

DOCKETED

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California Energy Commission

Puente Power Project Preliminary Staff Assessment Biological Resources

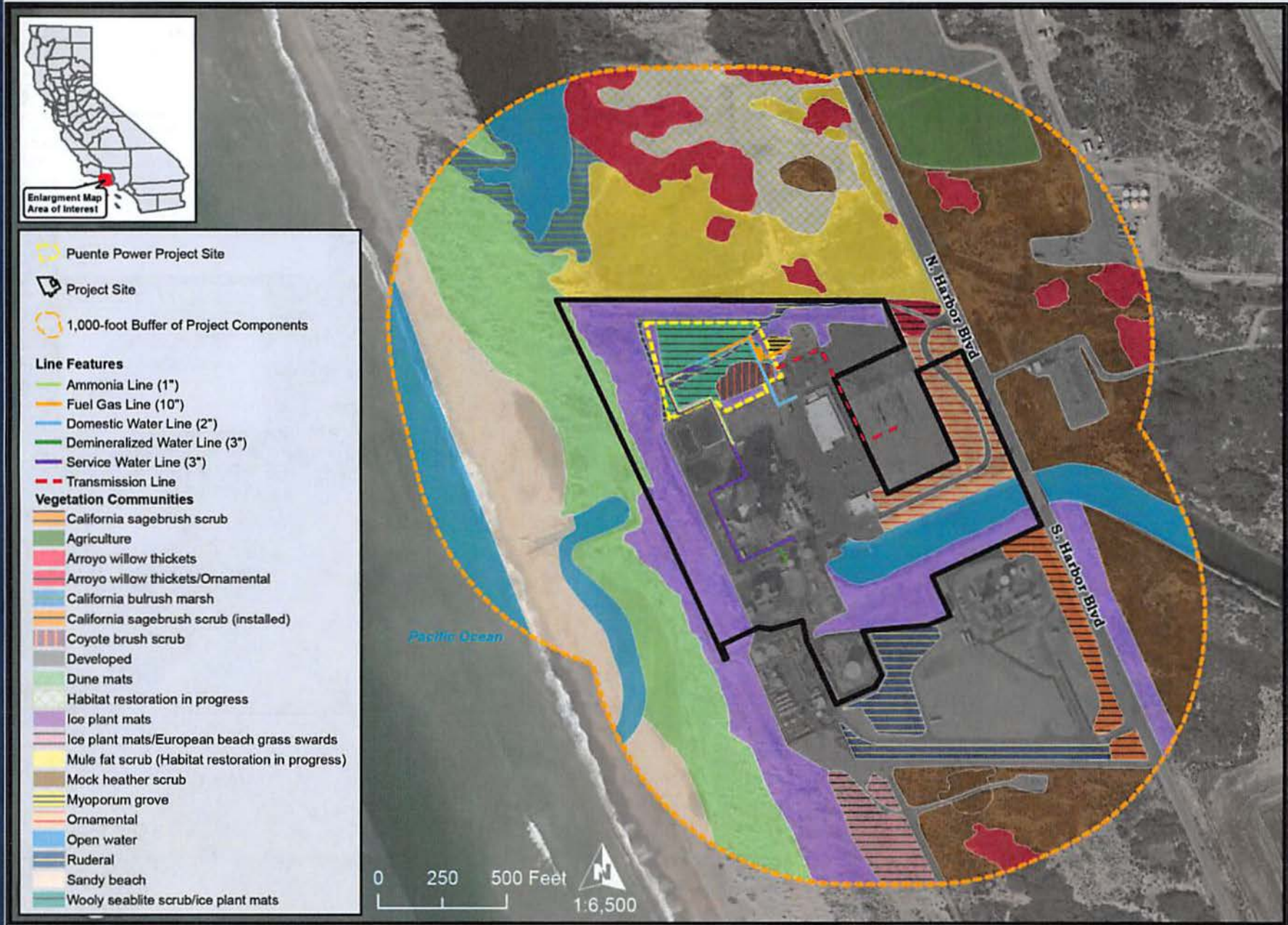
Carol Watson



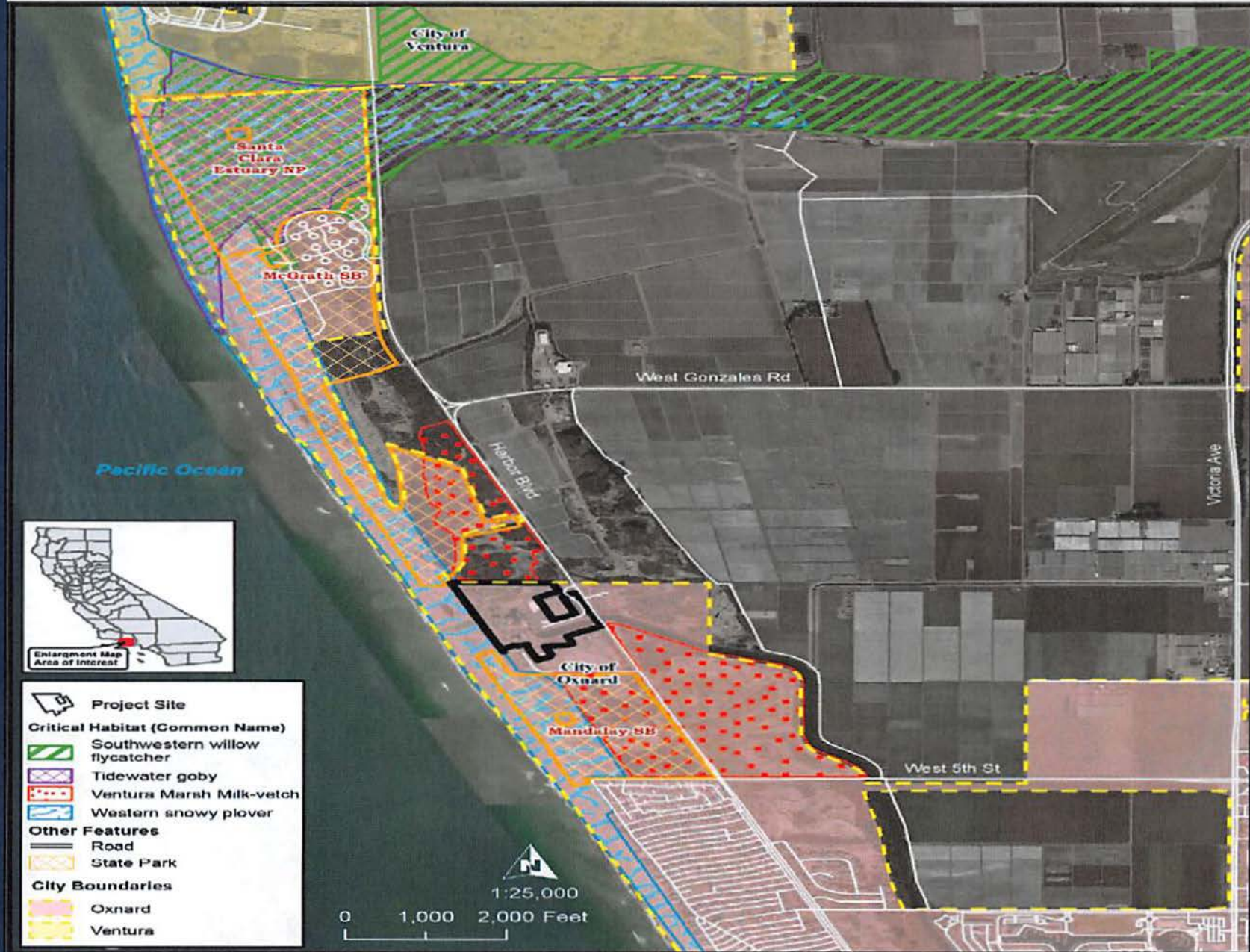
Overview of Onsite Biological Resources

- ▶ Existing project site has been historically disturbed, graded, and/or used for spoils storage for years
- ▶ Contains few natural resources and primarily consists of degraded woolly seablite-ice plant mats
- ▶ Situated adjacent sensitive habitat and wildlife, including USFWS-designated western snowy plover critical habitat to the west
- ▶ Species occurring at the Puente Power Project site are typically common species, acclimated to development, such as small rodents, lizards, and birds. There is also potential for less urbane species, primarily birds, to fly over the site, or perch on adjacent structures such as the Mandalay Bay Generating Station

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES - FIGURE 3
Puente Power Project PSA - Vicinity Vegetation



BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES - FIGURE 2
Puente Power Project PSA - USFWS Critical Habitat



CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION - SITING, TRANSMISSION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION
 SOURCE: United States Fish and Wildlife Service ~ 2015, OpenStreetMap, Bing Aerial and ESRI.



Puente Project Impacts

- ▶ Direct Impacts:
 - Loss of habitat (primarily woolly seablite-ice plant mats)
 - Crushing of common wildlife by construction equipment
 - Loss of Coastal Commission defined wetlands

- ▶ Indirect Impacts:
 - Offsite spread of invasive plants, noise, lighting, soil erosion



Coastal Commission Wetlands

- ▶ Coastal Commission Definition: “Lands within the coastal zone which may be covered periodically or permanently with shallow water”
- ▶ One parameter approach (vegetation, soils, or hydrology)
- ▶ Jurisdictional determination
- ▶ Wetland Mitigation
 - ▶ 2.03-acre wetland
 - ▶ 2:1 mitigation ratio
 - ▶ =4.06 acres of compensatory wetlands recommended
 - ▶ Coastal Commission staff report



Puente Project Review

- ▶ The site is previously disturbed; largely consisting of woolly seablite-ice plant mats
- ▶ Mitigation for wetlands meeting California Coastal Commission standards mitigated at 2:1 ratio
- ▶ Staff currently plans to publish the Final Staff Analysis in fall, 2016; will reflect substantive comments received and incorporate findings of the Coastal Commission staff report.