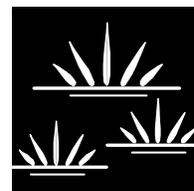


# GLENN LUKOS ASSOCIATES

Regulatory Services



May 3, 2016

Mr. Scott Hansen  
KB Homes Coastal, Inc.  
36310 Inland Valley Drive  
Wildomar, California 92595

**SUBJECT:** Results of a Biological Survey for the 40.36-acre Somerset Project (Tentative Tract Map 16805), City of Victorville, San Bernardino County, California.

Dear Mr. Hansen:

This report provides the results of biological resources work performed for the Somerset Development (Tentative Tract Map 16805). This report provides the results of the evaluation of the property to support federal and/or state endangered species, a desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) pre-project survey, and the preliminary findings of the Mohave ground squirrel (*Spermophilus mohavensis*; MGS) study. The final results of the MGS study will be available in June 2016 and a preconstruction burrowing owl survey and a nesting bird survey will be performed just prior to ground disturbance.

## **SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

The 40.36-acre property is located in the City of Victorville, San Bernardino County, California [Exhibit 1 – Regional Map]. The property is located southwest of the City of Victorville proper with the north boundary of the property adjacent to Luna Road, the west boundary along Monte Vista Road, and the east boundary along Daisy Road. It is depicted on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic map Baldy Mesa, California (dated 1956 and photorevised in 1988) at Section 29, Township 5 North, Range 5 West [Exhibit 2 – Vicinity Map].

Lands surrounding the property are undeveloped with high-density residential development occurring to the north and east of the project site. Exhibit 3 provides an aerial image of the site including the property boundary.

## **METHODOLOGY**

**Desert Tortoise/Listed Species.** GLA biologist Jeff Ahrens visited the property on April 27, 2016 to conduct a site review and desert tortoise pre-project survey following the USFWS 2010

Pre-project Field Survey Protocol.<sup>1</sup> The objectives of this protocol are to: (1) determine the presence or absence of the desert tortoise, (2) estimate the number of tortoises, and (3) assess the distribution of tortoises.

A single visit was performed. Ten-meter (33 feet) wide belt transects were traversed throughout the property (100-percent coverage) looking for any evidence of desert tortoise occupation including live tortoises, tortoise burrows, cover sites, tortoise scat (in the open, at middens or at tortoise burrows/cover sites) and carcasses/bones.

All burrows, including tortoise burrows, other animal species burrows, and cover sites (natural occurring shelters including rock crevices and caliche caves) that appeared accessible to a tortoise (all life stages) were searched for tortoise sign. Table 1 summarizes the desert tortoise survey visit.

**Table 1. Summary of Desert Tortoise Pre-Project Survey**

Survey Date	Biologist	Start/End Time	Start/End Temperature (Fahrenheit)	Start/End Wind Speed (mph)	Cloud Cover
April 27, 2016	Jeff Ahrens	0610/1130	48/66	4/7	Clear/Clear

To determine which endangered or threatened plants to occur in the region, the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) rare plant inventory<sup>2</sup> was consulted for the Baldy Mesa USGS quadrangle map. For a list of threatened or endangered animals with potential to occur in the region, a United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Conservation (IPaC) Trust Resources Report was generated for the project site<sup>3</sup> and the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) was consulted for the Baldy Mesa USGS quadrangle map<sup>4</sup>.

**Mohave Ground Squirrel.** Philippe Vergne, a permitted MGS biologist at EVIRA, Inc. performed a focused habitat evaluation for MGS on April 7, 2016 to assess the potential for the species to be present on the property. Based on site conditions, a protocol MGS trapping survey was recommended. The survey is a series of three trapping sessions with each trapping session

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<sup>1</sup> GLA also referred to the USFWS 2009 General Ecology and Survey Protocol for Determining Presence/Absence and Abundance for the Desert Tortoise – Mojave Population.

<sup>2</sup> CNPS, Rare Plant Program. 2016. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (online edition, v8-02). California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, CA. Website <http://www.rareplants.cnps.org> [accessed 03 May 2016].

