

Appendix FEIR-3

Draft Glossy Snake Relocation Plan



DRAFT

Relocation Plan for California Glossy Snake

Entrada South and Valencia Commerce Center (VCC)

Planning Areas

Prepared For:

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Background

This DRAFT Relocation Plan for Glossy Snake for the Entrada South and Valencia Commerce Center (VCC) Planning Areas (**Relocation Plan**) facilitates the implementation of Mitigation Measure ES/VCC-MM-BIO-1 of the Draft Supplemental EIR (SEIR) for the Entrada South and Valencia Commerce Center (VCC) Project (Project) based on the performance standards identified in Mitigation Measure RMDP/SCP BIO-54 of the State-certified EIR, defined below.

The Project is located adjacent to the boundary of the Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and within the boundary of the Spineflower Conservation Plan (collectively, RMDP/SCP) approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), which were the subject of an EIR and Additional Environmental Analysis (AEA) certified by CDFW in 2017 (SCH No. 20000011025; hereafter collectively referred to as the State-certified EIR). The Entrada South and VCC Planning Areas were analyzed in the State-certified EIR. The Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning has prepared a Draft SEIR for the Project that updates the analysis in the State-certified EIR to address incremental changes to the Project development, as well as relevant new information. One topic included in the Draft SEIR is the Project's potential effects on the California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*), which has been identified as a California Species of Special Concern (CSC) since the State-certified EIR was prepared.

The Draft SEIR proposes to adopt new Mitigation Measure ES/VCC-MM-BIO-1:

"Prior to construction, the Applicant shall develop a relocation plan for California glossy snake, to be incorporated into the relocation plan developed for other special-status reptile species, according to requirements in RMDP/SCP-BIO-54."

Mitigation Measure RMDP/SCP-BIO-54, which is referenced in the proposed new measure, was adopted as part of the State-certified EIR and applies to the Project; it imposes specific performance standards for the development of a relocation plan that would address multiple CSC reptile species, as follows:

"Prior to construction the applicant shall develop a relocation plan for coast horned lizard, silvery legless lizard, coastal western whiptail, rosy boa, San Bernardino ringneck snake, and coast patch-nosed snake. The Plan shall include but not be limited to the timing and location of the surveys that would be conducted for each species; identify the locations where more intensive

efforts should be conducted; identify the habitat and conditions in the proposed relocation site(s); the methods that would be utilized for trapping and relocating the individual species; and provide for the documentation/recording of the species and number of the animals relocated. The Plan shall be submitted to CDFW for approval 60 days prior to any ground disturbing activities within potentially occupied habitat.

The Plan shall include specific survey and relocation efforts that would occur for construction activities that occur both during the activity period of the special status species (generally March to November) and for periods when the species may be present in the work area but difficult to detect due to weather conditions (generally December through February). Thirty days prior to construction activities in coastal scrub, chaparral, oak woodland, riparian habitats, or other areas supporting these species qualified biologists shall conduct surveys to capture and relocate individual coast horned lizard, silvery legless lizard, coastal western whiptail, rosy boa, San Bernardino ringneck snake, and coast patch nosed snake in order to avoid or minimize take of these special status species. The plan shall require a minimum of three (3) surveys conducted during the time of year/day when each species is most likely to be observed. Individuals shall be relocated to nearby undisturbed areas with suitable habitat. If construction is scheduled to occur during the low activity period (generally December through February) the surveys shall be conducted prior to this period if possible and exclusion fencing shall be placed to limit the potential for re-colonization of the site prior to construction. The qualified biologist will be present during ground-disturbing activities immediately adjacent to or within habitat that supports populations of these species. Clearance surveys for special-status reptiles shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to the initiation of construction each day.

Results of the surveys and relocation efforts shall be provided to CDFG in the annual mitigation status report. Collection and relocation of animals shall only occur with the proper scientific collection and handling permits.

This Relocation Plan is intended to provide a framework for compliance with Mitigation Measures ES/VCC-MM-BIO-1 and RMDP/SCP-BIO-54, including the performance standards contained therein. It may be revised as needed to comply with any other applicable requirements, including any additional mitigation measures adopted through the SEIR or any permit conditions imposed by an agency with jurisdiction over the Project, and may be incorporated into the reptile relocation plan required by Mitigation Measure RMDP/SCP-BIO-54, as contemplated by Mitigation Measure ES/VCC-MM-BIO-1.

