

### 3.3 Biological Resources

This section describes and evaluates potential effects related to biological resources that could result from construction and operation of the Proposed Project. The section contains: (1) a description of the existing environmental setting for biological resources as well as a description of the Adjusted Baseline Environmental Setting; (2) a summary of the federal, State, and local regulations related to biological resources; and (3) an analysis of potential impacts to biological resources associated with the implementation of the Proposed Project, as well as identification of potentially feasible measures that could mitigate significant impacts.

Comments received in response to the NOP for the EIR can be found in Appendix B, though no specific comments regarding biological resources were provided.

The analysis included in this section was developed based upon a review of potentially occurring special-status species,<sup>1</sup> as well as existing wildlife habitats, vegetation communities, and jurisdictional resources based on the results of a field reconnaissance visit conducted by ESA biologists on May 10, 2018, and a review of available information related to biological resources in the vicinity of the Project Site. A database query of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB)<sup>2</sup> and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California<sup>3</sup> was conducted to identify special-status wildlife and plant species that have been recorded in the region. The database queries included the US Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle and the surrounding eight quadrangles for Inglewood: Beverly Hills, Hollywood, Los Angeles, Venice, South Gate, Long Beach, Torrance, and Redondo Beach. In addition, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) database<sup>4</sup> was also queried, which identifies federally-listed species that have been recorded in the region. was also conducted. both?

#### 3.3.1 Environmental Setting

##### Regional Setting

The Project Site is located in the City of Inglewood, just south of the Hollywood Park along West Century Boulevard, within Los Angeles County. Regional geographic features in the surrounding area include the Los Angeles Basin. The City of Inglewood is located approximately 9.5 miles south of the Santa Monica Mountains and about 6 miles east of the Pacific Ocean.

- <sup>1</sup> Species that are protected pursuant to Federal or State endangered species laws, or have been designated as Species of Special Concern by the CDFW, or species that are not included on any agency listing but meet the definition of rare, endangered or threatened species of the CEQA Guidelines section 15380, are collectively referred to as "special-status species."
- <sup>2</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2019. California Natural Diversity Database RareFind 5 personal computer program. <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/mapsanddata.asp>. Accessed June 26, 2019. Data set expires December 1, 2019.
- <sup>3</sup> California Native Plant Society, 2019. *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (online edition, v7-13)*. <http://www.rareplants.cnps.org/>. Accessed June 27, 2019.
- <sup>4</sup> US Fish and Wildlife Service, 2019. Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC). <https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>. Accessed June 26, 2019.

The climate in the region is Mediterranean, with dry summers and cool winters; however, the region has experienced periodic drought conditions. Generally, the Los Angeles Basin receives most of its precipitation between November and March. Annual precipitation averages around 14 inches a year.

Plant communities and diverse habitats are limited in the vicinity of the Project Site due to extensive urbanization and development. “[T]he complete urbanization of Inglewood has appreciably limited any remaining natural resources to be conserved.”<sup>5</sup> Plant communities that occur within urbanized areas in the region typically consist of maintained ornamental landscaping.

### **Project Site Overview**

The entirety of the Project Site was surveyed for biological resources. Adjacent areas are completely developed and urbanized; therefore, adjacent areas did not need to be assessed for their potential to support special-status species.

#### ***Arena Site***

The approximately 17-acre Arena Site is the largest contiguous part of the Project Site and is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of West Century Boulevard and South Prairie Avenue. The site is previously disturbed and mostly barren dirt (non-vegetated) with portions that are developed with concrete slab or buildings. There are some portions of the Project Site that contain sparse non-native grasses and ornamental plants, and are surrounded by residential, commercial and institutional development, including sidewalks and adjacent roadways lined by ornamental trees.

#### ***West Parking Garage Site***

The approximately 5-acre West Parking Garage Site is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of West Century Boulevard and South Prairie Avenue. It is previously disturbed and dominated by non-native grasses and ornamental plants. Four street trees are located in the middle of this site along West 101st Street. The site is surrounded by an urban/developed landscape and adjacent land uses include residential and commercial developments.

