WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN (MSHCP) FOCUSED BURROWING OWL SURVEYS FOR THE 10.64-ACRE (2.57-ACRE POTENTIAL OFFSITE IMPACT AREA) MAZOONEH, LP PROJECT SITE

CITY OF PERRIS, WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Submitted to:

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April 27, 2024; Revised July 24, 2025

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INFORMATION SUMMARY

A. Report Date: July 24th, 2025

B. Report Title: Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Focused Burrowing Owl Surveys for the 10.64-Acre (2.57-Acre Potential Offsite Impact Area) Mazooneh, LP Project Site, City of Perris, Western Riverside County, California.

C. Case #: 21-05298

D. APN#s: 310-150-012 and 310-160-070 (including right of ways)

E. Project Location: USGS 7.5' Series Perris Quadrangle Township 4 South, Range 3 West, Section 32, Western Riverside County, Extending North of Ellis Avenue, East of Goetz Road, and West of Case Road as shown in Attachment A, *Project Site Map*.

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H. Date of Surveys: April 22nd, 23rd, 25th, 26th, and 27th, 2024.

I. Summary: The 10.64-acre project site (2.57-acre potential offsite impact area) is located within the Western Riverside County MSHCP Mead Valley Area Plan. The project site is dominated by disturbed/ruderal vegetation, roadside drainage ditches and existing developed roadways.

The MSHCP has determined that all of the sensitive species potentially occurring onsite have been adequately covered (MSHCP Table 2-2 Species Considered for Conservation Under the MSHCP Since 1999, 2004). However, additional surveys may be required wildlife species if suitable habitat is documented onsite and/or if the

property is located within a predetermined “Survey Area” (MSHCP 2004).

The project site occurs completely within a predetermined Survey Area for the burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). Suitable burrowing owl burrows potentially utilized for refugia and/or nesting were documented within the project site including foraging habitat documented throughout the property. Therefore, focused surveys were conducted by Cadre Environmental during the spring of 2024.

No burrowing owl or characteristic sign such as white-wash, feathers, tracks, or pellets were detected within or immediately adjacent to the project site during the 2024 survey efforts.

At a minimum, an MSHCP 30-day preconstruction survey will be required immediately prior to the initiation of construction to ensure protection for this species and compliance with the conservation goals as outlined in the MSHCP.

SUBJECT

Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Focused Burrowing Owl Surveys for the 10.64-Acre (2.57-Acre Potential Offsite Impact Area) Mazooneh, LP Project Site, City of Perris, Western Riverside County, California.

This report presents the findings of focused Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) burrowing owl surveys conducted for the 10.64-acre (2.57-acre potential offsite impact area) Mazooneh, LP project site ("Project Site") located within the western region of Riverside County, City of Perris, California. Specifically, the Project Site is located within Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 310-150-012 and 310-160-070 (including adjacent right of ways).

The Project Site is located within United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' Series Perris Quadrangle, Riverside County, Township 4 South, Range 3 West, Section 32. Specifically, the Project Site extends north of Ellis Avenue, east of Goetz Road, and west of Case Road, as shown in Attachment A, *Project Site Map*.

The Project Site is located within the Western Riverside County MSHCP Mead Valley Area Plan and is not located within or adjacent to a Criteria Area, Cell Group or Linkage Area.

The Project Site is currently dominated by disturbed/ruderal vegetation, roadside drainage ditches and existing developed roadways as illustrated in Attachment, B *Vegetation Communities Map*, and Attachments C to F, *Current Project Site Photographs*.

This report incorporates the findings of a literature review, compilation of existing documentation, and a field reconnaissance and focused surveys conducted on April 22nd, 23rd, 25th, 26th, and 27th, 2024.

This documentation is consistent with accepted scientific and technical standards and the requirements of the MSHCP. When appropriate, general biological resources are described in summary form in an effort to provide the reader with adequate background information.

METHODS OF STUDY

APPROACH

Prior to visiting the Project Site, a review of all available and relevant data on the biological characteristics, sensitive habitats, and species potentially present on or adjacent to the Project Site was conducted. Additionally, aerial photography, and USGS topographic map data were examined. After reviewing the available information, Cadre Environmental conducted a physical site assessment/burrow and focused surveys.

