Appendix A:
Biological Resources Analysis
Memo

Date: November 8, 2016

To: Ms. Crystal Robinson, Procurement Administrator
    Hemet City Hall—Planning Division
    445 E. Florida Avenue
    Hemet, CA 92543-4209

From: Ashley Laor, Associate Biologist

Subject: Downtown Hemet Specific Plan Project—Biological Resources Analysis

FirstCarbon Solutions (FCS) conducted a biological resources assessment to document the existing biological conditions and analyze potential impacts to biological resources within the Specific Plan area. This letter report evaluates the existing biological resources found on-site.

Project Location and Description

The Specific Plan area is located in the city of Hemet, Riverside County, California. The project plan area is bordered by Oakland Avenue on the north, Gilbert Street on the west, Acacia Avenue on the south, and Santa Fe Street on the east (Exhibit 1). The Specific Plan’s total area is 360 acres.

The City is presently developing a Specific Plan; the proposed Specific Plan is a comprehensive plan that features a land use plan, circulation plan, urban design framework, utility infrastructure plan, development standards, design guidelines, and sustainability plan for future development within the plan boundaries. The Specific Plan would remain consistent with the community’s vision for the City and individual projects would be required to comply with all federal, state, and local regulations.

Regulatory Framework

This section provides an overview of the laws and regulations that influence biological resources. Many of these regulations will not apply to the project if sensitive biological resources are avoided.

Federal Endangered Species Act

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has jurisdiction over species listed as threatened or endangered under the B. Section 9 of Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) protects listed species from “take,” which is broadly defined as actions taken to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct.” FESA protects threatened and endangered plants and animals and their critical habitat. Candidate species are those proposed for listing; these species are usually treated by resource agencies as if they were actually listed during the
environmental review process. Procedures for addressing impacts to federally listed species follow two principal pathways, both of which require consultation with the USFWS, which administers the FESA for all terrestrial species. The first pathway, Section 10(a) incidental take permit, applies to situations where a non-federal government entity must resolve potential adverse impacts to species protected under the FESA. The second pathway, Section 7 consultation, applies to projects directly undertaken by a federal agency or private projects requiring a federal permit or approval.

**Migratory Bird Treaty Act**

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) implements international treaties between the U.S. and other nations devised to protect migratory birds, their parts, eggs, and nests from activities such as hunting, pursuing, capturing, killing, selling, and shipping, unless expressly authorized in the regulations or by permit. The State of California has incorporated the protection of birds of prey in Sections 3800, 3513, and 3503.5 of the Fish and Game Code (FGC).

All raptors and their nests are protected from take or disturbance under the MBTA (16 United States Code [USC], Section 703, et seq.) and California statute (FGC Section 3503.5). The golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are also afforded additional protection under the Eagle Protection Act, amended in 1973 (16USC, Section 669, et seq.).

**Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act**

With few exceptions, this act (16 USC 668–668d) prohibits take of bald eagles and golden eagles. Unlike the MBTA, which defines “take” to mean only direct killing or taking of birds or their body parts, eggs, and nests, the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act defines take in a manner similar to FESA as including “pursuing, shooting, shooting at, poisoning, wounding, killing, capturing, trapping, collecting, molesting, and disturbing,” with “disturb” further defined (50 CFR 22.3) as “to agitate or bother a Bald or Golden Eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available; (1) injury to an eagle, (2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or (3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior.” Therefore, the requirements for guarding against impacts to eagles generally are far more stringent than those required by the MBTA alone.

**Executive Order 13112—Invasive Species**

Executive Order (EO) 13112 directs all federal agencies to refrain from authorizing, funding, or carrying out actions or projects that may spread invasive species. The order further directs federal agencies to prevent the introduction of invasive species, control and monitor existing invasive species populations, restore native species to invaded ecosystems, research and develop prevention and control methods for invasive species, and promote public education on invasive species. As part of the proposed action, the USFWS and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) would issue permits and therefore would be responsible for ensuring that the proposed action complies with EO 13112 and does not contribute to the spread of invasive species.
Clean Water Act Section 404

The USACE and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Waters of the U.S. include wetlands, lakes, and rivers, streams, and their tributaries. Wetlands that fall under the jurisdiction of the USACE (referred to as jurisdictional wetlands) are defined as areas “inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.” Areas not considered jurisdictional waters include, for example, non-tidal drainage and irrigation ditches excavated on dry land; artificially irrigated or created bodies such as small ponds, lakes or swimming pools; and water-filled depressions (33 CFR 328.3; 40 CFR 230.3).

