BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED BANANA AVENUE WAREHOUSE
FONTANA, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

PREPARED FOR:

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INTRODUCTION

The Banana Avenue Industrial Warehouse Project proposes the construction of a 133,813-square-foot warehouse building on a 6.2-acre site. The project is proposing 126,313 square feet of warehouse space and 7,500 square feet of supporting office space. The warehouse building will have eighteen (18) truck docking bays and five (5) truck loading spaces. The plan proposes ninety-two (92) automobile parking spaces. The site currently has asphalt parking that is striped for 136 trucks. The site is approximately 8 miles southwest of Lytle Creek Wash and one mile west of the San Sevaine Channel on a broad alluvial plain south of the San Gabriel Mountains. It is bounded by industrial uses on the north, east, and south and by a residential truck district to the west. The project site is flat, ranging in elevation from 972 feet down to 967 feet above sea level. There are no drainages, canyons, or hillside slopes on the site. There are no trees and very little vegetation on the project site. Sandy to sandy-loam soil dominates the site.

The project site is located in southern Fontana, within the Southwest Industrial Park (SWIP) Specific Plan, Slover West Manufacturing District. All but the southern and eastern portion of the site have been covered with an asphalt parking lot for trucks.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

An assessment of the biological resources of the project site was conducted by John R. Bitterly with the guidance of Dr. Jones on 3 June 2019. The results of this field reconnaissance are presented below and in the floral and faunal species lists provided in the Appendix.

VEGETATION

The project site supports very little vegetation and only one vegetation type along small portions of the southern and eastern edge of the project site. The vegetation is limited to the mixed ruderal/fallow field plant association, a community of annuals and short-lived perennials, mostly non-native, which grows in response to frequent soil disturbance. Plant diversity was low on the site, consisting almost entirely of dried plant remains from the growing season earlier in the year. No species was found to be dominant, but the dried remains of filaree (*Erodium* spp.) and of non-native grasses of a few species dominated, in limited areas of the unpaved portion of the site. In all, 12 species of plants were identified onsite, 9 non-native. All existing vegetation had recently been trimmed to less than two inches high per Fire Department requirements to remove annual grasses.

TERRESTRIAL VERTEBRATES

Animals and animal sign found on the site were few, all typically found in association with disturbed sites. Four species of birds were observed on or immediately adjacent to the site. These are all typical of open urban and suburban areas in southern California. No amphibians, reptiles, or mammals were detected.

SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Special Status Designations

A **federally endangered species** is a species of invertebrate, plant, or wildlife formally listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) as facing extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its geographic range. A **federally threatened species** is one formally listed by the USFWS as likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. "Take" of a federally endangered or threatened species or its habitat is prohibited by federal law without a special permit. The term "take", under ESA, means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in such conduct. Harm is defined by the USFWS to encompass "an act which actually kills or injures wildlife. Such an act may include significant habitat modification or degradation where it actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering" (50 CFR § 17.3).

A **proposed threatened or endangered species** is one officially proposed by the USFWS for addition to the federal threatened or endangered species lists.

The State of California considers an **endangered species** one whose prospects of survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy; a **threatened species** is one present in such small numbers throughout its range that it is considered likely to become an endangered species in the near future in the absence of special protection or management; and a **rare species** is one present in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become endangered if its present environment worsens. The designation "rare species" applies only to California native plants. State threatened and endangered species include both plants and wildlife -- but do not include invertebrates -- and are legally protected against "take", as this term is defined in the California Endangered Species Act (California Fish & Game Code Section 2050 *et seq.*).

Species of special concern is an informal designation used by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for some declining wildlife species that are not officially listed as endangered, threatened, or rare. This designation does not provide legal protection but signifies that these species are recognized as vulnerable by CDFW.

Species that are **California fully protected** include those protected by special legislation for various reasons, such as the mountain lion (*Felis concolor*) and white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*).

