APPENDIX 2.2-1

Biological Technical Report

HELIX
Environmental Planning

The Villages - Escondido Country Club

Biological Technical Report

June 2017

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The Villages – Escondido Country Club
Biological Technical Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the request of New Urban West, Inc. (project proponent), HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX) has completed this biological resources technical report for The Villages – Escondido Country Club (project), which is proposed in the northwestern portion of the City of Escondido in northern San Diego County, California. The project would generally consist of a General Plan Amendment to the Land Use Element, Zone Change to S-P Zone, a Vesting Tentative Map and Specific Plan to allow for development of the 392 single-family dwelling unit project within Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 224-490-05-00, 224-491-01-00, 224-490-06-00, 224-211-05-00, 224-211-15-00, 224-211-12-00, 224-230-43-00, 224-811-28-00, and 224-210-53-00. The project would occur within an approximately 110-acre area, referred to herein as the project site. In addition, the new land uses proposed for The Villages Specific Plan Area include Open Space System, Clubhouse with recreational, social and farm amenities, and three single-family residential Villages. The 46-acre Open Space System will consist of 32 acres of landscaped Greenbelt and 14 acres of environmental channels and retention basins to convey stormwater from San Marcos Creek through the project site and clean stormwater from the project site.

The purpose of this report is to document the existing biological conditions within the project site and provide an analysis of potential impacts to sensitive biological resources with respect to local, state, and federal policy. This report provides the biological resources technical documentation necessary for review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by the City of Escondido Planning Department (City).

The project site is generally characterized by disturbed and developed land associated with the former Escondido Country Club and golf course. The area surrounding the site consists of residential housing and urban development. Due to the urbanized nature of the site and vicinity, it is not located within a biological core and linkage area or any focused planning areas that are targeted for conservation in the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) regional conservation planning area.

HELIX conducted biological resources surveys in March and November 2016. The surveys confirmed the presence of seven vegetation communities/habitat types: freshwater marsh, disturbed wetland, non-native riparian, disturbed land, man-made earthen channel, man-made concrete channel, and man-made basin/pond. Three of the communities are considered sensitive natural communities: freshwater marsh, disturbed wetland, non-native riparian. No special status plant or animal species have a high potential to occur within the project site based primarily on the lack of suitable habitat; none were observed during HELIX's 2016 surveys.

The project site supports several man-made drainage features and basins that were previously created for conveyance and detention of stormwater and irrigation, as well as aesthetic water features for the former golf course. The features in the eastern portions of the site occur over areas that once supported a reach of San Marcos Creek, which has long been diverted into ditches, swales, and storm drains within the golf course and surrounding developments. The features on site either abate within uplands or collect into the existing storm drain system. As such, the features are geographically isolated and would not qualify as wetland and non-wetland

waters of the U.S. subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) pursuant to Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA). The features could, however, qualify as isolated waters of the State subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) pursuant to the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act; in addition to jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) pursuant to California Fish and Game Code (CFG Code) Sections 1600 *et seq*.

Potential significant impacts have been identified for special-status species, sensitive natural communities, and tree resources protected under local ordinance. Mitigation measures are proposed that would reduce the potential significant impacts of the project to below a level of significance. Potential impacts on wildlife corridors and nursery sites and regional conservation plans were found not to be significant.

Notification and permitting with the RWQCB and CDFW is a regulatory requirement of the project due to unavoidable impacts on isolated waters of the State and jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat. Impacts to these resources will be mitigated on site through establishment/re-establishment, enhancement, and preservation measures within the 46-acre open space for the project.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

At the request of New Urban West, Inc. (project proponent), HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX) has completed this biological resources technical report for the proposed The Villages – Escondido Country Club (project). The purpose of this report is to document the existing biological conditions within an approximately 110-acre project site and provide an analysis of potential impacts to sensitive biological resources with respect to local, state, and federal policy. This report provides the biological resources technical documentation necessary for review under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) by the City of Escondido Planning Department (City).

1.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

1.2.1 Project Location

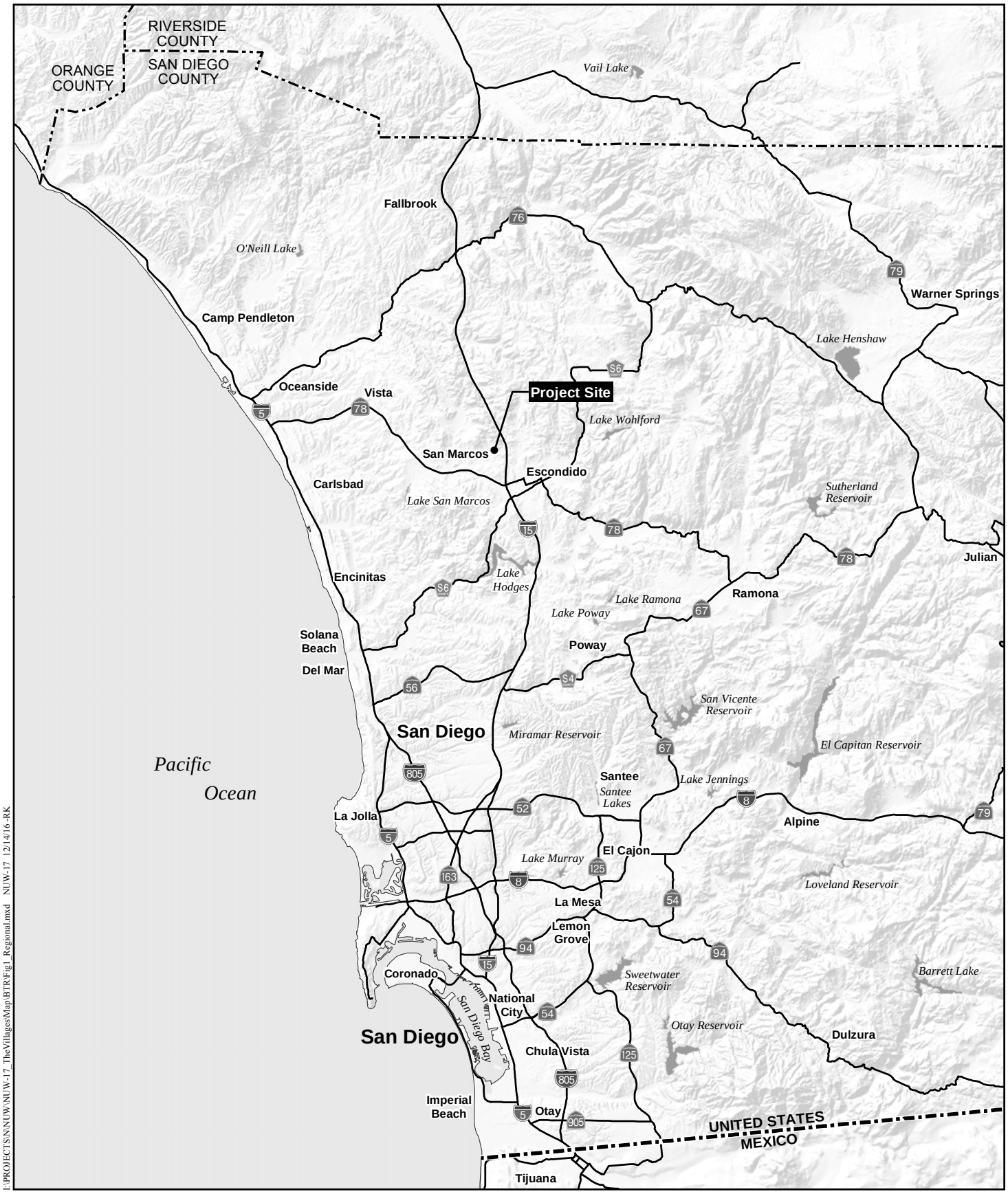
The approximately 110-acre project site is generally located in the northwestern portion of Escondido in northern San Diego County, California (Figure 1). More specifically, the site occurs at the old Escondido Country Club located north of El Norte Parkway, south of Gary Lane, east of Golden Circle Drive, and west of Interstate 15 (Figure 2). The site is located in Sections 5, 6 and an unsectioned portion of Township 12 South, Range 2 West of the Valley Center U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic map. The site is bounded by existing residential developments on all sides. The project site occurs within Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 224-490-05-00, 224-491-01-00, 224-490-06-00, 224-211-05-00, 224-211-15-00, 224-211-12-00, 224-230-43-00, 224-811-28-00, and 224-210-53-00.

