URS

June 29, 2012

Larry Cochrun
First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.

SUBJECT: 2012 PROTOCOL BURROWING OWL SURVEY – SAN MICHELE PROPERTY PROJECT, CITY OF MORENO VALLEY, RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

Dear Mr. Cochrun,

This report documents the findings of the 2012 burrowing owl habitat assessment and burrow survey conducted by URS Corporation (URS) for the proposed San Michelle Property Project (Project). The proposed Project includes the development of an approximate 9-acre property within the City of Moreno Valley, County of Riverside, California. The Project is bound by San Michele Road to the north, Perris Boulevard to the east, and a development to the south and west (Figure 1).

For the purposes of this evaluation, the Biological Study Area (BSA) includes the Project's proposed ground disturbance footprint (Project footprint), plus a 500-foot buffer. The BSA is located within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Perris Topographic Map in Section 31, Township 3 South, Range 3 West, at an approximate elevation of 1,470 feet above sea level (Figure 2). The Project footprint is currently disturbed and undeveloped with surrounding land uses in the BSA consisting of disturbed/undeveloped lands or developments.

The Project is located within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) survey area, and as a result, a MSHCP protocol burrowing owl survey was performed within the BSA.

METHODS

An initial burrow investigation (habitat assessment) was performed on June 7, 2012 in accordance with MSHCP requirements prior to initiating focused owl surveys. The initial survey was performed to locate suitable owl habitat and potential nesting substrates. A focused burrow survey was then conducted within the BSA between June 7, and June 20, 2012. The surveys were conducted following the Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions for the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Area (County of Riverside 2006).

Habitat Assessment

An initial habitat assessment for burrowing owl was conducted on June 7, 2012 by URS Biologists Carol Thompson and Jeff Crain and included a systematic assessment and pedestrian-based survey of the BSA. Weather conditions at the time of the initial habitat assessment survey were sunny, with winds ranging from 1 to 3 miles per hour and ambient air temperatures ranging from approximately 60° to 64° Fahrenheit. The assessment was performed by searching for habitat

typically utilized by burrowing owls (e.g. mounds, rubbish piles, ditches, earthen berms, unpaved fields, and fallow/ruderal fields). Based on the presence of suitable habitat within the BSA, a focused burrow survey was subsequently conducted.

Focused Survey

Methodical surveys for owl burrows, including potential nesting sites within cracks and crevices in man-made structures, were conducted by thoroughly walking areas of suitable habitat within the BSA. Survey dates, personnel, and weather conditions during surveys are provided within Table 1. Pedestrian survey transects were spaced at approximately 100 ft to allow for adequate visual coverage of the BSA. Where necessary, transect spacing was reduced or expanded to account for vegetation density, land cover, and visibility. The locations of all potential burrows and sign were recorded and mapped with a Global Positioning System (GPS) and on aerial imagery. Incidental observations of other wildlife species encountered during the surveys were also documented. The presence of each incidentally observed species was based on direct observation or vocalization. Bird scientific nomenclature and common names follows Sibley (2001).

The focused burrow surveys were conducted when weather conditions were conducive to observing potential burrows and owls outside of burrows. The survey was not performed during rain or within five days of precipitation, high winds (> 20 mph), dense fog, or temperatures over 90 °F. Where access to the entire BSA was not possible as a result of private property or physical barriers such as fences, observations were made from the nearest appropriate vantage points with binoculars.

RESULTS

Although much of the BSA is disturbed or developed, some areas do provide suitable habitat for burrowing owls. Ten potential burrows were observed within the BSA; however, no burrowing owls or their sign were observed associated with any of the potential burrows (Figure 3). All burrows were observed within the 9-acre Project footprint and none were observed within the 500-ft buffer. Recent disking activities and other land disturbances have created potentially-suitable open areas within the BSA providing marginal habitat, but these areas all only had potential owl burrows with no sign of occupation. Field observations suggest that the developed and degraded nature of the BSA and the disturbance regime present generally preclude owls from occupying the BSA. Other incidental wildlife species observed during surveys are provided within in Table 2.

Table 1. Survey Dates and Weather Conditions

Date	Personnel*	Temperature (°F)	Wind (MPH)	Sky
June 7, 2012	CT, JC	60 – 64	1 – 3	Sunny, Clear
June 11, 2012	CT	55 – 56	1 – 3	Overcast with marine layer
June 13, 2012	CT	75 – 78	1 –5	Sunny, Clear

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Date	Personnel*	Temperature (°F)	Wind (MPH)	Sky
June 20, 2012	CT	55 – 57	1 – 3	Overcast with marine layer
*URS Biologists: Carol Thompson = CT, Jeff Crain = JC				