<sup>3</sup> USFWS. 2016. Information for Planning and Conservation Trust Resources Report. Generated on May 3, 2016. Accessed at <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>.

<sup>4</sup> CNDDB. 2016. California Natural Diversity Database, RareFind 4. Element reports for Baldy Mesa, California USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map. Available: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/biogeodata/cnddb/mapsanddata.asp>. Accessed: 03 May 2016.

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composed of five consecutive days of trapping. The required time between sessions is no less than two weeks. If no MGS are captured during the first session, then a second session is required. If no animals are captured during the second session then a third session is needed. The first trapping session occurred in the last week of April with no MGS detected. The second session is planned for mid-May and the last session in early June.

**Burrowing Owl Preconstruction Survey.** A burrowing owl preconstruction survey will be performed within 14 days prior to ground disturbance. No survey work for this species has occurred yet.

**Nesting Bird Survey.** A survey to determine the presence of nesting birds will be performed within seven days prior to ground disturbance. No survey work for nesting birds has occurred to date.

## **RESULTS**

### **Existing Conditions**

The project site occurs in the western Mohave Desert with the dominant vegetation composed of creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) and white bursage (*Ambrosia dumosa*) with occasional desert tea (*Ephedra californica*), Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*) and nonnative grasses (e.g., *Schismus* sp.). Site topography is flat and occurs at an elevation of approximately 3,260 feet above mean sea level.

Wildlife detected included desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*), white-tailed antelope ground squirrel (*Ammospermophilus leucurus*), common side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*), California whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris*), blue-gray gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*), and sagebrush sparrow (*Artemisiospiza nevadensis*).

### **Threatened/Endangered Species (Condition of Approval 21 & 22)**

No threatened or endangered plants are known to occur on lands depicted on the Baldy Mesa USGS quadrangle map. Thus, there is no potential for listed plants to be present on the project site.

There are three listed animals recorded in the region, desert tortoise, MGS, and California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*). A focused survey was performed for desert tortoise and the species was confirmed absent. Although the project site occurs within the range of the California

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condor, it is less than reasonable to expect the species to be present given the extreme rarity of the species, the lack of large prey to scavenge on, and the level of human disturbance in the area.

A habitat evaluation for MGS was conducted and confirmed there was low potential for the species to be present. As such, a focused trapping survey for MGS is ongoing with the first trapping session finding the species absent. A second trapping session is scheduled for mid-May and a third one for early June.

**Burrowing Owl Preconstruction Survey (Condition of Approval 23)**

To date, no work has been performed for this task. It will be performed within 14 days of project ground disturbance.

**Nesting Bird Survey (Condition of Approval 24)**

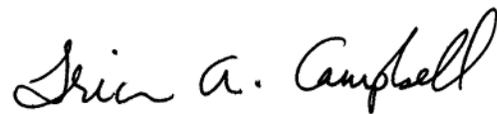
To date, no work has been performed for this task. The survey will occur within seven days of project ground disturbance.

A subsequent report will be provided detailing final results of the MGS trapping survey, preconstruction burrowing owl survey, and the nesting bird survey.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please call me at (949) 837-0404, ext. 17 or on my mobile at (951) 972-2179.