Site Descriptions and Biological Setting

The Project site is located within the Santa Clara River basin. The Santa Clara River watershed comprises a total of 1,634 square miles and drains portions of Los Padres National Forest, and the Santa Susana Mountains. The portion of the watershed in which the Entrada South and VCC Planning Areas lie is mostly east of the Ventura/Los Angeles County line and encompasses approximately 640 square miles. The Entrada South and VCC Planning Areas are described separately below.

(1) Entrada South Planning Area

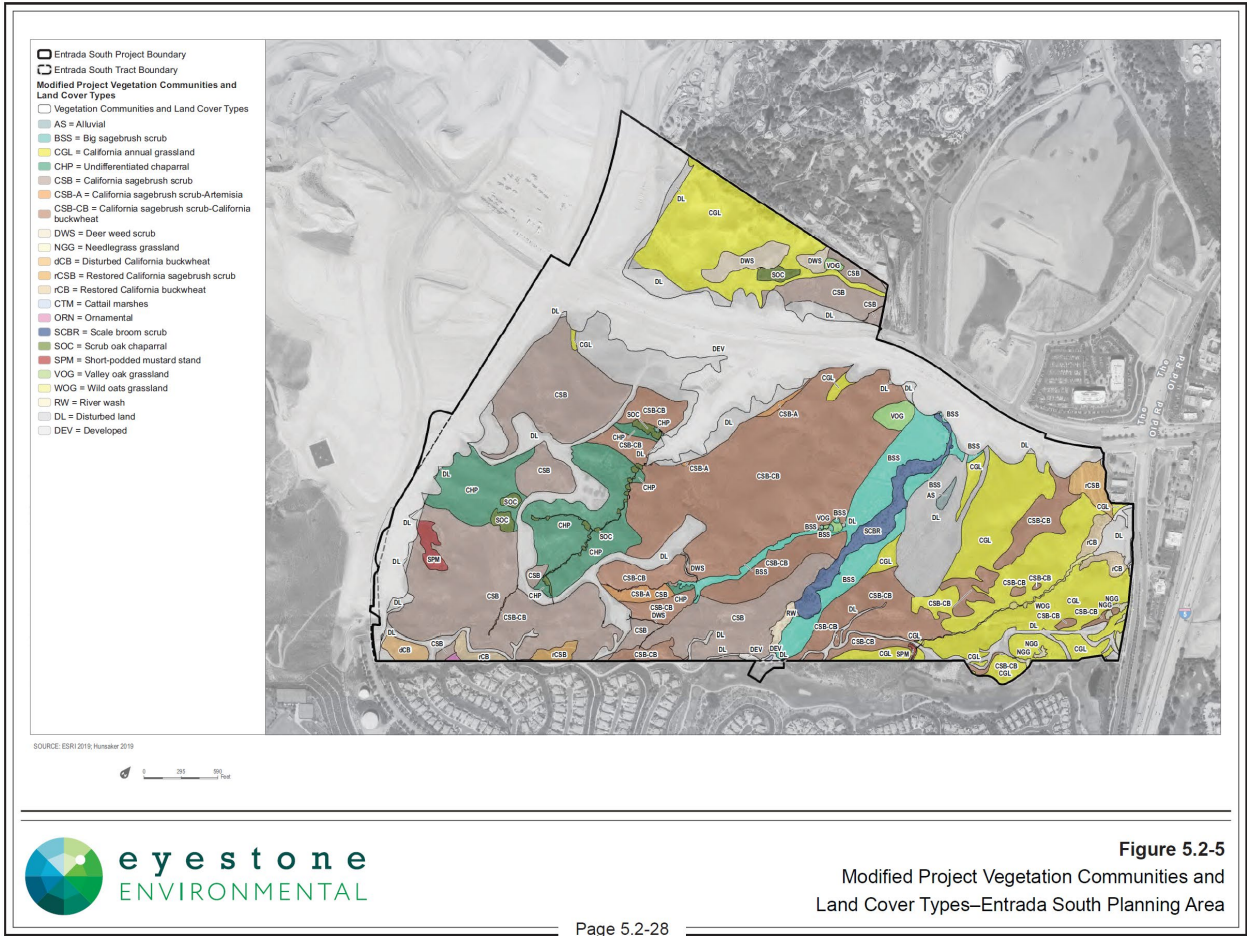
The topography of the Entrada South Planning Area is dominated by several north/south trending ridges. Site elevations range from approximately 1,100 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the eastern portion to approximately 1,450 amsl on the ridges in the southwestern portion of the Entrada South Planning Area (see attached **Figure 1**, Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types – Entrada South Planning Area). Vegetation communities and land cover types are summarized in Table 1.

