



SYCAMORE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS, INC.

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19 February 2020

Troy Estacio, SVP Acquisitions & Development Services
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Sacramento, CA 95814

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Subject: February 2020 Burrowing Owl Survey Update for the Aggie Research Campus Project, Yolo County, CA

Dear Mr. Estacio,

This letter transmits the initial results surveys for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) conducted in accordance with the CDFW 2012 *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* guidelines (CDFW Guidelines), for the Aggie Research Campus (ARC) Project located just east of the City of Davis in Yolo County, CA. Two CDFW Guideline surveys have been conducted since January 2020. Seven additional CDFW Guideline surveys are planned through the 2020 burrowing owl breeding season, which extends from 1 February through 31 August. A final report documenting the results of the full set of breeding season surveys for burrowing owl will follow the final survey, anticipated in June/July 2020.

Please note that a survey targeting burrowing owl also occurred in August 2019. The results of the August 2019 survey are included in Table 2, below.

METHODS

Surveys are being conducted in accordance with the CDFW Guidelines. Table 1 summarizes the area surveyed, biological staff conducting the surveys, and the date and hours of the surveys.

Table 1. Summary of CDFW Guideline Burrowing Owl Surveys Conducted January 2020 to Present

DATE	SURVEY TIMING	AREA SURVEYED	BIOLOGISTS ¹	HOURS
24 Jan 2020	Non-breeding	Project Site, Stormwater Capacity Area, & 500-foot buffer	Mike Bower, M.S. Juan Mejia, B.S. Elliot Maldonado, B.S.	6:30 AM - 4:00 PM
6 Feb 2020	Breeding	Project Site, Stormwater Capacity Area, & 500-foot buffer	Juan Mejia, B.S. Elliot Maldonado, B.S. Monica Coll, B.S.	6:45 AM – 3:30 PM

¹ Mike Bower, Juan Mejia, and Elliot Maldonado are Certified Yolo HCP/NCCP Qualified Biologists for burrowing owl.

The Burrowing Owl Survey Area is shown on the map in Attachment A. The Survey Area includes 1) the Project site, 2) annexation areas south of the Project site, 3) the northern and eastern sewer line alternatives, 4) the parcels considered for stormwater capacity work approximately 2 miles east of the Project site, and 5) suitable habitat within 500 feet of the aforementioned areas. The survey was

performed by biologists with experience surveying for burrowing owl. The biologists walked transects through suitable habitat while searching for burrowing owl and potentially suitable burrows, as defined in the CDFW Guidelines. Binoculars were used to increase visual coverage and detection distances. The locations of reported burrowing owl sightings noted on eBird.org were closely inspected during surveys to verify whether the sightings corresponded with occupied burrows.

The CDFW Guidelines consider burrow sites to be *occupied* if a burrowing owl has been observed occupying a burrow, or burrowing owl sign has been observed at a burrow, within the last three years.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Table 2 is a summary of all burrowing owl survey results from August 2019 to present.

Table 2. Summary of Burrowing Owl Occupancy

SITE	LOCATION DESCRIPTION	OWLS/SIGN OBSERVED			OWLS LAST OBSERVED
		7 AUG 2019 ¹	24 JAN 2020	6 FEB 2020	
A	Approximately 530 ft north of the Project Site, along north side of County Rd 30B	2 owls	2 owls	2 owls	6 February 2020
B	Northwestern edge of Project Site, along east side of County Rd 104	1 owl		1 owl	6 February 2020
C	Western edge of the Project Site, along east side of Mace Blvd, north and south of intersection with County Rd 104			1 owl	6 February 2020
D	Approximately 400 ft west of the Project Site, in vacant lot north of 2nd St	1 owl			7 August 2019
E	Approximately 100 ft west of the Project Site, along west side of Mace Blvd, south of 2 nd St; includes artificial burrows	3 owls		1 owl	6 February 2020
F	Approximately 360 ft east of Mace Blvd, along south side of County Rd 32A, and in the vacant field east of Ikeda's Market		Sign ²	Sign ²	No owls observed

¹ The survey on 7 August 2019 was conducted by biologists Mike Bower, M.S., and Juan Mejia, B.S. The survey covered the ARC Project site and areas within 500 feet. The August 2019 survey targeted burrowing owl, but is not considered part of the full set of CDFW guideline surveys currently underway in 2020.

² Sign consisted of several white wash markings and small mammal bones (potential prey remains) near several burrow entrances.

Attachment A contains a map showing the locations of occupied and unoccupied burrow complexes documented thus far. A total of six occupied burrow complexes occur within approximately 500 feet of the Project (Sites A through F). Hundreds of currently unoccupied burrows occur in the Burrowing Owl Survey Area, mostly within the 500-foot survey buffer as shown on Attachment A. Three occupied burrow complexes (Sites A, B, and E) are known or suspected to include breeding within the last three years based on survey data, and observations recorded on eBird.org. The remaining three occupied burrow complexes (Sites C, D, and F) are likely refuge or wintering burrows; no evidence of breeding has been observed at these burrows.