#### ***East Transportation and Hotel Site***

The approximately 5-acre East Transportation and Hotel Site is located along West Century Boulevard between South Doty Avenue and Yukon Avenue South. The site consists of a disturbed lot that is currently barren with some patches of non-native grasses and ornamental plants with nine ornamental trees. Commercial development is adjacent to this site.

#### ***Well Relocation Site***

The 0.7-acre Well Relocation Site is located near the southwest corner of West 102nd Street and South Doty Avenue intersection. The Well Relocation Site has been previously disturbed and is

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<sup>5</sup> City of Inglewood General Plan, Conservation Element (adopted October 21, 1997), p. 5.

8. Plants considered under the CNPS to be “rare, threatened or endangered in California” (Rank 1A, 1B, and 2 in CNPS, 2013) as well as CNPS Rank 3 and 4<sup>7</sup> plant species.

A list of special-status species that have the potential to occur within the vicinity of the Project Site was compiled based on data in the CNDDDB,<sup>8</sup> and the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants.<sup>9</sup> A list of special-status species relevant to the Project Site, their general habitat requirements, and their potential to occur within the vicinity of the Project Site is provided in Appendix E. All recorded observations of special-status species within the USGS Inglewood quadrant and the surrounding 8 quadrants are included within the table.<sup>10</sup> The full list of species is presented in Appendix E. The following criteria was used to determine the potential for a special-status species to occur in the Project Site and immediate surrounding area:

- **Unlikely:** The Project Site and/or surrounding area do not support suitable habitat for a particular species, or the Project Site is outside of the species known range. In addition, the species has not otherwise been reported to exist on the Project Site;
- **Low Potential:** The Project Site and/or immediate area only provide limited amounts and low quality habitat for a particular species. In addition, the known range for a particular species may be outside of the immediate project vicinity. In addition, the species has not otherwise been reported to exist on the Project Site;
- **Medium Potential:** Although the species has not been reported to exist on the Project Site, the site and/or immediate area provide suitable habitat for a particular species; or
- **High Potential:** The Project Site and/or immediate area provide ideal habitat conditions for a particular species and/or known populations occur in immediate area and/or within the Project Site.

The CNDDDB and CNPS database queries identified 59 special-status plant species having been recorded in the region. All of the 59 special-status plant species were determined to be Unlikely to occur in Project Site due to lack of suitable habitats and soils. None of the 59 special-status plant species has been reported to exist on the Project Site. None of these species was observed during the on-site survey.

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<sup>7</sup> Rank 3 and 4 plants may be analyzed under CEQA §15380 if sufficient information is available to assess potential impacts to such plants. Factors such as regional rarity versus statewide rarity should be considered in determining whether cumulative impacts to a Rank 3 or 4 plant are significant even if individual project-level impacts are not. CNPS Rank 3 and 4 may be considered regionally significant if, for example, the occurrence is located at the periphery of the species' range, or exhibits unusual morphology, or occurs in an unusual habitat/substrate. For these reasons, CNPS Rank 3 and 4 plants have been included in the special-status species analysis. Rank 3 and 4 plants are also included in the California Natural Diversity Database Special Plants, Bryophytes, and Lichens List. [Refer to the current published list available at: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata>.]

<sup>8</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2019. California Natural Diversity Database RareFind 5 personal computer program. <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/mapsanddata.asp>. Accessed June 26, 2019. Data set expires December 1, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> California Native Plant Society, 2019. *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (online edition, v7-13)*. <http://www.rareplants.cnps.org/>. Accessed June 27, 2019.

<sup>10</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2019. California Natural Diversity Database RareFind 5 personal computer program. <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/mapsanddata.asp>. Accessed June 26, 2019. Data set expires December 1, 2019.

The database queries also identified 35 special-status wildlife species that have been recorded in the region. Based on the biological resource reconnaissance, it was determined that all of the 35 special-status wildlife species are unlikely to be present because the Project Site lacks suitable habitat for these 35 wildlife species, and/or the Project Site is outside of the species' known range. In addition, none of these 35 wildlife species has been reported to have been observed there, and none was observed during the on-site survey.

