BURROWING OWL SURVEY REPORT
FOR THE
OLEANDER BUSINESS PARK PROJECT SITE

Prepared for:
APPLIED PLANNING, Inc.
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Prepared by:

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APRIL 2020

OLEANDER BUSINESS PARK PROJECT

Burrowing owl survey

APN - 295-310-012, 295-310-013, 295-310-014,
295-310-015

An approximately 89-Acre Property,
Total Area Surveyed: 240 acres (including adjacent buffer area)

PROJECT SITE LOCATION
U.S.G.S. 7.5-minute Steele Peak topographic quandrangle in SECTION 32 NW of TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH, RANGE 4 WEST

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Principal Investigator
Paul Galvin, M.S.

Surveys conducted by:
Paul Galvin
Surveys conducted on:
3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 31 March and 1, 2 April 2020

Report date: 4 April 2020

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the statements furnished 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.

HARMSWORTH ASSOCIATES
Paul Galvin, M.S.
Vice President

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Oleander Business Park Project site is located within the Mead Valley area of Riverside County, California (Figure 1). The entire project area is within the western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) area and therefore requires compliance with the plan.

This report summarizes the results of focused surveys for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) conducted in spring 2020 at the project site, as per Section 6.3.2 of the Western Riverside County MSHCP.

1.1 Proposed Project

The Oleander Business Park Project proposes construction and operation of approximately 710,736 square feet of light industrial/manufacturing uses within an approximately 44-acre site. The Project also includes a 10-acre off-site laydown and soils/import export area and improvement of associated roads. All areas to be developed by the Project or otherwise disturbed by Project development activities (including off-site areas) were surveyed in spring 2020, and are the subject of this report.

1.2 Site Description

The Oleander Business Park Project site is located within the Mead Valley area of Riverside County, California (Figure 1). The site is west of Interstate 215, south of Nandina Avenue, north of Oleander Avenue and west of Decker Road (Figures 2 and 3). The site is within Section 32 of Township 3 South and Range 4 West of the Steele Peak, California, United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (Figure 1).

The Oleander Business Park Project site consists of approximately 44 acres of undeveloped land, located at the edge of the built-up city limits (Figure 3). The Project also includes a 10-acre off-site laydown and soils/import export area, located in the northwest corner. The exact size and location of the laydown/import export area are approximate and subject to refinement as the Project is further defined. The laydown/import export area would conform to County requirements regarding temporary surface improvements, stormwater management, security, environmental restrictions, restoration, etc. Materials and soils stockpiling specifications would conform to applicable County of Riverside Building & Safety requirements.

Additional areas of off-site disturbance would result from construction of site-adjacent roadway improvements and construction of utilities connections to existing area-serving utilities systems. Decker Road, Harley Knox Road, Nandina Avenue and Oleander

Avenue to Day Street) would all be improved. All Project roadway improvements and utilities connections improvements would occur within dedicated rights-of-way and/or assigned easements.

The project site has been significantly impacted due to years of disturbance, trash, off-road trails and footpaths. The site slopes gently from west to east and topography varies from an elevation of approximately 1,648 feet above msl along the central western boundary to 1,570 feet above msl along the northeastern boundary of the site (Figure 3).

The site has a Mediterranean type climate, with hot dry summers, relatively cool winters and sparse rains. Annual precipitation for the region averages 13.3 inches, and average annual temperature ranges from 50^0 to 79^0 F. Rainfall during the 2018/2019 season was above normal but the 2019/2020 season was below normal throughout southern California (Appendix A).

