
Leona

The Leona study area is located approximately 5 miles southeast of Lake Mathews and approximately 3 miles west of the City of Perris.

Existing Conditions

General Site Conditions

The study area is located in an open space area among various, moderate-sized, rolling hills. The elevation of the study area is approximately 2,262 feet above sea level. Soils present consist predominantly of Lodo rocky loam, based on the USDA soil surveys. Land use in the vicinity consists of a rural residence to the east, and undeveloped open space to the north, east, and west, preceded by an east-west dirt access road. The study area is subject to disturbance associated with off-road vehicle use and illegal dumping.

Vegetation

The vegetation in the study area consists of a juniper woodland plant community intermixed with a coastal sage scrub plant community. The plant species observed include California juniper (*Juniperus californica*), Palmer goldenbush (*Ericameria palmer*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), snake cholla (*Cylindropuntia californica*), California aster (*Lessingia filaginifolia*), short-podded mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), and various, unidentified grasses.

Wildlife

Wildlife activity was low during the survey. Species observed include common raven (*Corvus corax*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), and domestic chicken (*Gallus domesticus*). Species expected to occur are those commonly observed in coastal sage scrub and juniper woodland habitats, such as wrentit (*Chamaea fasciata*), desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*), and California kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula californica*).

Sensitive Biological Resources

Sensitive Species

Federally and State Listed Species

Habitat for any State- or federally-listed threatened or endangered species not already covered by an existing HCP does not occur within the study area. Therefore, the development of the study area is not anticipated to impact any plant or animal species protected under CESA or FESA.

WRMSHCP

The study area is located within an area identified by the WRMSHCP as requiring a habitat assessment for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a CSC covered by the WRMSHCP. The species was not observed within the study area. Suitable habitat for the species was observed on the study area and focused surveys are necessary to determine the occupation status of the species onsite.

The study area also contains suitable habitat for Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*), a federally-listed endangered species covered by the WRMSHCP, coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), a federally-listed threatened species covered by the WRMSHCP, orange-throated whiptail (*Aspidoscelis hyperythra*), San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), Bell's sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli belli*), and southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), all CSC covered by the WRMSHCP. None of these species were observed within the study area. Impacts to these species' habitat have been adequately accounted for by the WRCMSHCP and if the development of the study area is found consistent with the WRCMSHCP, then further consideration of potential impacts will not be necessary. Coastal California gnatcatcher, Bell's sage sparrow, and Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, however, are also protected under the MBTA and CDFG code and impacts to their nesting activities will still need to be avoided.

Other Sensitive Species

No suitable habitat for sensitive species not specifically protected under any other policy occurs on the study area.

Critical Habitat

The study area is located within Critical Habitat for Quino checkerspot butterfly, as designated by the USFWS. Because the study area is located within the WRMSHCP and suitable habitat for Quino checkerspot butterfly occurs within the study area, consultation with the USFWS will need to occur prior to construction and avoidance measures will need to be implemented.

Nesting Birds

No nests or nesting activities were observed during the survey, however, the vegetation in the study area contains suitable nesting habitat for ground and shrub nesting avian species, such as wrentit and killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*).

California Desert Native Plant Act

Snake cholla was observed in the study area and this species is protected under Section 80073 of the CDNPA. According to Section 80073 of the CDNPA, no snake cholla (including both dead and live) may be harvested except under a permit issued by the County Agricultural Commissioner or the sheriff. The commissioner may establish limits on the quantity of snake cholla which may be taken under any permit and on the number of permits for the taking of snake cholla which may be issued.

Jurisdictional Waters

No drainage features, wetlands, vernal pools, or suitable habitat for sensitive fairy shrimp species occur on or in the vicinity of the study area. No waters or wetlands potentially under the jurisdiction of the State or the United States will be impacted by the development of the study area.

Wildlife Corridors and Movement

Given the limited size and minimal disturbance associated with the development of the study area, no impacts to any wildlife corridors or wildlife movement patterns are anticipated.

Applicable HCP or Land Use Management Plan

WRMSHCP

The study area is owned and managed by the County of Riverside, and is subject to the WRMSHCP. The study area is located within the “Lake Mathews/Woodcrest” Area Plan, SU3- Gavilan Hills West subunit, and falls within Criteria Cell 2858.

SKRHCP

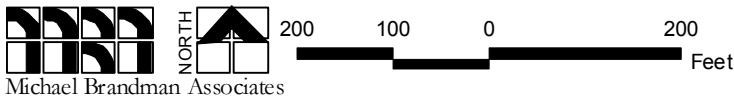
The study area is located within a fee area under the Western Riverside County SKRHCP.