Project proponents must obtain a permit from the USACE for all discharges of fill material into waters of the U.S., including jurisdictional wetlands, before proceeding with a proposed action. If wetlands are jurisdictional and could be filled as part of the project, the USACE may issue either an individual permit or a general permit. Individual permits are prepared on a project-specific basis for projects that are expected to have adverse effects on the aquatic environment. General permits are pre-authorized permits issued to cover similar activities that are expected to cause only minimal individual and cumulative adverse environmental effects.

A Section 404 permit may not be required if the project avoids the discharge of any fill material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands. If the project cannot be designed to avoid the discharge of fill or excavating in waters of the U.S., including wetlands, a Section 404 permit must be obtained.

Clean Water Act Section 401

The CWA requires any applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity that may result in a discharge of a pollutant into waters of the U.S. to obtain a certification that the discharge will comply with the applicable effluent limitations and water quality standards. The appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) regulates Section 401 requirements.

California Fish and Game Code

Under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has the responsibility for maintaining a list of endangered and threatened species (FGC 2070). Sections 2050 through 2098 of the FGC outline the protection provided to California’s rare, endangered, and threatened species. Section 2080 of the FGC prohibits the taking of plants and animals listed under the CESA. Section 2081 established an incidental take permit program for state-listed species. CDFW maintains a list of “candidate species,” which it formally notices as being under review for addition to the list of endangered or threatened species.

In addition, the Native Plant Protection Act of 1977 (FGC Section 1900, et seq.) prohibits the taking, possessing, or sale within the State of any plants with a state designation of rare, threatened, or
endangered (as defined by CDFW). An exception to this prohibition in the Native Plant Protection Act allows landowners, under specified circumstances, to take listed plant species, provided that the owners first notify CDFW and give that state agency at least 10 days to come and retrieve (and presumably replant) the plants before they are plowed under or otherwise destroyed. (FGC Section 1913 exempts from “take” prohibition “the removal of endangered or rare native plants from a canal, lateral ditch, building site, or road, or other right of way.”) Project impacts to these species are not considered significant unless the species are known to have a high potential to occur within the area of disturbance associated with construction of the proposed project.

The CDFW also maintains lists of “Species of Special Concern” that serve as species “watch lists.” The CDFW has identified many Species of Special Concern. Species with this status have limited distribution or the extent of their habitats has been reduced substantially, such that their populations may be threatened.

Thus, their populations are monitored, and they may receive special attention during environmental review. While they do not have statutory protection, they may be considered rare under CEQA and thereby warrant specific protection measures.

Sensitive species that would qualify for listing but are not currently listed are afforded protection under CEQA. CEQA Guidelines Section 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance) requires that a substantial reduction in numbers of a rare or endangered species be considered a significant effect. CEQA Guidelines Section 15380 (Rare or Endangered Species) provides for assessment of unlisted species as rare or endangered under CEQA if the species can be shown to meet the criteria for listing. Unlisted plant species on the CNPS’s Lists 1A, 1B, and 2 would typically be considered under CEQA.

Sections 3500 to 5500 of the FGC outline protection for fully protected species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. Species that are fully protected by these sections may not be taken or possessed at any time. The CDFW cannot issue permits or licenses that authorize the take of any fully protected species, except under certain circumstances such as scientific research and live capture and relocation of such species pursuant to a permit for the protection of livestock.

Under Section 3503.5 of the FGC, it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders of Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds of prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto. To comply with the requirements of CESA, an agency reviewing a proposed project within its jurisdiction must determine whether any state-listed endangered or threatened species may be present in the project study area and determine whether the proposed project will have a potentially significant impact on such species. In addition, CDFW encourages informal consultation on any proposed project that may impact a candidate species.

Project-related impacts to species on the CESA endangered or threatened list would be considered significant. State-listed species are fully protected under the mandates of the CESA. “Take” of protected
species incidental to otherwise lawful management activities may be authorized under FGC Section 206.591. Authorization from CDFW would be in the form of an Incidental Take Permit.