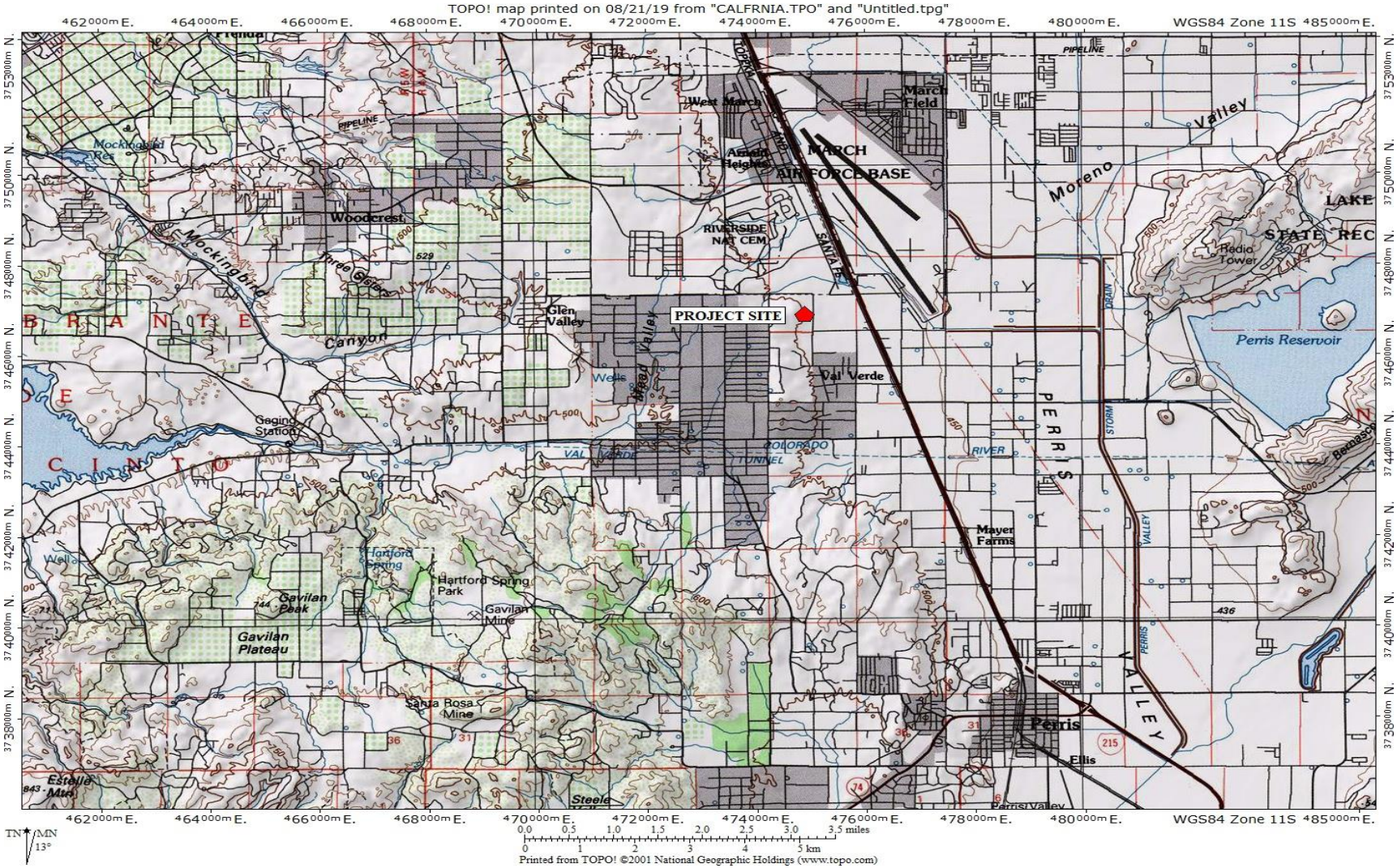

Figure 1: Location of the Oleander Business Park Project site in Riverside County, California. Source: USGS Topographical quadrant: Steele Peak.

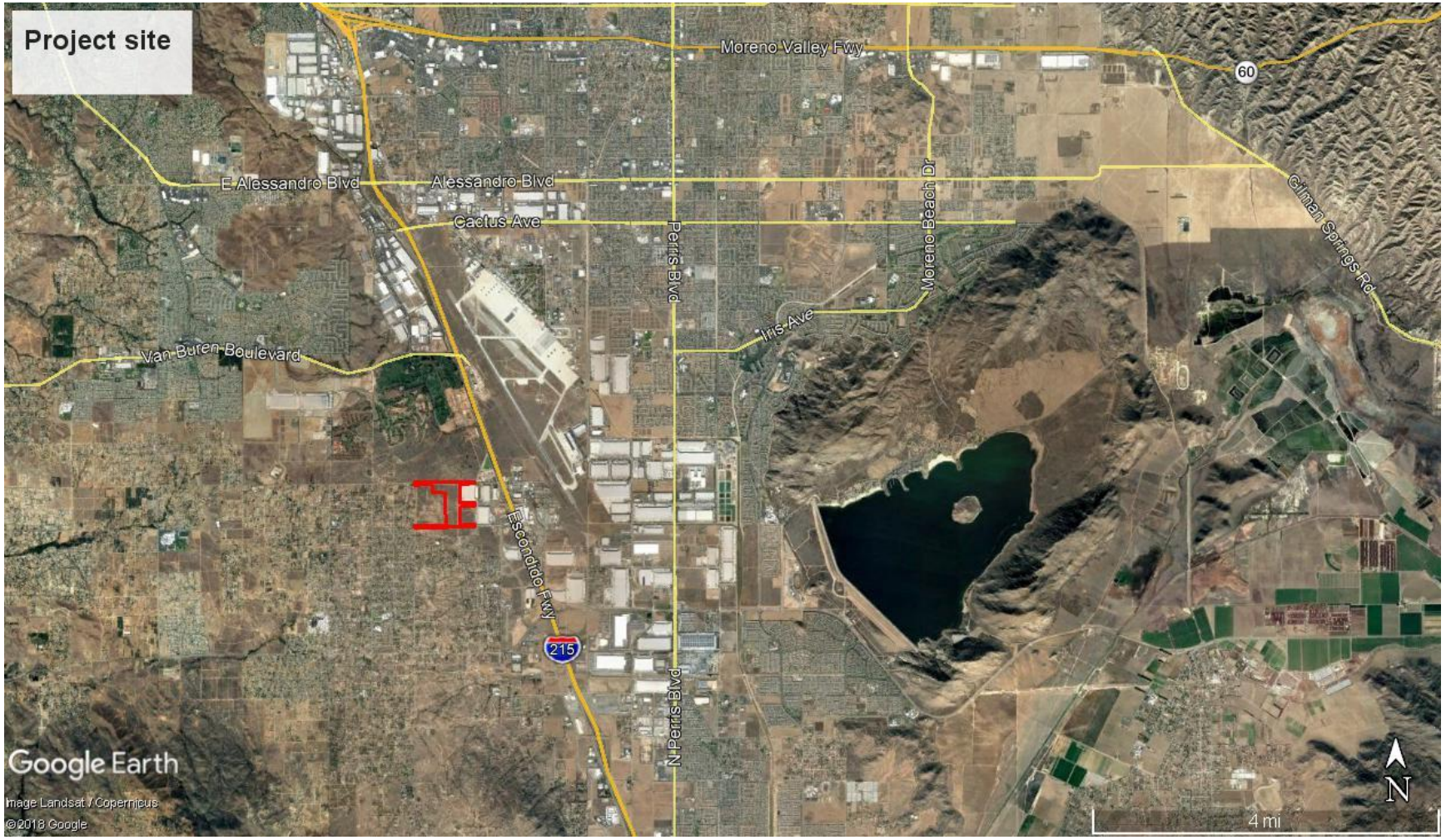

Figure 2: Location of the Oleander Business Park Project site (in red). Source: Google Earth, Inc.