Table 2. Incidental Wildlife Species Observed within the BSA

Scientific Name	Common Name
CLASS AVES	BIRDS
ACCEPITRIDAE	HAWKS EAGLES & RELATIVES
Buteo jamaicensis	Red-tailed hawk
ALAUDIDAE	LARKS
Eremophila alpestris	horned lark
CHARADREIDAE	PLOVERS
Charadrius vociferus	killdeer
COLUMBIDAE	PIGEONS & DOVES
Columba livia	rock dove
Zenaida macroura	mourning dove
CORVIDAE	JAYS & CROWS
Corvus brachyrhynchos	American crow
Corvus corax	common raven
FRINGILLIDAE	FINCHES
Carpodacus mexicanus	house finch
MIMIDAE	MOCKINGBIRDS & THRASHERS
Mimus polyglottos	northern mockingbird
ICTERIDAE	ORIOLES, BLACKBIRDS & COWBIRDS
Euphagus cyanocephalus	Brewer's blackbird
TROCHILIDAE	HUMMINGBIRDS
Calypte anna	Anna's hummingbird
TYRANNIDAE	TYRANT FLYCATCHERS
Sayornis nigricans	black phoebe
STURNIDAE	STARLINGS, MYNAS & OXPECKERS
Sturnus vulgaris	European starling
CLASS MAMMALIA	MAMMALS
Otospermophilus beecheyi	California ground squirrel
Thomomys bottae	Botta's pocket gopher

If you have any follow-up questions or concerns, please contact Greg Hoisington at (714) 433-7678 or greg.hoisington@urs.com.

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Sincerely,

Greg Hoisington
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REFERENCES

County of Riverside. 2006. Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions for the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Area (E.P. Department, ed), p. 4. Riverside, CA: County of Riverside.

Sibley, D.A. 2000. *National Audubon Society The Sibley Guide To Birds*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

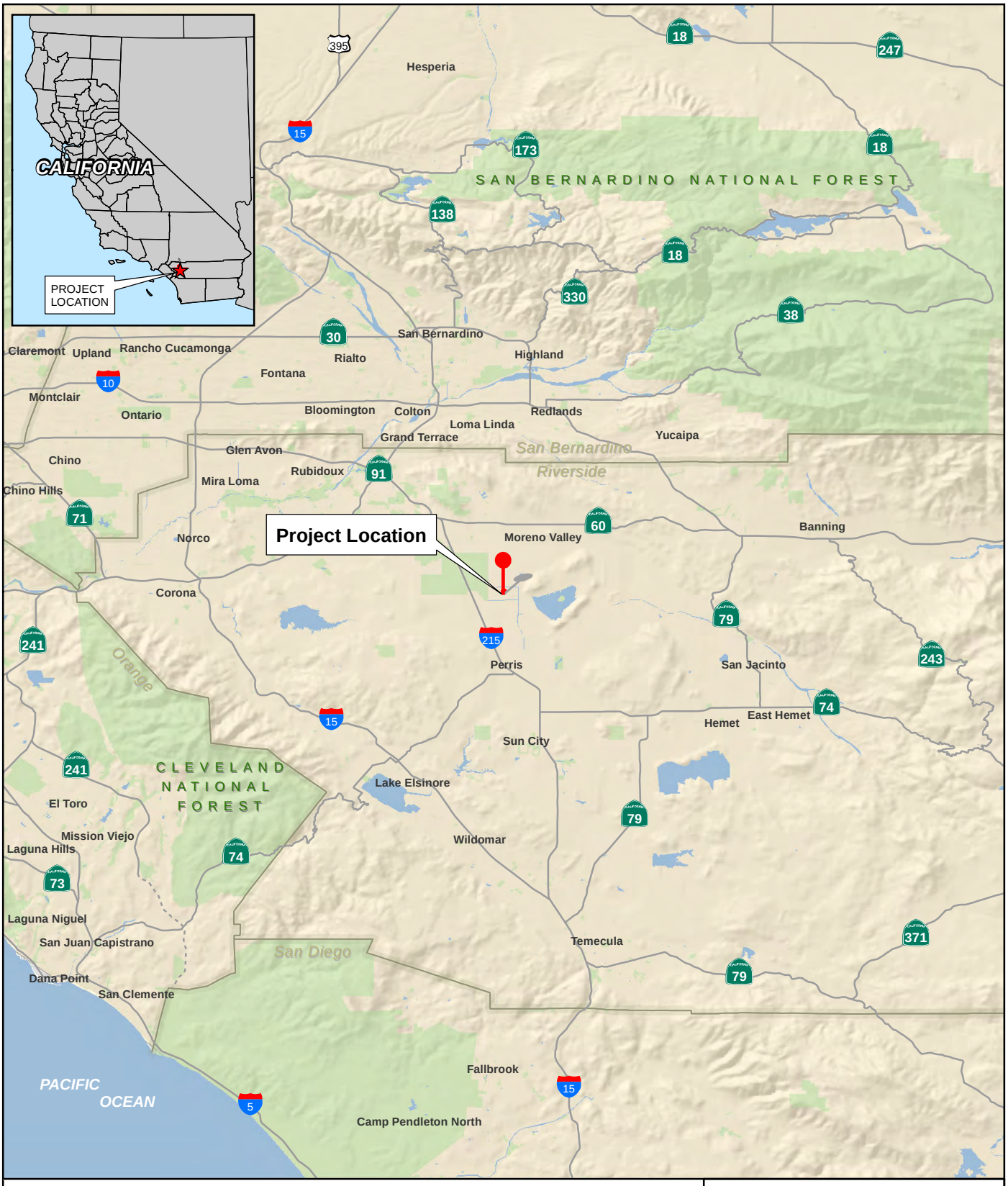

Figure 1
Regional Location

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San Michele Property

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Source: ESRI/Bing Maps
Aerial Flown 2009/2010

