

August 26, 2015

Ms. Karen Ruggles
KLR Planning
P.O. Box
San Diego, CA 92168

Subject: College Avenue Apartments Site Biology Update

Dear Ms. Ruggles:

This letter report describes the results of a visit conducted at the College Avenue Apartments project to update previous biological mapping for the site. The approximately 1.5 acre site located at 5030 College Avenue in the City of San Diego (Figures 1 & 2).

METHODS

The site previously was mapped by EDAW in 2002. A Biological Survey Letter report (EDAW 2003) was prepared for the project and submitted to the City. Prior to the current site visit, available maps, air photos, and existing conditions material for the site were reviewed along with the EDAW letter.

Following review of the previous mapping, Alden Environmental (Alden) Senior Biologist, Greg Mason, performed a field survey of the project area on August 21, 2015. The entire site was walked and plant and animal species observed were recorded. Plant species names followed the Jepson Manual (Baldwin 2012). Vegetation communities were mapped according to Holland's Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California (Holland 1986) as updated (Oberbauer 2008).

RESULTS

Environmental Setting

The site is vacant and surrounded on all sides by developed land. The parcel is located within the City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan but is not within or adjacent to the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA). The site is in a developed area and shows signs of regular disturbance, including trash dumping from the adjacent apartments on the northern boundary.

Vegetation Communities

Four vegetation communities were mapped within the project boundaries: Diegan coastal sage scrub, non-native grassland, non-native woodland, and disturbed habitat (Figure 3; Table 1). Of these, only the Diegan coastal sage scrub and non-native grassland are considered sensitive, per the City's Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) ordinance.

Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub-Disturbed

Disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub occurs on site (Figure 3). Dominant species within this habitat on site include lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*), and California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*). The habitat is sparse, fragmented, and heavily disturbed. Approximately 0.09 acre of disturbed coastal sage scrub occurs on site. The 2003 report mapped 0.10 acre of this habitat on site. The area and extent of this habitat is similar to that previously mapped in 2003. Differences appear due to better aerial photograph rectification, site disturbances, and normal habitat variability over time.

Table 1 VEGETATION COMMUNITIES ON SITE			
Vegetation Community	Previous	Current	Difference
Diegan coastal sage scrub	0.10	0.09	-0.01
Non-native grassland	1.24	1.04	-0.20
Non-native woodland	0.20	0.18	-0.02
Disturbed habitat ¹	0.02	0.20	+0.18
TOTAL	1.56²	1.51²	-0.05

¹Includes areas previously mapped as ruderal.

²The acreage for the previous project was based on acreage from the Assessor's Parcel Map. The current project acreage is based on an actual boundary survey of the project site and represents the accurate site area.

Non-Native Grassland

Non-native grassland occurs as a dense to sparse cover of non-native grasses, sometimes associated with species of showy-flowered, native, annual forbs. This community characteristically occurs on gradual slopes with deep, fine-textured, usually clay soils. This habitat on site is dominated by Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*). Non-native grassland is considered sensitive by the City. A total of 1.04 acre of this habitat was mapped on site (Table 1). This is 0.20 acre less than that previously mapped on the site. The difference appears to be due to disturbance on site.

Non-Native Woodland

Non-native woodland on site is comprised of several planted tree species including eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), pine trees (*Pinus* sp.), pepper trees (*Schinus molle*), and myoporum (*Myoporum laetum*). The mapped area of this community on site is 0.18 acre, 0.02 acre less than previously mapped, with the distribution somewhat changed. The change in location is due to removal of trees along the southern boundary and the remaining trees growth since the previous mapping. Non-native woodland is not considered sensitive by the City.

Disturbed Habitat

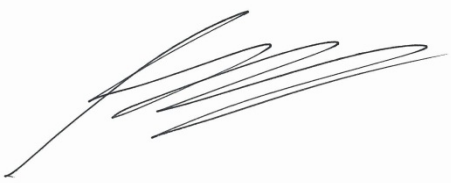
Disturbed habitat includes land cleared of vegetation, land containing a preponderance of non-native plant species, or land showing signs of past or present usage that reduces its capability of providing viable wildlife habitat. Approximately 0.20 acre of disturbed habitat occurs on site. This is 0.18 acre larger than previously mapped. The change is the result of the trees being removed along the slope at the southern site boundary. This slope now supports disturbed habitat. Disturbed habitat is not considered sensitive by the City.