Section 1602 of the FGC requires any entity to notify CDFW before beginning any activity that “may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of, or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake” or “deposit debris, waste, or other materials that could pass into any river, stream, or lake.” “River, stream, or lake” includes waters that are episodic and perennial; and ephemeral streams, desert washes, and watercourses with a subsurface flow. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be required if CDFW determines that project activities may substantially adversely affect fish or wildlife resources through alterations to a covered body of water.

California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The RWQCB has regulatory authority over wetlands and waterways under both the CWA and the State of California’s Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code, Division 7). Under the CWA, the RWQCB has regulatory authority over actions in waters of the U.S., through the issuance of water quality certifications under Section 401 of the CWA in conjunction with permits issued by the USACE under Section 404 of the CWA. When the RWQCB issues Section 401 certifications, it simultaneously issues general Waste Discharge Requirements for the project under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Activities in areas that are outside of the jurisdiction of the USACE (e.g., isolated wetlands, vernal pools, seasonal streams, intermittent streams, channels that lack a nexus to navigable waters, or stream banks above the ordinary high water mark) are regulated by the RWQCB under the authority of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Activities that lie outside of USACE jurisdiction may require the issuance of either individual or general waste discharge requirements.

Methods

Prior to conducting a field survey, a literature and database review was completed. Also reviewed were the proposed plans and description; aerial photos and topographic maps; the CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) (CDFW 2016); California Native Plant Society’s (CNPS’s) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (CNPS 2016); the Niles USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map (1980); the National Wetland Inventory (NWI; USFWS 2016); and other technical databases and resource agency reports in order to assess the current distribution of special-status species and habitats in the vicinity of the proposed project site (e.g., streams, riparian habitat, ponds).

On October 28, 2016, FCS Environmental Analysts Paul Smallman and Connor Tindall surveyed the project plan area on foot during daylight hours. The purpose of this reconnaissance-level field survey was to obtain an overview of the existing habitat conditions within the Specific Plan area and its potential to support special-status wildlife and plant species, wetlands, critical habitat, wildlife movement, and other potentially jurisdictional features. The survey area for this review included the proposed Specific Plan area.
Existing Conditions

The project plan area is a 360-acre area located in the City of Hemet’s historic downtown. The Specific Plan area and its surroundings are well developed and urbanized and consist of residential, commercial, mixed use and office uses. There is a 36-acre, mostly vacant, undeveloped property known as the Hemet Stock Farm located in the northwest corner of the Specific Plan area and contains one residential unit. The City owns several properties in the central core area that are also vacant or underutilized, totaling 0.37 acres, consisting mainly of impervious surfaces.

Soils Series within the Specific Plan Area

San Emigdio Series

The Specific Plan area consists of a range of the San Emigdio series of 0 to 2 percent slopes (Exhibit 2). This series formed in dominantly sedimentary alluvium, found on fans and floodplains and are very deep well drained soils. The mean annual precipitation is 15 inches and the mean annual air temperature is 62 degrees Fahrenheit. This soil series is used for growing citrus fruit, alfalfa, truck crops, and dryland grain (USDA Soil Survey).

Habitat Types within the Specific Plan Area

Historic Equine Facility and Agricultural Land (Hemet Stock Farm)

The Hemet Stock Farm was built in 1909 as a horse track and ranch and later used as agricultural land. Existing vegetation is minimal and consisted primarily of non-native weedy species and ornamental trees. Agricultural lands generally occur in areas that once supported productive and diverse biological communities. The conversion of native vegetation to agricultural lands has greatly reduced the wildlife species diversity and habitat value. However, some common and agricultural “pest” species forage in these habitats, and cultivated vegetation can provide benefits such as cover, shade, and moisture for these and other species during hot summer months. Typical species found in agricultural lands include red-tailed hawk (Buteo jamaicensis), barn owl (Tyto alba), American crow (Corvus brachyrhynchos), Brewer’s blackbird (Euphagus cyanocephalus), house finch (Haemorhous mexicanus), California ground squirrel (Spermophilus beecheyi), and western harvest mouse (Reithrodontomys megalotis).

Urban/Developed Land

Urban habitat is distinguished by the presence of both native and exotic species maintained in a relatively static composition within a downtown, residential, or suburbia setting. Species richness in these areas depends greatly upon community design (i.e., open space considerations) and proximity to the natural environment.

