



CARLSBAD  
FRESNO  
IRVINE  
LOS ANGELES  
PALM SPRINGS  
POINT RICHMOND  
RIVERSIDE  
ROSEVILLE  
SAN LUIS OBISPO

August 29, 2019

Karena Zakhour  
Advanced Pressure Technology  
687 Technology Way  
Napa, CA 94558

Subject: Biological Resources Assessment for Proposed AP-Tech Expansion Project  
Napa County, California

Dear Ms. Zakhour:

This letter presents the results of a biological resources assessment for the proposed AP-Tech Expansion Project (“project”) in Napa County. The 3.2-acre project site is located at 687 Technology Way, about 0.23 miles east of the Napa County Airport (Figure 1). The purpose of the survey was to determine if any biological resources were potentially present that could affect the proposed project. Specifically, LSA assessed the potential presence of special-status species, sensitive natural communities, and wetland/riparian areas that are subject to agency jurisdiction.

## METHODS

LSA biologist Eric Lichtwardt conducted the site survey on August 22, 2019. Weather conditions during the survey were overcast skies, no wind, and a temperature of approximately 68 degrees Fahrenheit. During the survey, Mr. Lichtwardt walked the entire project site and recorded observations in a field notebook. He used binoculars (10 x 42) to aid in observations of wildlife and habitats and inspected trees adjacent to the site for raptor nests.

Prior to conducting the field survey, LSA conducted a search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB)<sup>1</sup> for occurrence records of special-status plants and animals and sensitive natural communities in the project vicinity. In addition, LSA searched the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants<sup>2</sup> for occurrence records of rare plants within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Cuttings Wharf Quadrangle within which the project site is located.

## EXISTING BIOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

The project site is a largely undeveloped parcel (Figure 1) within an existing industrial park; as such, the project site has previously been graded and leveled. The site is surrounded by industrial

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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2019. California Natural Diversity Database. Commercial version dated August 2019. Biogeographic Data Branch, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Sacramento.

<sup>2</sup> California Native Plant Society, Rare Plant Program. 2019. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (online edition, v8-03 0.39). Website <http://www.rareplants.cnps.org> (accessed August 26, 2019).

buildings, paved parking areas, roadways, and associated landscaping (Figure 1). Vegetation cover on the project site is generally sparse and open. Due to previous mowing, the ground over most of the site is covered with a matted thatch of dead grass. Vegetation is ruderal and dominated by non-native weeds including chicory (*Cichorium intybus*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), wild oat (*Avena* sp.), and Harding grass (*Phalaris aquatica*). No native plant species were observed on the site. No plant species typical of wetland habitats such as vernal pools, swales, or marshes were found during the survey.

Five small blackwood acacias (*Acacia melanoxydon*), an invasive non-native tree species, are present in the right-of-way along Technology Way and are adjacent to the project site.

Animal species observed on and adjacent to the project site were limited to birds and include Eurasian collared-dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), California scrub-jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), and house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*). All of these species are common resident birds in urban habitats in Napa County; the Eurasian collared-dove is a non-native species.

No California ground squirrels (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*) or their burrows were found on the project site; the burrows of this species provide habitat for several special-status species, including the burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). Additionally, no diggings of Botta's pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) or runways of California voles (*Microtus californicus*) were evident on the project site. These small mammals are important prey items for raptors such as the northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), and short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*).

Soils on the project site include Clear Lake clay, 0-2 percent slopes, and Haire loam, 2-9 percent slopes; both these soil types are listed by the National Resources Conservation Service as hydric soils ([https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/nrcseprd1316620.html](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcseprd1316620.html)); however, there was no evidence of ponding on the project site and no vegetation typical of wetland habitats.

There are no wetlands, riparian habitats, or other sensitive natural communities on or adjacent to the project site.

## SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

The CNDDDB and CNPS searches provided occurrence records for 22 special-status species (12 plant and 10 animal species) within 2 miles of the project site and/or within the USGS Cuttings Wharf Quadrangle, which are evaluated in this report (Table A). In addition, three other special-status species known from the project vicinity, western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*), northern harrier, and short-eared owl, are also evaluated in Table A. Special-status plant species restricted to volcanic or serpentine soils or thermal springs are not included in the table because these soils or features are not present in or adjacent to the project site. Additionally, special-status fish species are not included because the project site is not located in or adjacent to any habitat suitable for fish.