Legend

- Tower Location
- 50' Study Area

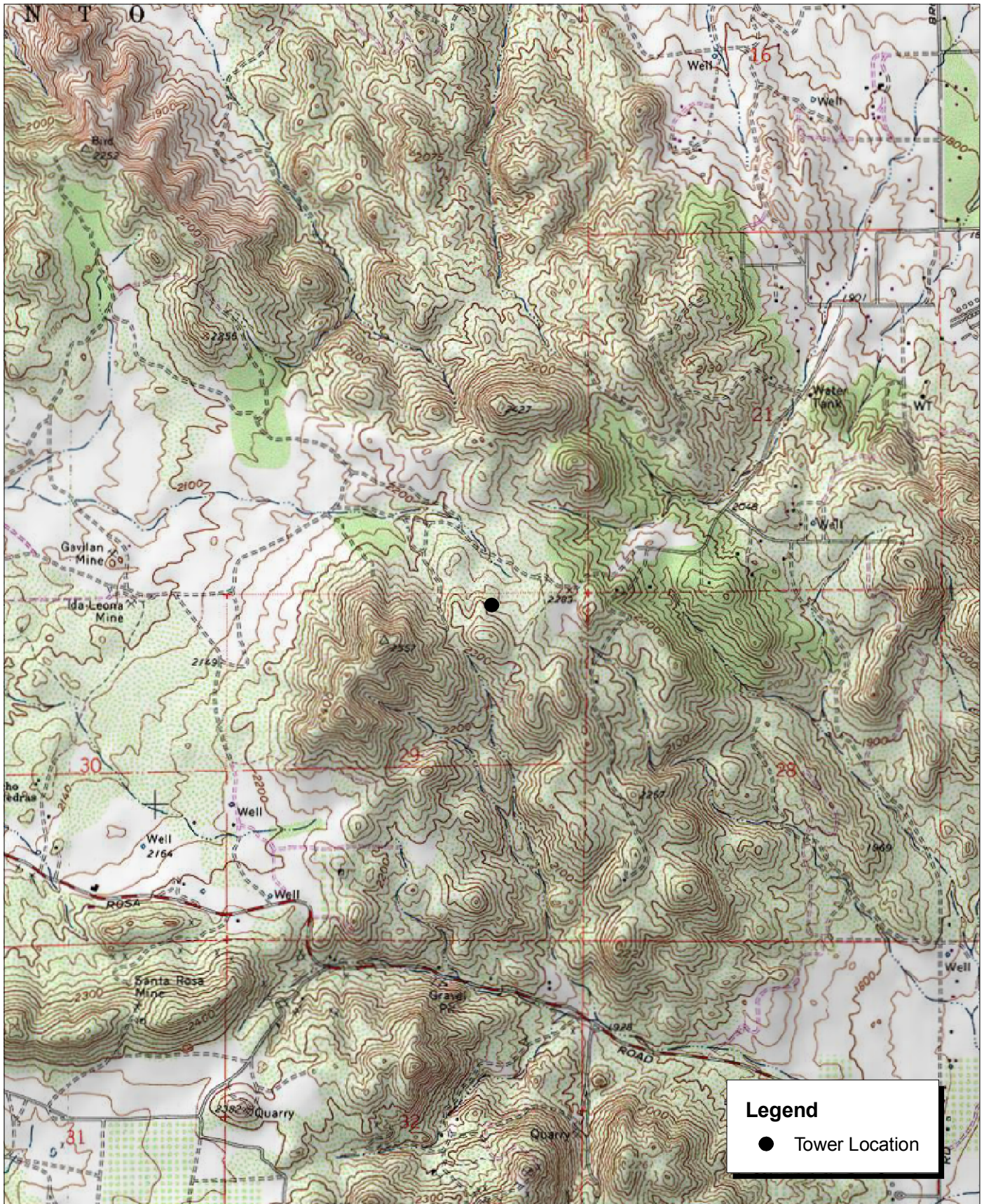
Source: USDA Soils Data (NRCS).



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Leona Communication Site Local Vicinity Aerial Map

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
 PUBLIC SAFETY ENTERPRISE COMMUNICATION PROJECT



Source: USGS Steele Peak 7.5' Topographic Map.



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Leona Communication Site Local Vicinity Topographic Map

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
 PUBLIC SAFETY ENTERPRISE COMMUNICATION PROJECT



Source: USDA Soils Data (NRCS).



Photograph 1: View toward Leona candidate location, facing northeast.



Photograph 2: View toward Leona candidate location, facing northwest.



Photograph 3: View toward Leona candidate location, facing southeast.



Photograph 4: View toward Leona candidate location, facing southwest.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2008.



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Leona Candidate Photographs 1 to 4
PSEC Project



Photograph 5: View from Leona candidate location, facing northeast.



Photograph 6: View from Leona candidate location, facing south.



Photograph 7: View from Leona candidate location, facing east.



Photograph 8: View from Leona candidate location, facing west.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2008.



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Leona Candidate Photographs 5 to 8
PSEC Project

Leona**Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)**

APN	Cell	Cell Group	Acres	Area Plan	Sub Unit
321190005	2745	N	1.37	Lake Mathews / Woodcrest	SU3 - Gavilan Hills West
321190005	2858	N	8.79	Lake Mathews / Woodcrest	SU3 - Gavilan Hills West

HABITAT ASSESSMENTS

Habitat assessment shall be required and should address at a minimum potential habitat for the following species:

APN	Amphibia Species	Burrowing Owl	Criteria Area Species	Mammalian Species	Narrow Endemic Plant Species	Special Linkage Area
321190005	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO

Burrowing Owl

Burrowing owl.

If potential habitat for these species is determined to be located on the property, focused surveys may be required during the appropriate season.

Background

The final MSHCP was approved by the County Board of Supervisors on June 17, 2003. The federal and state permits were issued on June 22, 2004 and implementation of the MSHCP began on June 23, 2004.

For more information concerning the MSHCP, contact your local city or the County of Riverside for the unincorporated areas. Additionally, the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), which oversees all the cities and County implementation of the MSHCP, can be reached at:

Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
4080 Lemon Street, 12th Floor
Riverside, CA 92502-1604

Phone: 951-955-9700

Fax: 951-955-8873

www.wrc-rca.org