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April 17, 2024 15833

Scott Bering
Second Street Family LP
14211 Yorba Street, Suite 200
Tustin, CA 92780

Subject: **Paleontological Resources Inventory Letter Report for the Corona Family Housing Project, Corona, California**

Dear Mr. Bering:

This letter report documents the results of the paleontological resources inventory conducted by Dudek in support of the proposed Corona Family Project (project) in the City of Corona, California (Figure 1 – Project Location Map).

To determine the paleontological sensitivity of the project site and make adequate recommendations, Dudek performed a paleontological resources inventory for the project to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP 2010) guidelines for successful paleontological mitigation. The inventory consisted of a Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLA) and Western Science Center (WSC) paleontological records search; paleontological survey; review of geological mapping, geological and paleontological literature, and the historic resources chapter of the City of Corona General Plan. The results of the NHMLA and WSC paleontological records search were negative for paleontological resources within the project site; however, the NHMLA reported six fossil localities near the project site.

As the Project site is underlain by two to five feet of artificial fill and planned excavations for the project are anticipated to extend approximately five to seven feet below the ground surface (bgs) (LOR Geotechnical Group 2023), with 2,500 cubic yards of cut, there is a low potential to encounter intact subsurface paleontological resources during ground disturbing activities. As such, a paleontological monitoring program is not necessary; however, mitigation measure (MM)-GEO-1 requires that a qualified paleontologist be contacted to evaluate any potential fossil discoveries. This letter report was prepared by Michael Williams, PhD, with editorial comments from Sarah Siren, M.Sc., who are qualified Principal Investigators for Paleontology in the County of Riverside, and in accordance with federal and state CEQA guidelines and SVP (2010) standards.

1 Project Location and Description

The project site is located at South Buena Vista Avenue and West 2nd Street in the City of Corona, Riverside County, California. The project site falls within unsectioned land of Township 3 South, Range 7 West of the Corona North, CA U.S. Geological Service (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map (Figure 1). The project site consists of a 3.5-acre western parcel located at the southwest corner of the intersection of South Buena Vista Avenue and West 2nd Street and a 0.2-acre eastern parcel located east of South Buena Vista Avenue (Figure 2). The project involves the new construction of a residential housing project on 2nd Street in the City of Corona. The

project would consist of residential units, common room, offices, parking, and outdoor gathering areas. Social services would be provided to residents on site. The proposed project site, which was previously occupied by a mobile home park, is currently vacant.

2 Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources are the remains or traces of plants and animals that are preserved in the Earth's crust, and per the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology ([SVP] 2010) guidelines, are older than written history or older than approximately 5,000 years, which approximates the middle Holocene. They are limited, nonrenewable resources of scientific and educational value and are afforded protection under state laws and regulations. This study satisfies requirements in accordance with state guidelines (13 California Public Resources Code [PRC], 21000 et seq.) and PRC Section 5097.5 (Stats 1965, c 1136, p. 2792). This analysis also complies with guidelines and significance criteria specified by SVP (2010). Table 1 provides definitions for high, undetermined, low, and no paleontological resource potential, or sensitivity, as set forth in and by the SVP (2010) Guidelines for Determining Significance: Paleontological Resources.