The California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System classifies urban habitat into five different vegetation types: tree grove, street strip, shade tree/lawn, lawn, and shrub cover. Tree groves refer to conditions typically found in city parks, green belts, and cemeteries. These areas vary in tree height, spacing, crown shape, and understory conditions; however, they have a continuous canopy. Street strip vegetation, located roadside, varies with species type but typically includes a ground cover of grass. Shade trees and
lawns refer to characteristic residential landscape, which is reminiscent of natural savannas. Lawns are composed of a variety of grasses, maintained at a uniform height with continuous ground cover through irrigation and fertilization. Shrub cover refers to areas commonly landscaped and maintained with hedges, typically found in commercial districts.

All five types of urban habitat are found in combination within the Specific Plan Area. Vegetation in this area consists primarily of introduced ornamental trees and shrubs and manicured lawns as well as invasive weeds in disturbed areas. Urban/developed lands are generally not of high value for wildlife. Birds and mammals that occur in these areas typically include introduced species adapted to human habitation, such as rock dove (Columba livia), starling (Sturnus vulgaris), house sparrow (Passer domesticus), house mouse (Mus musculus) and Norway rat (Rattus norvegicus). Some native species persist in commercial development lands, including western toad (Bufo boreas), western fence lizard (Sceloporus occidentalis), Brewer’s blackbird, house finch, western scrub jay (Aphelocoma californica), yellow-billed magpie (Pica nuttali), and American crow.

**Ruderal (Disturbed)**

The Specific Plan area contains Ruderal vegetation throughout the area. Ruderal (roadside) communities occur in areas of disturbances such as along roadsides, trails, parking lots, etc. These communities are subject to ongoing or past disturbances (e.g., vehicle activities, mountain bikes, mowing). Ruderal habitat in these disturbed areas supports a diverse weedy flora.

Vascular plant species associated with these areas typically include Johnson grass, Canadian horseweed (Conyza canadensis), milk thistle (Silybum marianum), yellow star thistle (Centaurea solititialis), and field bindweed (Convolvulus arvensis). Fallow fields support field bindweed (Convolvulus arvensis), turkey mullein (Eremocarpus setigerus), wild lettuce (Lactuca serriola), prickly sow thistle (Sonchus arvensis), and common mallow (Malva neglecta). Mediterranean hoary-mustard (Hirschfeldia incana) and curly dock (Rumex crispus) are also typical of this area.

Dominant species found within ruderal habitat include introduced grasses such as bromes (such as Bromus hordeaceus), rye (Lolium multiflorum), and wild oat (Avena fatua). Common forbs associated with annual grassland include clover (Medicago sp.), filaree (Erodium sp.), wild radish (Raphanus sativus), mustards (such as Brassica nigra), winter vetch (Vicia villosa), field bindweed (Convolvulus arvensis), and milk thistle (Silybum marianum).

A distinguishing characteristic of urban habitats is the mixture of native and exotic plant species. Exotic plant species may provide valuable habitat elements such as cover for nesting and roosting, as well as food sources such as nuts or berries. Native and introduced animal species that are tolerant of human activities often thrive in urban habitats.
Legend

- Specific Plan Area
- SeA - San Emigdio fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- SfA - San Emigdio fine sandy loam, deep, 0 to 2 percent slopes
- SgA - San Emigdio loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes

Source: USDA, 2015

Exhibit 2
Soils Map
Wildlife

The vegetation and land cover types discussed above provide habitat for a limited number of local wildlife species. Wildlife activity was low during the field survey and consisted of primarily avian species. Very few wildlife species were observed on or near the Specific Plan area; all were common species found in urban and rural areas of Riverside County. Some of the more common birds observed on-site include American crow, mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), and Northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*). Also found within the Hemet stock farm was a killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*), a common ground nesting bird found throughout California. Trees within the Specific Plan area provide suitable habitat for other common nesting avian species.

A limited variety of common mammals most likely occurs within the Specific Plan area and its vicinity: striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), California ground squirrel, raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), and Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*) may occasionally wander through the site.

Because of a lack of suitable habitat, very few amphibians and reptiles are expected to use habitats within the Specific Plan area. The western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*) is expected to occur within the area; no amphibians were observed during the survey.

Nesting Raptors and Migratory Birds

Trees and shrubs located within the Specific Plan area may provide suitable nesting habitat for birds protected under the MBTA, including the killdeer, and other special-status birds such as raptors covered by FGC Section 3503.5, are Fully Protected by the State and/or the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Mammals

*Bat Species*

Bats of various species can utilize the large trees within the Specific Plan area as well as the several abandoned structures and debris piles located in the northwestern area. The Specific Plan area and its vicinity contains suitable habitat for several bat species, including one special-status bat species: the western yellow bat (*Lasiusurus xanthinus*)—a species of high priority designated by the Western Bat Working Group, discussed further in the following section. No bats were observed on-site during the field survey.