### **Sensitive Natural Communities**

Six sensitive natural communities/habitats have been reported within the Inglewood USGS quadrangle map and the eight surrounding USGS quadrangles queried of the CNDDDB and CNPS databases or have been reported to the USFWS IPaC database (Appendix E) within the vicinity of the Project Site. The six sensitive natural communities that have the potential to occur within the vicinity are: California walnut woodland, southern coast live oak riparian forest, southern coastal bluff scrub, southern dune scrub, southern sycamore alder riparian woodland, and walnut forest. During the field reconnaissance, it was determined that none of these sensitive habitats exist within, or adjacent to, the Project Site and they are therefore excluded from further discussion.

### **Designated Critical Habitat**

USFWS designates critical habitat for certain species listed by the agency as threatened or endangered. "Critical habitat" is defined in FESA Section 3(5)(A) as those lands within a listed species' current range that contain the physical or biological features considered essential to the species' conservation, as well as areas outside the species' current range that are determined to be essential to its conservation. The Project Site and the surrounding adjacent areas do not contain any designated critical habitat for any federally listed species.

### **Jurisdictional Resources**

Depressions, channels, or other aquatic features that hold or convey water can fall under the jurisdiction of agencies that regulate activities within these resources. When such features exist on a Project Site, a jurisdictional delineation may be prepared to determine the extent of federal or state jurisdiction. A jurisdictional delineation was not conducted for the Proposed Project because, based on the biological field reconnaissance, there were no features or conditions present on <sup>the</sup> Project Site that would potentially be subject to the jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers or the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, and/or CDFW.

### **Wildlife Movement Corridors**

Wildlife movement corridors can provide favorable locations for wildlife to travel between different habitat areas such as foraging sites, breeding sites, cover areas, and preferred summer and winter range locations. They may also function as dispersal corridors allowing animals to move between various locations within their range. Wildlife movement corridors are considered important ecological resources and adverse impacts to such movement corridors can be determined to be significant. Areas of human disturbance or urban development can fragment wildlife habitats and impede wildlife movement between areas of suitable habitat. This

## Local

### **City of Inglewood General Plan**

The City of Inglewood's General Plan does not identify any goals or policies related specifically to the protection of biological resources.

The City of Inglewood General Plan's Conservation Element contains policies promoting the conservation, protection and effective use of natural resources other than biological resources. Because these policies are addressed elsewhere in this EIR, this chapter does not address the consistency of the Proposed Project with these policies.

### **City of Inglewood Tree Preservation Ordinance**

City Municipal Code Chapter 12, Article 32<sup>12</sup>, includes provisions to protect trees located on both public and private land in the City. The following trees are considered "protected trees" under the ordinance: (1) all trees having a minimum DBH of 8 inches; (2) street trees or other required trees such as those required as a condition of approval, Use Permit, or other zoning requirement; (3) memorial trees dedicated by an entity recognized by the City, and all specimen trees that define a neighborhood or community; (4) trees of the following species that are at least 4 inches diameter at breast height: big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), western dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*), California sycamore (*Platanus racemose*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*), blue oak (*Quercus douglassii*), Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*), California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*), valley oak (*Quercus lobate*), interior live oak (*Quercus wislizenii*), and California bay (*Umbellularia californica*); and (5) a tree or trees of any size planted as a replacement for a protected tree (Ord. 12-06 5-8-12, sec. 12-113).

No person shall remove, destroy, perform cutting of branches over one inch in diameter, or disfigure or cause to be removed or destroyed or disfigured any protected tree without having first obtained a permit to do so. All protected trees shall require a permit for removal, relocation, cutting or reshaping. All removed or disfigured trees shall also require replacement with like-size, like-kind trees or an equal value tree or trees as determined by the City's Master Plan or the Parks, Recreation and Library Services Department. If a replacement tree is unavailable in like size or kind, the value of the original protected tree shall be determined using the latest edition of Guide for Plant Appraisal by the International Society of Arboriculture. The valuation is used to determine the number and size of replacement trees required. The replacement trees must be located on site wherever possible. Where there is not sufficient room on site for the replacement trees, another site may be designated (Ord. 12-06 5-8-12, sec. 12-116).