The January 2016 Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center (MRIC) Project identified occupied burrowing owl complexes at Site A (CNDDDB Occurrences #994), Site C (CNDDDB Occurrence #614), and Site E (CNDDDB Occurrence #695) (FEIR Chapter 4, pages 15-16). No owls or their sign had been observed at Sites B, D, and F in 2015.

These results are preliminary. An additional seven burrowing owl surveys conducted in accordance with the CDFW Guidelines are planned during the 2020 breeding season.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Bower', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

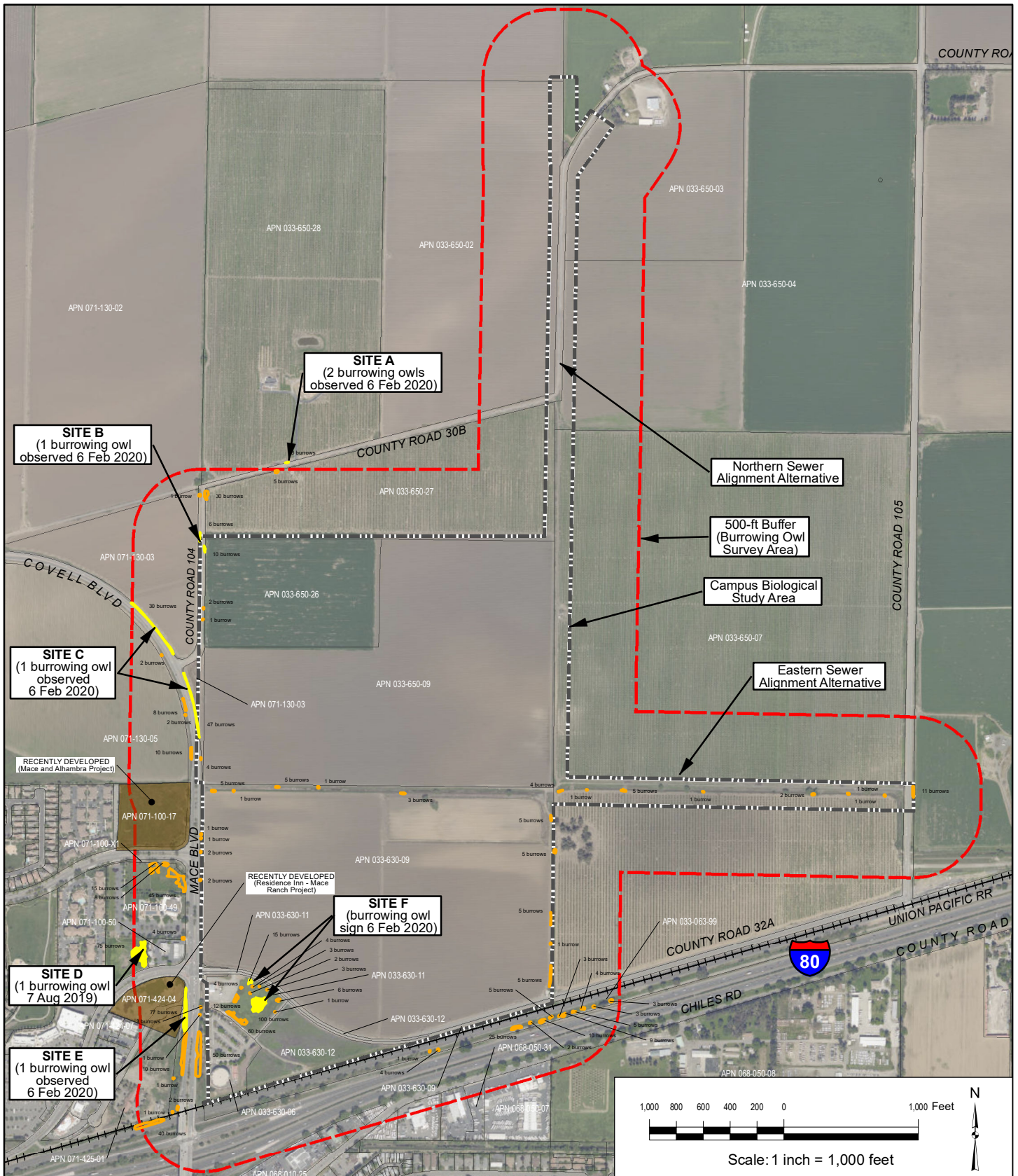
Mike Bower, M.S.
Botanist/Biologist

Attachment A. Preliminary Burrowing Owl Survey Results Map

Attachment A.