1.2.2 Project Description

The proposed project consists of a General Plan Amendment to the Land Use Element, Zone Change to S-P Zone, a Vesting Tentative Map and Specific Plan to allow for development of the 392 single-family dwelling unit project (Figure 4). The total project area is approximately 109.3 acres. The new land uses proposed for the Villages Specific Plan Area include Open Space System, Clubhouse with recreational, social and farm amenities, and three single-family residential Villages.

The 46-acre Open Space System will consist of 32 acres of landscaped Greenbelt and 14 acres of environmental channels and retention basins to convey stormwater from San Marcos Creek through the project site and clean stormwater from the project site. The Greenbelt will have a series of pocket parks along an approximately 4-mile long walking trail system.

A new, completely rebuilt Clubhouse will replace the former clubhouse. Recreational amenities will include a swimming pool, gym facility, and tennis court/pickle ball courts. Social amenities include restaurant and bar, banquet facilities and event courtyard, meeting room, administration office, and Village Green with a small concert/performance facility. Farm amenities include a professionally managed community Farm, which will supply produce to the restaurant and to the



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Regional Location

THE VILLAGES

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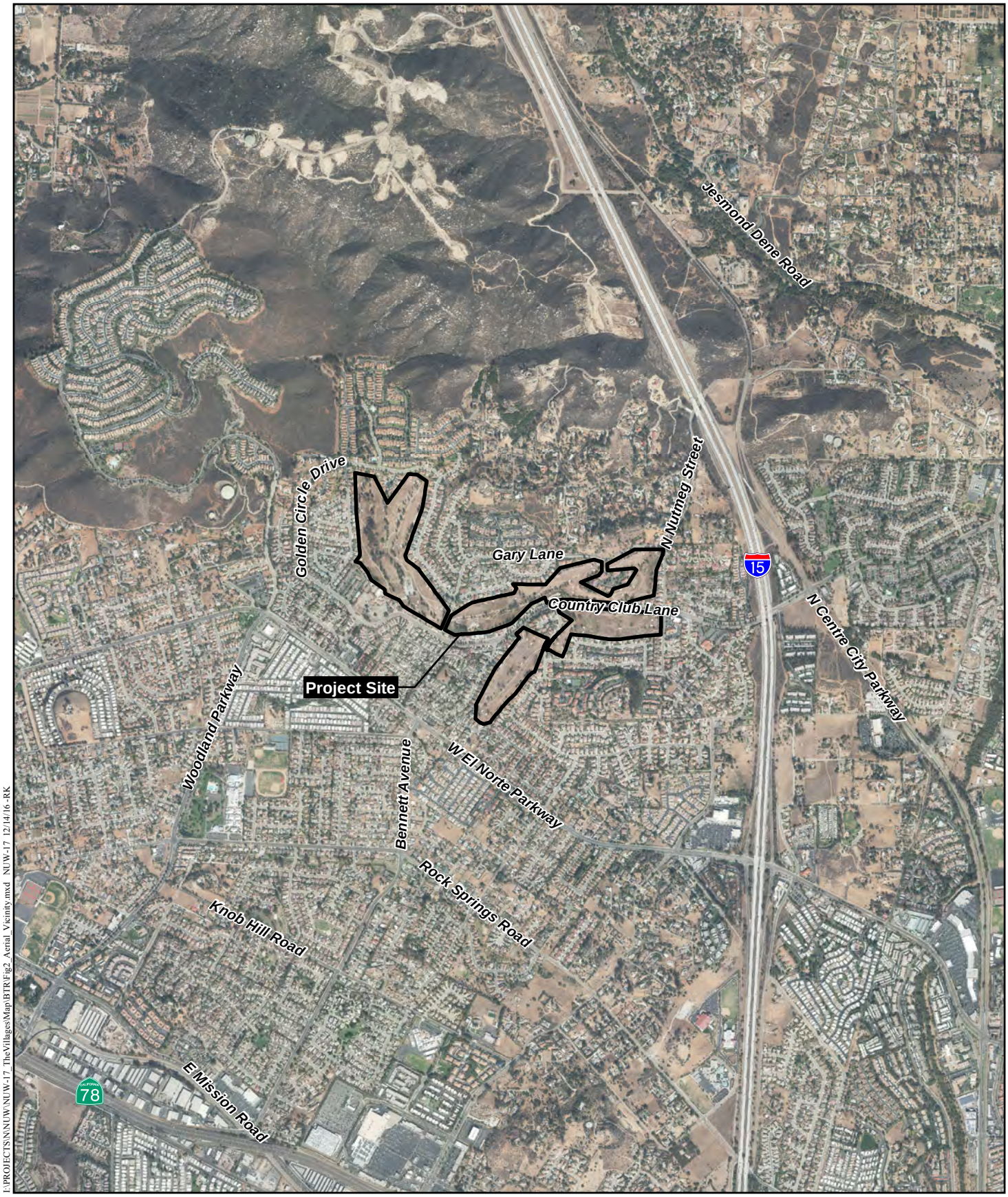
N 0 8 Miles