Sincerely,

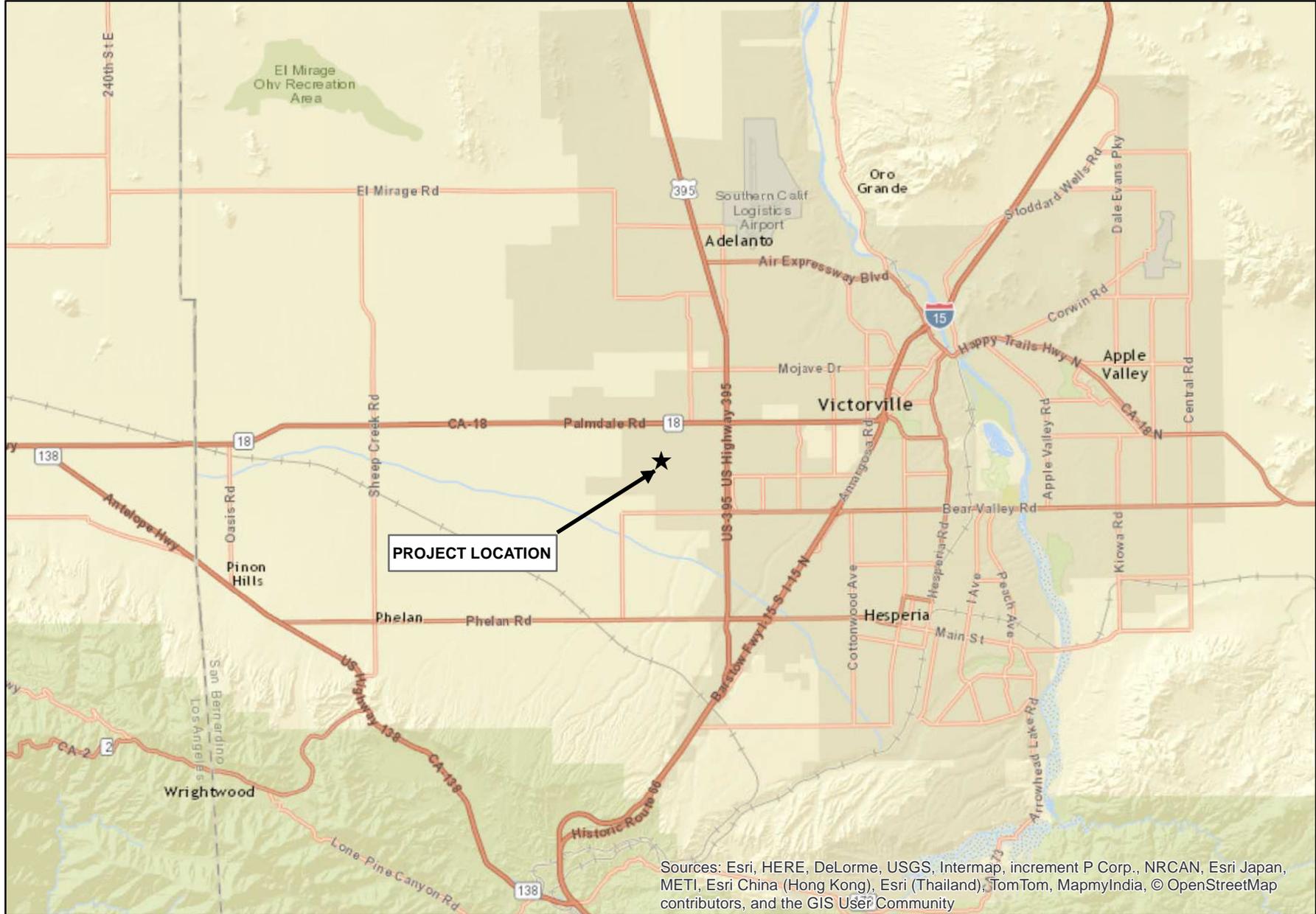
GLENN LUKOS ASSOCIATES, INC.