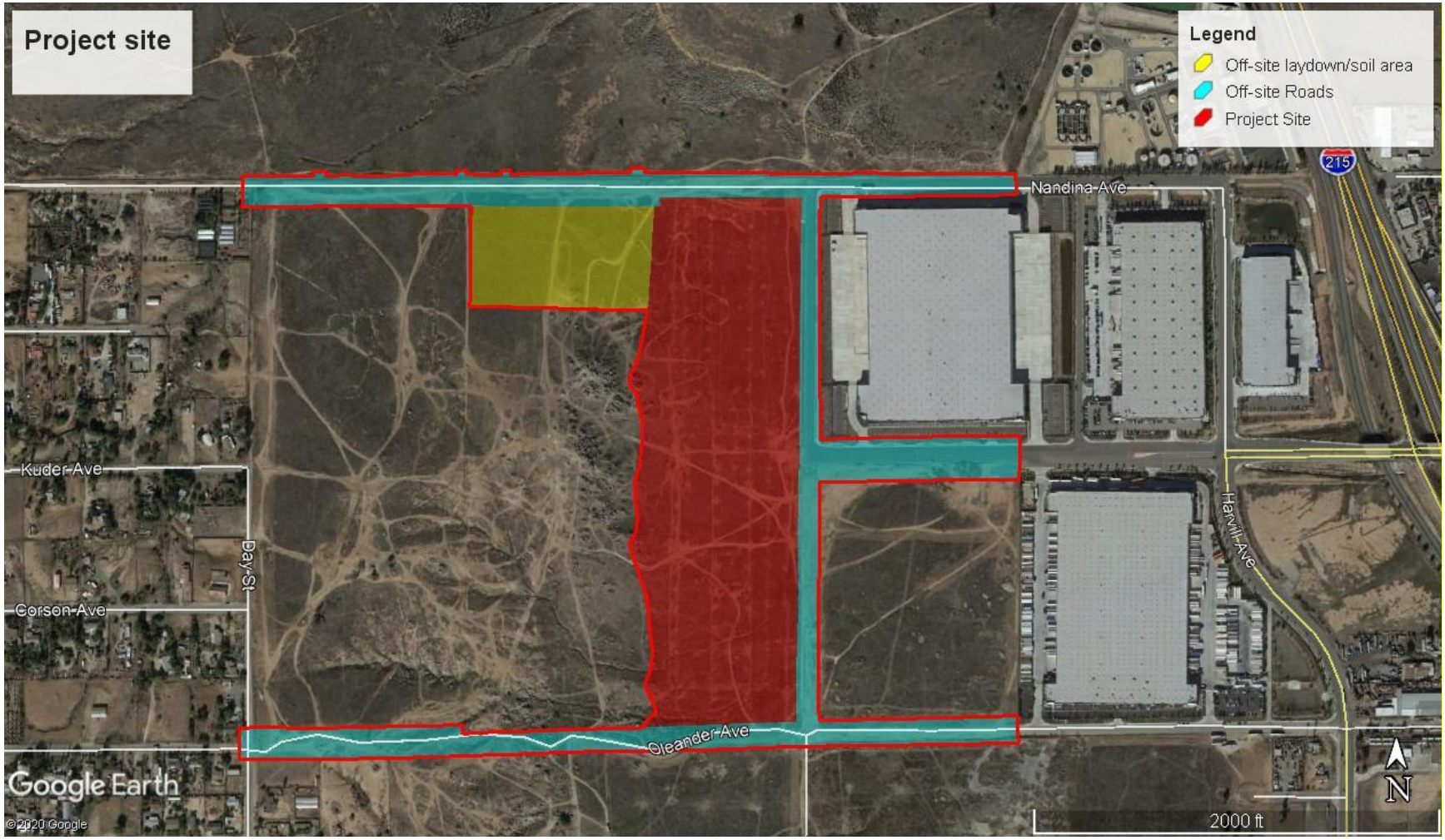

Figure 3: Oleander Business Park Project site (in red). Source: Google Earth, Inc.

2.0 METHODS

Burrowing owls occur in shortgrass prairies, grasslands, lowland scrub, agricultural lands (particularly rangelands), prairies, coastal dunes, desert floors, and some artificial, open areas as a yearlong resident. They require large open expanses of sparsely vegetated areas on gently rolling or level terrain with an abundance of active small mammal burrows. As a critical habitat feature, they require the use of rodent or other burrows for roosting and nesting cover. They can also use pipes, culverts, and nest boxes (USFWS 2003, Haug *et al.* 1993, Zeiner *et al.* 1990).

Prior to conducting fieldwork previous results of wildlife surveys and habitat assessments in the project area were reviewed. Potential burrowing owl habitat occurs mostly at the project edges and adjacent off-sites areas but all areas of the site were included in the survey.

Focused burrowing owl surveys at the project site were conducted following the MSHCP burrowing owl survey instructions (County of Riverside 2006). The survey area consisted of the project site and a buffer area of 150 meters outside the entire extent of the site boundary. All these areas were surveyed a total of 4 times. Due to the size of the area to be surveyed, the site was divided into two equal portions (Area A and Area B) and two days were required to complete 1 survey. Focused burrowing owl surveys were conducted on 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 31 March and 1, 2 April 2020 by Paul Galvin (Table 1, Figures 4 and 5). The final 3 survey days were delayed due to rain in mid-March.

Surveys were conducted during the morning hours (approximately from 1 hour before sunrise to 2-3 hours after sunrise). All surveys were conducted during good weather conditions (not too hot and no or only light winds).

The survey methods consisted of scanning all open areas and suitable habitat with binoculars prior to walking through that area. The biologist then conducted pedestrian walking surveys through all areas. The walking transects were spaced to ensure 100% visual coverage of the ground surface. The exact distance between transect lines varied depending on topography and vegetation but was generally no more than 75 feet. All open areas, banks, rodent burrows and any other area likely to support owl burrows were checked.

Table 1: **Survey conditions during burrowing owl assessment/surveys, March 2020.**

Date	Biologist	Time	%Cloud cover	Temp (^{0}F)	Wind speed (mph)	Area surveyed	BUOW
3/03/20	PG	6.00-9.30	5-5	52-64	2-3	Portion A of project site and 150m buffer area	0
3/04/20	PG	6.00-9.30	0-0	51-65	0-0	Portion B of project site and 150m buffer area	1 Owl
3/05/20	PG	6.00-9.30	0-0	50-72	0-0	Portion A of project site and 150m buffer area	0
3/06/20	PG	6.00-9.30	0-0	53-68	0-0	Portion B of project site and 150m buffer area	1 Owl
3/09/20	PG	7.00[1] -10.30	35-50	51-60	0-1	Portion A of project site and 150m buffer area	0
3/31/20	PG	6.30-10.00	20-40	50-56	0-0	Portion B of project site and 150m buffer area	1 Owl
4/01/20	PG	6.15 -9.45	10-0	54-62	0-1	Portion A of project site and 150m buffer area	0
4/02/20	PG	6.15-9.45	40-50	51-57	0-0	Portion B of project site and 150m buffer area	1 Owl

