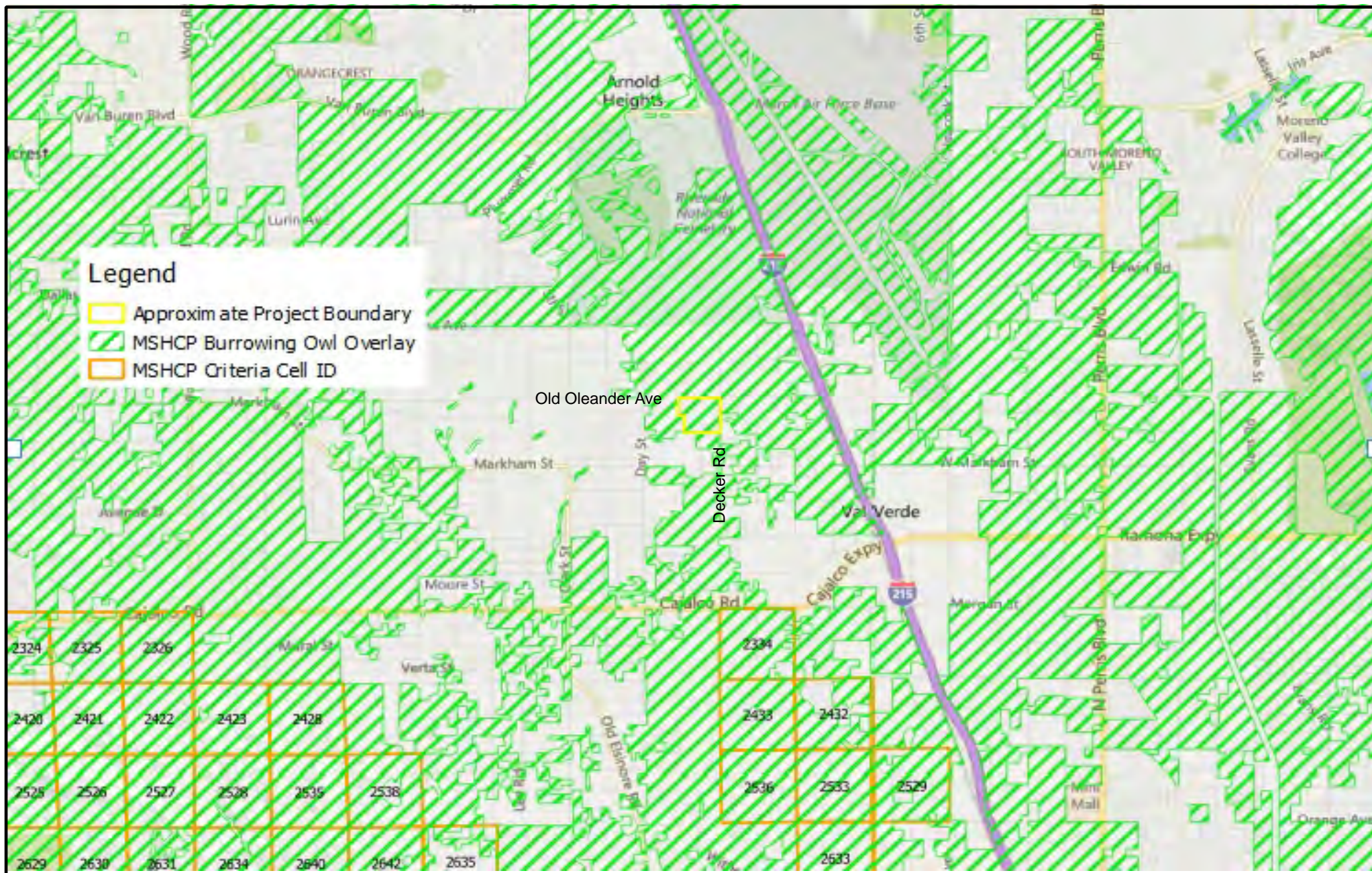


**Legend**

-  Project Site Boundary
-  0.11 Acre of Upland Vegetated Ephemeral Swale