Tricia A. Campbell  
Principal/Senior Biologist

## **EXHIBITS**

Source: ESRI World Street Map



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



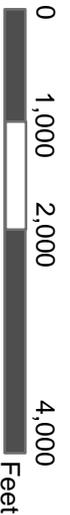
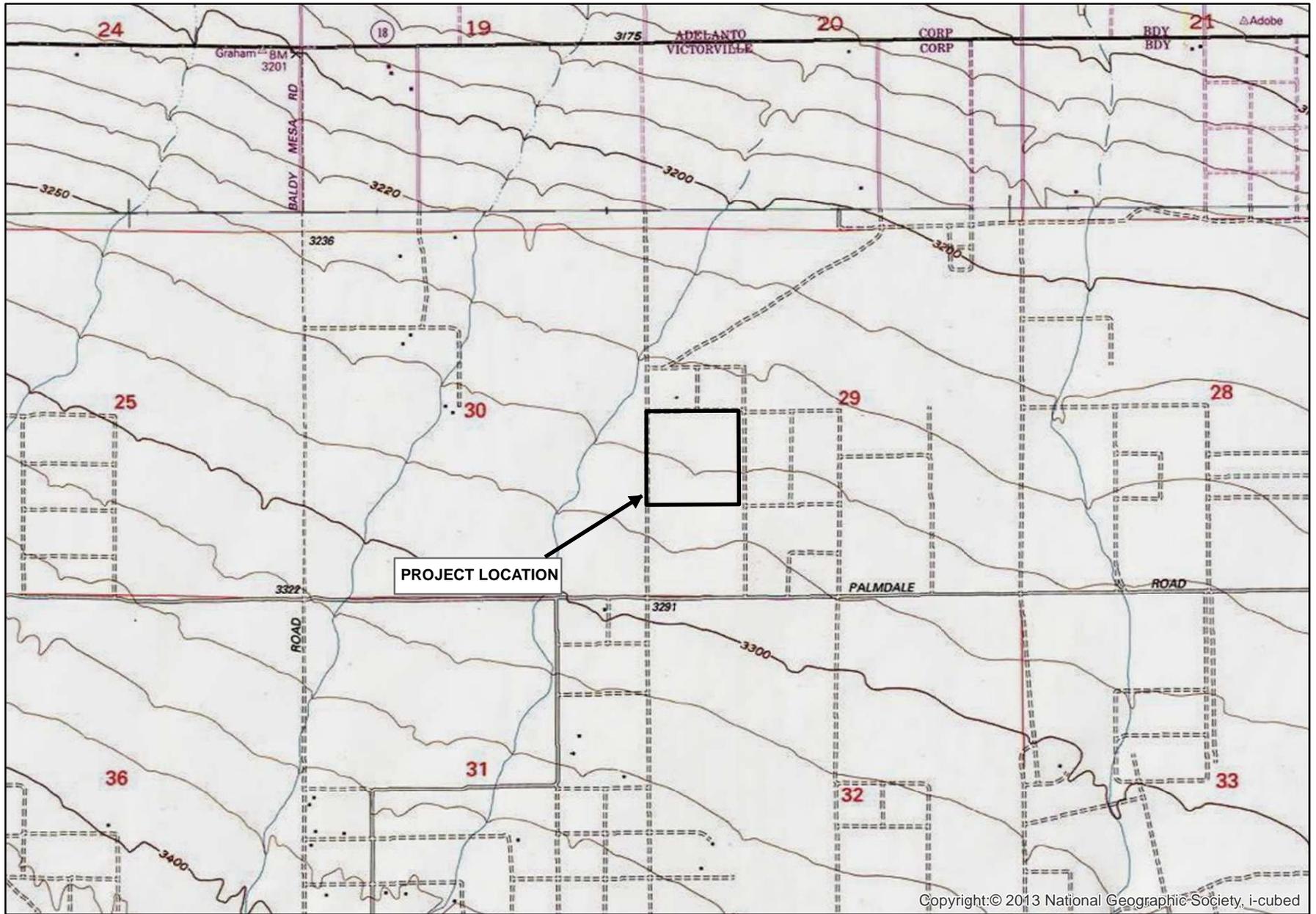
**SOMERSET DEVELOPMENT**  
Regional Map

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Exhibit 1

Adapted from USGS Baldy Mesa, CA quadrangle



# SOMERSET DEVELOPMENT

Vicinity Map

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Exhibit 2

Luna Road

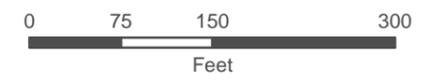
Daisy Road

Monte Vista Road

### Legend

 Project Site Boundary\*

\* Project site boundaries were approximated



1 inch = 150 feet

Coordinate System: State Plane 5 NAD 83  
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic  
Datum: NAD83  
Map Prepared by: C. Lukos, GLA  
Date Prepared: May 3, 2016

**SOMERSET DEVELOPMENT**  
Project Site Map

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Exhibit 3