Figure 1



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Project Vicinity Map (Aerial Photograph)

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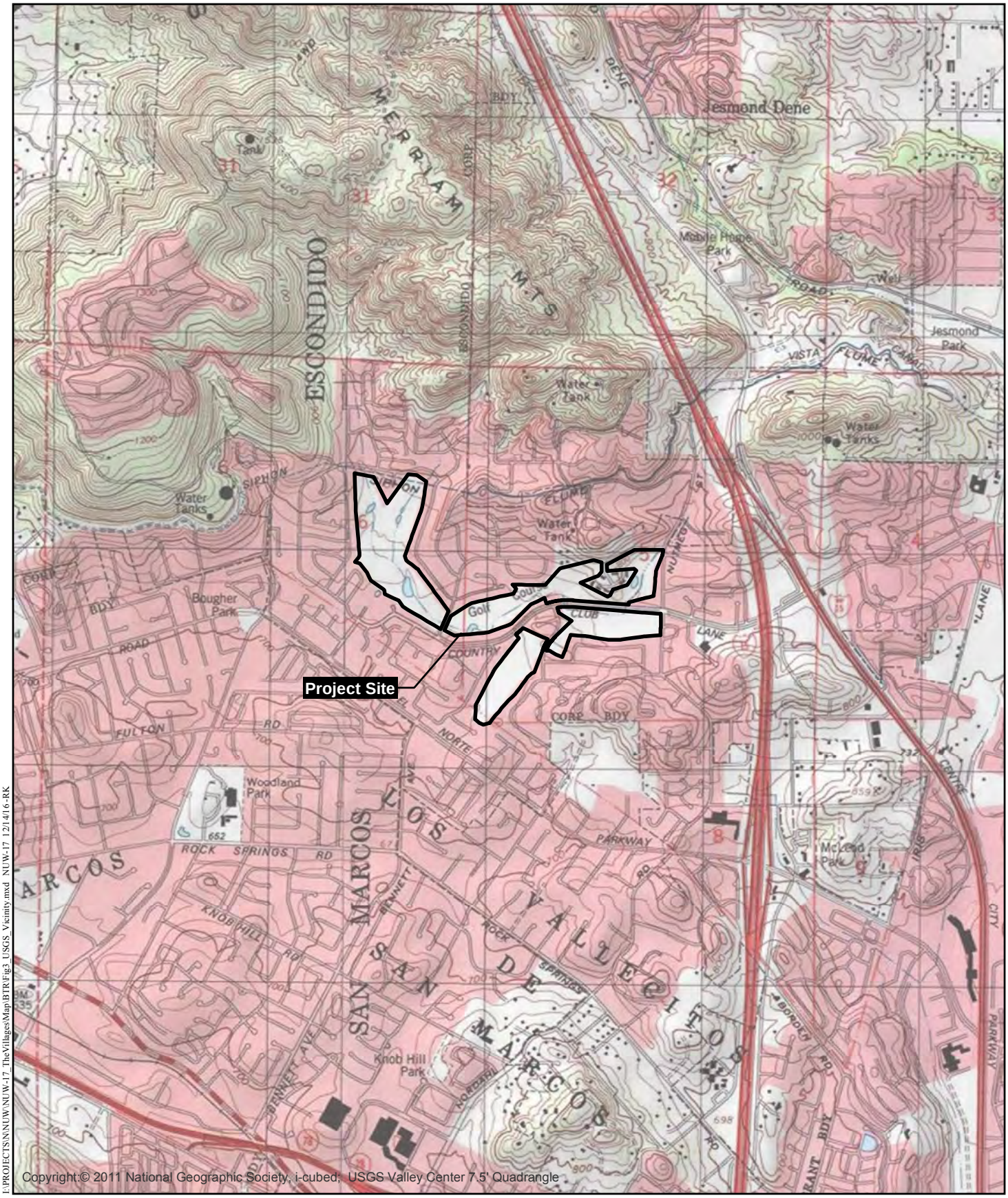
Figure 3



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Project Vicinity Map (USGS Topography)

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N 0 2,000 Feet

Figure 3

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Site Plan

THE VILLAGES

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0 450 Feet

Figure 4

Farm Stand for sale to nearby residents. Access to the Clubhouse is from the W. Country Club Lane intersection with Golden Circle Drive.

The residential land use is comprised of three Villages. Village boundaries will be defined by Greenbelt Open Space that is used to separate and buffer existing development from the new homes. Each Village will have a mixture of single-family housing types and lot sizes. The separate identities for each Village will be created primarily by the architecture style of the dwellings, augmented by landscaping, fencing and entry monumentation.

2.0 METHODS

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior to conducting 2016 field surveys, a thorough review of relevant maps, databases, and literature pertaining to biological resources known to occur within the project vicinity was performed. Recent and historical aerial imagery (Google 2016), topographic maps (USGS 1996), soils maps (USDA 2016), and other maps of the project site and vicinity were acquired and reviewed to obtain updated information on the natural environmental setting.