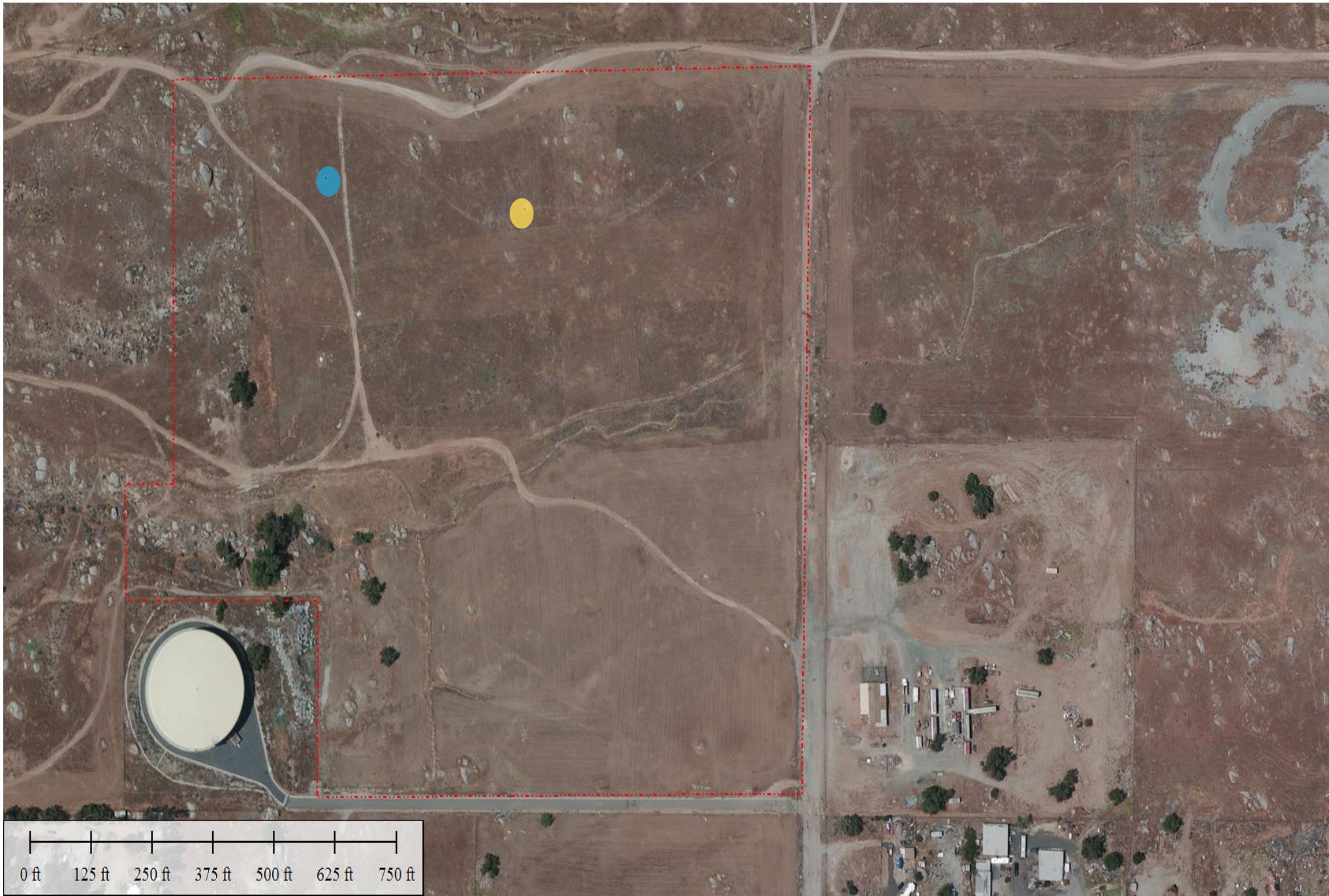


**Figure 5**  
 Drainage Map  
 Decker Parcels II Project  
 County of Riverside, California