PG = Paul Galvin
[1] = with daylight savings time change, sunrise was 7.05 am

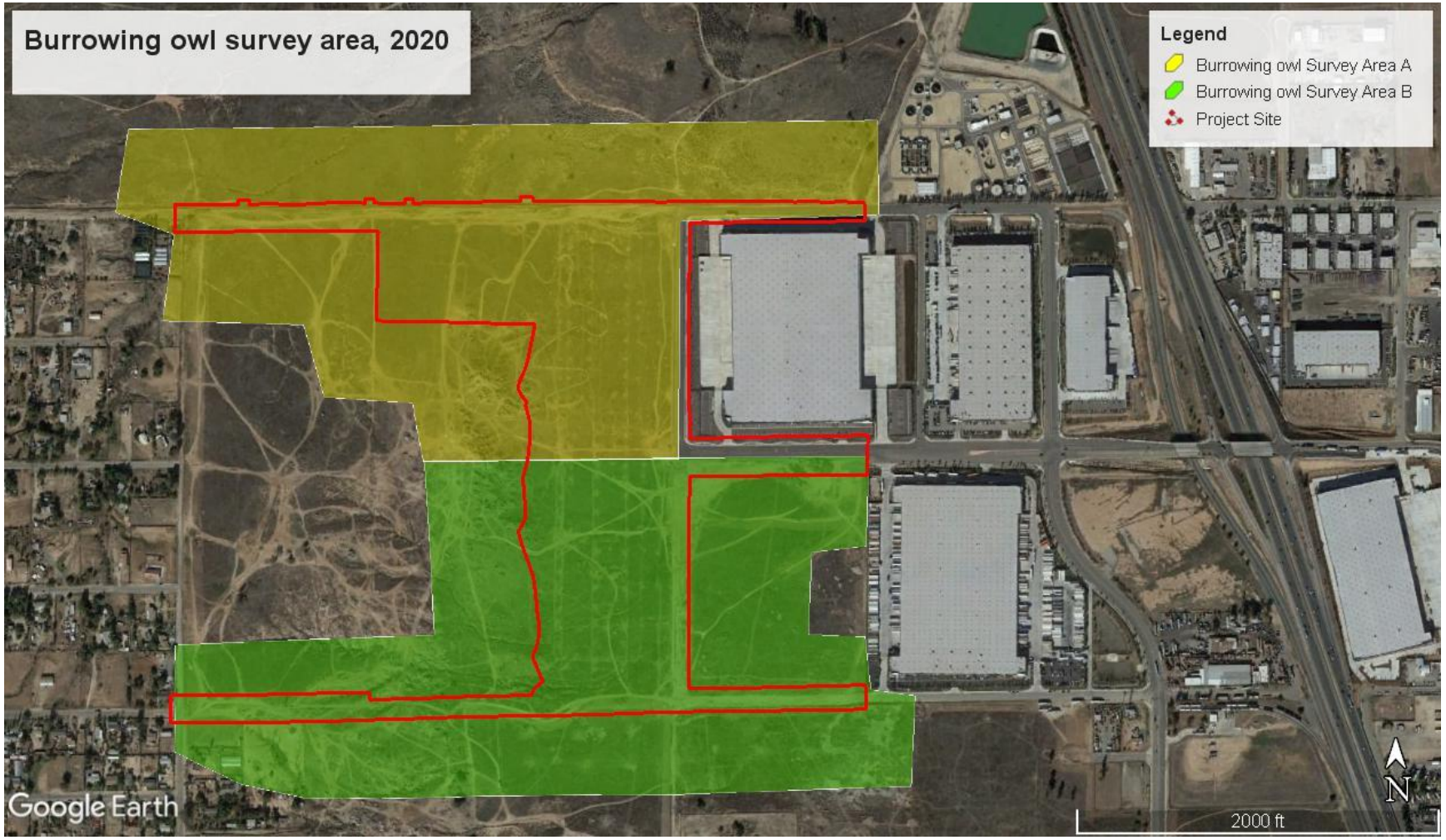

Figure 4: Burrowing owl survey areas (yellow and green shading) at the Oleander Business Park Project site (in red), including buffer survey area. Source: Google Earth, Inc.

