

MEMORANDUM

To: Ross Duenas, Kimley-Horn and Associates
From: Anita Hayworth, PhD, Dudek
Subject: Biological Assessment for the Proposed North Park - Mid-City Regional Bikeway Project, City of San Diego, California
Date: June 11, 2015
cc: Brian Grover

Dudek conducted a site visit to the approximately 2.74-acre project area along Robinson Avenue between Park Avenue and Alabama Street, City of San Diego (City), California (Figures 1 and 2). The focus of the visit was to evaluate the site for biological resources and the potential to contain sensitive habitats or special-status species. The Robinson Avenue Bikeway is located in the North Park community of the City of San Diego primarily within the Robinson Avenue right-of-way (ROW) from just east of Park Boulevard to Alabama Street. The project site is surrounded on all sides by an existing mix of single and multi-family residential and commercial land uses typical of the area.

For the proposed elevated shared-use path (bikeway path), approximately 2,800 square feet of land would be acquired from the property to the north (Assessor Parcel Number 453-012-15-07 to 14). At this location, Robinson Avenue is not a fully connected roadway between Florida Street and Alabama Street. The western portion of Robinson Avenue slopes downward from Florida Street before reaching a traffic guardrail and two alley and private driveway entrances. Immediately east of this traffic guardrail is a private parking lot associated with the surrounding residences. At the entrance of the private parking lot for the surrounding residential land uses, Robinson Avenue extends approximately 120 feet east before intersecting with Alabama Street.

A site visit was conducted by Dudek biologist Emily Wier on January 12, 2015 (Table 1). All native and naturalized plant species encountered on the project site were identified and recorded, as well as ornamental species. The potential for special-status plant and wildlife species to occur on the project site was evaluated based on the land covers and soils present.

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Table 1
Survey Conditions

Date	Staff	Survey Type	Survey Conditions
January 1, 2015	Emily Wier	Reconnaissance survey	0745–0845; 58°–61°Fahrenheit; 0–3 miles per hour wind; 90–40% cloud cover

One non-native plant community and one land cover type were observed within the site (Figure 3). The majority of the site would be considered developed land according to Oberbauer et al. (2008). The remaining portion of the site is mapped as ornamental plantings within the alignment of the proposed bikeway path (Figure 3). Common plant species present include eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.), Washington fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea glabra*), yellow sweetclover (*Melilotus albus*), coastal wattle (*Acacia cyclops*), and English ivy (*Hedera helix*).

The primary use is residential development, and includes apartment complexes, single- and multi-family houses, street parking, and parking lots. Due to the urban setting the site is lacking in native habitat and very little habitat that provides resources for wildlife. Wildlife use of the site is expected to be limited to those species tolerant of human activity and use. Therefore there is relatively low wildlife diversity present, and consists primarily of urban-adapted bird species. However, there are potential resources for bird species within the ornamental plantings including potential for foraging and nesting.

Two soil types are mapped on site: Redding-Urban land and Urban land. Neither soil type provides habitat for small reptiles and mammals which require native soils and less disturbed habitat. Common bird species that were observed onsite included yellow-rumped warbler (*Setophaga coronata*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), California towhee (*Melospiza crissalis*), and Anna’s hummingbird (*Calypte anna*). The eucalyptus trees and other ornamental shrubs found on site could provide potential nesting opportunities for raptors and songbirds. Although this survey was conducted outside of nesting bird season, no active or inactive nests were detected during the biological resources site visit.

Two areas that convey runoff and stormwater flows were mapped within the project area. One is located at the intersection of Robinson Avenue and Alabama Street, is covered with shotcrete, and is four feet wide by six feet long. It serves to convey flows from Robinson Avenue into an eastward draining V-ditch. The second area that conveys flows is located south of the ornamental habitat at the base of the canyon. The concrete-lined swale is approximately 3 feet wide, 10 feet

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long, and drains flow into a 3 foot wide box culvert. There were two stormwater man holes within the project area, so flows presumably connect with the underground stormwater system. As these two features have been constructed to convey flows from the built environment, and do not replace pre-existing jurisdictional features, these concrete-lined features would not be the jurisdiction of any of the resource agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, or California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) is a long-term regional conservation plan established to protect special-status species and habitats in San Diego County. The MSCP is divided into subarea plans that are implemented separately from one another. The site is located within the City of San Diego MSCP subarea. The City Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) consists of a “hard line” preserve developed by the City in cooperation with the wildlife agencies, property owners, developers, and environmental groups. The MHPA identifies biological core resource areas and corridors targeted for conservation, in which only limited development may occur (City of San Diego 1997). The closest location of MHPA is approximately 820 feet to the southwest. There is no MHPA adjacent to the site.