**Figure 6**

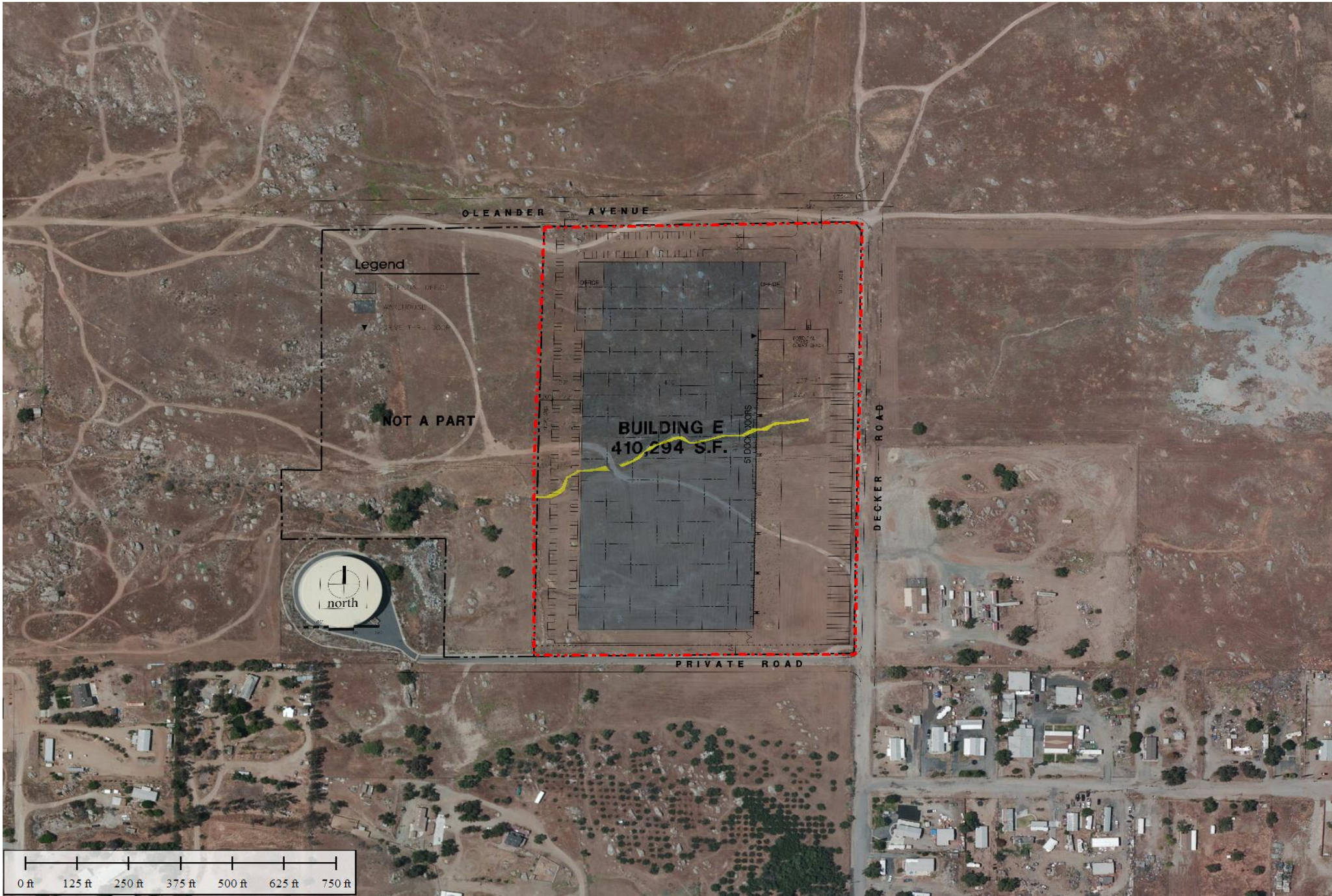
MSHCP Map  
 Decker Parcels II Project  
 County of Riverside, California