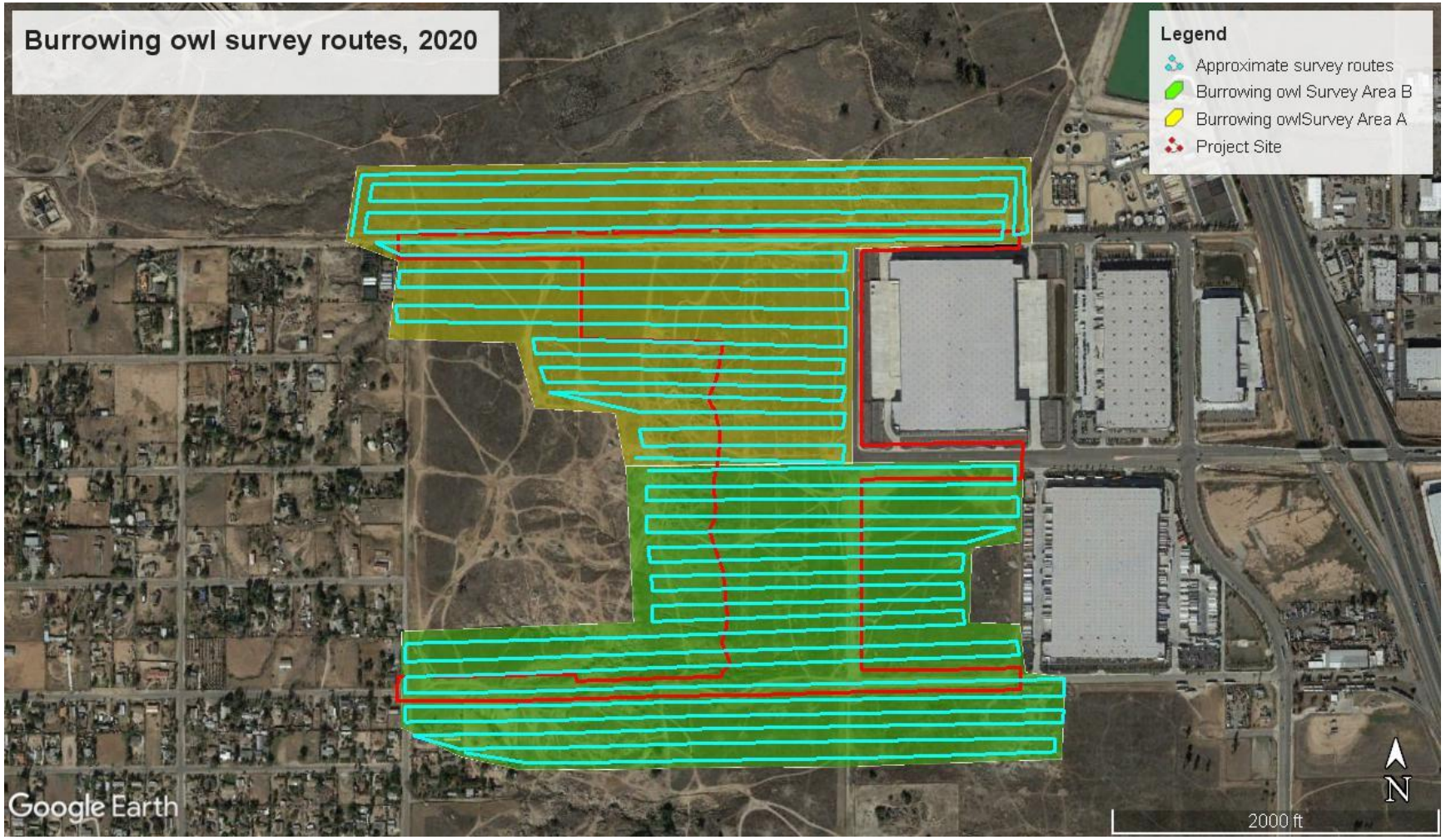

Figure 5: Burrowing owl survey area (yellow and green shading) at the Oleander Business Park Project site (in red), including buffer survey area. Approximate survey routes in blue, consisted of walking transects spaced approximately 75 feet apart. Source: Google Earth, Inc.

3.0 RESULTS

California ground squirrels (*Otospermophilus* beecheyi) were present onsite and created numerous burrows, especially near the rock outcrops. Occupied and unoccupied burrows large enough to potentially support burrowing owls were mapped (Figure 6). Mapped locations typically represent multiple burrows or one burrow with multiple entrances. None of these burrows within the project site showed any evidence of owl occupancy. There were no artificial or man-made structures suitable for burrowing owl nesting (such as debris piles, old pipes) located onsite.

A single burrowing owl was detected during the survey. The owl was unpaired and no nesting behavior was detected. The owl primarily utilized burrow B1, but also utilized burrow B2 (Figure 7). The owl was easy to detect as it was outside its burrow all surveys days until after the survey was completed. The area occupied by the owl is mapped in Figure 7.

The burrowing owl was not located in the project site, nor was it located within the right of way of Harley Know Boulevard. The owl was located on an adjacent private parcel and was identified because its location fell within the County's mandated survey "buffer area" as shown in (Figure 7).

No other burrowing owl was detected during the survey and no owl occurred within the project work area.