Table 1. Paleontological Resource Sensitivity Criteria

Resource Sensitivity / Potential	Definition
High	Rock units from which vertebrate or significant invertebrate, plant, or trace fossils have been recovered are considered to have a high potential for containing additional significant paleontological resources. Rocks units classified as having high potential for producing paleontological resources include, but are not limited to, sedimentary formations and some volcaniclastic formations (e. g., ashes or tephras), and some low-grade metamorphic rocks which contain significant paleontological resources anywhere within their geographical extent, and sedimentary rock units temporally or lithologically suitable for the preservation of fossils (e. g., middle Holocene and older, fine-grained fluvial sandstones, argillaceous and carbonate-rich paleosols, cross-bedded point bar sandstones, fine-grained marine sandstones, etc.). Paleontological potential consists of both (a) the potential for yielding abundant or significant vertebrate fossils or for yielding a few significant fossils, large or small, vertebrate, invertebrate, plant, or trace fossils and (b) the importance of recovered evidence for new and significant taxonomic, phylogenetic, paleoecologic, taphonomic, biochronologic, or stratigraphic data. Rock units which contain potentially datable organic remains older than late Holocene, including deposits associated with animal nests or middens, and rock units which may contain new vertebrate deposits, traces, or trackways are also classified as having high potential.
Undetermined Potential	Rock units for which little information is available concerning their paleontological content, geologic age, and depositional environment are considered to have undetermined potential. Further study is necessary to determine if these rock units have high or low potential to contain significant paleontological resources. A field survey by a qualified professional paleontologist (see "definitions" section in this document) to specifically determine the paleontological resource potential of these rock units is required before a paleontological resource impact mitigation program can be developed. In cases where no subsurface data are available, paleontological potential can sometimes be determined by strategically located excavations into subsurface stratigraphy.

Table 1. Paleontological Resource Sensitivity Criteria

Resource Sensitivity / Potential	Definition
Low Potential	Reports in the paleontological literature or field surveys by a qualified professional paleontologist may allow determination that some rock units have low potential for yielding significant fossils. Such rock units will be poorly represented by fossil specimens in institutional collections, or based on general scientific consensus only preserve fossils in rare circumstances and the presence of fossils is the exception not the rule, e. g. basalt flows or Recent colluvium. Rock units with low potential typically will not require impact mitigation measures to protect fossils.
No Potential	Some rock units have no potential to contain significant paleontological resources, for instance high- grade metamorphic rocks (such as gneisses and schists) and plutonic igneous rocks (such as granites and diorites). Rock units with no potential require no protection nor impact mitigation measures relative to paleontological resources.

Source: SVP (2010)

2 Regulatory Framework

2.1 Paleontological Resources Preservation Act of 2009

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act, Paleontological Resource Preservation Subtitle (16 U.S.C. 470aaa et seq.) directs the Secretaries (Interior and Agriculture) to manage and protect paleontological resources on federal land using scientific principles and expertise. (This act is known by its common name, the Omnibus Act or the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act [PRPA].) The PRPA incorporates most of the recommendations of the report of the Secretary of the Interior titled "Assessment of Fossil Management on Federal and Indian Lands" to formulate a consistent paleontological resources management framework. In passing the PRPA, Congress officially recognized the scientific importance of paleontological resources on some federal lands by declaring that fossils from these lands are federal property that must be preserved and protected. The PRPA codifies existing policies of the BLM, National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and provides the following:

- Uniform criminal and civil penalties for illegal sale and transport, and theft and vandalism of fossils from federal lands.
- Uniform minimum requirements for paleontological resource-use permit issuance (terms, conditions, and qualifications of applicants).
- Uniform definitions for "paleontological resources" and "casual collecting."
- Uniform requirements for curation of federal fossils in approved repositories.

Federal legislative protections for scientifically significant fossils apply to projects that take place on federal lands (with certain exceptions, such as the Department of Defense, which continue to protect paleontological resources under the Antiquities Act). Such protections involve federal funding, require a federal permit, or involve crossing state lines.

2.2 California Environmental Quality Act

The CEQA Guidelines require that all private and public activities not specifically exempted be evaluated against the potential for environmental damage, including effects to paleontological resources. Paleontological resources, which are limited, nonrenewable resources of scientific, cultural, and educational value, are recognized as part of the environment under these state guidelines. This study satisfies project requirements in accordance with CEQA (13 PRC [Public Resources Code], 21000 et seq.).

Paleontological resources are explicitly afforded protection by CEQA, specifically in Section VII(f) of CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, the "Environmental Checklist Form," which addresses the potential for adverse impacts to "unique paleontological resource[s] or site[s] or … unique geological feature[s]." This provision covers fossils of signal importance – remains of species or genera new to science, for example, or fossils exhibiting features not previously recognized for a given animal group – as well as localities that yield fossils significant in their abundance, diversity, preservation, and so forth.

