

Biological Constraints Survey for 5th Street Drainage Improvements

City of Highland,
San Bernardino County, California



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Prepared for

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The City of Highland is preparing a Negative Declaration for the 5th Street Drainage Improvements Project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). On July 19, 2010, HDR biologist, Dr. Joseph Platt visited the site of the proposed drainage pipe along 5th Street and its outfall into City Creek overflow canal. The following information is an assessment of the potential biological issues related to the project site.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project consists of building a storm drain system along 5th Street starting at 3rd street, extending along Palm Avenue and 5th Street, and outletting in the City Creek Channel. The work within the Flood Control right-of-way will consist of installing a 4 x 4-foot Reinforced Concrete Box (RCB), construction of an outlet structure along the existing channel wall, and placement of rip-rap for energy dissipation. From the outfall at the eastern end, the trench will be placed in the southern right-of-way of 5th Street. This is occupied by access roads to homes and businesses. The rest of the trenching will occur in the paved portion of 5th Street.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The proposed site for the outfall is in a manufactured bank of loose dirt and gravel. It is held in place by a sheet metal fence. An unimproved access ramp runs down from 5th Street, along the face of the metal fence, passed the proposed outfall, and into the channel (Photo 1). There is neither natural area nor plants in this area.

The proposed project site has no burrows or other potential nest sites for burrowing owls. The level of human activity in the area precludes the use of the area by owls. The soil at the site is hard packed and without structure. Along the channel side of the access ramp, there are scattered Russian thistle (*Salsola* sp.) plants (Photo 1). No other plant material was present.

It is our opinion that the proposed project will not pose a risk to biological resources in the area.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Creek overflow canal is recognized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as “Waters of the U.S.” It is therefore important that the project activities do not impact the flow channel. We recommend that construction of the required headwall be carried out from outside the canal. It should be done so that no equipment works from within the canal. Best Management Practices should be implemented that will ensure no pollutants or fill is placed into the actual flow channel, and that work is restricted to the access ramp and above the bank.



Photo 1. Looking up the access ramp with the proposed headwall located on the fence line to the right. Note the scattered salsola plants off the ramp at the left.



Photo 2. Taken in the channel on the south side of 5th Street looking east.



Photo 3. Taken from bridge structure looking south downstream from 5th Street.



Photo 4. Taken to show typical channel wall and bottom.