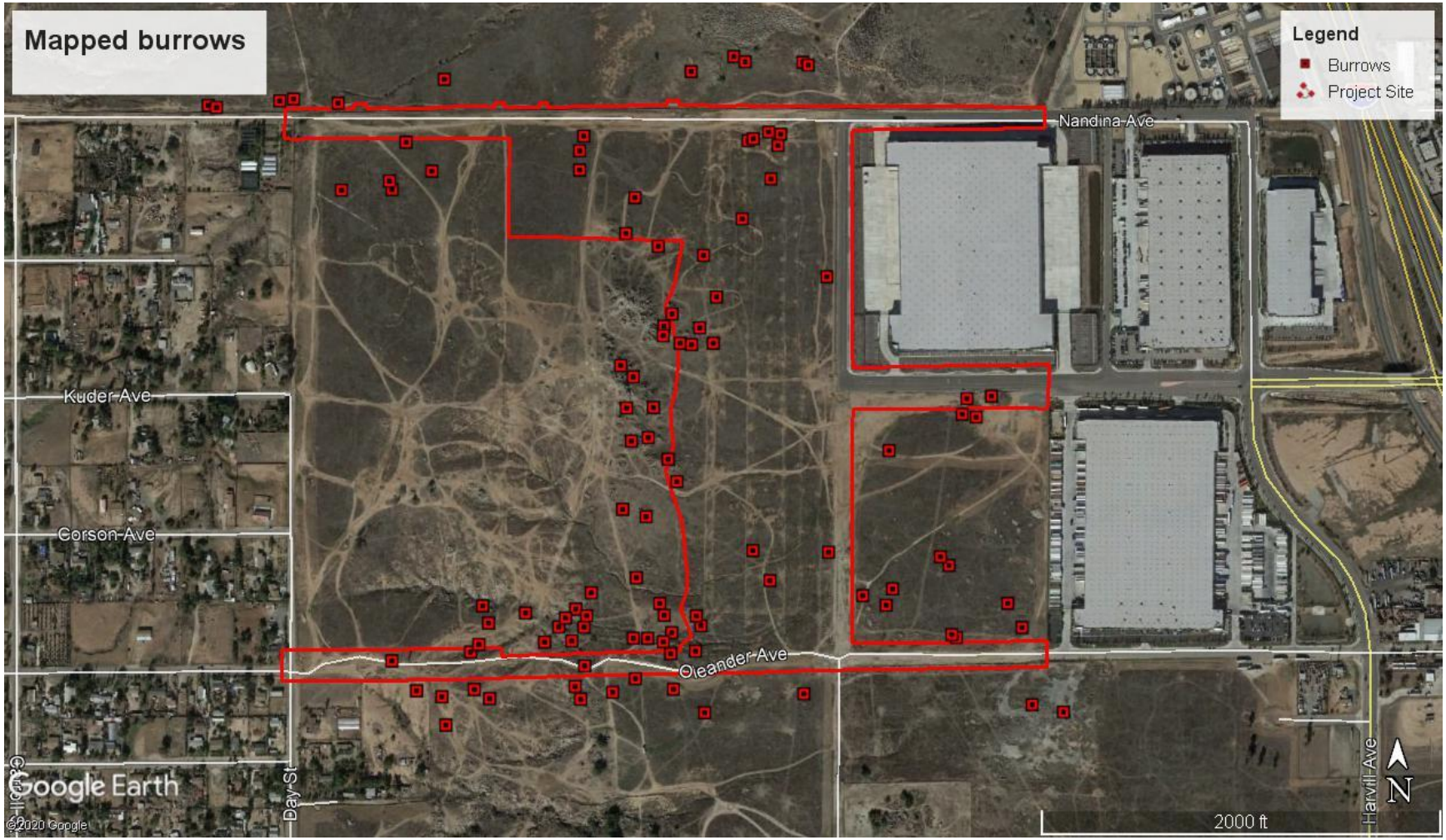

Figure 6: Potential owl burrows at the Oleander Business Park Project site, March 2020. Source: Google Earth, Inc.

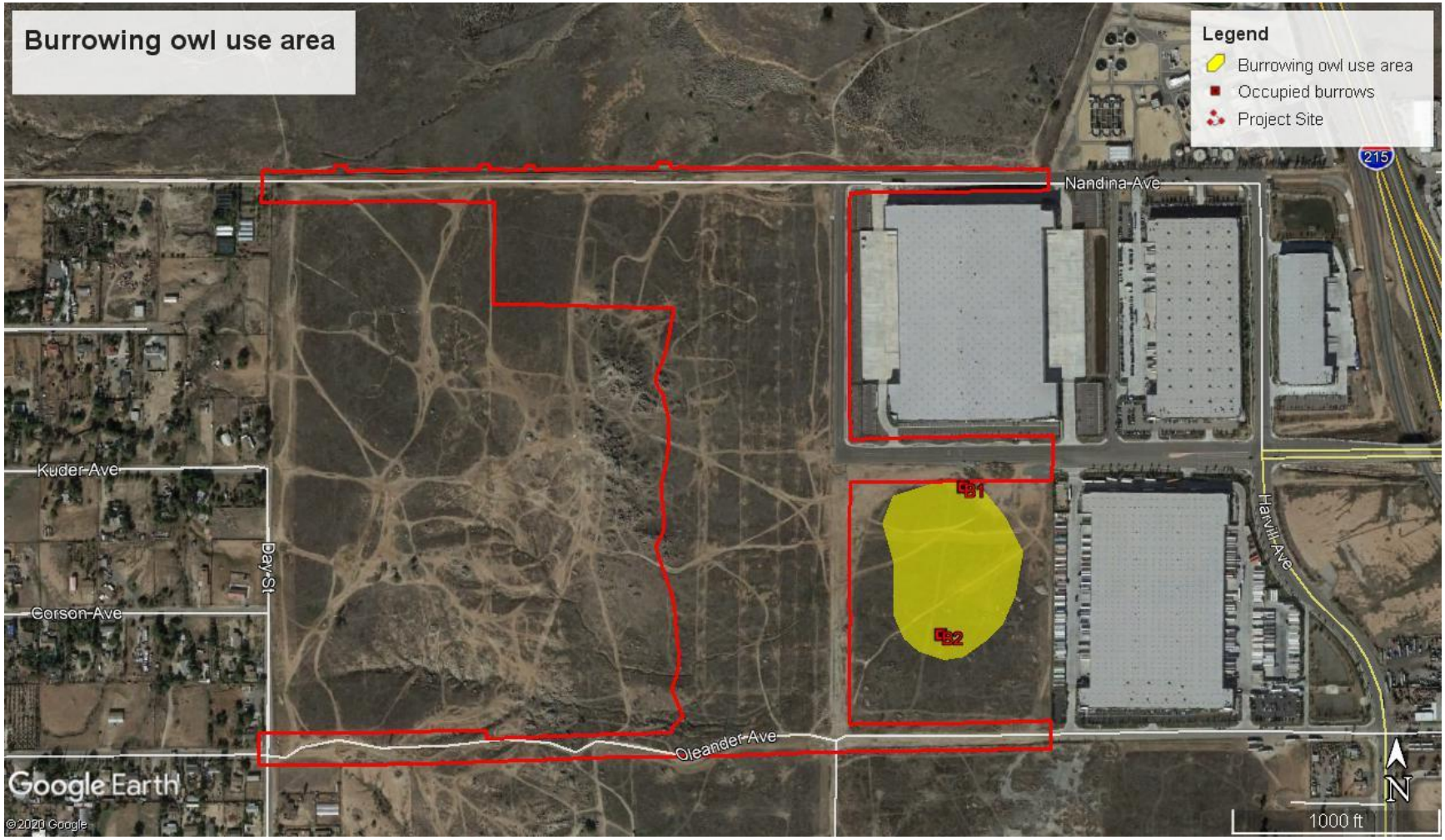

Figure 7: Occupied owl burrows and occupied burrowing owl habitat (yellow shading) at the Oleander Business Park Project site. Source: Google Earth, Inc.

4.0 PROPOSED PROJECT AND MSHCP COMPLIANCE

The proposed project includes the installation of a storm drain and sewer line within the existing (and ultimate) Harley Knox Boulevard (Figure 8) and installation of Decker Road and associated storm drain/sewer lines. The proposed street improvements will occur entirely within the right of way of Harley Knox Boulevard. The storm drain and sewer line are 24 feet and 44 feet off Harley Knox's southerly R/W respectively.

The owl burrow (burrow B1) is approximately 110 feet from the closest edge of the right of way; 134 feet from the storm drain and 154 feet from the sewer line work.

All work for the installation of Decker Road will occur within the right of way of Decker Road as per Figure 8. The closest edge of the Decker Road right of way to the owl burrow (burrow B1) is approximately 550 feet.