2.3 PRC Section 5097.5

The PRC Section 5097.5 (Stats 1965, c 1136, p. 2792) regulates removal of paleontological resources from state lands, defines unauthorized removal of fossil resources as a misdemeanor, and requires mitigation of disturbed sites.

2.4 City of Corona General Plan

The historic resources chapter of the City of Corona General Plan specifically addresses potential impacts to non-renewable paleontological resources and outlines policies to mitigate negative impacts (City of Corona 2020). The goals and policies protecting paleontological resources are outlined below:

> **Goal HR-3**: Recognize the importance of archeological and paleontological resources and ensure the identification and protection of those resources within the City of Corona.
>
> > **Policy HR-3.6**: Any project that involves earth-disturbing activities in soil or rock units known or reasonably suspected to be fossil-bearing shall require monitoring by a qualified paleontologist retained by the project applicant for the duration of excavation or trenching.
> >
> > **Policy HR-3.7**: Support and encourage public education and awareness of local paleontological resources, including the establishment of museums and educational opportunities accessible to the public. Of development activities. Any measures applied shall include the preparation of a report meeting professional standards, which shall be submitted to the Riverside County Museum of Natural History.

3 Methods

3.1 Geological Map Review, Literature Review, Survey, and Paleontological Records Search

Published geological maps, published and unpublished reports, and the paleontological resources sensitivity map found in the City of Corona 2020 – 2040 General Plan were reviewed to identify geological units within the project site and determine their paleontological sensitivity.

Dudek conducted a paleontological survey on January 12, 2024. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain if any fossils were present on the surface and confirm geological mapping. Field recording and photo documentation of exposed ground surface were completed as appropriate.

Paleontological records search requests were sent to the NHMLA and WSC on January 11, 2024. The purpose of the records searches was to determine whether there are any known fossil localities in or near the project site to aide in determining whether a paleontological mitigation program is warranted to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects of construction on paleontological resources.

4 Results

4.1 Geological Map Review, Literature Review, Survey, and Paleontological Records Search

The project site is located within the northernmost Peninsular Ranges geomorphic province (Norris and Webb 1990; California Geological Survey [CGS] 2002). This geomorphic province is characterized by northwest trending mountain ranges and valleys that extend over 900 miles from the tip of the Baja Peninsula to the Transverse Ranges (i.e. the San Bernardino and San Gabriel Mountains in southern California). Regionally, the Peninsular Ranges are bounded to the east by the Colorado Desert and the west by the continental shelf and offshore islands (Santa Catalina, Santa Barbara, San Nicholas, and San Clemente) (Norris and Webb 1990; CGS 2002). Regional mountain ranges in the Peninsular Ranges geomorphic province include the Santa Ana, San Jacinto, and Santa Rosa Mountains. Geologically, these mountains are dominated by Mesozoic, plutonic igneous and metamorphic rocks that are part of the Peninsular Ranges batholith (Southern California batholith) (Jahns 1954).

More specifically and according to the published surficial geological mapping at a scale of 1:24,000 by Morton et al. (2002) and the International Chronostratigraphic Chart of Cohen et al. (2023), the project site is underlain by Holocene (<11,700 years ago) to late Pleistocene (approximately 11,700 – 129,000 years ago) young alluvial fan deposits (map unit Qyf). These deposits are characterized by grayish-colored, sands, gravels, and cobbles. Older, late to middle Pleistocene (approximately 11,700 – 774,000 years ago), gravelly alluvial fan deposits (map unit Qof_g) are situated just to the south, and gravelly, middle Pleistocene (approximately 129,000 – 774,000 years ago) alluvial fan deposits are mapped just to the west of the project site (Morton et al. 2002). Given the close proximity of these Pleistocene deposits, they likely underlie the project site at depth.