<sup>12</sup> City of Inglewood. *Municipal Code Chapter 12 Article 32, Tree Preservation*. [www.qcode.us/codes/inglewood](http://www.qcode.us/codes/inglewood). Accessed October 10, 2018.

### **Issues Determined to be Less Than Significant**

Upon review of the Proposed Project, the City of Inglewood determined that due to the physical characteristics of the Project Site and the Proposed Project, several biological resources issues would involve issues or resources that would not be affected by the Proposed Project and need not be further considered in the Draft EIR.<sup>13</sup> The discussions below provide brief statements of reasons for the City's determination that these issues do not warrant further consideration in the EIR.

The following significance criteria were found to address issues that would not be affected by the Proposed Project. With respect to significance criterion 2, as described under Environmental Setting, the Project Site does not contain any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community. With respect to significance criterion 3, as described under Environmental Setting, no federally or state-protected wetlands or waters occur on the Project Site or in the vicinity of the Project Site. With respect to significance criterion 6, as described under Environmental Setting, the Project Site is not located within the boundaries of a habitat conservation plan (HCP), natural communities conservation plan (NCCP), or any other applicable conservation plan. The following discussion further addresses these criteria.

#### **The Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service. (No Impact)**

The Project Site does not contain any riparian habitat and does not contain any streams or water courses necessary to support riparian habitat. The majority of the Project Site is vacant, undeveloped land that has been previously developed and cleared, is heavily disturbed and regularly maintained, with the remaining parts of the Project Site being developed with uses. These conditions do not support any other sensitive natural communities. The nearest open space with natural communities is the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area, located approximately 4.5 miles northwest of the Project Site. As a result of these conditions, the Proposed Project would not have any effect on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations by CDFW or USFWS. Thus, there would be **no Project-level or cumulative impacts** of the Proposed Project related to this significance criterion.

#### **The Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. (No Impact)**

Based on the 2018 biological reconnaissance survey, there were no wetlands or other aquatic features that could potentially be protected by federal or state regulations. Therefore, construction

<sup>13</sup> Public Resources Code section 21003(e) states that "[t]o provide more meaningful public disclosure, reduce the time and cost required to prepare an environmental impact report, and focus on potentially significant effects on the environment of a proposed project, lead agencies shall, in accordance with Section 21100, focus the discussion in the environmental impact report on those potential effects on the environment of a proposed project which the lead agency has determined are or may be significant. Lead agencies may limit discussion on other effects to a brief explanation as to why those effects are not potentially significant."

and operation of the Proposed Project would not be anticipated to impact federal or state jurisdictional resources, including wetlands. Thus, there would be **no Project-level or cumulative impacts** of the Proposed Project related to this significance criterion.

**The Proposed Project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. (No Impact)**

The Project Site is not located within the boundaries of, or in the vicinity of, any HCP or NCCP. The closest designated HCP (the City of Rancho Palos Verdes HCP) is located approximately 10 miles south/southwest from the Project Site.<sup>14</sup> Since there would be no interaction between the Proposed Project and an approved HCP or NCCP, the Proposed Project would not conflict with the provisions of any adopted conservation plan. Thus, there would be **no Project-level or cumulative impacts** of the Proposed Project related to this significance criterion.

### Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**Impact 3.3-1: Construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service. (No Impact)**

As noted in the list of common wildlife species observed within the Project Site in the Environmental Setting Section and the Special Status Species section above, no species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the USFWS or CDFW occur within the Project Site. No suitable habitats for special-status species occur within the Project Site. Additionally, as noted in the Potential to Occur Table in Appendix E, there is no potential for such species to occur adjacent or in proximity to the Project Site where construction or operation of the Proposed Project would result in direct or indirect impacts. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project, during both construction and operation, would result in **no impact** to sensitive or protected species.

#### Mitigation Measures

None required.

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<sup>14</sup> City of Rancho Palos Verdes, 2004. Natural Communities Conservation Planning Subarea Plan, Figure 2-1. Available: [https://pvplc.org/\\_lands/docs/NCCP.pdf](https://pvplc.org/_lands/docs/NCCP.pdf). Accessed September 24, 2018.