Three unnamed, ephemeral drainages that flow northward are present in the Entrada South Planning Area, known as (from west to east): Unnamed Drainage 1, Unnamed Drainage 2, and Unnamed Drainage 3. All of these tributaries exit the Entrada South Planning Area through storm drain systems before eventually discharging to the Santa Clara River.

Table 1
Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types in Entrada South Planning Area

General Physiognomic and Physical Location	Habitat Types	Floristic Alliance/Associations Included	Acreage
Grass and herb Dominated Communities	Non-native Grassland Native Grassland Mustard stand	California annual grassland Wild oat grassland Needlegrass grassland Short-pod mustard stand	60.0
Scrub and Chaparral	Coastal Scrub Undifferentiated Chaparral scrubs Other chaparral	California sagebrush scrub (including restored) California sagebrush – Artemisia California sagebrush – California buckwheat scrub California buckwheat (including restored and disturbed forms) Deer weed scrub Scrub oak chaparral	174.2
Broad-Leafed Upland Tree Dominated	Oak Woodland and Forest	Valley oak/grass	1.7
Riparian and Bottomland Habitat	Other Riparian/Wetland	River wash Alluvial scrub Big sagebrush scrub Cattail marshes Scale broom scrub	19.8
Man-made Land Cover Types		Ornamental Developed land ² Disturbed land	129.5
TOTAL			385.2

Figure 1 - Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types – Entrada South Planning Area



VCC Planning Area

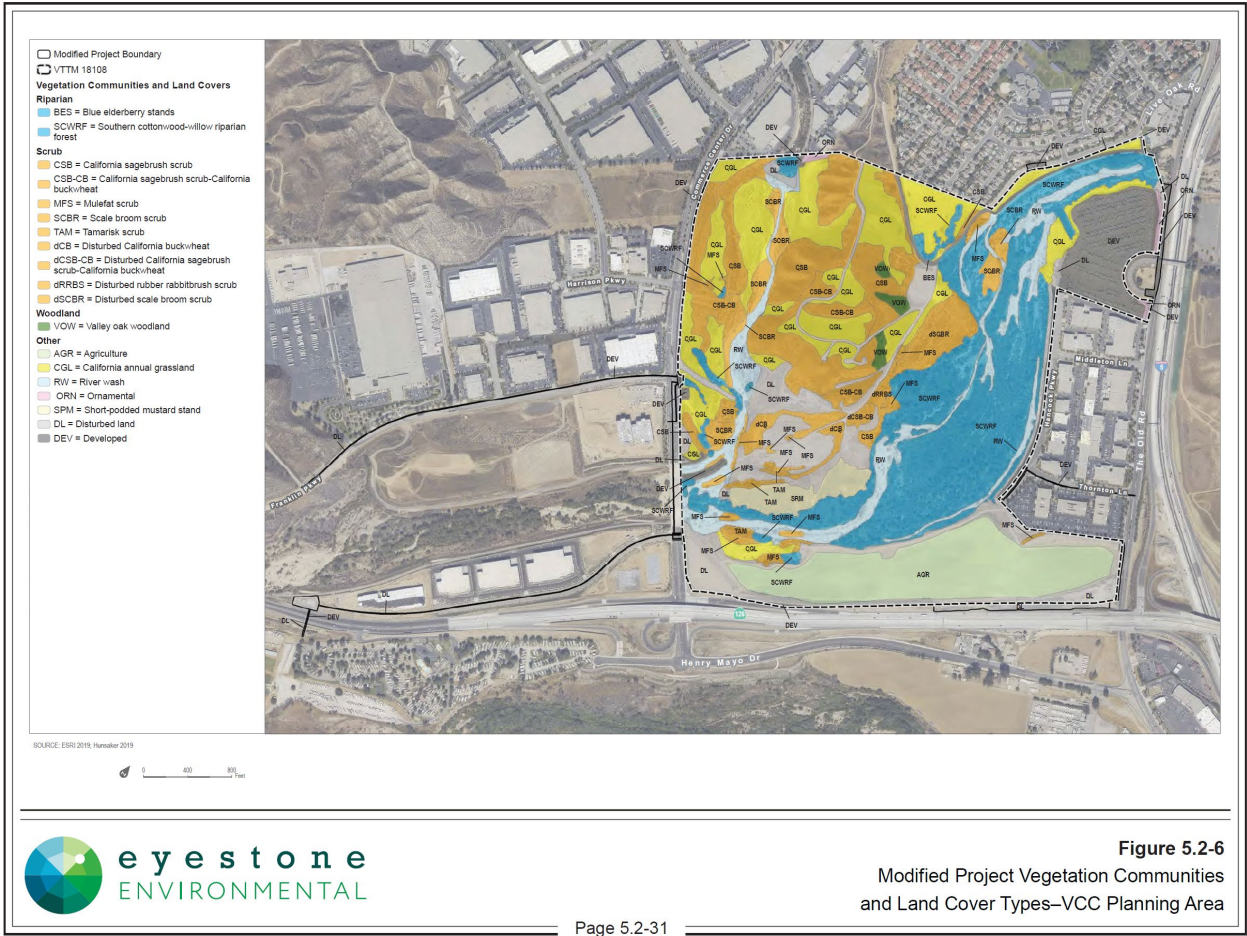
The VCC Planning Area lies roughly in the northwest corner of the junction of Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 126 (SR-126), east of Commerce Center Drive and north of the Santa Clara River. The topography of the VCC Planning Area is dominated by north-south-trending ridges that lie north of Castaic Creek, near the confluence with Hasley Creek. Site elevations range from approximately 990 feet amsl in the Castaic Creek bottom to approximately 1,210 feet amsl at the top of the north-central ridge (see **Figure 2**, Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types - VCC Planning Area). Vegetation communities and land cover types are summarized in Table 2.