Geotechnical borings conducted for the project indicated the project site is underlain by two to five feet of artificial fill, which is in turn, underlain by sandy silt and silty sand alluvial deposits with gravel (LOR Geotechnical Group 2023). The reddish-brown color of the sediments and wispy calcite observed in the geotechnical borings could be indicative of older (oxidized) sediments.

While recent alluvial fan deposits are generally too young to yield significant paleontological resources on the surface and at shallow depths, Pleistocene alluvial deposits are known to produce significant fossils in this part of Riverside County and potentially underlie the more recent sediments. In his compilation of Holocene and Pleistocene vertebrate fossils from California, Jefferson (1991) reported on Pleistocene faunas from Corona and along the Santa Ana River that produced fossil fish (Osteichthyes), lizard (Sauria), rabbit (Lagomorpha), vole (*Microtus* sp.), ground sloth (*Paramylodon harlani*) mastodon (*Mammut* sp.), mammoth (*Mammuthus columbi* and *M. meridionalis*), horse (*Equus* sp.), camel (cf. *Camelops* sp.), and bison (*Bison*) specimens. In addition, a fossil bison (*Bison*) was recovered during excavations for the State Route 91 widening project (Williams Pers. Obs.).

Dudek paleontologist, David Alexander, conducted an intensive-level pedestrian survey of the project site on January 12, 2024. The approximately 3.46-acre Project area was located between an active road and active school grounds. There were no structures present; however, the remnants of an asphalt surface, likely the mobile home park, were visible in some areas. Ground surface visibility was excellent (70% to 90%). Grass, gravels, and a few trees were present on the surface as well as modern debris. No fossils were observed during the paleontological survey.

The NHMLA records search results letter was received on January 14, 2024, and the WSC records search results letter was received on 2/15/2024. No records of fossil localities were found within the boundaries of the project site; however, the LACM reported five fossil localities in the vicinity of project site (Confidential Attachment A). The fossil localities are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2. LACM Paleontological Records Search Results

Locality Number	Approximate Location	Formation or Unit	Taxa	Depth (ft bgs)
LACM VP 1207	One-mile north-northwest of Corona	Unnamed Pleistocene unit	Bovidae (Cow family)	Unknown
LACM VP 4619	Wineville Ave in Eastvale, CA	Unnamed Pleistocene unit	Mammoth (*Mammuthus*)	100 feet bgs
LACM VP 7811	West of Orchard Park, Chino Valley	Unnamed Pleistocene unit consisting of tan eolian silts	Whip snake (*Masticophis*)	9 – 11 feet bgs
LACM VP 7268, 7271	South of Los Serranos Golf Course	Unnamed Pleistocene unit	Horse (*Equus*)	Unknown
LACM VP 7508	North of Serrano Canyon in Chino Hills	Unnamed Pleistocene unit	Ground sloth (*Nothrotheriops*); elephant family (Proboscidea); horse (*Equus*)	Unknown

VP, Vertebrate Paleontology
bgs, below the ground surface

The WSC reported no fossil localities within the project site or the one-mile radius buffer, but they did confirm the potential for significant paleontological at depth within the project site (Confidential Attachment A).

5 Impact Analysis and Management Recommendations

5.1 Thresholds of Significance

The thresholds of significance used to evaluate the impacts of the project related to paleontological resources are based on Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. A significant impact under CEQA would occur if the proposed project would:

- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

5.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature

No paleontological resources were identified within the project site as a result of the paleontological survey, institutional records search, or desktop geological and paleontological review. No unique geological features are present on the surface, and they are not anticipated at depth. The paleontological records search conducted by