In addition, a query of sensitive species and habitats databases was conducted, including the USFWS species records (USFWS 2016a), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; CDFW 2016), and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Electronic Inventory (CNPS 2010). The USFWS' National Wetland Inventory (NWI) was also reviewed (USFWS 2016b). Any recorded locations of species, habitat types, wetlands, and other resources were mapped and overlaid onto aerial imagery using Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

2.2 GENERAL BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

An initial general biological survey of the project site was conducted by HELIX biologist, Karl Osmundson, on March 23, 2016. Vegetation was mapped on a 1"=200' scale aerial of the site. A minimum mapping unit size of 0.10 acre was used when mapping upland habitat; 0.01 acre was used when mapping wetland and riparian habitat. The site reconnaissance included a general inventory of existing conditions and focused primarily on verifying existing vegetation communities or habitat types, assessing suitability for sensitive plant and animal species, assessing potential jurisdictional waters and wetlands, and identifying any other potential sensitive resources. Physical parameters assessed included vegetation and soil conditions, presence of indicator plant and animal species, slope, aspect and hydrology.

The project site was surveyed on foot and with the aid of binoculars. Representative photographs of the site were taken, with select photographs included in this report as Appendix F. Plant and animal species observed or otherwise detected were recorded in field notebooks. Animal identifications were made in the field by direct, visual observation or indirectly by detection of calls, burrows, tracks, or scat. Plant identifications were made in the field or in the lab through comparison with voucher specimens or photographs. The locations of special status plant and

animal species incidentally observed or otherwise detected were mapped. The project site was examined for evidence of potential jurisdictional waters and wetlands, including vernal pools. Table 1 provides a summary of the biological surveys conducted for the project.

Table 1
BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS

SURVEY TYPE	DATE	HELIX PERSONNEL
2016		
General biological survey, vegetation mapping, habitat assessment, preliminary jurisdictional delineation, plant and wildlife inventory	March 23	Karl Osmundson
Formal jurisdictional delineation, plant and wildlife inventory	November 11	Larry Sward, Hannah Lo
Tree survey, plant and wildlife inventory	November 11	Hannah Lo, Summer Schlageter
	November 12	Hannah Lo, Summer Schlageter
	November 13	Hannah Lo, Summer Schlageter

2.3 JURISDICTIONAL DELINEATION

Prior to beginning fieldwork, aerial photographs (1"=200' scale), topographic maps (1"=200' scale), and National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps were reviewed to assist in determining the location of potential jurisdictional areas in the project site. Mr. Osmundson performed the basic jurisdictional delineation concurrently to the general biological survey on March 23, 2016. A formal jurisdictional delineation was conducted by HELIX biologists Larry Sward and Hannah Sadowski on November 11, 2016 to confirm the estimated boundaries of water and wetland resources potentially subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jurisdiction pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA; 33 USC 1344), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) jurisdiction pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne), and streambed habitats potentially subject to CDFW jurisdiction pursuant to Sections 1600 *et seq.* of the California Fish and Game Code (CFG Code). Areas generally characterized by depressions, drainage features, and riparian and wetland vegetation were evaluated.

Waters of the U.S.

Potential USACE-jurisdictional waters of the U.S. were delineated in accordance with the Wetlands Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987) and Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (USACE 2008). Sampling points were located within representative uplands and wetlands, and mapping of drainage features was performed in the field based on the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) and surface indications of hydrology. Areas were determined to be potential wetland waters of the U.S. if there was a dominance of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology

indicators. Areas were determined to be non-wetland waters if there was evidence of regular surface flow within an OHWM, but the vegetation and/or soils criterion were not met. Once features were delineated, HELIX completed a significant nexus evaluation to demonstrate geographic isolation or connectivity to a downstream traditional navigable water (TNW).

Waters of the State

Potential RWQCB-jurisdictional waters of the State were delineated in the same manner as potential waters of the U.S. All waters of the U.S. were considered waters of the State subject to RWQCB jurisdiction pursuant to CWA Section 401. Where features were determined to be geographically isolated, they were considered isolated waters of the State subject to RWQCB jurisdiction pursuant to Porter-Cologne.

Streambed and Riparian Habitat

Potential CDFW-jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat were determined based on the presence of riparian vegetation or regular surface flow within a measurable bed and bank. Streambeds within CDFW jurisdiction were delineated based on the definition of streambed as "a body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and supporting fish or other aquatic life. This includes watercourses having a surface or subsurface flow that supports riparian vegetation" (Title 14, Section 1.72). Potential CDFW-jurisdictional unvegetated streambed encompasses the top-of-slope to top-of-slope width for the features within the project site. Vegetated streambed includes all riparian shrub or tree canopy extending within or beyond the banks of features within the project site.

2.4 TREE SURVEYS

HELIX biologists Larry Sward, Hannah Sadowski, and Summer Schlageter completed an inventory and mapping of native and non-native "mature" and "protected" trees that occur on the project site on November 11, 21 and 23, 2016. Mature and protected trees are defined in Section 33-1069, Article 55 of Chapter 33 of the City's Municipal Code. Data and mapping from HELIX's tree survey effort are included as Appendix G.

2.5 SURVEY LIMITATIONS

Noted animal species were identified by direct observation, vocalizations, or the observance of scat, tracks, or other signs. However, the lists of species identified are not necessarily comprehensive accounts of all species that utilize the project site as species that are nocturnal, secretive, or seasonally restricted may not have been observed. Those species that are of special status and have potential to occur in the project site, however, are still addressed in this report. Last, 2016 was a drought year, which may have affected the vegetation composition of the site.

2.6 NOMENCLATURE

Nomenclature used in this report generally comes from Holland (1986) and Oberbauer (2008) for vegetation; Baldwin *et al*. (2012) for plants; Glassberg (2001) for butterflies; Collins and Taggart

(2006) for reptiles and amphibians; American Ornithologists' Union (2013) for birds; and Bradley *et al*. (2014) for mammals. Plant species status is from the CNPS (2014), CDFW (2014a), and County (2010a). Animal species status is from CDFW (2011 and 2014b) and County (2010a).

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

3.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The project site is generally located within the northern foothill humid temperate ecoregion of north San Diego County. Generalized climate in the region is regarded as dry, subhumid mesothermal, with warm dry summers and cold moist winters. Mean annual precipitation is between 10 and 20 inches, and the mean annual temperature is between 59 and 64 degrees Fahrenheit. The frost-free season is 260 to 300 days.

Although not approved or adopted, the project site is located within the boundaries of the Draft Escondido MHCP Subarea Plan, within undesignated land outside of biological core and linkage areas and focused planning areas.

