

# **APPENDIX B**

## *Biological Assessment*



July 19, 2019

11475

Ninia Hammond  
The Palomar Heights Project  
2235 Encinitas Boulevard, Suite 216  
Encinitas, California 92024

**Subject:** *Biological Site Assessment Report for the Palomar Heights Project in Escondido, California*

Dear Ms. Hammond:

The following letter report describes the biological site assessment performed by Dudek and a summary of identified biological constraints and impact avoidance options for the potential development of the Palomar Heights Project (Project) within the City of Escondido, California (Figure 1, Project Location).

This site assessment report is intended to describe the existing conditions of biological resources within the Project site, discuss any special-status biological resources with potential to occur on site, and recommend likely mitigation requirements. It should be noted that no focused surveys for special-status species were conducted during this biological assessment.

## 1 Location

The 13.8-acre Project site is located in the central area of the City of Escondido (Figure 1). The Project site is bordered by E. Valley Parkway to the north, N. Fig Street to the east, and E. Grand Avenue to the south. The site is approximately 1.5 miles east of Interstate 15. The Project site is currently developed and occupied by the Palomar Health Downtown Campus.

## 2 Methods

Before conducting field surveys, Dudek reviewed regional California Natural Diversity Database occurrence data (CDFW 2019), the San Diego Natural History Museum's Bird Atlas (SDNHM 2012), and the National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2019) to identify special-status species and jurisdictional aquatic resources that are known to occur or potentially occur within the Project site.

Fieldwork associated with this report was completed on June 20, 2019. The Project site was surveyed systematically on foot to determine the presence of appropriate habitat for special-status species, particularly nesting birds. The potential for special-status species was evaluated when considering whether additional focused surveys would be required.

Dudek surveyed the site for jurisdictional aquatic resources (i.e., waters or wetlands of the United States and/or state).

### 3 Results

Plant and wildlife species observed during surveys are provided in Attachments A and B. The Project site is mostly developed with buildings and pavement, with the exception of several areas of ornamental plantings and non-native vegetation. Elevations on site range from approximately 670 to 710 feet above mean sea level. Topography is generally flat, but some small vegetated slopes exist between paved areas.

Dudek noted two land covers within the Project site: urban/developed and ornamental plantings.

The majority of the Project site is developed with Palomar Health Downtown Campus buildings and paved parking lots. Between paved areas and buildings are strips of ornamental trees, including large eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*, native tree but part of the ornamental planting), pines (*Pinus* spp.), and other assorted non-native and ornamental shrub, grass, weed, and tree species; these areas appeared to be landscaped regularly.

Although ornamental and non-native plant species dominate the vegetation on site, there were several common native species found growing in landscaped and bare soil areas around buildings throughout the site (i.e., Canada horseweed [*Erigeron Canadensis*], cottonbatting plant [*Pseudognaphalium stramineum*], and San Diego milk aster [*Stephanomeria diegensis*]). These species regularly occur on disturbed lands/roadsides and were not part of any larger native vegetation community on site. One immature coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) was found in an ornamental patch of vegetation on the eastern side of the property.

#### Special-Status Wildlife Species

No special-status wildlife species were observed on the Project site. No historic occurrences of special-status species were mapped on or near the Project site. Given the urban and developed nature of the site, it is unlikely that special-status species would use the site for nesting, breeding, or foraging.

#### Special-Status Plant Species

No special-status plant species were observed on the Project site. Most vegetation observed on site was ornamental or non-native, and the native species encountered are not considered rare or special status.

#### Jurisdictional Aquatic Resources

No jurisdictional aquatic resources occur on site.

### 4 Impact Avoidance Measures

Based on our initial review of the site and biological resources mapped in the Project vicinity, the Project site does not possess relevant biological constraints that would require mitigation if impacted. However, potential impacts to migratory birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act that could nest in ornamental planting and trees on site must be addressed.

Ms. Hammond

Subject: *Biological Site Assessment Report for the Palomar Heights Project in Escondido, California*


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Avoidance of impacts to nesting birds would require clearing and grubbing of on-site trees and vegetation to occur outside of the nesting season (January 15 to August 31). If clearing or grubbing occurs within the nesting season, nesting bird surveys for migratory birds and raptors are required to be performed by a qualified biologist at least 72 hours before the start of vegetation removal. If active nests are found, construction buffers between 50 and 500 feet will be required around the nest(s) until the nesting cycle is complete.

No additional surveys or biological evaluations are necessary in relation to biological resources on the Project site.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 760.479.4138 or via email at cschaaf@dudek.com.