To protect the owl the project proponent proposes:

> A pre-construction survey will be conducted for burrowing owl. If the owl is still present at the time of the utility installation a sound barrier/wall would be installed along the edge of the work area along Harley Knox Boulevard. The sound barrier/wall would be approximately 10 feet tall, approximately 200 feet long, located adjacent the right of way southern edge and roughly centered opposite the primary burrow (B1). The wall would be composed of hay bales or plywood. Such walls have been commonly used to protect nesting birds at construction projects and have been shown to work well. The sound barrier/wall would be installed prior to start of construction and stay in place until construction is completed in the vicinity of the owl.
>
> Should the owl relocate closer to Decker Road, or another project location, a sound barrier/wall would be installed at the appropriate location.
>
> The owl would be monitored during construction activity to ensure no impacts occur to the owl.

Under Objective 5 of the MSHCP burrowing owl species objections (Table 9.2), surveys for burrowing owl will be conducted as part of the project review process for public and private projects within the burrowing owl survey area where suitable Habitat is present (see *Burrowing Owl Survey Area Map, Figure 6-4 of the MSHCP, Volume I*). The locations of this species determined as a result of survey efforts shall be conserved in accordance with procedures described within *Section 6.3.2, MSHCP, Volume I* and the guidance provided below:

> Burrowing owl surveys shall be conducted utilizing accepted protocols as follows. If burrowing owls are detected on the project site then the action(s) taken will be as follows:

> If the site is within the Criteria Area, then at least 90 percent of the area with long-term Conservation value will be included in the MSHCP Conservation Area. Otherwise:
>
> 1) If the site contains, or is part of an area supporting less than 35 acres of suitable Habitat or the survey reveals that the site and the surrounding area supports fewer than 3 pairs of burrowing owls, then the on-site burrowing owls will be passively or actively relocated following accepted protocols.
>
> 2) If the site (including adjacent areas) supports three or more pairs of burrowing owls, supports greater than 35 acres of suitable Habitat and is non-contiguous with MSHCP Conservation Area lands, at least 90 percent of the area with long-term Conservation value and burrowing owl pairs will be conserved onsite.
>
> The survey and Conservation requirements stated in this objective will be eliminated when it is demonstrated that Objectives 1 – 4 have been met.

As stated above no burrowing owls were detected within the project site; however if the survey buffer zone is included as part of the "project site" then as required by the MSHCP under Objective 5 the on-site burrowing owl should be passively or actively relocated following accepted protocols.

Since the area utilized by the burrowing owl will not be directly impacted and will remain after project completion it makes sense that the owl is allowed to remain and is not actively relocated. In addition to the currently utilized area, additional suitable burrowing owl habitat will remain in the project vicinity to the north of Nandina Avenue and on the western project boundary in a project open space area.

Rather than actively relocating the owl, the owl should be allowed to stay in its area or passively self-relocate if it wishes. As stated above, to further protect the owl the project proponent proposes to install a sound barrier/wall along the edge of the work area along Harley Knox Boulevard and Decker Road. The sound barrier/wall would be approximately 12 feet tall and be composed of hay bales or plywood. Such walls have been commonly used to protect nesting birds at construction projects and have been shown to work well. The sound barrier/wall would be installed prior to start of construction and stay in place until construction is completed in the vicinity of the owl.

The owl would be monitored during construction activity to ensure no impacts occur to the owl.