3.2 GENERAL LAND USES

Since the 1960's, land uses at the project site have included those associated with the Escondido Country Club and golf course. The country club and golf course are no longer active and the site is currently characterized by disturbed, fallow land. Surrounding land uses include residential development in all directions (Figure 2).

3.3 DISTURBANCE

The project site consists of an abandoned golf course that is surrounded by existing residential development. As such; the site is subject to a number of previous and ongoing anthropogenic-related disturbances that include pedestrian use, domestic pet use (i.e., dogs and cats), invasive species, and regular night lighting and noise.

The hydrology and vegetation composition of the site has evidently changed dramatically since the golf course operations have ceased. The man-made channels and basins/ponds that occur are no longer maintained or supported by irrigation water from the golf course, and as a result, most are in a dysfunctional state.

3.4 TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS

Elevations in the project site range from approximately 800 feet above mean sea level (amsl) to 725 feet amsl. Elevation generally increases along the Project site boundary. The Project site generally contains of a valley surrounded by gentle hills.

Five soil types have been mapped in the project site (Natural Resource Conservation Service [NRCS] 2014a). Those soils types covering the most area included Escondido very fine sandy loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes, eroded, Huerhuero loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes, Las posas fine sandy loam, 5 to 9 percent slopes, eroded, Las Posas fine sandy loam, 9 to 15 percent slopes, eroded, and Vista coarse sandy loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, eroded. None of the named soils mapped in the project site are listed as hydric (NRCS 2014b).

3.5 VEGETATION COMMUNITIES/HABITAT TYPES

Seven vegetation communities/habitat types occur in the project site (Table 2; Figure 5): freshwater marsh, disturbed wetland, non-native riparian, disturbed land, man-made earthen channel, man-made concrete channel, and man-made basin/pond. Classification generally follows Holland (1986) and Oberbauer (2008), where applicable. Classification of man-made channels and ponds/basins were further refined by HELIX for clarity of the type of conveyance and detention feature in the context of jurisdictional waters and wetlands.

Table 2
VEGETATION COMMUNITIES/HABITAT TYPES

Vegetation Community / Habitat Type	**Existing** (acres)
Wetland/Riparian	
Freshwater Marsh	0.04
Disturbed Wetland	0.04
Non-Native Riparian	0.21
Subtotal	*0.29*
Upland	
Disturbed Land	100.7
Man-Made Earthen Channel	0.1
Man-Made Concrete Channel	0.2
Man-Made Basin/Pond	1.9
Subtotal	*102.9*
TOTAL	**103.2**

*Wetland/riparian acres rounded to the nearest 0.01 acre and upland acres rounded to the nearest 0.1 acre.

Freshwater Marsh

Freshwater marsh is dominated by perennial, emergent monocots, 5 to 13 feet tall, forming incomplete to completely closed canopies. This vegetation type occurs along the coast and in coastal valleys near river mouths and around the margins of lakes and springs, freshwater or brackish marshes. These areas are semi- or permanently flooded yet lack a significant current (Holland 1986). Dominant species include cattails (*Typha* spp.) and bulrushes (*Scirpus* spp.),

along with umbrella sedges (*Cyperus* spp.), rushes (*Juncus* spp.), and spike-sedge (*Eleocharis* sp.).

Freshwater marsh occurs over approximately 0.04 acre confined to limited portions of the earthen channels in the southeastern portions of the site. Broad-leaved cattail (*Typha latifolia*) is the dominant species observed, much of which was dead or desiccated due to the golf course areas no longer being artificially irrigated.

Disturbed Wetland

Disturbed wetland is dominated by exotic wetland species that invade areas that have been previously disturbed or undergone periodic disturbances. These non-natives become established more readily following natural or human-induced habitat disturbance than the native wetland flora. Characteristic species of disturbed wetlands include giant reed (*Arundo donax*), cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium* var. *canadense*), umbrella sedge (*Cyperus involucratus*), wild celery (*Apium graveolens*), and tamarisk (*Tamarix* sp.).

Approximately 0.04 acre of disturbed wetland is mapped within the southeastern portion of the site. Dominant species include rabbitsfoot grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), senesced cattail, and gum tree (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) samplings.

Non-Native Riparian

Non-native riparian comprises densely vegetated riparian thickets dominated by non-native, invasive species. Characteristic species include: giant reed, tamarisk, eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.), palms (*Phoenix* spp. and *Washingtonia* spp.), Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), castor-bean (*Ricinus communis*), and pampas grass (*Cortaderia* spp.), along with natives such as arrowweed (*Pluchea sericea*), western cottonwood, and willows. It occurs along disturbed water courses.

A narrow, 0.21-acre stand of low quality, non-native riparian habitat occurs in the southeastern portion of the site adjacent to West Country Club Lane, between Nutmeg Street to the east and La Brea Street to the west. This habitat is dominated by gum tree, giant reed (*Arundo donax*), Pepper tree (*Schinus molle*), salt cedar (*Tamarix* sp.), and a few scattered, native willows (*Salix lasiolepis*). The understory is bare or characterized by dead or desiccated due to the golf course areas no longer being artificially irrigated.

Disturbed Land

Disturbed land includes areas in which there is a dominance of ruderal (weedy) and ornamental vegetation in areas that were previously developed or subject to regular maintenance; the vegetative cover comprises less than 10 percent of the surface area (disregarding natural rock outcrops); and/or there is evidence of soil surface disturbance and a predominance of non-native and/or weedy species that are indicators of such surface disturbance.

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Source of Vegetation: RECON 2014, Revised by HELIX 2016

Vegetation

THE VILLAGES

HELIX Environmental Planning

0 450 Feet

Figure 5

Approximately 100.7 acres of disturbed land is mapped over the old golf course grounds on the site. These areas show extensive sign of disturbance, large patches of non-native ruderal forbs (weeds), remnant golf course developments (e.g., cart paths, bunkers, etc.), and ornamental vegetation scattered throughout.

Man-Made Earthen Channel

Several man-made earthen channels occur throughout the site that formerly served as irrigation and storm water conveyance features for the golf course. Many of these features have uniform channel widths and depths, indicative of having been excavated. Many of these features are bare or overgrown with non-native grasses and forbs due to the golf course areas no longer being artificially irrigated and maintained. Approximately 0.1 acres of earthen channels have been delineated on the site.