Sensitive Biological Resources

The following section discusses the potential for special-status biological resources to occur within the project site. Review of the CNDDDB database revealed special-status species that have been previously documented within the project vicinity (Exhibit 3).
Legend
- Specific Plan Area
- 5-mile Buffer
- Reptile/Amphibian
- Bird
- Mammal
- Aquatic/Terrestrial Community
- Invertebrate
- Plant

Source: USDA, 2015

Exhibit 3
Sensitive Biological Resources (CNDDB) Map
Special-Status Plant Communities

Special-status plant communities are considered sensitive biological resources based on federal, state, or local laws regulating their development, limited distributions, and habitat requirements of special-status plant or wildlife species that occur within them.

There are no special-status plant communities within the Specific Plan area or within 1 mile of the Specific Plan area.

Special-Status Plant Species

The Special-Status Plant Species database search identifies 13 special-status plant species and CNPS sensitive species that have been recorded to occur within Hemet and San Jacinto California topographic quadrangle (USGS 1986), as recorded by the CNDDB and CNPSEI (CDFW 2016; CNPS 2016). Of the eight plant species identified, one species has recorded occurrence within the Specific Plan area and is discussed further below. All other special-status plant species have been determined unlikely to occur on-site, primarily based on the absence of suitable habitat such as soils, elevation, aquatic features, and topography.

Chaparral sand-verbena (Abronia villosa var. aurita)

Chaparral sand-verbena is a dicot annual herb and has a CNPS rare plant rank of 1B.1. General habitat consists of Chaparral, coastal scrub, and desert dunes. Microhabitat consists of sandy areas with an elevation range of 75 to 1,600 meters. The blooming period for this species is January to September. Although this species has been known to occur within the Specific Plan area, it is highly unlikely that this species currently exists within the Specific Plan area. The recorded occurrence is from 1935, and since then, the habitats on-site have been highly altered. Because of a variety of impacts—including development, flood control activities, road maintenance, and the growth of non-native plants, and the current conditions—it is highly unlikely that this species would exist within the Specific Plan area.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

The Special-Status Wildlife Species database search identifies 17 federal and state listed threatened and/or endangered wildlife species, and state Species of Special Concern that have been recorded in the CNDDB (CDFW 2016) as occurring within Hemet, California topographic quadrangle (USGS 1986). Of the 17 wildlife species identified, two species were evaluated for their potential to occur within the Specific Plan area, discussed further below. All other special-status wildlife species have been determined unlikely to occur on-site, primarily based on the absence of suitable habitat.

Red-diamond rattlesnake (Crotalus ruber)

The red-diamond rattlesnake is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. Habitat for this species consists of Chaparral, woodland, grassland, and desert areas from coastal San Diego County to the eastern slopes of the mountains and north through western Riverside County into southernmost San Bernardino County. They prefer rocky areas, dense vegetation and require rodent burrows, cracks in rocks or surface cover objects. Although this species has been previously recorded within the Specific Plan area, it is dated
from 1941 and is highly unlikely to be found utilizing the habitats within the Specific Plan area. No potential habitats are found within the Specific Plan area for this species.

**Western yellow bat** (*Lasiurus xanthinus*)

The western yellow bat is a CDFW Species of Special Concern (SSC) and a Western Bat Working Group High Priority species. Found in valley foothill riparian, desert riparian, desert wash, and palm oasis habitats. They roost in trees, particularly palm trees and forage over water sources and among trees. Although no suitable habitats are found within the Specific plan area, palm trees from landscaping may provide marginal roosting habitat. Impacts to this species, if found on-site during the removal of trees or construction activities, could be significant.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The following discussion addresses potential impacts to special-status biological resources resulting from the proposed Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures where appropriate to minimize those impacts to a level of “less than significant” under CEQA.

No suitable habitat occurs for special-status plant species within the Specific Plan area, due to lack of proper soils and aquatic features such as wetlands. Furthermore, the vegetation within the Specific Plan area consists primarily of landscaped lawns and ornamental trees and shrubs. No impacts to special-status plants are expected to occur as a result of the Specific plan developments.