Two drainages, Castaic Creek and Hasley Creek, run roughly north-south through the VCC Planning Area and join at the southwestern end of the planning area. Castaic Creek and Hasley Creek eventually drain to the Santa Clara River. In addition, two other potentially jurisdictional aquatic features are present on site: the Live Oak Road Detention Basin, and the Old Road Agricultural Ditch.

Table 2
Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types in VCC Planning Area

General Physiognomic and Physical Location	Habitat Types	Floristic Alliance/Associations Included	Acreage
Grass and herb Dominated Communities	Non-native Grassland Native Grassland Mustard stand	California annual grassland Wild oat grassland Needlegrass grassland Short-pod mustard stand	57.5
Scrub and Chaparral	Coastal Scrub Undifferentiated Chaparral scrubs Other chaparral	California sagebrush scrub (including restored) California sagebrush – Artemisia California sagebrush – California buckwheat scrub California buckwheat (including restored and disturbed forms) Deer weed scrub Scrub oak chaparral	49.1
Broad-Leafed Upland Tree Dominated	Oak Woodland and Forest	Valley oak/grass	1.8
Riparian and Bottomland Habitat	Other Riparian/Wetland	River wash Alluvial scrub Big sagebrush scrub Cattail marshes Scale broom scrub	119.7
Man-made Land Cover Types		Agriculture Ornamental Developed land Disturbed land	106.7
TOTAL			334.7

Figure 2 - Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types – VCC Planning Area



Source: Dudek, 2024.

Purpose

The purpose of this Relocation Plan is to provide guidance for implementing pre-construction surveys for the California glossy snake to ensure that impacts to these individuals are minimized, and to relocate individuals of the species, if found, to suitable habitats outside the project area according to a standardized methodology. This includes identifying habitat suitable for species relocation within areas to be preserved as open space under the control of FivePoint. The Relocation Plan also specifies coordination efforts with CDFW and record keeping and recording requirements.

Requirements and Performance Standards

Consistent with Draft SEIR Mitigation Measure ES/VCC-MM-BIO-1, and based on the applicable performance standards in Mitigation Measure RMDP/SCP-BIO-54, the Project proponent will engage biological consultants to conduct pre-construction surveys for the glossy snake, a special-status terrestrial reptile in the Project disturbance areas (including areas that may be indirectly impacted by development activities) prior to construction in areas of potentially suitable habitat.