the NHMLA revealed six nearby fossil localities from similar Pleistocene geological units, and the WSC records search results indicated they do not have any fossil localities from within the project site or the one-mile radius buffer. The artificial fill present on the surface and shallow subsurface of the project site has low paleontological resource sensitivity or potential. The Holocene to late Pleistocene alluvial fan deposits mapped on the surface and present below the artificial fill also have low paleontological resource sensitivity or potential that increases with depth bgs. Pleistocene alluvial fan deposits mapped nearby and presumably underlying the project site at depth have high paleontological resource sensitivity or potential throughout their geographic and stratigraphic extent. The paleontological resources sensitivity map in the City of Corona General Plan indicates the project site has low to high paleontological resources sensitivity. Based on the records search and survey results, map and literature review, review of the City of Corona General Plan paleontological resources sensitivity map, and planned excavation depths and anticipated sediment removal amounts, the project site has low potential to produce paleontological resources on the surface that increases with depth. In the event that intact paleontological resources are discovered on the project site, ground-disturbing activities associated with construction of the project, such as grading and large diameter drilling (two-feet or greater) during site preparation and trenching for utilities, have the potential to destroy a unique paleontological resource or site. Without mitigation, the potential damage to paleontological resources during construction would be a potentially significant impact. With implementation of the following recommended mitigation measure (MM), impacts would be reduced to below a level of significance. Impacts of the project are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated during construction.

MM CUL-1: Paleontological Monitor. Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Project Applicant shall submit to and receive approval from the City of a Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (PRMMP). The PRMMP shall include the provision of a trained paleontological monitor during onsite soil disturbance activities. The PRMMP shall include the provision of a trained paleontological monitor during onsite soil disturbance activities. The monitoring for paleontological resources shall be conducted on a full-time basis during the rough grading phases of the Project site within native soils that have the potential to harbor paleontological resources. The paleontological monitor shall be equipped to rapidly remove any large fossil specimens encountered during excavation. During monitoring, samples of soil shall be collected and processed to recover micro-vertebrate fossils. Processing shall include wet screen washing and microscopic examination of the residual materials to identify small vertebrate remains. If paleontological resources are unearthed or discovered during grading activities, the following recovery processes shall apply:

- Upon encountering a large deposit of bone, salvage of all bone in the area shall be conducted with additional field staff and in accordance with modern paleontological techniques.

- All fossils collected during the project shall be prepared to a reasonable point of identification. Excess sediment or matrix shall be removed from the specimens to reduce the bulk and cost of storage. Itemized catalogs of all material collected and identified shall be provided to the museum repository along with the specimens.

- A report documenting the results of the monitoring and salvage activities and the significance of the fossils shall be prepared.

- All fossils collected during this work, along with the itemized inventory of these specimens, shall be deposited in a museum repository (such as the Western Science Center for Archaeology & Paleontology, the Riverside Metropolitan Museum, or the San Bernardino County Museum) for permanent curation and storage.

Should you have any questions relating to this report and its findings please contact Michael Williams (mwilliams@Dudek.com) or Sarah Siren (ssiren@dudek.com).

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Williams, Ph.D.
Senior Paleontologist
Mobile: 225.892.7622
Email: mwilliams@dudek.com

Att.: *Figure 1, Regional Location Map*
Attachment A, Confidential LACM Paleontological Records Search Results

cc: *Sarah Siren, Jonathan Rigg, Hayley Ward, Dudek*

6 References

California Geological Survey. 2002. California Geomorphic Provinces: Note 36. 4 pp.

