

## 4. Environmental Setting

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to provide, pursuant to provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines, a “description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, from both a local and a regional perspective.” The environmental setting will provide a set of baseline physical conditions that will serve as a tool from which the lead agency will determine the significance of environmental impacts resulting from the Proposed Project.

### 4.2 REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### 4.2.1 Regional Location

The Project Site is at the northeast corner of Clinton Keith Road and Salida Del Sol, City of Wildomar, Riverside County. The City of Wildomar is surrounded by the cities of Murrieta, Menifee, and Lake Elsinore. Regional access to the Project Site is provided by Interstate 15 (I-15), approximately 0.65 mile to the west. See Figure 3-1, *Regional Location*.

#### 4.2.2 Regional Planning Considerations

##### **County of Riverside General Plan**

A general plan is the blueprint for a county. It describes the future growth and development within the county over the long term. It acts as a constitution for both public and private development, the foundation upon which leaders will make growth- and use-related decisions. The general plan is meant to express the community's goals with respect to both human-made and natural environments and sets the policies and implementation measures to achieve them for the welfare of those who live, work, and do business in the county. The Riverside County General Plan consists of nine elements and 19 area plans. The eight elements are land use, circulation, multipurpose open space, safety, noise, housing, air quality, healthy communities and administration. The City of Wildomar is in the Elsinore Area Plan of the Riverside County General Plan.

##### **Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan**

The Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) serves as a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan, pursuant to Section (a)(1)(B) of the federal Endangered Species Act, as well as a natural communities conservation plan under the California Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 2001. The plan encompasses all of Riverside County west of the crest of the San Jacinto Mountains to the Orange County line. The overall biological goal of the MSHCP is

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to conserve covered species and their habitats, as well as to maintain biological diversity and ecological processes while allowing for future economic growth in a rapidly urbanizing region.

The primary intent of the MSHCP is to provide for the conservation of a range of plants and animals and in return, provide “take” coverage and mitigation for projects throughout western Riverside County. The approval of the MSHCP and the Implementing Agreement by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife allows signatories of the Implementing Agreement to issue “take” authorizations for the 146 species covered by the MSHCP, including state and federally listed species, as well as other identified sensitive species. While the City of Wildomar is a permittee to the MSHCP, the Mt. San Jacinto Community District is not a permittee to the MSHCP.

### 4.3 LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### 4.3.1 City of Wildomar General Plan

The City of Wildomar officially became a city on July 1, 2008 and adopted the County of Riverside General Plan (including the Elsinore Area Plan) as the City’s General Plan. The City of Wildomar’s General Plan Update process has been placed on hold indefinitely and the governing land use document is the Riverside County General Plan.

The Project Site is designated as OS-R (Open Space Recreation) by the City of Wildomar General Plan Land Use Map. The Project Site is zoned R-R (Rural Residential) by the City’s zoning map (Wildomar 2015b) and the City’s zoning ordinance is found in Chapter 17 of the City’s Municipal Code.

#### 4.3.2 Location and Land Use

The Project Site is at the northeast corner of Clinton Keith Road and Salida Del Sol in Wildomar. It is bordered by La Estrella Street to the north, Clinton Keith Road to the south, Salida Del Sol to the west, and Elizabeth Lane and single-family residential units to the east.

The Project Site has three street frontages and is surrounded by single-family, rural residential, and institutional uses and undeveloped natural open space. Land uses to the north across La Estrella Street include natural open space and single-family units; to the west across Salida Del Sol are rural residential and a veterinary hospital; and to the south across Clinton Keith Road are undeveloped open space and a self-storage building. Land use to the east is a residential community. Other uses in the area include a commercial center, approximately 0.5 mile to the west, and a medical center approximately 0.4 mile to the southwest. The nearest school, Ronald Reagan Elementary School, is approximately 0.5 mile to the west, and the nearest residential uses adjoin the Project Site on Elizabeth Lane and Country Park Drive on the east. The City of Wildomar General Plan Land Use Map designates properties to the east as medium density residential (MDR). To the south are business park (BP), to the west are BP and MDR, and to the north are open space recreation (OS-R) and MDR.

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### 4.3.3 Biological Resources

The Project Site is undeveloped and characterized by various plant communities. The only visually apparent disturbance is some vegetation management (possibly disking) for fire control along the western and southern site boundaries. The Project Site generally slopes down from north to south and is lower in elevation along the western edge. A large hill, Rattlesnake Hill, is on the northwest corner of the Project Site, and a small rock outcrop is also in the northwest corner.