Sincerely,

  
Cody Schaaf  
Project Biologist

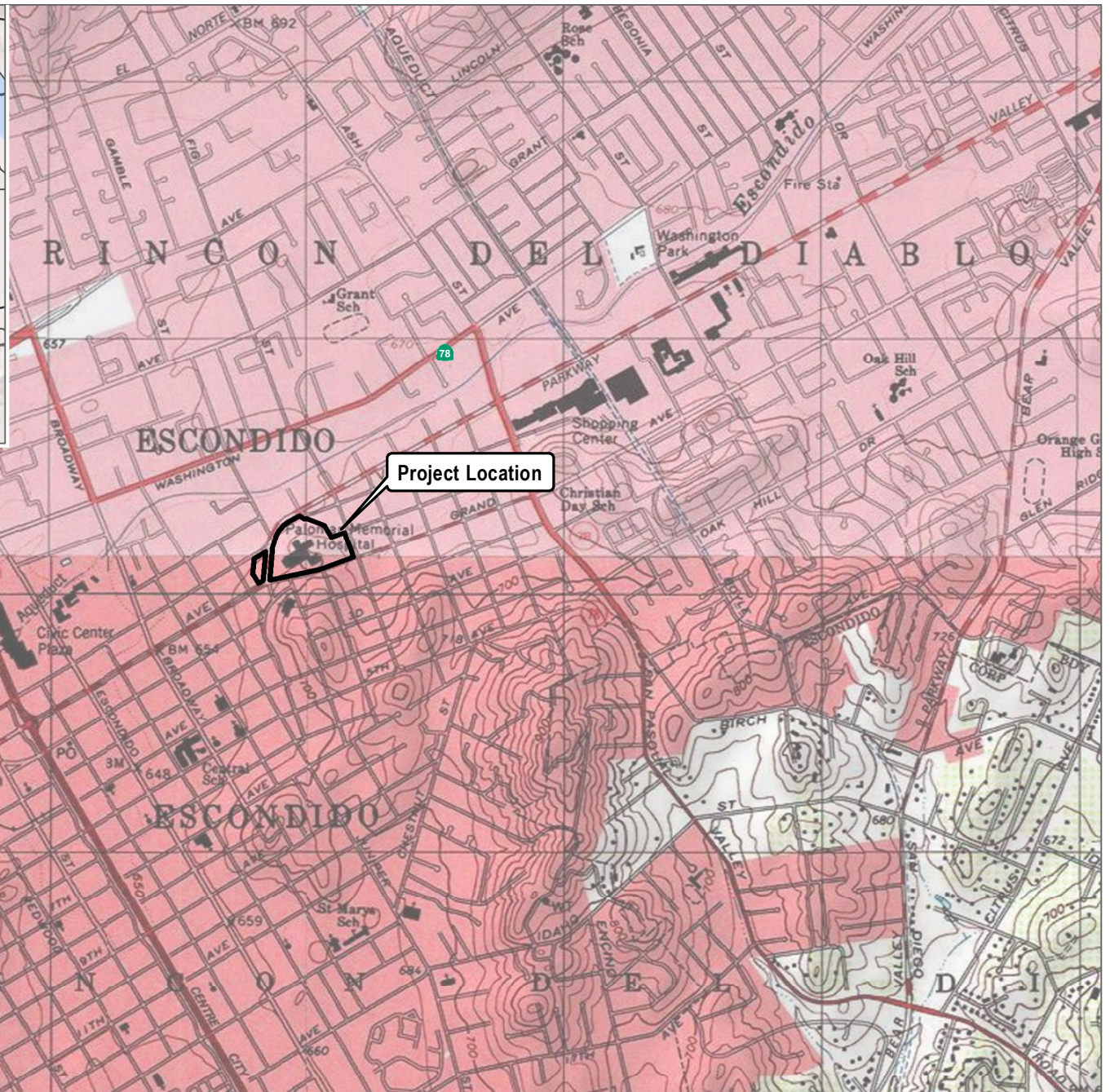
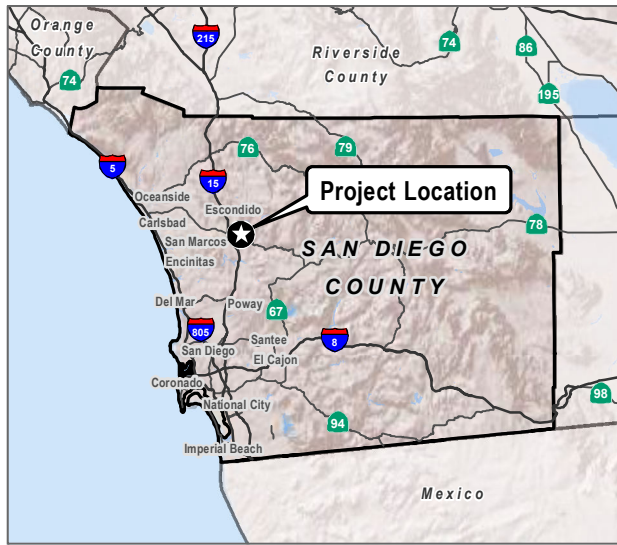
Att.: *Figure 1*  
*Attachment A, Plants Observed During Surveys*  
*Attachment B, Wildlife Observed During Surveys*

## 5 Literature Cited

- CDFW (California Department of Fish and Wildlife). 2019. RareFind, Version 5.0 and BIOS. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). Accessed June 2019. <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Maps-and-Data>.
- SDNHM (San Diego Natural History Museum). 2012. "Birds of San Diego County." From the San Diego County Bird Atlas. Accessed June 2019. <http://www.sdplantatlas.org/BirdAtlas/BirdPages.aspx>.
- USFWS (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). 2019. National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Wetlands Mapper. Accessed June 2019. <https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html>.