Man-Made Concrete Channel

Several man-made concrete channels and swales also occur throughout the site. These channels also formerly served as irrigation and storm water conveyance features for the golf course. Many of the concrete channels appear to have been excavated in uplands to convey water to and from the artificial basins/ponds for the golf course, especially in areas where water wouldn't have naturally flowed or been conveyed over the landscape. Approximately 0.2 acres of concrete channels have been delineated on the site.

Man-Made Basin/Pond

Several man-made basins and ponds also occur on the site, which are either concrete- or earthen-lined. The total estimated surface area is 1.9 acres. Since the golf course operations have ceased, many of the ponds have completely dried out due to the golf course areas no longer being artificially irrigated. The earthen-lined ponds were mostly bare during HELIX's 2016 surveys.

3.6 FLORA

HELIX identified a total of 62 plant species in the project site, of which 40 (65 percent) are non-native species (Appendix A).

3.7 FAUNA

A total of 36 animal species were observed or otherwise detected in the project site during the biological surveys, including 34bird and two mammal species (Appendix B).

4.0 SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.1 SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES

Sensitive vegetation communities/habitat types are defined as land that supports unique vegetation communities or the habitats of rare or endangered species or subspecies of animals or plants as defined by Section 15380 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

The project site is characterized by disturbed and developed land associated with the old Escondido Country Club and golf course. Native and naturalized habitat is largely absent from the site, with the exception of the small stands of freshwater marsh, disturbed wetland, and non-native riparian in the southeastern portions of the site. As a whole, these areas are dominated by non-native plant species; however, scattered native species (e.g., broad-leaved cattail, arroyo willow) are present in limited numbers that contribute to the biological function of these areas. Therefore, these small pockets of freshwater marsh, disturbed wetland, and non-native riparian are considered sensitive natural communities.

4.2 SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES

Special status plant species have been afforded special status and/or recognition by the USFWS and CDFW, and may also be included in the CNPS' Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants. Their status is often based on one or more of three distributional attributes: geographic range, habitat specificity, and/or population size. A species that exhibits a small or restricted geographic range (such as those endemic to the region) is geographically rare. A species may be more or less abundant but occur only in very specific habitats. Lastly, a species may be widespread but exists naturally in small populations.

Special Status Plant Species Observed

No special status plant species were observed within the project site during HELIX's 2016 surveys. No records of previous observations exist from USFWS, CNDDB, CNPS, and SanBIOS species data.

Special Status Plant Species with Potential to Occur

None of the special status plant species known to the region have a high potential to occur within the project site due primarily to the lack of suitable conditions, habitat conversion and disturbances from previous golf course uses, and prevalence of non-native vegetation. The site does not support the vegetation associations, soils, or hydrology required by many of the special status plants known to the region. Special status plant species analyzed for their potential to occur on the site are identified in Appendix C.

Mature and Protected Trees

The City regulates the removal of mature and protected trees as defined under their General Plan and municipal code. HELIX's 2016 surveys confirmed the presence of both mature and protected trees within the site. Figure 6 depicts the native and non-native trees that are considered mature trees by the City. Of the mature trees, 18 coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) trees with diameter at breast height (DBH) greater than 10 inches, which are further considered protected trees by the City. No heritage trees or other protected trees occur. The complete results of the tree surveys are provided in Appendix G.

4.3 SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES

Special status animal species include those that have been afforded special status and/or recognition by the USFWS and CDFW. In general, the principal reason an individual taxon (species or subspecies) is given such recognition is the documented or perceived decline or limitations of its population size or geographical extent and/or distribution, resulting in most cases from habitat loss.

Special Status Animal Species Observed or Otherwise Detected

No special status animal species were observed within the project site during HELIX's 2016 surveys. No records of previous observations exist from USFWS, CNDDB, and SanBIOS species data.

Special Status Animal Species with Potential to Occur

None of the special status animal species known to the region have a high potential to occur within the project site due primarily to the lack of suitable habitat, isolation of the site from undeveloped habitat blocks in the region, and disturbances associated with the highly urbanized setting. The site does not support the constituent elements required by many of the special status animals known to the region for nesting/breeding, foraging, dispersal, and other life history requirements. Special status animal species analyzed for their potential to occur on the site are identified in Appendix D.

Several non-listed, sensitive Watch List bird species could potentially nest and/or forage over the site, although the potential is low. These species are relatively common to the region and include species such as Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*).

Raptor Foraging

Surveys for raptors, potential nests, and other sign (i.e., pellets, feathers, discarded prey items, perches) were conducted concurrent with the March 23 and November 11, 21 and 23, 2016 general biological and tree surveys at the site. In its current state, the project site provides marginal foraging opportunities for common raptors that are resident and migratory to the region, such as red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), and great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*). The ornamental trees provide suitable perching habitat and the

remnant golf course fairways provide open habitat for hunting. There is likely the presence of prey items for certain raptor species, although no evidence was observed during the 2016 surveys. Taller, weedy species cover a good portion of the ground and would likely make foraging more difficult. As such, the project site provides some function and value for raptor foraging, although the function and value is relatively low considering the urban setting of the site and surrounding area. As the site has been an active golf course for decades, it has likely not functioned as a local or regional foraging resource of importance for raptors. Other more expansive areas occur in the local area and region that provide better quality foraging habitat, such as Daley Ranch, which is a 3,058-acre conservation area located in the City approximately 2.5 miles east of the site.