Special status plant species are those listed by the state of California or federal government as endangered, threatened, or rare and those that are candidates for future listing. According to a biological habitat assessment for the Project Site in January 2014, the plant communities on the Project Site include: Riversidian sage scrub grassland ecotone, Riversidian sage scrub, chamisal chaparral, oak woodland, riparian herb, mulefat scrub, willow scrub, cottonwood willow riparian forest, willow riparian forest, oak riparian forest, swale, and disturbed annual grassland.

### 4.3.4 Climate and Air Quality

The Project Site is in the South Coast Air Basin, which is under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District. The project area has a Mediterranean climate characterized by mild winters and warm, dry summers. The Western Regional Climate Center collected climatic data at Lake Elsinore from 1948 to 2005. The mean temperature in the area ranges from a low of 36.4° Fahrenheit (°F) in the winter to a high of 98.4°F in the summer, though extremes of 10°F in the winter and 115°F in the summer have been recorded. The average annual precipitation is 11.4 inches per year, and snowfall is rare in this area.

### 4.3.5 Geology and Landform

The campus is on the low bedrock hills of El Sobrante de San Jacinto, part of the Perris Structural Block, in the northern part of the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province. The Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province extends approximately 900 miles southward from the Los Angeles Basin to Baja California, Mexico, and is characterized by elongated northwest-trending mountain ranges separated by sediment-floored valleys (Mission 2004). The most dominant features of the province are the northwest-trending fault zones, most of which die out, merge with, or terminate at the steep reverse faults at the southern margin of the Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains far to the north in the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province.

The site sits on a portion of the Paloma Valley ring complex (Mission 2004). The hill on the north portion of the property is composed of Cretaceous-age gabbro. Much of the rest of the site is composed of Cretaceous-age monzogranite and granodiorite. The southwest corner of the property is composed of the sandstone member of the Pleistocene-age Pauba Formation. The surface of the property is composed of weathered bedrock, which is expected to extend only a few feet below the ground surface before reaching bedrock.

The Project Site generally slopes toward the south and is moderately steep in places. Rattlesnake Hill, a 120-foot-tall bedrock hill, is on the north end of the Project Site, and an ephemeral wash that is tributary to Murrieta Creek is along the east side of the Project Site. The elevation of the site ranges from about 1,370

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feet above mean sea level at the southwest portion of the property, to 1,580 feet above mean sea level on top of Rattlesnake Hill. The northeast end of the property sits at about 1,480 feet above mean seal level. The surface terrain of most of the property can be characterized as hummocky.

### 4.3.6 Hydrology

The Project Site is in the Santa Margarita River Watershed, and the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board classifies the project area as the inland surface waters of the Santa Margarita Hydrologic Unit (Basin No. 2.0) within the Murrieta Hydrologic Area (Basin No. 2.30) and the Wildomar and Murrieta Hydrologic Subareas (Basin Nos. 2.31 and 2.32). Drainage from the area flows toward the Santa Margarita River, which cuts across Camp Pendleton and empties into the Pacific Ocean north of Oceanside.

Local ephemeral washes are tributary to Murrieta Creek, which merges with Temecula Creek in Temecula to become the Santa Margarita River. The ephemeral wash on the Project Site is unnamed and flows through a culvert underneath Clinton Keith Road and ultimately to Murrieta Creek. The closest named water feature is Iodine Spring, about 0.7 mile northwest of the Project Site. The Project Site is undeveloped and does not have any existing drainage facilities. For most of the site, precipitation currently percolates into shallow soils or drains onto adjoining gutters along Clinton Keith Road and Salida Del Sol.

Due to the shallow bedrock beneath the site, only limited perched groundwater is expected. The site is within the Temecula Valley Groundwater Basin. Monitoring wells about a half mile southwest of the Project Site were measured in 2004, and the depth to groundwater ranged from 16.8 to 30.0 feet below ground surface.

### 4.3.7 Noise

The noise environment at the Project Site is characteristic of a suburban-residential environment. The primary existing sources of noise at the Project Site are the adjacent roadways (e.g., Salida Del Sol, Clinton Keith Road). In addition, the project is affected by background noise from traffic on I-15.

### 4.3.8 Scenic Features

The Project Site contains Rattlesnake Hill on the north portion of the site, and mountain ridgelines to the north, south, and west are visible from the Project Site. The Project Site is not in a designated scenic highway corridor or part of any designated scenic vista pursuant to Caltrans's Scenic Highways Plan.