**Table A: Special-Status Species within 2 Miles of the Project Site**

Species	Status* Federal/State/ Other	Habitat and Blooming Period (plants only)	Evaluation
<b>Plants</b>			
Alkali milk-vetch <i>Astragalus tener</i> var. <i>tener</i>	--/--/1B	Playas and vernal pools in valley and foothill grassland (adobe clay). Annual herb, blooms March to June.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Loch Lomond button-celery <i>Eryngium constancei</i>	FE/SE/1B	Vernal pools. Annual/perennial herb. Blooms April to June.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Burke's goldfields <i>Lasthenia burkei</i>	FE/SE/1B	Vernal pools, mesic meadows and seeps. Annual herb, blooms April to June.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Contra Costa goldfields <i>Lasthenia conjugens</i>	FE/--/1B	Playas and vernal pools in grassland and woodland. Annual herb, blooms March to June.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Delta tule pea <i>Lathyrus jepsonii</i> var. <i>jepsonii</i>	--/--/1B	Freshwater/brackish marshes and swamps. Perennial herb, blooms May to July, occasionally August to September.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Dwarf downingia <i>Downingia pusilla</i>	--/--/2B	Vernal pools in mesic valley and foothill grassland. Annual herb, blooms March to May.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Legenere <i>Legenere limosa</i>	--/--/1B	Vernal pools. Annual herb, blooms April to June.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Marin knotweed <i>Polygonum marinense</i>	--/--/3	Coastal salt/brackish marshes and swamps. Annual herb, blooms May to August, occasionally April and October.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Mason's lilaeopsis <i>Lilaeopsis masonii</i>	--/--/1B	Brackish/freshwater marshes and swamps, riparian scrub. Perennial rhizomatous herb, blooms April to November.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Saline clover <i>Trifolium hydrophilum</i>	--/--/1B	Marshes, swamps, vernal pools in mesic, alkaline valley and foothill grasslands. Annual herb, blooms April to June.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Soft salty bird's-beak <i>Chloropyron molle</i> ssp. <i>molle</i>	--/--/1B	Alkaline meadows, seeps, and playas in valley and foothill grassland. Annual herb, blooms June to September.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.
Suisun Marsh aster <i>Symphotrichum lentum</i>	--/--/1B	Brackish/freshwater marshes and swamps. Perennial rhizomatous herb, blooms May to November, occasionally April.	No suitable habitat for this species is present on the project site, it would not occur.

Species	Status* Federal/State/ Other	Habitat and Blooming Period (plants only)	Evaluation
<b>Animals</b>			
Vernal pool fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	FT/--/--	Vernal pools and shallow seasonal wetlands.	No suitable habitat is present on the project site, this species would not occur.
Foothill yellow-legged frog <i>Rana boylei</i>	--/SCT/SSC	Sunlit perennial creeks with rocks, cobble, and/or gravel substrates and quiet backwaters for breeding.	No suitable habitat is present on the project site, this species would not occur.
Western pond turtle <i>Actinemys marmorata</i>	--/--/SSC	Deep pools and ponds with basking areas and adjacent upland areas for nesting.	There are occurrence records for this species within 2 miles of the project site, but suitable habitat is not present on or adjacent to the project site.
Northern harrier <i>Circus hudsonius</i>	--/--/SSC	This raptor nests on the ground in open areas with scrubs or clumps of low vegetation and forages over grasslands, marshes, and other open habitats for small mammals (primarily voles).	This species occurs in the project site vicinity; however, the site is too sparsely vegetated and near developed areas to provide good nesting habitat and the project site does not appear to support abundant small mammal populations, making it marginal as foraging habitat.
Swainson's hawk <i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	--/ST/--	Nests in trees and forages over open scrublands, grassland, and hayfields with an abundance of large insects such as grasshoppers and small mammals.	This species occurs in the project site vicinity; however, no potential nests were observed in the trees adjacent to the site. Swainson's hawks could forage over the project site; however, the project site does not appear to support an abundant prey base (large insects and small mammals) and the site is not likely a significant foraging area.
Short-eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	--/--/SSC	Nests on the ground in grasslands and marshes, and forages over such habitats for small mammals (primarily voles). Generally forages at night, but can be active during the day.	This species occurs in the project site vicinity; however, the site is too sparsely vegetated and near developed areas to provide good nesting habitat and the project site does not appear to support abundant small mammal populations, making it marginal as foraging habitat.
Burrowing owl <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	--/--/SSC	Sparsely vegetated grasslands and other open habitats with small mammal burrows for nesting and shelter, sometimes uses culverts of other underground retreats.	No small mammal burrows or other underground retreats are present on the project site; therefore, this species would not likely occur.
California black rail <i>Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus</i>	--/FP/--	Salt and freshwater marshes.	No suitable habitat is present on the project site, this species would not occur.
California Ridgway's rail <i>Rallus obsoletus obsoletus</i>	FE/SE, FP/--	Tidal salt marsh.	No suitable habitat is present on the project site, this species would not occur.
Saltmarsh common yellowthroat	--/--/SSC	Salt and freshwater marshes.	No suitable habitat is present on the project site, this species would not