Conclusion

While there are some slight changes on the site (Table 1), there is no increase in the area of vegetation communities considered sensitive by the City. As such, no additional impact analyses or mitigation requirements are anticipated to be necessary for the project.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Mason", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Greg Mason
Senior Biologist

Enclosures: Figure 1 Regional Location
Figure 2 Project Location
Figure 3 Biological Resources

References:

- Baldwin, B. G., et al. 2012. The Jepson Manual: Vascular Plants of California, Second Edition. University of California Press, Berkeley.
- Holland, R.F. 1986. Preliminary descriptions of the terrestrial natural communities of California. State of California, The Resources Agency. 156 pp.
- Oberbauer, T. 2008. Terrestrial vegetation communities in San Diego County based on Holland's Descriptions. San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, California. 6 pp.
- EDAW. 2003. Biological Survey Letter Report for San Diego State University Sorority Row Housing Project, L.D.R. 6036

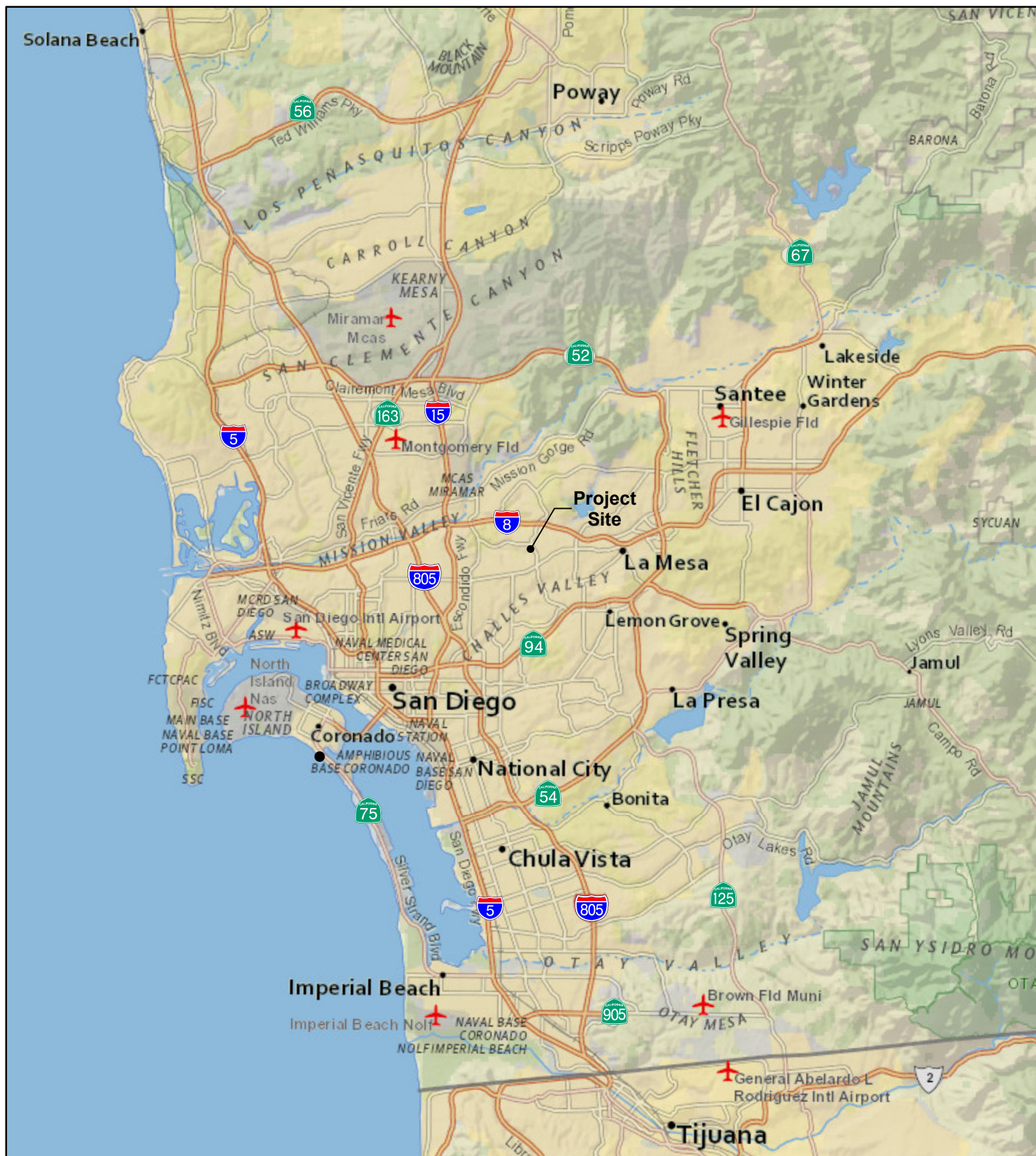
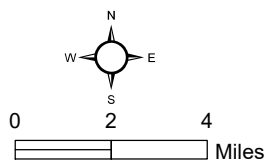