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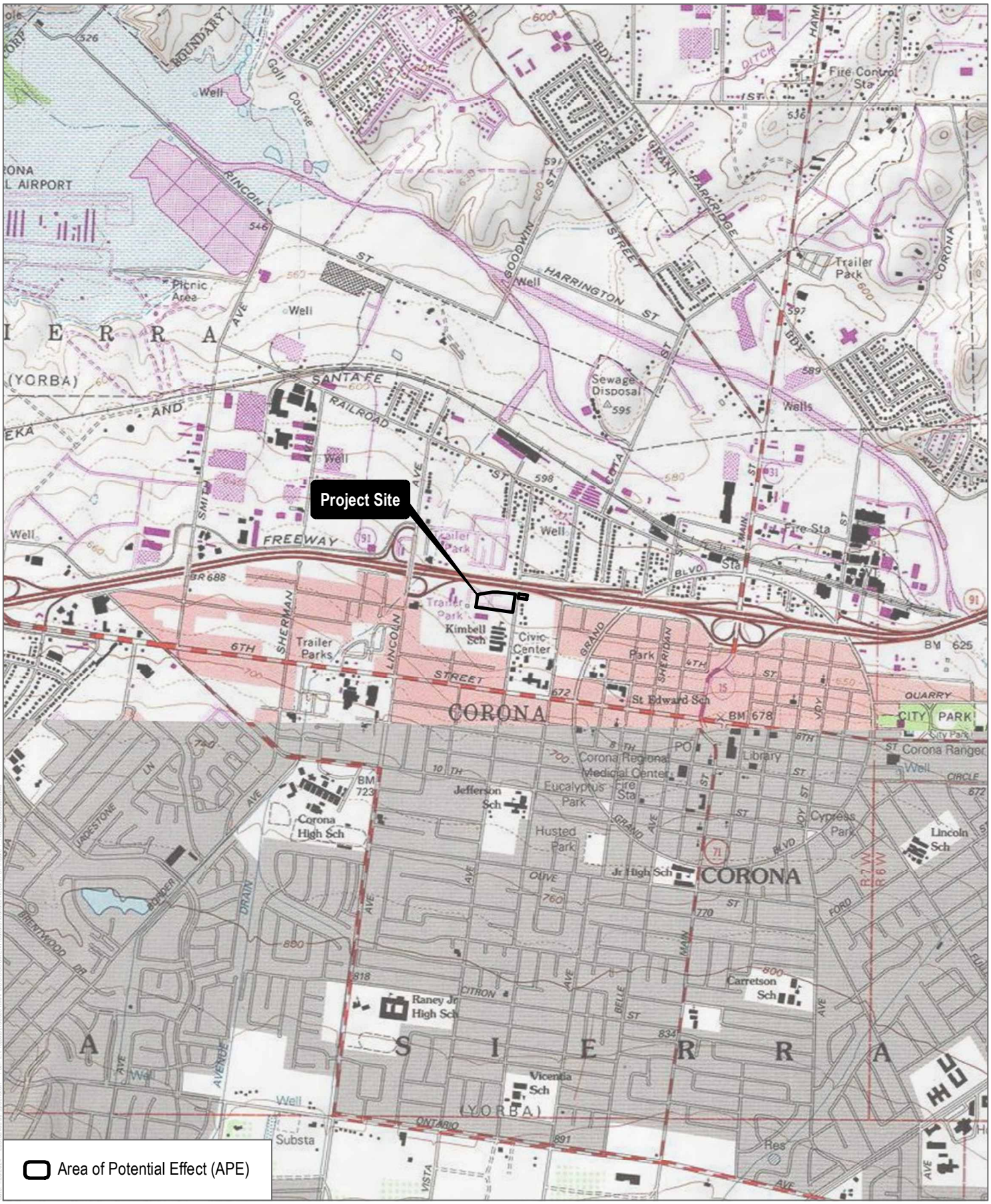
Morton, D.M., Gray, C.H., Bovard, K.R., and Dawson, Michael, 2002 Geologic map of the Corona North 7.5' quadrangle, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California: U.S. Geological Survey, Open-File Report OF-2002-22, scale 1:24,000.

Norris, R.M., and R.W. Webb, 1990. Geology of California (2nd edition). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP). 2010. Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources. 11 p. Available; http://vertpaleo.org/PDFS/68/68c554bb-86f1-442f-a0dc-25299762d36c.pdf.

Williams, M.J. 2024. Fossil Bison specimen uncovered in unnamed Pleistocene deposits during construction of the Interstate 91 Widening Project in the City of Corona. Personal observations by M. J. Williams (Dudek). August, 2014.