As required by the MSHCP, and during the initial property assessment process, the Project Site APNs were searched using the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) GIS database to determine if additional surveys for wildlife not adequately covered by the MSHCP may be required. The Project Site is located completely within a predetermined Survey Area for the burrowing owl.

Plant Community/Habitat Classification and Mapping

Plant communities were preliminarily mapped with the aid of an aerial photograph using the MSHCP uncollapsed vegetation communities classification system. When a vegetation community could not be accurately characterized using this classification system, an updated community classification code was developed to more accurately represent onsite habitat types.

Burrowing Owl Surveys

In accordance with the MSHCP Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions (2006), survey protocol consists of two steps, Step I – Habitat Assessment and Step II – Locating Burrows and Burrowing Owls. Step II is comprised of two parts, Part A: Focused Burrow Surveys and Part B: Focused Burrowing Owl Surveys.

Each step is briefly outlined below, followed by the methodology and results of each survey conducted within the Project Site. All initial habitat assessment, burrow and focused surveys were conducted by Ruben Ramirez, Cadre Environmental.

Surveys were conducted during weather that is conducive to observing owls outside their burrows and detecting burrowing owl sign. Surveys were not conducted during rain, high winds (> 20 mph), dense fog, or temperatures over 90 °F. None of the surveys were conducted within five (5) days of measurable precipitation.

In addition to the MSHCP guidelines, field notes were taken daily. These notes recorded the date, location, animal species observed, and general habitat characteristics of each area and habitat examined that day.

Step I – Habitat Assessment

Step 1 of the MSHCP habitat assessment for burrowing owl consists of a walking survey to determine if suitable habitat is present onsite. Cadre Environmental conducted the habitat assessment April 22nd, 2024. Upon arrival at the Project Site, and prior to initiating the assessment survey, Cadre Environmental used binoculars to scan all suitable habitats on and adjacent to the property, including perch locations, to ascertain owl presence.

All suitable areas of the Project Site were surveyed on foot by walking slowly and methodically while recording/mapping areas that may represent suitable owl habitat onsite. Primary indicators of suitable burrowing owl habitat in western Riverside County include, but are not limited to, native and non-native grassland, interstitial grassland within

shrub lands, shrub lands with low density shrub cover, golf courses, drainage ditches, earthen berms, unpaved airfields, pastureland, dairies, fallow fields, and agricultural use areas. Burrowing owls typically use burrows made by fossorial mammals, such as California ground squirrels (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*) or badgers (*Taxidea taxus*), but they often utilize man-made structures, such as earthen berms, cement culverts, cement, asphalt, rock, or wood debris piles, or openings beneath cement or asphalt pavement. Burrowing owls are often found within, under, or in close proximity to man-made structures.

According to the MSHCP guidelines, if suitable habitat is present, the biologist should also walk the perimeter of the property, which consists of a 150-meter (approximately 500 feet) buffer zone around the Project Site boundary. If permission to access the buffer area cannot be obtained, the biologist shall not trespass, but visually inspect adjacent habitats with binoculars.

Results from the habitat assessments indicated that suitable burrowing owl burrows potentially utilized for refugia and/or nesting were documented within the property including foraging habitat documented throughout the Project Site. Accordingly, if suitable habitat is documented onsite, both Step II surveys and the 30-day pre-construction surveys are required in order to comply with the MSHCP guidelines.

Step II – Locating Burrows and Burrowing Owls

Concurrent with the initial habitat assessments, a detailed focused burrow survey was conducted and included documentation of appropriately sized natural burrows or suitable man-made structures that may be utilized by burrowing owl - as part of the MSHCP protocol, which is described below under Part A. Focused Burrow Survey. The MSHCP protocol indicated that no more than 100 acres should be surveyed per day/per biologist.