Based on the lack of suitable habitat and the highly disturbed nature of the Specific Plan area, it is concluded that no special-status wildlife species other than the western yellow bat have the potential to occur within the project site.

**Bat Mitigation**

The Specific Plan area and its vicinity contains suitable habitat for a few bat species, including one special-status SSC bat species: the western yellow bat.

To ensure that there will be no biological concerns associated with these species, a bat survey shall be conducted between March 1 to July 31 by a qualified wildlife biologist prior to the removal of any trees or buildings. If no bat roosts are detected, then no further action is required if the trees and buildings are removed prior to the next breeding season. If removal is delayed, then an additional pre-demolition survey shall be conducted 30 days prior to removal to ensure that a new colony has not established itself. If a colony of bats is found roosting on-site, then the following mitigation will be implemented to reduce the potential disturbance:

- If maternity roosts are identified during the maternity roosting season (typically May to August), a qualified biologist shall determine appropriate buffer zones and roosts must remain undisturbed, until the qualified biologist has determined the young bats are no longer roosting. If roosting is found to occur on-site, replacement roost habitat (e.g., bat boxes) shall be provided on-site for roosting sites removed.
Nesting Birds or Raptors

Suitable habitat for raptors and other birds protected by the MBTA occurs within and adjacent to the Specific Plan area. Most native, breeding birds are protected under Section 3503 of the FGC, and raptors specifically are protected under Section 3503.5 of the FGC. Additionally, both Section 3513 of the FGC and the federal MBTA prohibit the killing, possession, or trading of migratory birds. Section 3800 of the FGC prohibits the taking of nongame birds and state Fully Protected species.

Most raptors nest in mature, large, coniferous or deciduous trees and use twigs and branches as nesting material. Smaller raptors may nest in cavities in anthropogenic structures and trees. The nesting period for raptors generally occurs between February 15 and August 31. Potential impacts could occur to resident and migratory species during project construction, which would render the project temporarily unsuitable for birds because of the noise, vibrations, and increased activity levels associated with various construction activities. These activities could potentially subject birds to risk of death or injury, and they are likely to avoid using the area until such construction activities have dissipated or ceased. Relocation, in turn, could cause hunger or stress among individual birds by displacing them into adjacent territories belonging to other individuals.

Construction activities that occur during the nesting season (generally March 1 to August 31) would disturb nesting sites for birds protected by the MBTA and FGC. No action is necessary if no active nests are found or if construction occurs during the non-breeding season (generally September 1 through February 14). Implementation of the following avoidance and minimization measures would reduce impacts to raptors and other nesting birds.

- To prevent impacts to MBTA-protected birds, nesting raptors, and their nests, removal of trees will be limited to only those necessary to construct the proposed project.

- If any tree removal is necessary, vegetation removal or ground-disturbing activities then it will occur outside the nesting season between September 1 and February 14. If ground-disturbing activities or the removal of trees and vegetation cannot be removed outside the nesting season, pre-construction surveys will be conducted 3 days prior to tree removal to verify the absence of active nests.

- If an active nest is located during pre-construction surveys, USFWS and/or CDFW (as appropriate) shall be notified regarding the status of the nest. Construction activities shall be restricted as necessary to avoid disturbance of the nest until it is abandoned or the agencies deem disturbance potential to be minimal. Restrictions may include establishment of exclusion zones (no ingress of personnel or equipment at a minimum radius of 100 feet around an active raptor nest and a 50-foot radius around an active migratory bird nest) or alteration of the construction schedule.

- A qualified biologist will delineate the buffer using Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing, pin flags, and or yellow caution tape. The buffer zone will be maintained around the active nest site(s) until the young have fledged and are foraging independently.
The Specific Plan area is surrounded by developments and does not appear to be a wildlife corridor. Significant impacts to the movement of regional wildlife do not seem evident. An assessment of potentially jurisdictional waters or wetlands was conducted as part of the literature review and reconnaissance-level survey, there are no potentially jurisdictional features within the Specific Plan area.

In addition, the Specific Plan Area falls within the Riverside County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan although it does not fall within any additional needs survey or within a criteria cell. Furthermore, the Specific Plan would remain consistent with the community’s vision for the City, and individual projects would be required to comply with all federal, state, and local regulations, with consideration for the local habitat and natural communities.