Preliminary Burrowing Owl Survey Results Map

February 2020



Aggie Research Campus
 Yolo County, CA
 17 February 2020

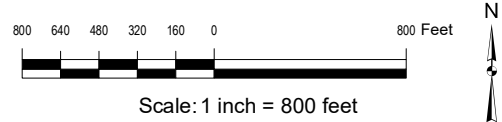
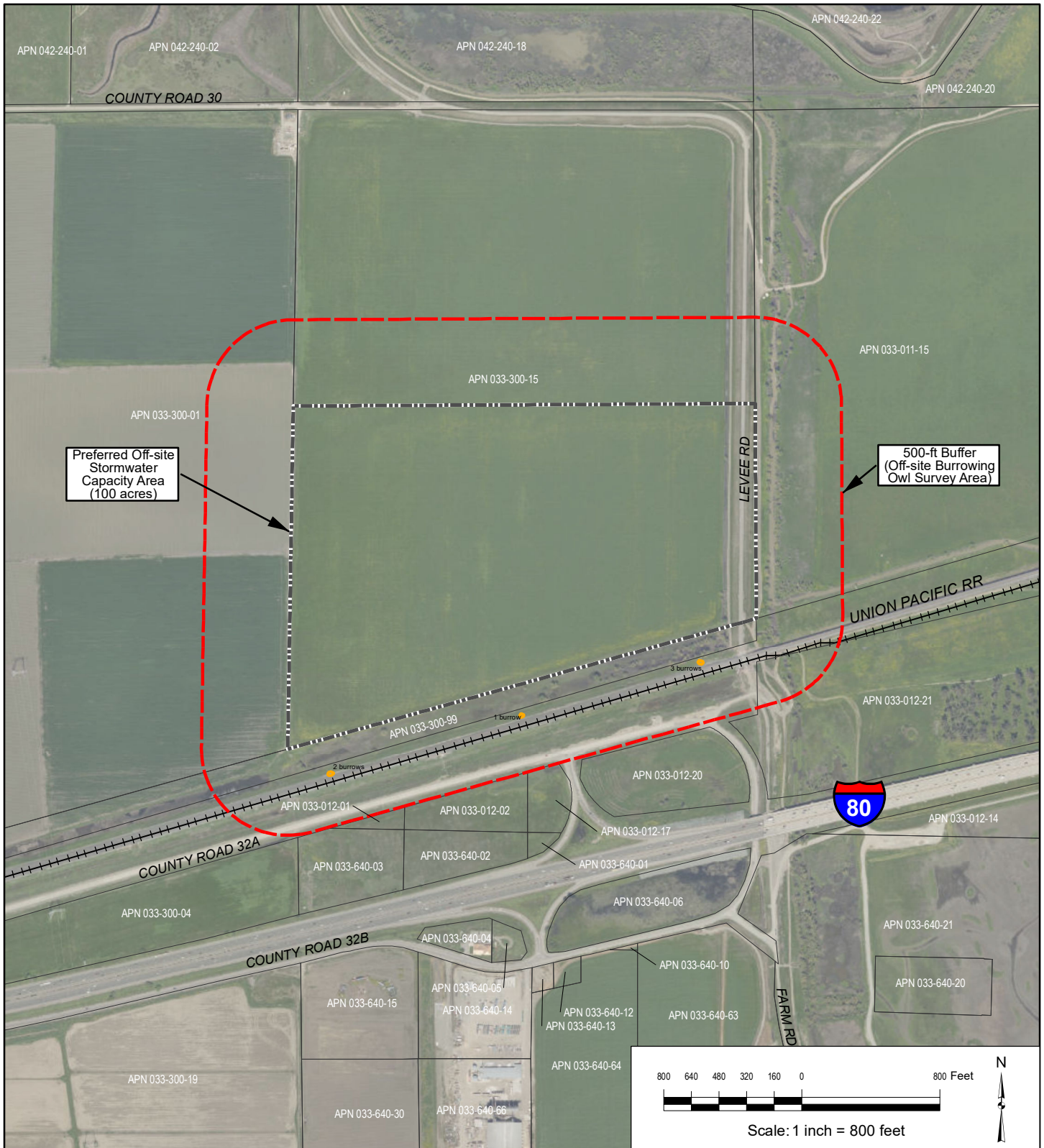
Attachment A.
 Preliminary Burrowing Owl
 Survey Results Map
 Sheet 1 of 2, (Main Site)

-  Campus Biological Study Area
-  500-ft Buffer (Burrowing Owl Survey Area)
-  Burrow Complex With Owl Occupancy (Date of most recent owl observation)
-  Burrow Complex - No Occupancy
-  Parcel Boundary
-  Recently Developed Areas







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Aerial Photograph: 13 August 2018
 2018 Yolo County Orthos Imagery
 ESRI World Imagery Arcmap Service Layer



Aggie Research Campus
 Yolo County, CA
 17 February 2020

Attachment A.
 Preliminary Burrowing Owl
 Survey Results Map
 Sheet 2 of 2, (Off-site)

-  Burrow Complex - No Occupancy
-  Preferred Off-site Stormwater Capacity Area (100 acres)
-  500-ft Buffer (Off-site Burrowing Owl Survey Area)
-  Parcel Boundary



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