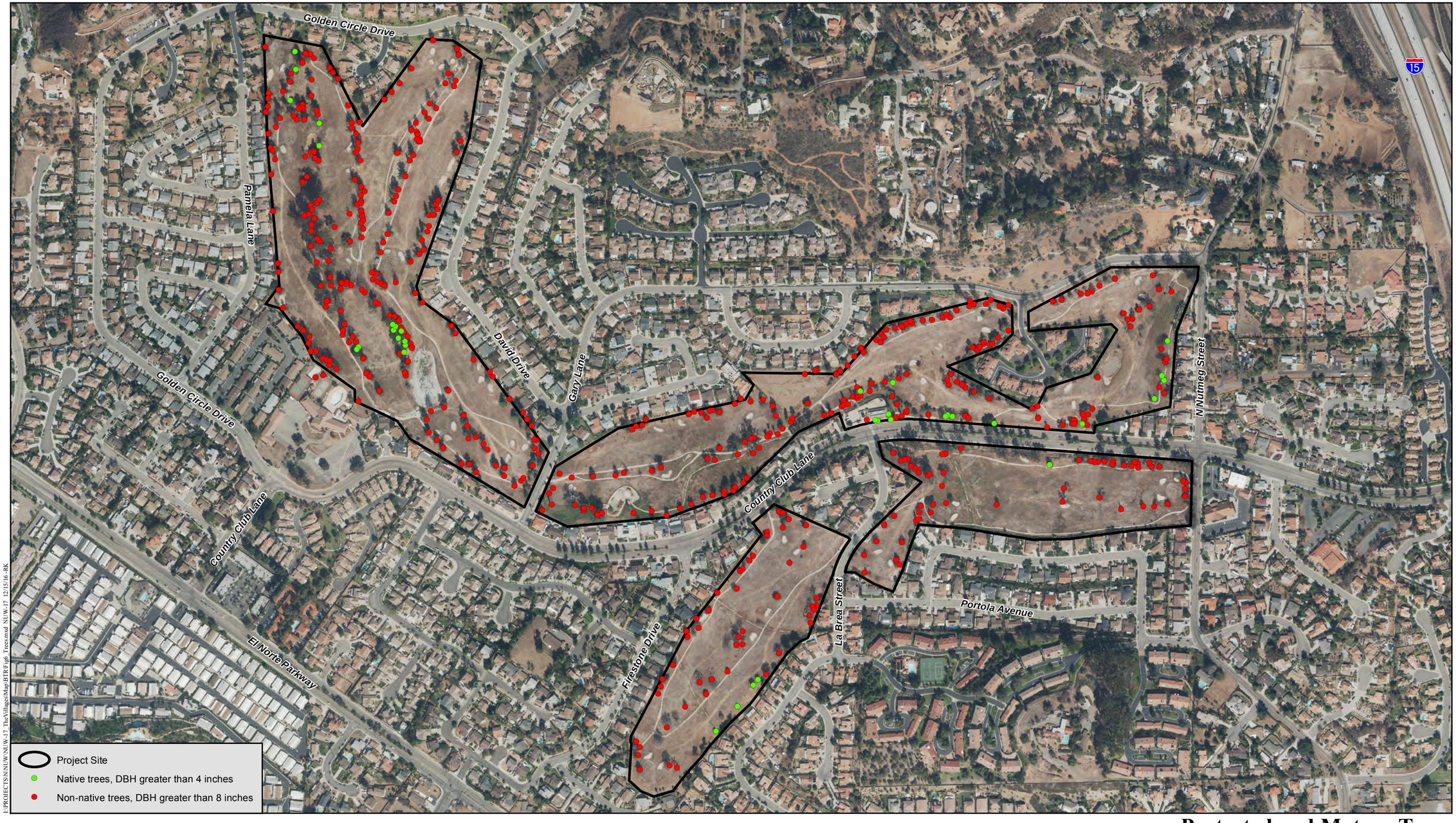
4.4 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS AND WETLANDS

Several man-made drainage features and basins occur throughout portions of the project site that were previously created for conveyance of stormwater and irrigation run-on/-off, as well as aesthetic water features for the golf course. Water that flows through the network of these man-made features is largely controlled with small dikes, dams, pipes, and holding basins, all of which either terminate within uplands on the site or discharge into the existing storm drain or municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) for the site and surrounding developments.

Based on information gathered thus far, the features on the site are geographically isolated with no downstream connectivity to a navigable waterway due to their termination within uplands on site or the existing MS4. The features have been created wholly within uplands, as evidenced by historical imagery and other maps. As such, the features are geographically isolated and would not qualify as waters of the U.S. as regulated by the USACE pursuant to CWA Section 404. As detailed below, the isolated features would, however, qualify as waters of the State subject to RWQCB jurisdiction and streambed and riparian habitat subject to CDFW jurisdiction.

Waters of the State

Potential RWQCB-jurisdiction within the project site includes 0.08 acre of wetland waters of the State (550 linear feet) and 2.48 acres (7,615 linear feet) of non-wetland waters of the State, as summarized below in Table 3 and depicted on Figure 7. The waters are all isolated and regulated by the RWQCB pursuant to Porter-Cologne.



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Protected and Mature Trees

THE VILLAGES

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Figure 6

Table 3 Waters of the State		
Jurisdictional Resource	**Area** (acres)	**Length** (feet)
Wetland Waters of the State	0.08	550
Non-Wetland Waters of the State	2.48	7,615
TOTAL	**2.56**	**8,165**

*Acres rounded to the nearest 0.01 acre and feet rounded to the nearest foot.

Streambed and Riparian Habitat

Potential CDFW-jurisdiction within the project site includes 0.29 acres (1,704 linear feet) of riparian-vegetated streambed and 2.27 acres (6,461 linear feet) of unvegetated streambed, as summarized below in Table 4 and depicted on Figure 8.

Table 4 Streambed and Riparian Habitat		
Jurisdictional Resource	**Area** (acres)	**Length** (feet)
Riparian-Vegetated Streambed		
Freshwater Marsh	0.04	382
Disturbed Wetland	0.04	168
Non-Native Riparian	0.21	1,154
Subtotal	*0.29*	*1,704*
Unvegetated Streambed		
Man-Made Earthen Channel	0.11	2,399
Man-Made Concrete Channel	0.24	2,976
Man-Made Basin/Pond	1.92	1,086
Subtotal	*2.27*	*6,461*
TOTAL	**2.56**	**8,165**

*Acres rounded to the nearest 0.01 acre and feet rounded to the nearest foot.