Figures



SOURCE: USGS 7.5-Minute Series Corona North & Corona South Quadrangles
Township 3S; Range 7W; Section 26

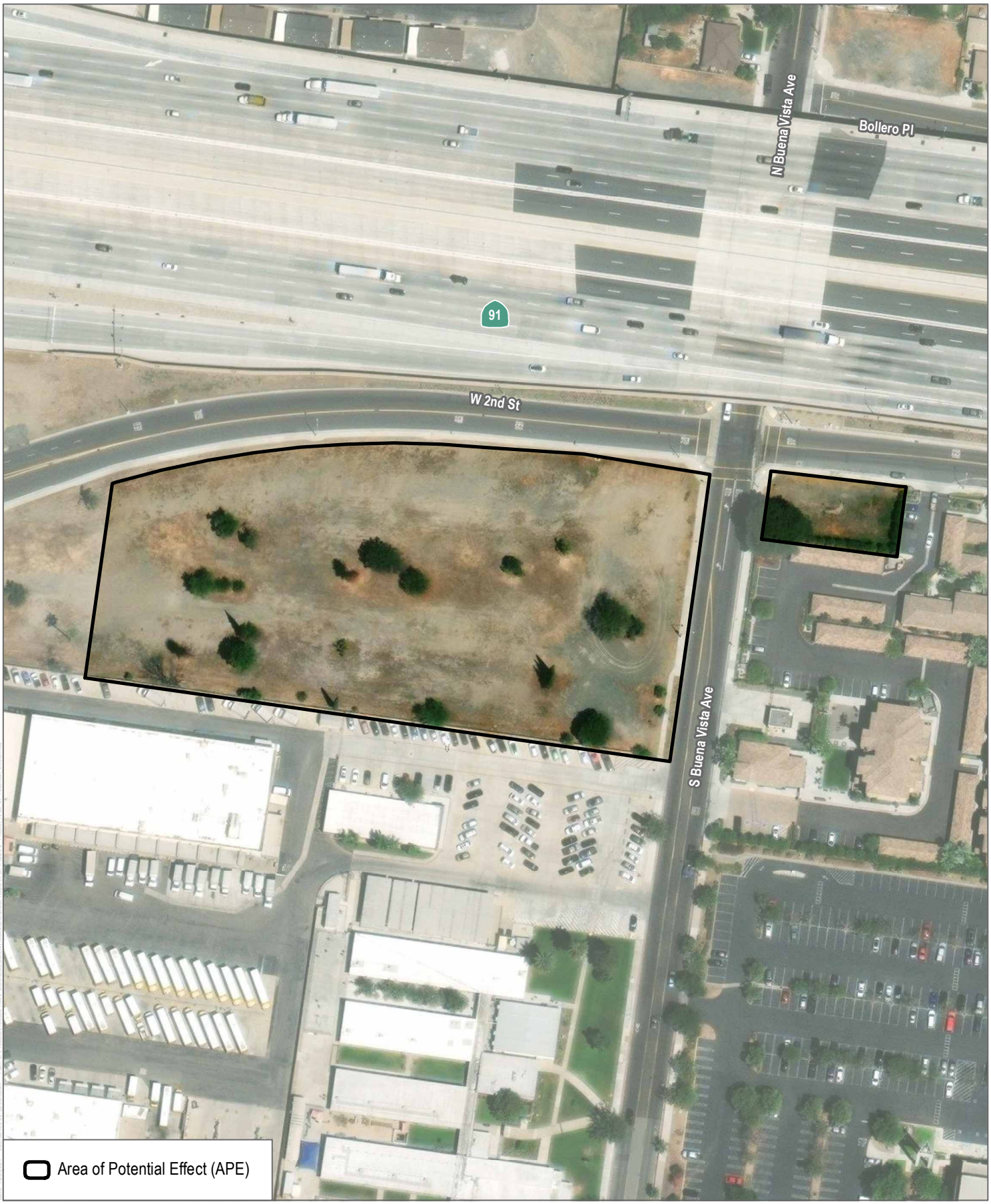
DUDEK

0 1,000 2,000 Feet
0 285 570 Meters
1:24,000

FIGURE 1

Project Location

Corona Family Housing Project



SOURCE: Maxar 2022; Open Street Maps 2023

DUDEK

0 62.5 125 Feet
0 15 30 Meters
1:1,500

FIGURE 2

Project Area of Potential Effect

Corona Family Housing Project

Attachment A

LACM and WSC Records Search Results (Confidential)