Part A: Focused Burrow Survey

A systematic survey for burrows, including burrowing owl sign, was conducted by walking across all suitable habitats mapped within the Project Site on April 22nd, 2024. Pedestrian survey transects were spaced to allow 100% visual coverage of the ground surface. The distances between transect centerlines were no more than 20 meters (approximately 66 ft.) apart, and owing to the terrain, often much smaller. Transect routes were also adjusted to account for topography and in general ground surface visibility.

All observations of suitable burrows or dens, natural or man-made, or sightings of burrowing owl, were recorded and mapped during the survey.

Part B: Focused Burrowing Owl Surveys

Four (4) focused burrowing owl surveys (in addition to the initial focused burrow survey – Step II, Part A) were conducted within the Project Site on April 23rd, 25th, 26th, and 27th, 2024, from one hour before sunrise to two hours after sunrise as outlined in Table 1,

Burrowing Owl Survey Schedule. During visual surveys, all potentially suitable burrow or structure entrances were investigated for signs of owl occupation, such as feathers, tracks, or pellets, and carefully observed to determine if burrowing owls utilize these features, when present. All burrows are monitored at a short distance from the entrance, and at a location that would not interfere with potential owl behavior, when present. In addition to monitoring potential burrow locations, all suitable habitats in the Project Site were walked along transects averaging 20 meters (approximately 66 feet) between centerlines as shown in Attachment G, *Burrowing Owl Survey Area Map*.

Table 1.
Burrowing Owl Survey Schedule

Survey	Dates (Conditions) 2024	Results
1	April 23rd - 54°F to 60°F, winds 4-10 mph, no rain	No owls detected
2	April 25th - 52°F to 62°F, winds 2-8 mph, no rain	No owls detected
3	April 26th - 55°F to 60°F, winds 2-10 mph, no rain	No owls detected
4	April 27th - 64°F to 64°F, winds 4-12 mph, no rain	No owls detected

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Project Site slopes slighting from northwest to southeast with elevations extending from 1,427 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) in the extreme northwest region to 1,418 AMSL along the southeast boundary. The Project Site is currently dominated by disturbed/ruderal vegetation, roadside drainage ditches and existing developed roadways as illustrated in Attachment, B *Vegetation Communities Map*, and Attachments C to F, *Current Project Site Photographs*.

SOILS

The Soil Survey of Western Riverside Area has the following soils mapped within the boundary of the property:

- RaA – Ramona sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- EpA – Exeter sandy loam, deep, 0-2% slopes.

The soils documented onsite are characterized as well drained (drainage class).

PLANT COMMUNITY/HABITAT CLASSIFICATION

Disturbed/Ruderal

The majority of the Project Site is dominated by disturbed/ruderal vegetation. Common dominant species documented within this habitat type include London rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*), stinknet (*Oncosiphon piluliferum*), cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium*

cicutarium), white-stemmed filaree (*Erodium moschatum*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), tumbling pigweed (*Amaranthus albus*), hare barley (*Hordeum murinum* subsp. *leporinum*), Italian rye (*Lolium multiflorum*), foxtail chess (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*), ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*), wild oat (*Avena fatua*), tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*), and yellow sweetclover (*Melilotus officinalis*). Less common species include wild radish (*Raphanus sativus*), Boccone's sand spurrey (*Spergularia bocconi*), and red gum tree (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*).

Roadside Drainage Ditch

Disturbed roadside drainage ditches are located along the northeastern and southwestern regions of the Project Site boundary. Species documented within the roadside drainage ditches include but are not limited to prostrate knotweed (*Polygonum aviculare*), canary grass (*Phalaris canariensis*), hyssop loosestrife (*Lythrum hyssopifolia*), Boccone's sand spurrey, annual sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), rattail six-weeks grass (*Festuca myuros*), prickly sow thistle (*Sonchus asper* subs. *asper*), California burclover (*Medicago polymorpha*), beardless wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*) tumbling pigweed, short pod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), and common fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*).

Developed

Developed regions of the Project Site include the paved sections of Ellis Avenue, Case Road and Goetz Road.