Species	Status* Federal/State/ Other	Habitat and Blooming Period (plants only)	Evaluation
<i>Geothlypis trichas sinuosa</i>			occur.
San Pablo song sparrow <i>Melospiza melodia samuelis</i>	--/--/SSC	Tidal salt marsh.	No suitable habitat is present on the project site, this species would not occur.
Tricolored blackbird <i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	--/ST/SSC	Nests in extensive marshes and sometimes stands of tall weedy green vegetation and blackberry with nearby open foraging areas with abundant large insect (e.g., grasshoppers) populations.	No suitable nesting habitat is present on or near the project site, this species would not likely occur during the breeding season.
Salt-marsh harvest mouse <i>Reithrodontomys raviventris</i>	FE/SE, FP/--	Salt marshes and fringing upland areas.	No suitable habitat is present on the project site, this species would not occur.

**\*Special-status species designations:**

- FE = federally listed as Endangered
- FT = federally listed as Threatened
- SE = State-listed as Endangered
- ST = State-listed as Threatened
- SCT = State Candidate Threatened
- FP = State fully protected
- SSC = California Species of Special Concern
- 1B = California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1B: species considered rare or endangered in California and elsewhere
- 2B = CRPR 2B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere
- 3 = CRPR 3: Review List, plants about which more information is needed

## SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES

Two sensitive natural communities occur within 2 miles of the project site (CDFW 2019),<sup>1</sup> coastal brackish marsh and northern vernal pools. As noted above, the project site is a previously graded and leveled parcel within an industrial park development and no natural habitats are present.

## WETLANDS AND RIPARIAN AREAS

The project site does not support wetlands or other aquatic habitats; there is no indication of hydrology and plants typical of wetlands. Waters of the United States including wetlands under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) are not present on or adjacent to the project site. In addition, there are no features under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) on or adjacent to the project site.

<sup>1</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2019. California Natural Diversity Database. Commercial version dated August 2019. Biogeographic Data Branch, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Sacramento.

## CONCLUSIONS

The project site does not provide habitat for any special-status plant or animal species. Special-status raptors such as northern harrier, Swainson's hawk, and/or short-eared owl which forage over open habitats occur in the project site vicinity; however, the degraded on-site habitat does not appear to support a robust prey base for these species and it is unlikely that the site is a significant foraging area for these species. There are no wetlands or other sensitive natural communities within the project site. No features subject to the jurisdiction of the Corps, RWQCB, and/or CDFW are present on or adjacent to the project site.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the degraded, sparsely vegetated habitat on the project site, nesting birds are not likely to be common. However, if project construction activities are initiated during the bird nesting season (February 15 through August 31), a preconstruction nesting bird survey for species protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (Code) should be conducted; the active nests (nests containing viable eggs or young) of most species of California native birds are protected under the MBTA and Code.

If you have any questions or comments please contact me at 510/376-5694 or [eric.lichtwardt@lsa.net](mailto:eric.lichtwardt@lsa.net).

Sincerely,

**LSA Associates, Inc.**



Eric Lichtwardt  
Associate/Senior Biologist

Attachment: Figure 1: Project Site Location and Land Cover Types

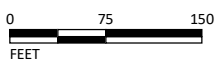


LSA

LEGEND

Project Site

FIGURE 1



SOURCE: Google Maps Sat (08/19).

I:\APY1901\GIS\Maps\Figure 1\_Project Site Location and Landcover.mxd (9/3/2019)

*Advanced Pressure Technology Expansion Project  
Napa County, California  
Project Site Location and Landcover Types*