The **California Native Plant Society** (CNPS) is a statewide resource conservation organization that has developed an inventory of California's special status plant species (visit http://www.cnps.org/cnps/rarplants/inventory/ for the latest CNPS list and rankings). This inventory is a summary of information on the distribution, rarity, and endangerment of California's vascular plants. This rare plant inventory consists of four lists. CNPS presumes that **List 1A** plant species are extinct in California because they have not been seen in the wild for many years. CNPS considers **List 1B** plants as rare, threatened, or endangered throughout their more common in other states. Plant species on lists 1A, 1B, and 2 meet CDFW criteria for range. **List 2** plant species are considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but endangered, threatened, or rare listing. Plant species for which CNPS requires additional

information in order to properly evaluate their status are included on **List 3**. **List 4** plant species are those of limited distribution in California whose susceptibility to threat is considered low at the time of listing.

Special Status Resources Potentially Occurring on the Project Site

Plant Communities

The ruderal plant association is comprised of highly opportunistic plants, typically annuals, mostly non-native, and often invasive. No special status has been designated for this plant association or any plant species typically found within it.

Plants

No special-status plant species were found on the site, nor are any likely to occur.

Animals

No special-status animal species were found on the site.

One special-status species with low potential to occur transitorily on the site, but not as a resident, is the **western burrowing owl** (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*). Because this species has declined steadily in California in recent decades and is considered by the CDFW to be a Species of Special Concern, Priority 1 (CDFW and PRBO 2003). Burrowing owls roost, shelter, and nest in burrows, in this region chiefly the modified burrows of California ground squirrels. However, no California ground squirrel burrows were found on the site, and none were observed in the area.

Small, nocturnal rodents are a chief prey item of burrowing owls; however, the site's loose, sandy-loam soil, which is not suitable for burrowing rodents other than the subterranean Botta's pocket gopher. For these reasons, the burrowing owl is highly unlikely to forage or reside onsite.

One other special-status species with low potential to occur transitorily on the site, the **Delhi Sands flower-loving fly** (*Raphiomidas terminalis abdominalis*). This insect is a federally listed endangered species. It is limited to areas with Delhi soils and native vegetation. Sandy to sandy-loam soil dominates the site, and there is no significant native vegetation on the project site. For these reasons, the Delhi Sands flower-loving fly (DSFLF) is highly unlikely to reside onsite.

The only two bird species observed on or near the site were the American Crow *(Corvus brachyrhynchos)* and the Morning Dove *(Zenaida macroura)*, neither of which is a species of special concern. The two most common **diurnal raptors** in the vicinity, and therefore the most likely to occur in the vicinity are red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), neither of which is a species of special concern. Given the lack of any native habitat, including no trees or shrubs, no special-status animal species were found, or are expected to occur on the site.

Given no native habitat on the site, there is no support for threatened or endangered or special status species found in the vicinity of the site, where little or no native vegetation is found.

Wildlife Corridors

The site is located approximately 8 miles south of the Angeles National Forest, the closest area that could contain viable wildlife corridors. The Jurupa Hills are located approximately one mile

south of the project site. However, these hills are isolated by surrounding urban development and do not support wildlife corridors. No migrating birds were observed or are expected to occupy or visit the site due to its present level of disturbance.

Wetland Resources

No wetlands or drainages are found on or near the site.

SITE DEVELOPMENT

Implementation of the proposed project will involve limited vegetation clearing and grading associated with the proposed construction of a tilt-up industrial building and associated infrastructure and landscaping. The development footprint and associated access and landscaping will cover the entire 6.2-acre site.

BIOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (as amended through 2009) is used by public agencies in determining whether a project may have a significant impact on biological resources. Under Appendix G, a project may have a significant impact on biological resources if it would:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modification, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the CDFW or USFWS.

2. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in the City or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the CDFW or USFWS.

3. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

4. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

5. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance (*e.g.*, oak trees or California walnut woodlands).

6. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

In addition, Section 15065(a) of the CEQA Guidelines establishes that a significant impact may occur if "[t]he project has the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish and wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, [or] reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species."

For purposes of this assessment, the project was evaluated on the basis of the above criteria in determining whether or not it will cause a significant impact. An evaluation of whether an impact on biological resources would be significant must consider the resource and how that resource fits into a regional or ecological context.

The definition of "significant" depends on the resource in question. Significant impacts are those that would diminish or result in the loss of an important biological resource, or those that would obviously conflict with local, state, or federal resource conservation plans, goals, or regulations. Impacts are sometimes locally important but not significant because, although they would result in an adverse alteration of existing local conditions, they would not substantially diminish, or result in the permanent loss of, an important resource on a population-wide or region-wide basis.

IMPACTS ON VASCULAR PLANTS, PLANT COMMUNITIES, TERRESTRIAL VERTEBRATES AND THEIR HABITAT

Based on the results of the site reconnaissance, it was determined that the proposed development of the site would not have any significant adverse impacts on biological resources currently present or anticipated to occur with any regularity.

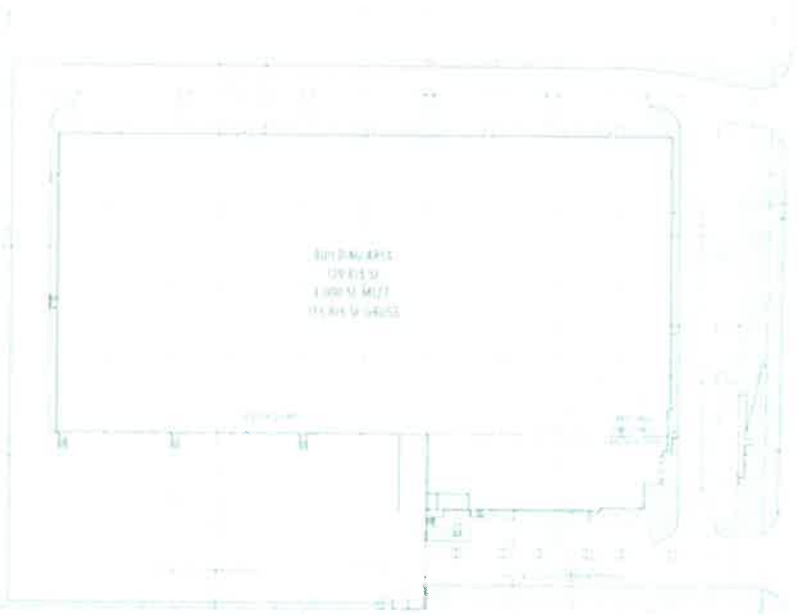
MITIGATION MEASURES

As no significant adverse impacts on biological resources are foreseen, no mitigation measures are necessary.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1
Project Aerial Photo

Exhibit 2
Project Site Plan



RGA LBIA REALTY

BANANA AVENUE INDUSTRIAL

10740 BANANA AVE. FONTANA CA 92337

SCHEMATIC DESIGN - SITE PLAN

PROJECT SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

View Looking West along Projects Southern Property Line

View Looking West along Projects Northern Property Line

PROJECT SITE PHOTOGRAPHS (Continued)

View Looking North along Projects Eastern Property Line

APPENDIX
FLORAL AND FAUNAL COMPENDIUM

INTRODUCTION TO FLORAL AND FAUNAL SURVEY[1]

Floral and faunal components listed in this compendium are those recorded on the site during the June 2019 survey. A few additional species are likely to be present at other seasons, or in the case of birds, as occasional visitors or migrants.

Floral taxonomy used in this report follows Baldwin et al. (2012). Vertebrates identified in the field by sight, calls, tracks, scat, or other signs are cited according to the nomenclature of the American Ornithologists' Union (1998) and supplements (2000 through 2015) for birds, and Wilson and Ruff (1999) for mammals.