The Project area grading is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2026 or later depending on project approvals and market conditions. In advance of grading, the Project site will be cleared of vegetation and trees. Before grubbing/grading activities, target reptile species will be surveyed for and relocated from the Project areas in accordance with mitigation measures ES/VCC-MM-BIO-1 and RMDP/SCP-BIO-54, as summarized below:

- *Prior to construction, develop a plan for relocation of California glossy snake. The plan should include the following:*
 - *Timing and location of surveys for glossy snake*
 - *Identify the locations where more intensive efforts should be conducted;*
 - *Identify the habitat and conditions in the proposed relocation site(s);*
 - *Specify methods that would be utilized for trapping and relocating; and*
 - *Provide for the documentation/recording of the species and number of the animals relocated.*
- *Submit the Plan to CDFW for approval 60-days prior to any ground disturbing activities within potentially occupied habitat.*
- *Important considerations to be incorporated into the plan:*

- include specific survey and relocation efforts that would occur for construction activities that occur both during the activity period of the special status species (generally March to November) and for periods when the species may be present in the work area but difficult to detect due to weather conditions (generally December through February).
- 30-days prior to construction activities in coastal scrub, chaparral, oak woodland, riparian habitats, or other areas supporting these species qualified biologists shall conduct surveys to capture and relocate individuals in order to avoid or minimize take of these special status species.
- a minimum of three (3) surveys to be conducted during the time of year/day when the species is most likely to be observed.
- Relocate individuals to nearby undisturbed areas with suitable habitat.
- If construction is scheduled to occur during the low activity period (generally December through February) the surveys shall be conducted prior to this period if possible and exclusion fencing shall be placed to limit the potential for re-colonization of the site prior to construction.
- qualified biologist present during ground-disturbing activities immediately adjacent to or within habitat that supports populations of these species.
- Clearance surveys for special-status reptiles shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to the initiation of construction each day.
- Results of the surveys and relocation efforts shall be provided to CDFG.
- Collection and relocation of animals shall only occur with the proper scientific collection and handling permits.

Target Species

Special-status reptiles known to occur in the vicinity and that are the target of the Relocation Plan include the local subspecies California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*). Please note that from time to time, the common and scientific names for special-status species may change. This document refers to California glossy snake based on the current accepted nomenclature.

Occurrences in Project Area

This section summarizes the special-status reptile species (glossy snake) that is covered under this Relocation Plan and includes a description of its general habitat requirements and occurrences in the project area.

California Glossy Snake

California glossy snake was designated as a California Species of Special Concern by CDFW after the analysis for the State-Certified EIR and adoption of RMDP/SCP BIO-54. The survey and relocation requirements of RMDP/SCP BIO-54 are considered applicable to California glossy snake as it occupies similar habitat and has similar life-history to the other species addressed by that mitigation measure. The California glossy snake occurs primarily in grasslands, fields, coastal scrub, and chaparral. It may also prefer sandy soil habitats, such as alluvial creek beds (Thomson et al. 2016). It is largely nocturnal and preys mostly on lizards and small mammals, but also on small birds and other snakes (Rodriguez-Robles et al. 1999). No focused surveys have been conducted for this species in the Project area. However, pitfall surveys for terrestrial reptiles were conducted in the RMDP area prior to the analysis for the State-Certified EIR (in 2004) and subsequently in portions of the RMDP/SCP area (in 2015 and 2017), a portion of which overlapped the Entrada South Project area (Magic Mountain Parkway Extension area), and these efforts should provide some indication of the potential for occurrence of the species on the Project sites (Impact Sciences 2004, 2006, 2015a; Compliance Biology 2017). No California glossy snakes were captured during these surveys.

The CNDDDB (CDFW 2024) includes three occurrences within 5.0 miles east and north of the Project site, but none since 1946. Therefore, the species likely is not common in the vicinity, including the Project site. However, the Entrada South Planning Area supports 254.0 acres and the VCC Planning Area supports 226.3 acres of habitats that may be suitable for the California glossy snake. These habitats include grasslands, scrub and chaparral, and alluvial creek beds (herein described as river wash habitat), and thus the species has the potential to occur in these areas. Although California glossy snake was not analyzed in the State-Certified EIR, the other special-status reptile species analyzed in the State-Certified EIR occur in some or all of the habitats potentially occupied by California glossy snake, including San Bernardino ring-necked snake (*Diadophis punctatus modestus*), San Diegan tiger whiptail [=coastal western whiptail] (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), coast patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis virgultea*), and Blainville's horned lizard. The latter three of these species, like California glossy snake, are California Species of Special Concern. Because the State-Certified EIR assumed that these species were likely present in suitable habitats on the Entrada South and VCC Planning Areas, California glossy snake should similarly be assumed to be present in the grassland, coastal scrub, and chaparral vegetation communities, as well as river wash habitat associated with ephemeral drainages on the Entrada South and VCC Planning Areas.