The approximately 2.74-acre project area is composed entirely of developed land and ornamental plantings that provide limited resources for wildlife, primarily urban-adapted species. There is no potential for occurrence of special-status plant or wildlife species. There is potential for nesting birds to occur within the project area within the ornamental plantings even though the plantings are composed entirely of non-native plant species. Per the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, impacts to nesting native birds, including their nests and eggs, is prohibited. Pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code. If impacts to suitable nesting habitat on site are proposed, avoidance of impacts to nesting birds could be achieved by removing suitable nesting habitat outside of the breeding season (February 15 to August 31 for most birds, January 15 to August 31 for raptors) to ensure that no active nests are disturbed. If disturbances to suitable nesting habitat are proposed during the breeding season, a survey for nesting birds should be conducted by a qualified biologist not more than 72 hours prior to the disturbance. If any active nests are detected, the area would be flagged and mapped on the construction plans along with a 300- to 500-foot avoidance buffer, and would be avoided until the nesting cycle is complete or it is determined that the nest has failed. The final buffer would be determined by a biologist.

There are no jurisdictional resources within the project area, although best management practices should be implemented so that project-related runoff does not drain into the storm drain system. There is no MHPA adjacent to the property so the property is not subject to the

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Land Use Adjacency Guidelines. No additional impacts would occur as a result of the development of the property.

Please feel free to call me at 760.479.4239 if you have any questions regarding this memo.

Sincerely,

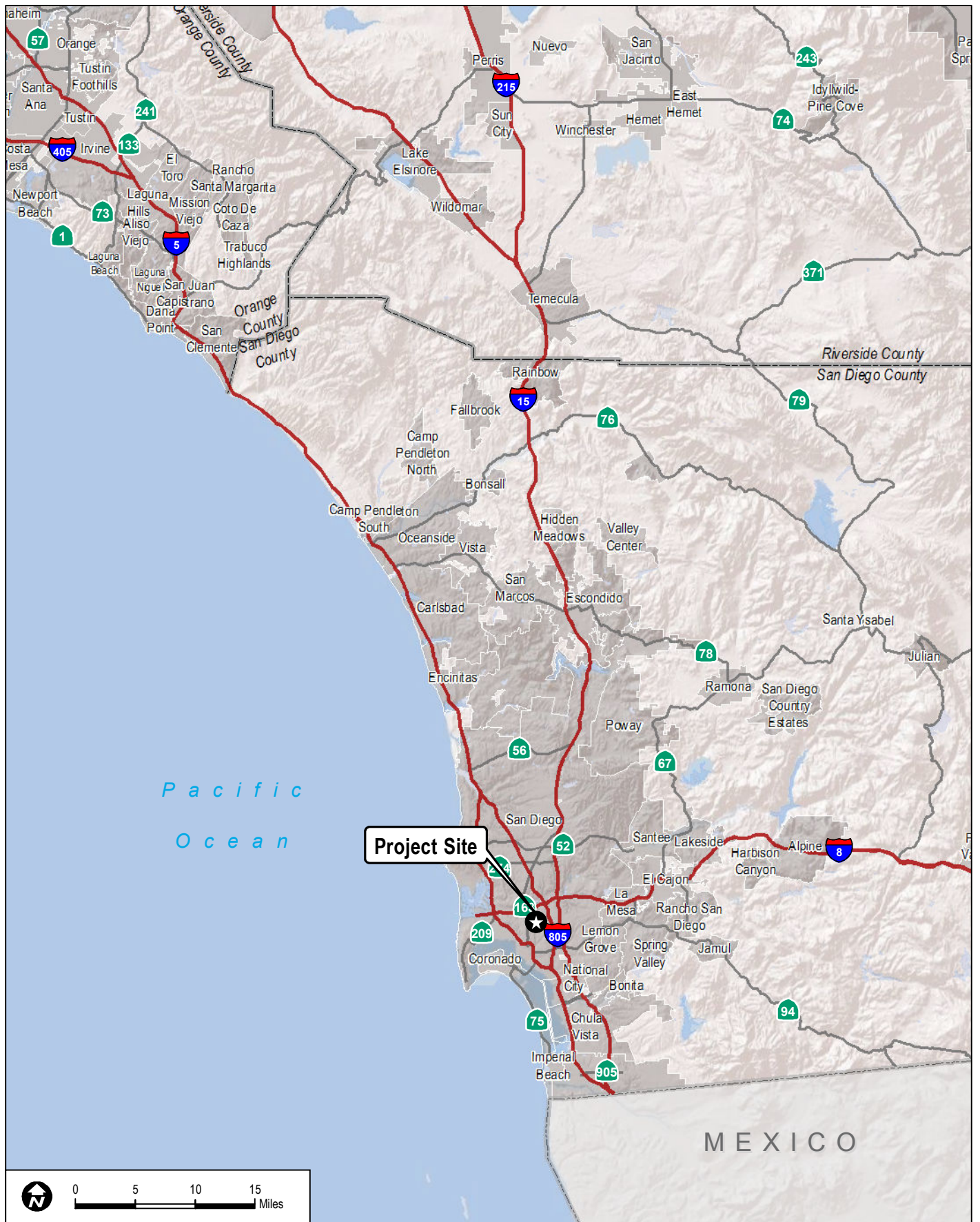


Anita Hayworth, PhD
Senior Biologist

Att: Figures 1-3

REFERENCES CITED

City of San Diego. Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). August 1997.