RESULTS

No burrowing owl or characteristic sign such as white-wash, feathers, tracks, or pellets were detected within or immediately adjacent to the Project Site or potential offsite impact area during the 2024 MSHCP focused surveys.

General wildlife species documented onsite or within the vicinity during the focused surveys include but are not limited to red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), Anna’s hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), Cassin’s kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*), cliff swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), Say’s phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), yellow rumped warbler (*Setophaga coronata*), white crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), and California ground squirrel.

Due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat, a 30-day pre-construction survey for burrowing owls is required prior to initial ground-disturbing activities (including vegetation clearing, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, site watering, equipment staging, grading, etc.) to ensure that no owls have colonized the site in the days or weeks preceding the ground-disturbing activities. If burrowing owls have colonized the project site prior to the

initiation of ground-disturbing activities, the project proponent will immediately inform the Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) and the Wildlife Agencies, and will need to coordinate further with RCA and the Wildlife Agencies, including the possibility of preparing a Burrowing Owl Protection and Relocation Plan, prior to initiating ground disturbance. If ground-disturbing activities occur, but the site is left undisturbed for more than 30 days, a pre-construction survey will again be necessary to ensure burrowing owl has not colonized the site since it was last disturbed. If burrowing owl is found, the same coordination described above will be necessary.

REFERENCES

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2024a. Special Animals. Natural Heritage Division, Natural Diversity Data Base.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB). 2022b. Sensitive Element Record Search for the Perris Quadrangle. California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Sacramento, California. Accessed April 2024.

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California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2024f. California Sensitive Natural Communities, ww.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Naturalcommunities#sensitive natural communities. Accessed April 2024.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2012. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, State of California Natural Resources Agency.

County of Riverside. 2006. Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions – Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Area.

Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP) Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), March 2004.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Project Site Map

Attachment B - Vegetation Communities Map

Attachment C - Current Project Site Photographs

Attachment D - Current Project Site Photographs

Attachment E - Current Project Site Photographs

Attachment F - Current Project Site Photographs

Attachment G - Burrowing Owl Survey Area Map

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*."

Author: _____ Date: July 24th, 2025

Fieldwork Performed By: _____ Date: July 24th, 2025

PLN 21-05298, APNs 310-150-012 & 310-160-070 (including right of ways)

Offsite Impact Boundary

Attachment A - Project Site Map

MSHCP Burrowing Owl Surveys

Mazooneh, LP Project Site, City of Perris, California

CADRE Environmental

N

1 inch = 100 feet

PLN 21-05298, APNs 310-150-012 & 310-160-070 (including right of ways)

Offsite Impact Boundary

Attachment B - Vegetation Communities Map

MSHCP Burrowing Owl Surveys

Mazooneh, LP Project Site, City of Perris, California

CADRE Environmental

N

1 inch = 100 feet

PHOTOGRAPH 1 - Eastward View of Ellis Avenue Roadside Drainage Ditch.

PHOTOGRAPH 2 - Northeast View of Project Site.

Refer to Attachment A - Project Site Map for Photographic Key

PHOTOGRAPH 3 - Southeast View of Project Site.

PHOTOGRAPH 4 - Southeast View of Northern Case Road Roadside Drainage Ditch.

Refer to Attachment A - Project Site Map for Photographic Key

PHOTOGRAPH 5 - Southward View of Project Site from Case Road.

PHOTOGRAPH 6 - Northwest View of Project Site from Case Road.