SOURCE: USGS 7.5-Minute Series Valley Center and Escondido Quadrangles

**FIGURE 1**  
Project Location  
Palomar Heights









# Attachment A

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Plants Observed During Surveys



EUDICOTS  
VASCULAR SPECIES

**ANACARDIACEAE—SUMAC OR CASHEW FAMILY**

- \* *Schinus molle*—Peruvian peppertree

**ARALIACEAE—GINSENG FAMILY**

- \* *Hedera helix*—English ivy

**ASTERACEAE—SUNFLOWER FAMILY**

- Erigeron canadensis*—Canadian horseweed
- \* *Lactuca serriola*—prickly lettuce
- Pseudognaphalium stramineum*—cottonbatting plant
- \* *Sonchus oleraceus*—common sowthistle
- Stephanomeria diegensis*—San Diego wirelettuce

**BIGNONIACEAE—BIGNONIA FAMILY**

- \* *Jacaranda mimosifolia*—blue jacaranda

**BRASSICACEAE—MUSTARD FAMILY**

- \* *Rosmarinus officinalis*—rosemary

**CARYOPHYLLACEAE—PINK FAMILY**

- \* *Polycarpon tetraphyllum*—fourleaf manyseed

**FABACEAE—LEGUME FAMILY**

- \* *Melilotus indicus*—annual yellow sweetclover

**FAGACEAE—OAK FAMILY**

- Quercus agrifolia*—coast live oak

**MALVACEAE—MALLOW FAMILY**

- \* *Malva parviflora*—cheeseweed mallow

**MYRTACEAE—MYRTLE FAMILY**

- \* *Eucalyptus* spp.—eucalyptus

**PLANTAGINACEAE—PLANTAIN FAMILY**

- \* *Plantago lanceolata*—narrowleaf plantain

**PLATANACEAE—PLANE TREE, SYCAMORE FAMILY**

- Platanus racemosa*—California sycamore

## GYMNOSPERMS AND GNETOPHYTES

### VASCULAR SPECIES

#### CUPRESSACEAE—CYPRESS FAMILY

*Calocedrus decurrens*—incense cedar

#### PINACEAE—PINE FAMILY

\* *Pinus* spp.—ornamental pines

## MONOCOTS

### VASCULAR SPECIES

#### ARECACEAE—PALM FAMILY

\* *Syagrus romanzoffiana*—queen palm

\* *Washingtonia robusta*—Washington fan palm

#### POACEAE—GRASS FAMILY

\* *Avena barbata*—slender oat

\* *Bromus diandrus*—ripgut brome

\* *Cynodon dactylon*—Bermudagrass

\* *Ehrharta erecta*—panic veldtgrass

\* *Pennisetum setaceum*—fountain grass

\* signifies introduced (non-native) species



# Attachment B

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Wildlife Observed During Surveys





BIRD

*FINCHES*

**FRINGILLIDAE—FRINGILLINE & CARDUELINE FINCHES & ALLIES**

*Haemorhous mexicanus*—house finch

*Spinus psaltria*—lesser goldfinch

*FLYCATCHERS*

**TYRANNIDAE—TYRANT FLYCATCHERS**

*Sayornis nigricans*—black phoebe

*Tyrannus vociferans*—Cassin's kingbird

*HAWKS*

**ACCIPITRIDAE—HAWKS, KITES, EAGLES, & ALLIES**

*Buteo jamaicensis*—red-tailed hawk

*JAYS, MAGPIES & CROWS*

**CORVIDAE—CROWS & JAYS**

*Corvus corax*—common raven

*LARKS*

**ALAUDIDAE—LARKS**

*Eremophila alpestris*—horned lark

*OLD WORLD SPARROWS*

**PASSERIDAE—OLD WORLD SPARROWS**

\* *Passer domesticus*—house sparrow

*PIGEONS & DOVES*

**COLUMBIDAE—PIGEONS & DOVES**

*Zenaida macroura*—mourning dove

REPTILE

*LIZARDS*

**PHRYNOSOMATIDAE—IGUANID LIZARDS**

*Sceloporus occidentalis*—western fence lizard

\* signifies introduced (non-native) species