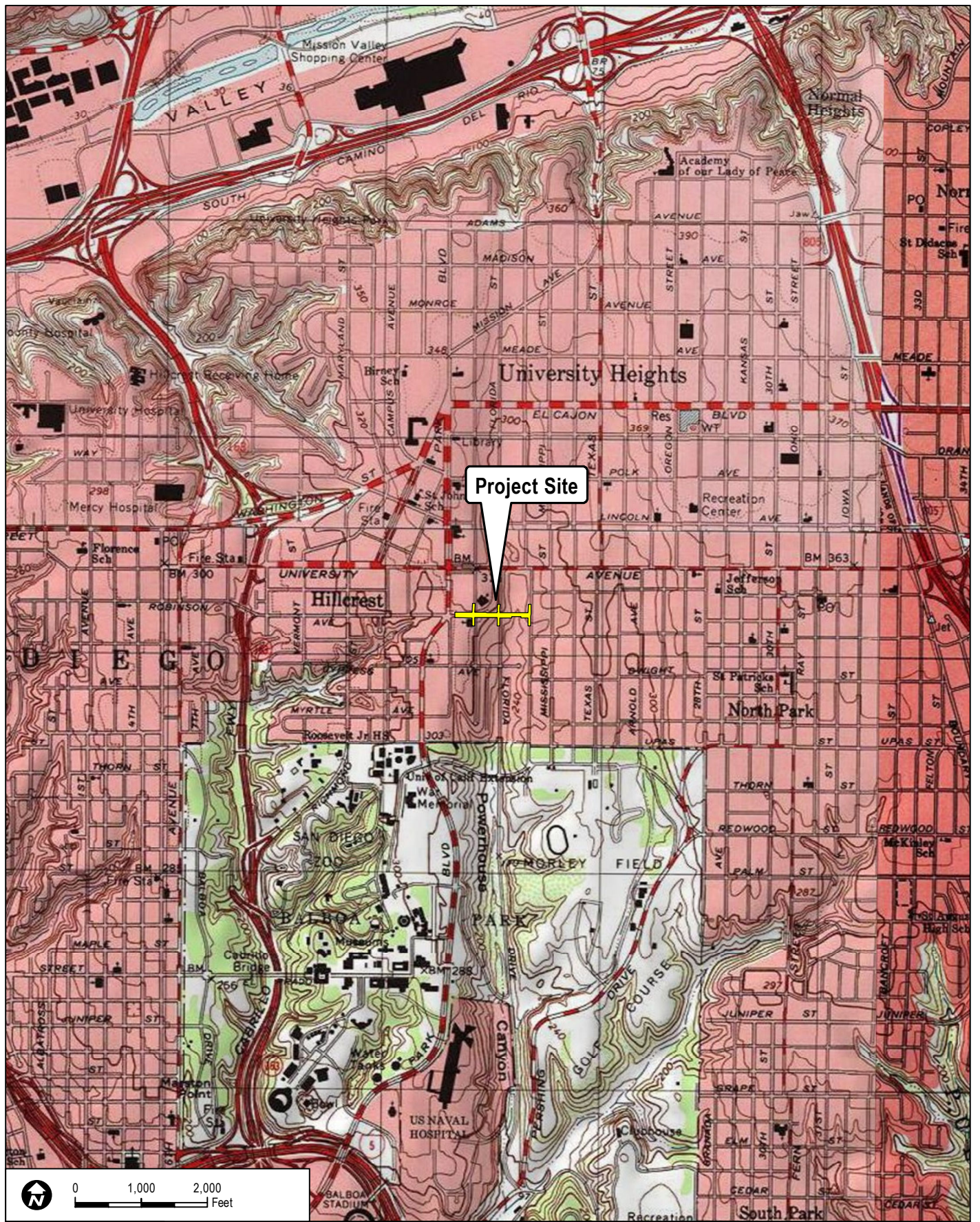


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FIGURE 1
Regional Map

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SOURCE: USGS 7.5-Minute Series Quadrangle.

FIGURE 1
Vicinity Map

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