Refer to Attachment A - Project Site Map for Photographic Key

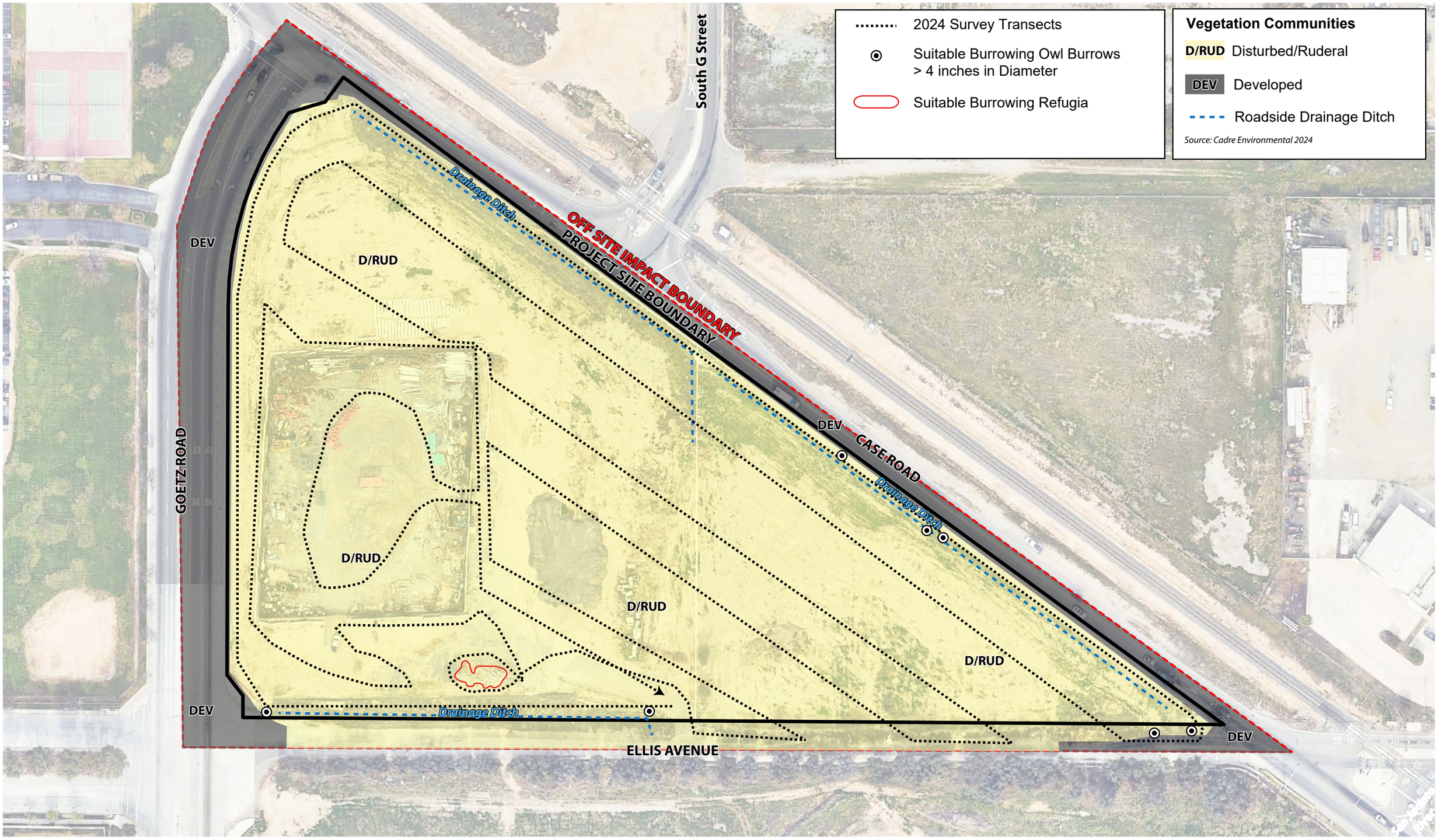
Attachment E - Current Project Site Photographs
MSHCP Burrowing Owl Surveys
Mazooneh, LP Project Site, City of Perris, California

CADRE Environmental

PHOTOGRAPH 7 - Eastward View of Ellis Avenue.

PHOTOGRAPH 8 - Northward View of Ellis Avenue Roadside Drainage Ditch Culvert.

Refer to Attachment A - Project Site Map for Photographic Key



PLN 21-05298, APNs 310-150-012 & 310-160-070 (including right of ways)

Offsite Impact Boundary

Attachment G - Burrowing Owl Survey Area Map

MSHCP Burrowing Owl Surveys
Mazooneh, LP Project Site, City of Perris, California

CADRE Environmental

N

1 inch = 100 feet