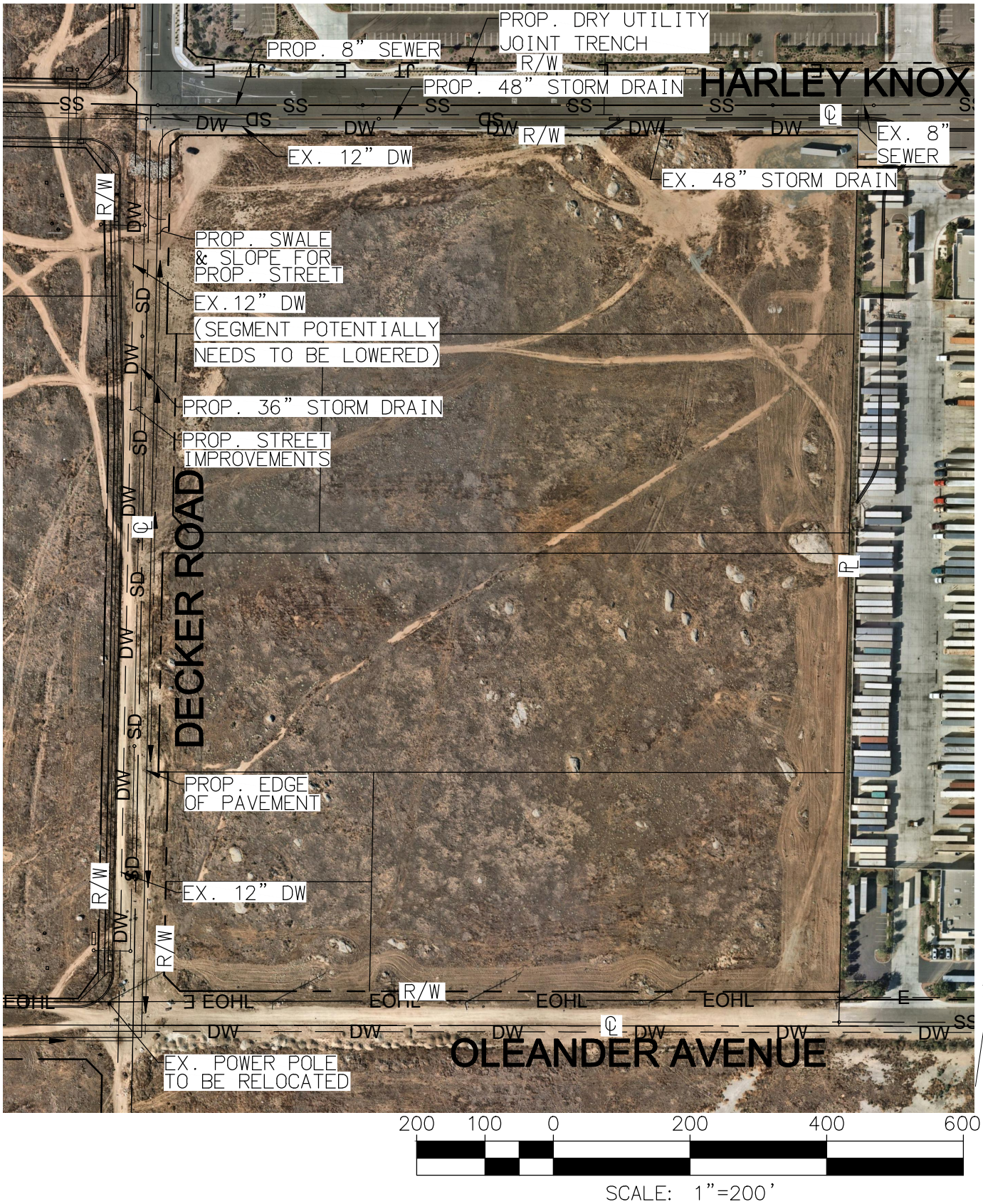

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EXHIBIT

Figure 8: Road improvements.

SCALE:	1"=200'	DATE:	3/16/2020

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6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix A: Wildlife species detected at the Oleander Business Park Project site, 2019/2020.

FAMILY/SPECIES NAME	COMMON NAME
REPTILIA	**REPTILES**
PHRYNOSOMATIDAE	**ZEBRA-TAILED, EARLESS, FRING-TOED, SPINY, TREE, SIDE-BLOTCHED AND HORNED LIZARDS**
Sceloporus orcutti	Granite Spiny Lizard
Sceloporus occidentalis	Western Fence Lizard
Uta stansburiana	Common Side-blotched Lizard
COLUBRIDAE	**HARMLESS EGG-LAYING SNAKES**
Pituophis catenifer	Gopher Snake
AVES	**BIRDS**
ODONTOPHORIDAE	**NEW WORLD QUAIL**
Callipepla californica	California Quail
CATHARTIDAE	**NEW WORLD VULTURES**
Cathartes aura	Turkey Vulture
ACCIPITRIDAE	**HAWKS, KITES, EAGLES AND ALLIES**
Buteo jamaicensis	Red-tailed Hawk
CHARADRIIDAE	**LAPWINGS AND PLOVERS**
Charadrius vociferus	Killdeer
COLUMBIDAE	**PIGEONS AND DOVES**
Zenaida macroura	Mourning Dove
CUCULIDAE	**CUCKOOS, ROADRUNNERS AND ANIS**
Geococcyx californianus	Greater Roadrunner
STRIGIDAE	**TYPICAL OWLS**
Athene cunicularia+	Burrowing Owl
TROCHILIDAE	**HUMMINGBIRDS**
Calypte anna	Anna's Hummingbird
FALCONIDAE	**CARCARAS AND FALCONS**
Falco sparverius	American Kestrel
TYRANNIDAE	**TYRANT FLYCATCHERS**
Sayornis nigricans	Black Phoebe
Sayornis saya	Say's Phoebe
Tyrannus vociferans	Cassin's Kingbird
Tyrannus verticalis	Western Kingbird
LANIIDAE	**SHRIKES**
Lanius ludovicianus+	Loggerhead Shrike
CORVIDAE	**JAYS AND CROWS**
Corvus brachyrhynchos	American Crow
Corvus corax	Common Raven
ALAUDIDAE	**LARKS**

Eremophila alpestris actia+	California Horned Lark
HIRUNDINIDAE	**SWALLOWS**
Tachycineta bicolor	Tree Swallow
Stelgidopteryx serripennis	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Petrochelidon pyrrhonota	Cliff Swallow
Hirundo rustica	Barn Swallow
TROGLODYTIDAE	**WRENS**
Salpinctes obsoletus	Rock Wren
MIMIDAE	**MOCKINGBIRDS AND THRASHERS**
Mimus polyglottos	Northern Mockingbird
STURNIDAE	**STARLINGS**
Sturnus vulgaris	European Starling
EMBERIZIDAE	**EMBERIZIDS**
Chondestes grammacus+	Lark Sparrow
Passerculus sandwichensis	Savannah Sparrow
Zonotrichia leucophrys	White-crowned Sparrow
ICTERIDAE	**BLACKBIRDS**
Agelaius phoeniceus	Red-winged Blackbird
Sturnella neglecta	Western Meadowlark
Euphagus cyanocephalus	Brewer's Blackbird
FRINGILLIDAE	**FRINGILLINE AND CARDUELINE FINCHES**
Haemorhous mexicanus	House Finch
Spinus psaltria	Lesser Goldfinch
PASSERIDAE	**OLD WORLD SPARROWS**
Passer domesticus	House Sparrow
MAMMALIA	**MAMMALS**
LEPORIDAE	**RABBITS & HARES**
Sylvilagus audubonii	Desert Cottontail
Lepus californicus	Black-Tailed Jackrabbit
SCIURIDAE	**SQUIRRELS, CHIPMUNKS & MARMOTS**
Otospermophilus beecheyi	California Ground Squirrel
GEOMYIDAE	**POCKET GOPHERS**
Thomomys bottae	Botta’s Pocket Gopher
CANIDAE	**FOXES, WOLVES & RELATIVES**
Canis lupus familiaris	Feral Dog
Canis latrans	Coyote

Sources:

Invertebrates: Powell and Hogue (1979) and Hogue 1993.

Butterflies: NatureServe, http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/

Fish: NatureServe, http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/

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6.2 Appendix B: Oleander Business Park Project site photographs 2020.

Photograph 1: Burrowing owl at burrow B1, March 2020.

Photograph 2: Burrowing owl at burrow B1, March 2020.

Photograph 3: Occupied burrow B1, March 2020.

Photograph 4: Occupied burrow B2, March 2020.

Photograph 5: One of the potential unoccupied owl burrows, March 2020.

Photograph 6: One of the potential unoccupied owl burrows, March 2020.

Photograph 7: One of the potential unoccupied owl burrows, March 2020.

Photograph 8: One of the potential unoccupied owl burrows, March 2020.