

# technical memorandum

date April, 14, 2015

to Desiree Scott, srmErnst Development Partners

from Brian Pittman, CWB, Wildlife Program Manager  
Julie Remp, Biologist

subject Burrowing Owl Survey for 2810 Harbor Bay Parkway, Alameda

On April 14, 2015, ESA biologist Julie Remp conducted a reconnaissance-level burrowing owl survey in an approximately 5.4-acre open field at 2810 Harbor Bay Parkway in Alameda, California (hereafter referred to as the Survey Area). The proposed project site is located in the southeast portion of the open field of the Survey Area. No burrowing owls or potential owl burrows were observed in the Survey Area.

## History, Setting, Methods, and Results

Two burrowing owl records are reported by the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and eBird online data reports 2015 sightings at Shoreline Park, and Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Park-Arrowhead Marsh within three miles of the Survey Area, suggesting that some habitats on Bay Farm Island may be able to support burrowing owl (see **Figure 1**) (CFDW, 2015<sup>1</sup>, eBird, 2015<sup>2</sup>). In 2008, PBS&J performed a Phase II burrowing owl survey of the Survey Area and adjacent undeveloped lands, and no owls or signs of owls were detected during that survey.<sup>3</sup>

The Survey Area is an approximately 220 foot by 1,000 foot vacant lot stretching 1 dominated by non-native vegetation. Ruderal weedy species such as black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) and perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*) grow in scattered patches in the Survey Area, and annual grasses such as wild oats (*Avena barbata*) cover much of the field. The Survey Area is bounded by a developed commercial property directly southeast, an open field northwest, the harbor bay with concrete trail and associated landscaping to the southwest and to the northeast is Adelphian Way road.

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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2015. California Natural Diversity Database, Rarefind 5. Accessed April 13, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> eBird. 2015. Explore Data Species Maps: data request for burrowing owl. Available online at <http://ebird.org/ebird/map/>. Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Accessed April 13, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> PBS&J. 2014. Memorandum to The City of Alameda Planning Department Entitled, "Harbor Bay – Bird and Wetlands Inspection." March 26, 2008.

The survey was conducted in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) 2012 protocol phase II surveys for burrowing owl, which include walking transects no more than 30 meters (90 feet) apart to obtain 100 percent visual coverage of the Survey Area. Additionally, 10x42 binoculars were used to scan the site, and any burrows or mounded areas or underneath likely perches were inspected closely for burrowing owl staining, owl pellets, or small mammal carcasses.

The survey began at approximately 10:40 am on April 14, 2015. Conditions were sunny, clear and warm (60° F) with 0% cloud cover and wind 8-13 mph. The Survey Area supports a small population of black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), California vole (*Microtus californicus*) and California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*). While ground squirrels were present, mammal burrows were not abundant in the Survey Area and no burrows were identified within the project footprint. In the adjacent vacant lot a few ground squirrel burrows were identified but were not of a sufficient size to support burrowing owls and no owl sign was observed. The Survey Area is subject to high levels of disturbance from foot traffic on the public trail and vehicle use on Adelphian Way road. Survey Area photos included as **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**.



SOURCE: CDFW, 2015; Microsoft, 2015; eBird, 2015 2810 Harbor Bay Parkway, Alameda Burrowing Owl Survey . 210448.02

**Figure 1**  
Project Location and Burrowing Owl Occurrences Within 3 Miles



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Source: ESA, 2015 2810 Harbor Bay Parkway, Alameda Burrowing Owl Survey. 210448.02  
**Figure 2**  
Typical Annual Grassland Habitat in the Study Area; Photo Date: April 14, 2015



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2810 Harbor Bay Parkway, Alameda Burrowing Owl Survey. 210448.02  
Source: ESA, 2015 **Figure 3**  
Typical Small Mammal Burrows in Study Area; Photo Date: April 14, 2015