Site Boundary

Study Area

Developed Areas*

N

0 800 Feet

**Area developed after aerial was flown*

Figure 2
Project Location

First Industrial Realty Trust, Inc.
San Michele Property

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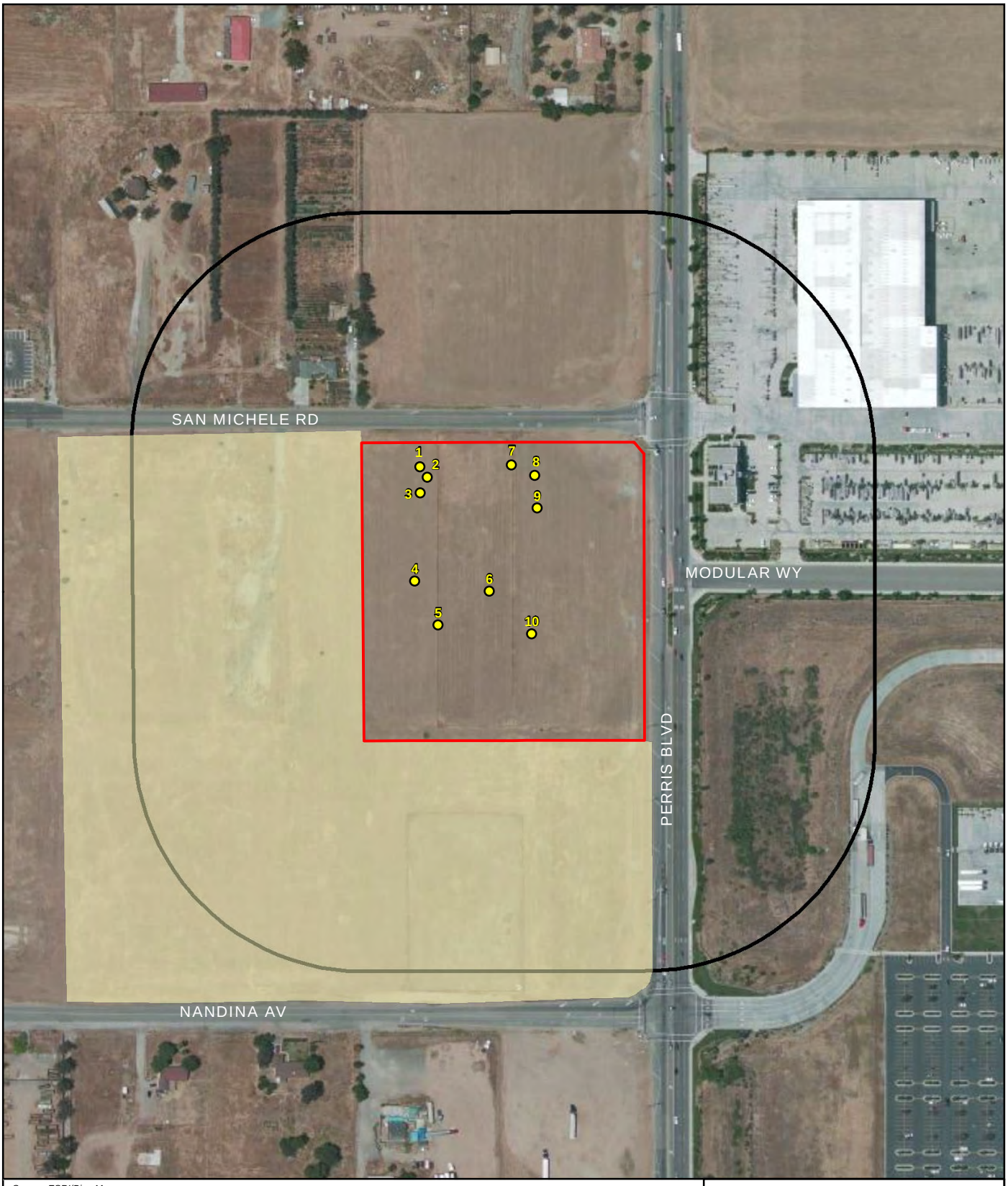

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Source: ESRI/Bing Maps
Aerial Flown 2009/2010

Burrow Locations
(No Burrowing Owl Sign Observed)

Site Boundary

Study Area

Developed Areas*

N

0 200 Feet

**Area developed after aerial was flown*

Figure 3

Potential Burrowing Owl Burrow Locations

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