### 4.3.9 Public Services and Utilities

The Riverside County Sheriff's Department provides police services to the project area, and the Riverside County Fire Department, in collaboration with CAL FIRE, provides emergency response services. The Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District provides domestic water and sewer collection and treatment services. Southern California Edison provides electricity, and the Southern California Gas Company provides natural gas.

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### 4.3.10 General Plan and Zoning

The Project Site is designated OS-R (Open Space Recreation) by the City of Wildomar General Plan Land Use Map and R-R (Rural Residential) by the Zoning Map.

## 4.4 ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines states that cumulative impacts shall be discussed where the project's incremental effects are cumulatively considerable. It further states that this discussion shall reflect the level and severity of the impact and the likelihood of occurrence, but not in as great a level of detail as that necessary for the project alone. Section 15355 of the Guidelines defines cumulative impacts to be "...two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." Cumulative impacts represent the change caused by the incremental impact of a project when added to other proposed or committed projects in the vicinity.

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15130 [b][1]) state that the information utilized in an analysis of cumulative impacts should come from one of two sources:

- A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency.
- A summary of projections contained in an adopted General Plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions.

The cumulative impact analysis in this EIR uses both methods as applicable to each cumulative impact section. The geographic context for cumulative impacts varies between sections in Chapter 5, *Environmental Analysis*, and is identified in the Cumulative Impacts subsection of each section of Chapter 5. For example, the geographic scope of air quality is the air basin. Cumulative impacts related to traffic have the potential to reach beyond the city boundary and have been addressed by using the related projects list in Table 4-1 and adding project-generated traffic to the traffic volumes from background ambient traffic growth. The list of related projects are also shown in Figures 5.11-3 and 5.11-4.

**Table 4-1 Related Projects**

ID	Project Name	Land Use	Unit	Quantity
1	Lennar Briarwood	SFR	DU	67
2	Lesle Tract Map	SFR	DU	10
3	Richmond American	SFR	DU	149
4	Lennar North Ranch	SFR	DU	84
5	Rancon Medical & Retail Center	Shopping Center	SF	17,100
		Medical Office	SF	33,400
		General Office Building	SF	45,000
		Fast Food Restaurant with Drive-Thru	SF	3,000
		Business Park	SF	267,45

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**Table 4-1 Related Projects**

ID	Project Name	Land Use	Unit	Quantity
6	Cornerstone Church Preschool & Admin Bldg.	Day Care Center	Student	180
		General Office Building	SF	24,461
8	Wal-Mart Retail Project	Free Standing Discount Superstore	SF	207,800
9	McVicar Residential Project	SFR	DU	49
13	Westpark Promenade Development	Shopping Center	SF	118,354
		Condos/Townhomes	DU	191
14	Villa Sienna Apartment Project	Apartment	DU	180
15	Grove Park Mixed Use Project	Apartment	DU	162
		Medical Office	SF	35,000
		Shopping Center	SF	50,000
16	Baxter Village Mixed Use Project	SFR	DU	67
		Shopping Center	SF	75,000
		Apartments	DU	204
17	Horizon/Strata Mixed Use Project	Assisted Living	Bed	86
		Condos/Townhomes	DU	138
21	Orange Bundy/Parcel Map	Shopping Center	SF	79,497
		Fast Food With Drive-Thru	SF	1,500
		Gasoline Service Station with Convenience Store	VFP	8,000
22	Oak Creek Canyon	SFR	DU	275
		Shopping Center	SF	2,000
23	Bundy Canyon Plaza	Gasoline Service Station with Convenience Store and Car Wash	VFP	12,000
		Fast Food Restaurant with Drive Through Window	SF	6,200
		Shopping Center	SF	33,800
27	Stable Lanes Retail Center	Shopping Center	SF	20,894
		Day Care Center	SF	9,305
28	Wildomar Square Retail Center	Shopping Center	SF	46,600
30	Diversified Pacific Homes	SFR	DU	51
31	Pacific Cove Inv.	SFR	DU	70
32	Beazer Homes	SFR	DU	108
35	Baxter/Susan GPA/TTM	SFR	DU	48
36	Ione/Palomar Residential	SFR	DU	60
38	Rhoades Residential Project	SFR	DU	131
39	Nova Homes Residential	SFR	DU	77
40	Darling/Bundy Canyon Residential	SFR	DU	140
41	Camelia Townhouse Project	SFR	DU	163

Source: IBI 2016  
 SFR = Single family residence  
 SF Square feet  
 DU = Dwelling Unit  
 VFP = Vehicle fueling position

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### 4.5 REFERENCES

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