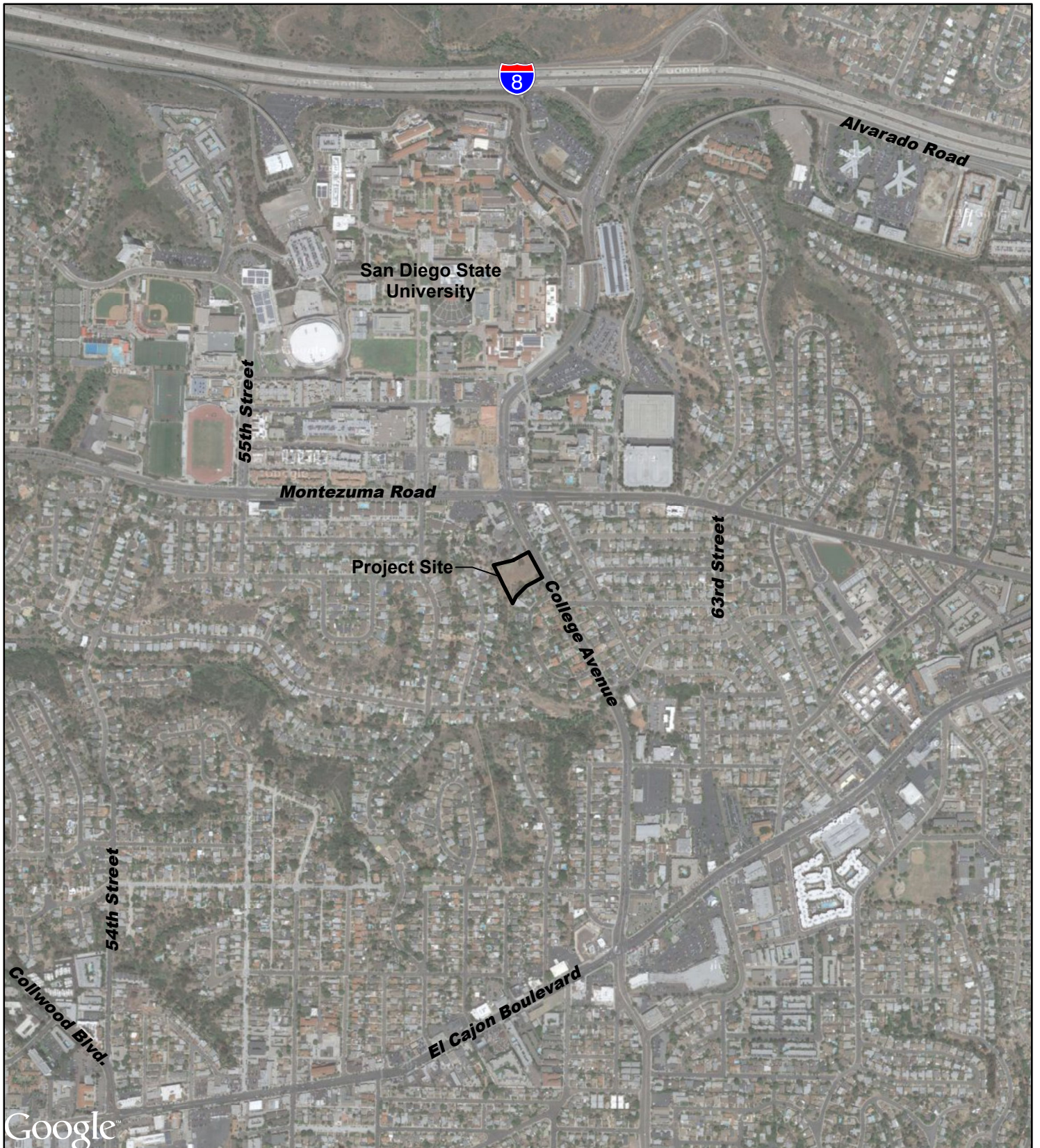
Figure 1

Regional Location

COLLEGE AVENUE APARTMENTS



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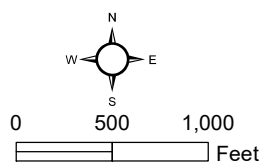


Figure 2

Project Location

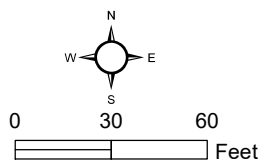
COLLEGE AVENUE APARTMENTS



Figure 3

Biological Resources

COLLEGE AVENUE APARTMENTS



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