FCS appreciates the opportunity to assist you on this project. If we can be of any further assistance, or if you have any questions concerning this letter report, please contact me at 646.320.2121.

Sincerely,

Ashley Laor, Associate Biologist
FirstCarbon Solutions
1350 Treat Boulevard, Suite 380
Walnut Creek CA, 94597

Enc: Attachment A: CNPS, CNDBB, and USFWS Database Search Results
Literature Cited


U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2016. Federal Endangered and Threatened Species that Occur in or may be Affected by Projects in the Hemet and San Jacinto, California 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle.
Attachment A:
CNPS, CNDDDB, and USFWS Database Search Results
Plant List

14 matches found. *Click on scientific name for details*

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Suggested Citation

## Plant List

16 matches found.  *Click on scientific name for details*

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### Suggested Citation

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This report is for informational purposes only and should not be used for planning or analyzing project level impacts. For project reviews that require U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service review or concurrence, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list from the Regulatory Documents page.
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

IPaC Trust Resources Report

NAME
Hemet Specific Plan

LOCATION
Riverside County, California

DESCRIPTION
Hemet Specific Plan

IPAC LINK
https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/project/QBXDX-3N4PR-F63GQ-VUJ7N-4H5KEQ

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Contact Information

Trust resources in this location are managed by:

Carlsbad Fish And Wildlife Office
2177 Salk Avenue - Suite 250
Carlsbad, CA 92008-7385
(760) 431-9440
Endangered Species

Proposed, candidate, threatened, and endangered species are managed by the Endangered Species Program of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

This USFWS trust resource report is for informational purposes only and should not be used for planning or analyzing project level impacts.

For project evaluations that require USFWS concurrence/review, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list from the Regulatory Documents section.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of such proposed action" for any project that is conducted, permitted, funded, or licensed by any Federal agency.

A letter from the local office and a species list which fulfills this requirement can only be obtained by requesting an official species list either from the Regulatory Documents section in IPaC or from the local field office directly.

The list of species below are those that may occur or could potentially be affected by activities in this location:

Amphibians

Arroyo (=arroyo Southwestern) Toad  Anaxyrus californicus  Endangered

CRITICAL HABITAT
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.

Birds

**Coastal California Gnatcatcher**  *Polioptila californica californica*  Threatened
CRITICAL HABITAT
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.

**Least Bell's Vireo**  *Vireo bellii pusillus*  Endangered
CRITICAL HABITAT
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.

**Southwestern Willow Flycatcher**  *Empidonax traillii extimus*  Endangered
CRITICAL HABITAT
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.

Crustaceans

**Riverside Fairy Shrimp**  *Streptocephalus woottoni*  Endangered
CRITICAL HABITAT
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=K03F

**Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp**  *Branchinecta lynchi*  Threatened
CRITICAL HABITAT
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=K03G
Flowering Plants

**San Diego Ambrosia**  *Ambrosia pumila*  
**CRITICAL HABITAT**  
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.  

**San Jacinto Valley Crownscale**  *Atriplex coronata var. notatior*  
**CRITICAL HABITAT**  
No critical habitat has been designated for this species.  

**Slender-horned Spineflower**  *Dodecahema leptoceras*  
**CRITICAL HABITAT**  
No critical habitat has been designated for this species.  

**Spreading Navarretia**  *Navarretia fossalis*  
**CRITICAL HABITAT**  
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.  

**Thread-leaved Brodiaea**  *Brodiaea filifolia*  
**CRITICAL HABITAT**  
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.  

Insects

**Quino Checkerspot Butterfly**  *Euphydryas editha quino (=E. e. wrighti)*  
**CRITICAL HABITAT**  
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.  

Mammals

**San Bernardino Merriam's Kangaroo Rat**  *Dipodomys merriami parvus*  
**CRITICAL HABITAT**  
There is final critical habitat designated for this species.  

**Stephens' Kangaroo Rat**  *Dipodomys stephensi (incl. D. cascus)*  
**CRITICAL HABITAT**  
No critical habitat has been designated for this species.  
Critical Habitats
There are no critical habitats in this location
Migratory Birds


Any activity that results in the take of migratory birds or eagles is prohibited unless authorized by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.[1] There are no provisions for allowing the take of migratory birds that are unintentionally killed or injured.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in the take of migratory birds is responsible for complying with the appropriate regulations and implementing appropriate conservation measures.

1. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- **Birds of Conservation Concern**
- **Conservation measures for birds**
- **Year-round bird occurrence data**
  - [Year-round bird occurrence data](http://www.birdscanada.org/birdmon/default/datasearch.jsp)

The following species of migratory birds could potentially be affected by activities in this location:

**Bald Eagle**  *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*  
Season: Wintering  
[[_](http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B008)]

**Bell's Sparrow**  *Amphispiza belli*  
Season: Year-round  
[[_](http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HE)]

**Bell's Vireo**  *Vireo bellii*  
Season: Breeding  
[[_](http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0JX)]

**Brewer's Sparrow**  *Spizella breweri*  
Season: Year-round  
[[_](http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HA)]
Burrowing Owl  Athene cunicularia
Season: Year-round
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0NC

Cactus Wren  Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus
Season: Year-round
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FZ

California Spotted Owl  Strix occidentalis occidentalis
Season: Year-round
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B08L

Costa's Hummingbird  Calypte costae
Season: Breeding
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0JE

Flammulated Owl  Otus flammeolus
Season: Breeding
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0DK

Fox Sparrow  Passerella iliaca
Season: Year-round

Lawrence's Goldfinch  Carduelis lawrencei
Season: Year-round
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0J8

Le Conte's Thrasher  toxostoma lecontei
Season: Year-round
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0GE

Least Bittern  Ixobrychus exilis
Season: Year-round
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B092

Lewis's Woodpecker  Melanerpes lewis
Season: Wintering
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HQ

Loggerhead Shrike  Lanius ludovicianus
Season: Year-round
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FY

Long-billed Curlew  Numenius americanus
Season: Wintering
http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B06S

Mountain Plover  Charadrius montanus
Season: Wintering
Nuttall's Woodpecker  Picoides nuttallii
  Season: Year-round
  http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HT

Oak Titmouse  Baeolophus inornatus
  Season: Year-round

Olive-sided Flycatcher  Contopus cooperi
  Season: Breeding
  http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0AN

Peregrine Falcon  Falco peregrinus
  Season: Wintering
  http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FU

Pinyon Jay  Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus
  Season: Year-round
  http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0I0

Rufous-crowned Sparrow  Aimophila ruficeps
  Season: Year-round
  http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0MX

Short-eared Owl  Asio flammeus
  Season: Wintering
  http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0HD

Western Grebe  aechmophorus occidentalis
  Season: Wintering
  http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0EA

Williamson's Sapsucker  Sphyrapicus thyroideus
  Season: Wintering
  http://ecos.fws.gov/tess_public/profile/speciesProfile.action?spcode=B0FX
Wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries

There are no refuges or fish hatcheries in this location
Wetlands in the National Wetlands Inventory

Impacts to NWI wetlands and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District.

DATA LIMITATIONS
The Service's objective of mapping wetlands and deepwater habitats is to produce reconnaissance level information on the location, type and size of these resources. The maps are prepared from the analysis of high altitude imagery. Wetlands are identified based on vegetation, visible hydrology and geography. A margin of error is inherent in the use of imagery; thus, detailed on-the-ground inspection of any particular site may result in revision of the wetland boundaries or classification established through image analysis.

The accuracy of image interpretation depends on the quality of the imagery, the experience of the image analysts, the amount and quality of the collateral data and the amount of ground truth verification work conducted. Metadata should be consulted to determine the date of the source imagery used and any mapping problems.

Wetlands or other mapped features may have changed since the date of the imagery or field work. There may be occasional differences in polygon boundaries or classifications between the information depicted on the map and the actual conditions on site.

DATA EXCLUSIONS
Certain wetland habitats are excluded from the National mapping program because of the limitations of aerial imagery as the primary data source used to detect wetlands. These habitats include seagrasses or submerged aquatic vegetation that are found in the intertidal and subtidal zones of estuaries and nearshore coastal waters. Some deepwater reef communities (coral or tuberficid worm reefs) have also been excluded from the inventory. These habitats, because of their depth, go undetected by aerial imagery.

DATA PRECAUTIONS
Federal, state, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define the limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any Federal, state, or local government or to establish the geographical scope of the regulatory programs of government agencies. Persons intending to engage in activities involving modifications within or adjacent to wetland areas should seek the advice of appropriate federal, state, or local agencies concerning specified agency regulatory programs and proprietary jurisdictions that may affect such activities.

**There are no wetlands in this location**