Natural History Museum
of Los Angeles County
900 Exposition Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90007

tel 213.763.DINO
www.nhm.org

Research & Collections

e-mail: paleorecords@nhm.org

January 14, 2024

Dudek

Attn: Michael Williams

re: Paleontological resources for the Corona Family Housing Project (PN: 15833)

Dear Michael:

I have conducted a thorough search of our paleontology collection records for the locality and specimen data for proposed development at the Corona Family Housing project area as outlined on the portion of the Corona North USGS topographic quadrangle map that you sent to me via e-mail on January 11, 2024. We do not have any fossil localities that lie directly within the proposed project area, but we do have fossil localities nearby from the same sedimentary deposits that may occur in the proposed project area, either at the surface or at depth.

The following table shows the closest known localities in the collection of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLA).

Locality Number	Location	Formation	Taxa	Depth
LACM VP 1207	Hill on east side of sewage disposal plant; 1 mile N-NW of Corona	Unknown formation (Pleistocene)	Bovidae	Unknown
LACM VP 4619	Wineville Ave, Eastvale, CA	Unknown Formation (Pleistocene)	Mammoth (*Mammuthus*)	100 feet bgs
LACM VP 7811	W of Orchard Park, Chino Valley	Unknown formation (eolian, tan silt; Pleistocene)	Whip snake (*Masticophis*)	9-11 feet bgs
LACM VP 7268, 7271	Sundance Condominiums, S of Los Serranos Golf Course	Unknown (Pleistocene)	Horse (*Equus*)	Unknown
LACM VP 7508	Near intersection of Vellano Club Dr. and Palmero Dr., Oakcrest Development; N of Serrano Canyon, Chino Hills	Unknown formation (Pleistocene)	Ground sloth (*Nothrotheriops*); elephant family (Proboscidea); horse (*Equus*)	Unknown

VP, Vertebrate Paleontology; IP, Invertebrate Paleontology; bgs, below ground surface

This records search covers only the records of the NHMLA. It is not intended as a paleontological assessment of the project area for the purposes of CEQA or NEPA. Potentially

fossil-bearing units are present in the project area, either at the surface or in the subsurface. As such, NHMLA recommends that a full paleontological assessment of the project area be conducted by a paleontologist meeting Bureau of Land Management or Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards.

Sincerely,

Alyssa Bell, Ph.D.
Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

enclosure: invoice

WESTERN SCIENCE CENTER

February 15th, 2024

Dudek
Michael Williams
605 Third Street
Encinitas, CA 92024

Dear Dr. Williams,

This letter presents the results of a record search conducted for Corona Family Housing Project in the City of Corona, Riverside County, California. The project site is located south of W. 2nd Street and bisecting S. Buena Vista Avenue on Township 3S, Range 7W, Section 14 on the *Corona North, CA* USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle.

The geologic units underlying this project are mapped as alluvial fan deposits from the Holocene and late Pleistocene epochs (Morton, Gray, Bovard, and Dawson 2002). Holocene alluvial units are considered to be of high preservation value, but material found is unlikely to be fossil material due to the relatively modern associated dates of the deposits. However, Pleistocene alluvial units are considered highly paleontologically sensitive. The Western Science Center does not have localities within the project area or within a 1 mile radius.

Any fossil specimen from the Corona Family Housing Project would be scientifically significant. Excavation activity associated with the development of the project area would impact the paleontologically sensitive Pleistocene alluvial units, and it is the recommendation of the Western Science Center that a paleontological resource mitigation program be put in place to monitor, salvage, and curate any recovered fossils associated with the study area.

If you have any questions, or would like further information, please feel free to contact me at bstoneburg@westerncentermuseum.org.

Sincerely,

Brittney Elizabeth Stoneburg, MSc
Collections Manager