**Figure 7**  
BUOW Results Map  
Decker Parcels II Project  
County of Riverside, California



- Legend**
-  Burrowing Owl and Burrow
  -  Burrowing Owl Pellet

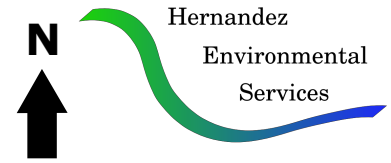




**Figure 8**  
 Impacts Map  
 Decker Parcels II Project  
 County of Riverside, California

**Legend**

	0.11 Acres of Impacts to Upland Vegetated Ephemeral Swale		Project Site Boundary
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# **APPENDIX A**

## Appendix A Species List

### Plant List

<i>Amaranthus</i> sp.	Pigweed
<i>Ambrosia psilostachya</i>	Western ragweed
<i>Avena</i> sp.	Oats
<i>Baccharis salicifolia</i>	Mulefat
<i>Brassica nigra</i>	Black mustard
<i>Brassica tournefortii</i>	Common mustard
<i>Bromus mediterraneus</i>	Red Brome
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>	Tacalote
<i>Chamaesyce prostrata</i>	Prostrate spurge
<i>Corethrogyne filaginifolia</i>	Common sandaster
<i>Croton setigerus</i>	Dove weed
<i>Cucurbita palmata</i>	Coyote gourd
<i>Datura stramonium</i>	Jimson weed
<i>Encelia californica</i>	California encelia
<i>Ericameria palmeri</i>	Palmer's goldenbush
<i>Erigeron bonariensis</i>	Horseweed
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	California buckwheat
<i>Erodium</i> sp.	Filaree
<i>Helianthus petiolaris</i>	Sunflower
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	Mustard
<i>Hordeum</i> sp.	Barley

Isocoma menziesii	Goldenbush
Malva parviflora	Cheeseweed
Nicotina glauca	Tree tobacco
Rumex crispus	Curly dock
Salsola tragus	Russian Thistle
Schinus molle	Peruvian pepper tree
Trichostema lanceolatum	Vinegar weed

### **Animal List**

Aphelocoma californiaca	Western scrub jay
Buteo jamaicensis	Red-tailed Hawk
Calypte anna	Anna's hummingbird
Canis latrans	Coyote
Canis laupus familiaris	Domestic dog
Carpodacus mexicanus	House finch
Cathartes aura	Turkey vulture
Corvus corax	Raven
Corvus brachyrhynchos	Crow
Falco sparverius	American kestrel
Hirundo rustica	Barn swallow
Lepus californicus bennetti	Black-tailed jackrabbit
Melospiza melodia	Song sparrow
Mimus polyglottos	Mocking bird
Passer domesticus	House Sparrow
Sayornis nigricans	Black phoebe



<i>Sceloporus occidentalis</i>	Western fence lizard
<i>Sialia currocoides</i>	Mountain bluebird
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Euroasian collard dove
<i>Sylvilagus audubonii</i>	Desert cottontail
<i>Thomomys bottae</i>	Botha's pocket gopher
<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>	Western kingbird
<i>Uta stansburiana</i>	Side-blotched lizard
<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Mourning dove

## **APPENDIX B**

# Site Photographs

## Decker Parcels II Project



**Facing west toward a water tank. Note the disturbed nature of the habitat.**



**Facing west looking at the peruvian pepper trees and granitic rocky outcrops on the property.**

# Site Photographs

## Decker Parcels II Project



**Facing northeast. The ephemeral swale runs from west to east and is dominated by non-native upland vegetation.**



**Area where the swale loses connectivity downstream.**