LEGEND

ABUNDANCE (PLANTS ONLY)[2]

Common: a dominant species in the noted community; occurs in relatively high numbers (percent cover on the site is generally between 5 and 50%). Score: 31–40.

Frequent: occurs in moderate numbers, but not a dominant element of the noted community (percent cover on the site is generally between 1 and 5 %). Score: 21–30.

Infrequent: occurs sporadically in the noted community; generally not an obvious or conspicuous component (percent cover on the site is generally less than 1%). Score 11–20.

Occasional: occurs rarely, or only in a small portion of the noted community; often not apparent unless searched for (generally, only 1-5 individuals found). Score: 1–10.

* denotes non-native species

REFERENCES[1]

American Ornithologists' Union. 1998. *The A. O. U. Check-list of North American Birds*, 7th ed. Allen Press. Lawrence, KA.

American Ornithologists' Union. 2000–2018. *Forty-second through fifty-ninth supplements to the A. O. U. Check-list of North American Birds*, 7th ed. Allen Press. Lawrence, KA.

Baldwin, B. G., Goldman, D. H., Keil, D. J., Patterson, R., Rosatti, T. J., and Wilken, D. H. 2012. *The Jepson Manual: Vascular Plants of California, second edition*. University of California Press.

Wilson, D. E., and Ruff, S. 1999. *The Smithsonian Book of North American Mammals*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC.

1 This is not intended as an exhaustive listing of the vascular plants and terrestrial vertebrates occurring on the site; some annual herbs, transients, seasonal visitors, and uncommon species may not have been detected by the field survey.

2 This is an indication (for plants only) of relative frequency of occurrence on the site based on visual sampling at ten locations. At each location a plant's relative abundance was indicated with a number ranging from 1 (infrequent) to 5 (abundant). The numbers were then totaled for the ten samples to derive the abundance score.

VASCULAR PLANTS

	Abundance
EUDICOTS	
ASTERACEAE — SUNFLOWER FAMILY	
Ambrosia acanthicarpa – annual bur-sage	frequent
Erigeron canadensis – horseweed occasional	
BORAGINACEAE — BORAGE FAMILY	
Amsinckia menziesii – rancher's fireweed	infrequent
BRASSICACEAE — MUSTARD FAMILY	
* *Brassica tournefortii* – Sahara mustard	infrequent
* *Sisymbrium irio* – London rocket	frequent
GERANIACEAE — GERANIUM FAMILY	
* Erodium spp. – filaree	frequent
MONOCOTS	
POACEAE — GRASS FAMILY	
* *Avena barbata* – slender wild oat	occasional
* *Bromus diandrus* – ripgut grass	
* *Bromus madritensis* subsp. *Rubens* – foxtail chess	
* *Festuca myuros* – rattail fescue	
* *Hordeum* sp. – barley	
* *Schismus barbatus* – Mediterranean grass	occasional

TERRESTRIAL VERTEBRATES

BIRDS

COLUMBIDAE - PIGEONS AND DOVES	
Zenaida macroura - mourning dove	resident near site
CORVIDAE - CROWS AND JAYS	
Corvus brachyrhynchos - American crow	resident near site
STURNIDAE — STARLINGS	
* *Sturnus vulgaris* – European starling	resident near site
FRINGILLIDAE — FINCHES	
Carpodacus mexicanus – house finch	resident near site

REFERENCES

California Burrowing Owl Consortium. 1993. *Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines*. Unpublished.

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). 2012. *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation*. State of California Natural Resources Agency, Department of Fish and Game. March 7, 2012.

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO). 2003. California Bird Species of Special Concern: Draft List and Solicitation of Input. (http://www.prbo.org/BSSC/draftBSSClist.pdf).

CNPS Inventory of Rare Plants: https://www.cnps.org/rare-plants/cnps-inventory-of-rare-plants.
Holland, R. F. 1986. *Preliminary Description of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California*. California Department of Fish and Game.