4.5 HABITAT CONNECTIVITY AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

Wildlife corridors connect otherwise isolated pieces of habitat and allow movement or dispersal of plants and animals. Local wildlife corridors allow access to resources such as food, water, and shelter within the framework of their daily routine. Regional corridors provide these functions over a larger scale and link two or more large habitat areas, allowing the dispersal of organisms and the consequent mixing of genes between populations. A corridor is a specific route that is

used for the movement and migration of species, and may be different from a linkage in that it represents a smaller or narrower avenue for movement. A linkage is an area of land that supports or contributes to the long-term movement of animals and genetic exchange by providing live-in habitat that connects to other habitat areas. Many linkages occur as stepping-stone linkages that are comprised of a fragmented archipelago arrangement of habitat over a linear distance. Important corridors and linkages have been identified on a local and regional scale throughout the MHCP (AMEC Earth & Environmental, *et al*. 2003) and the County MSCP (County 1998). The planning objectives of most corridors and linkages in western San Diego County include establishing a connection between the northern and southern regional populations of the coastal California gnatcatcher, in addition to facilitating movement and connectivity of habitat for large mammals and riparian bird species.

No known wildlife corridors or linkage areas are mapped as occurring on or in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The site is surrounded by existing development, and as such, does not by itself function as a wildlife corridor or linkage. The nearest undeveloped block of habitat occurs approximately 500 feet to the northwest of the site. This area is separated from the project site by existing roadways and residential homes. The site is further characterized by open, exposed areas that lack suitable cover and resources that are typically associated with wildlife movement areas. Common birds and mammals might move through the site to forage and during dispersal activities; however, they would not be expected to use the site as a wildlife corridor, linkage, or specific travel route to and from nursery sites other important resources.

5.0 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

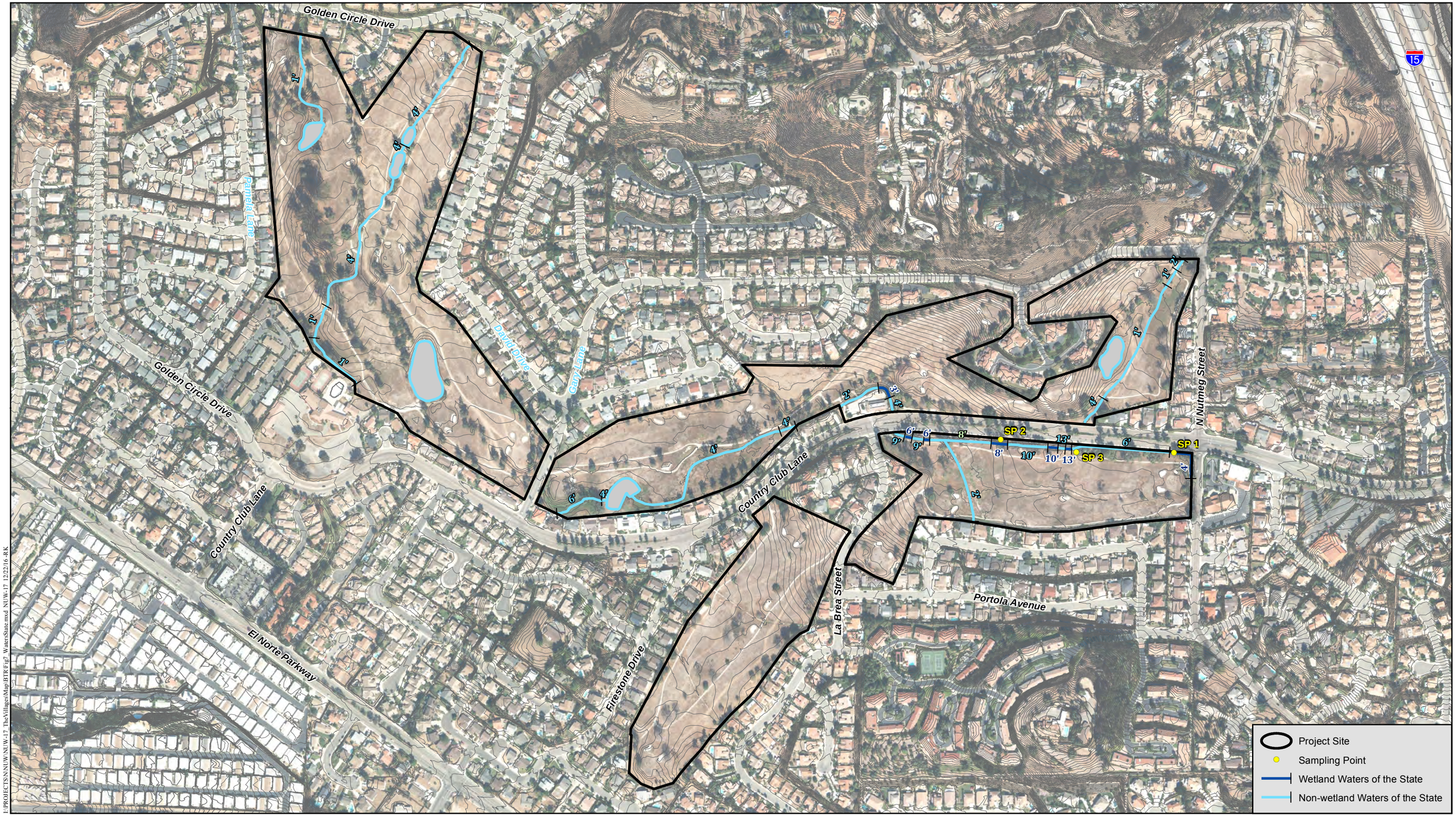
Biological resources in the project site are subject to regulatory review by federal, State, and local agencies. Under CEQA, impacts associated with a proposed project or program are assessed with regard to significance criteria determined by the CEQA Lead Agency (in this case, the City) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines. Biological resources-related laws and regulations that apply to the project include the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), CEQA, CFG Code, Porter-Cologne, and City Municipal Code.

USFWS will be responsible for reviewing issues related to migratory birds pursuant to the MBTA. RWQCB will be responsible for reviewing issues related to waters of the State pursuant to Porter-Cologne. CDFW will be responsible for reviewing issues related to nesting birds, raptors, and jurisdictional streambed and riparian habitat pursuant CFG Code. The City is the lead agency for the CEQA environmental review process and issues pertaining to mature and protected trees under their Municipal Code.

5.1 FEDERAL

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

All migratory bird species that are native to the U.S. or its territories are protected under the federal MBTA, as amended under the Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2004 (FR Doc. 05-5127). The MBTA is generally protective of migratory birds but does not actually stipulate



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Source of Vegetation: RECON 2014, Revised by HELIX 2016

Potential Waters of the State

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Figure 7