California glossy snakes occupy arid scrub, rocky washes, grasslands, and chaparral. It is assumed to prefer microhabitats of open areas and areas with soil loose enough for burrowing (CalHerps 2024). Depending on weather, this species is typically active from

February to November with most activity concentrated in May (CalHerps 2024). This species is not active during the hottest parts of the year and can be found in burrows or under rocks.

Timing and Location of Pre-Construction Surveys

Though focused glossy snake pedestrian surveys have not been conducted on the Entrada South or VCC Planning Areas, no glossy snakes were observed on either of the Planning Areas during other biological surveys (plant and animal). Pedestrian surveys for this species will be conducted within the grading disturbance limits prior to grading. Biological monitors will pre-clear the grading area and also be present to monitor the grading activity in the event any are unearthed, so they can be relocated. At least 3 surveys shall be completed within 30-days of the ground disturbance in potentially suitable habitat for the species, including grassland, coastal scrub, and chaparral vegetation communities and all streambed areas where river wash is present.

As the species is most active from February to November, with limited surface activity during the hottest months of the summer, these surveys are to occur during a period when the species is expected to be most active. As a primarily nocturnal and crepuscular (active at dawn and dusk) species, surveys will be conducted during the early morning or early evening, with at least one of the surveys occurring during the night time period. During the hottest summer months when surface activity is low, additional surveys for the species may be conducted by searching beneath logs, rocks or other accessible burrow areas. If the ground disturbance is scheduled to occur outside of this active period (typically the winter months), then surveys shall occur earlier than 30-days prior to construction to determine if the species is likely present, and if found, individuals relocated and exclusion fencing installed to prevent re-inhabiting of the area by the species. If concentrations of individuals are found in any particular habitat(s) or site locations, then more intensive survey and relocation efforts, including additional surveys, employing additional trapping methods, or increasing the number of monitoring biologists, will be implemented during pre-construction trapping and relocation and during construction monitoring, as deemed appropriate by the Qualified Biologist.

Relocation Procedures

The following section describes the methods and relocation guidelines for glossy snake. These methods are fairly typical for a range of special-status wildlife species, unless stated otherwise. The timing and location of surveys are addressed above, and relocation may occur in concert with surveys or as a separate activity. This includes specifications for the dormant and active periods. The specific relocation methods are outlined, including materials needed, transportation requirements, and habitat suitability requirements of the relocation sites.

Any glossy snakes that are found or captured during site preparation or construction are to be relocated to suitable habitat located outside the project area in accordance with this Relocation Plan.

Personnel

The resumes of the Qualified Biologist and other biologist(s) working under their direction that are proposed to conduct the pre-construction surveys and implement the mitigation measure will be submitted to CDFW for approval, along with this Relocation Plan, prior to conducting the pre-construction surveys. The approval of this plan by CDFW constitutes express approval to relocate any common species of reptile and any CDFW Species of Special Concern described in this plan and detected during pre-construction surveys.

Capture and Relocation Methods

Depending upon the timing of Project construction, this Relocation Plan is expected to begin upon approval or within 30 days prior to the initiation of grading. Additional survey and collection will occur up to and including the period of initial grading/grubbing. The specific relocation methods are described below.

Capture Methods

Capturing animals will be done by hand and/or tools such as snake sticks. Any glossy snakes collected shall be recorded and attributed to a specific GPS location. General information on the habitat conditions and site location will be taken, including position, substrate, and microhabitat characteristics. Basic weather data will also be recorded during survey activities (e.g., temperature, cloud cover, wind speed, precipitation). Representative photos will be taken of any captured/relocated glossy snakes. Data sheets (or, as appropriate, a summary of the data) and representative photos will be included in the post-relocation report.

Care will be taken to minimize harm and stress to captured snakes. Biologists performing the species capture and relocation will use an antibacterial disinfectant on equipment to ensure that diseases are not transferred among conspecifics.

Transportation

All captured animals shall be contained in a shaded container and will be relocated within one hour of capture whenever possible, but in no case for more than 24 hours. It is recommended that all animals be relocated to their new site during midmorning, when they are most active. This will ensure that the species are capable of escaping predation in their new habitat.

Because animals will be stored for less than 24 hours, no supplemental food or water is required. In the unlikely event the duration in captivity has to be longer than 24 hours, then a shallow bowl of water shall be provided for each animal.

Glossy snakes will be transported to a relocation site in similar habitat as they were captured or as otherwise approved by CDFW, in a secure plastic bucket or cloth bag. Animals will be kept in a relatively stress-free environment and out of the direct sun.

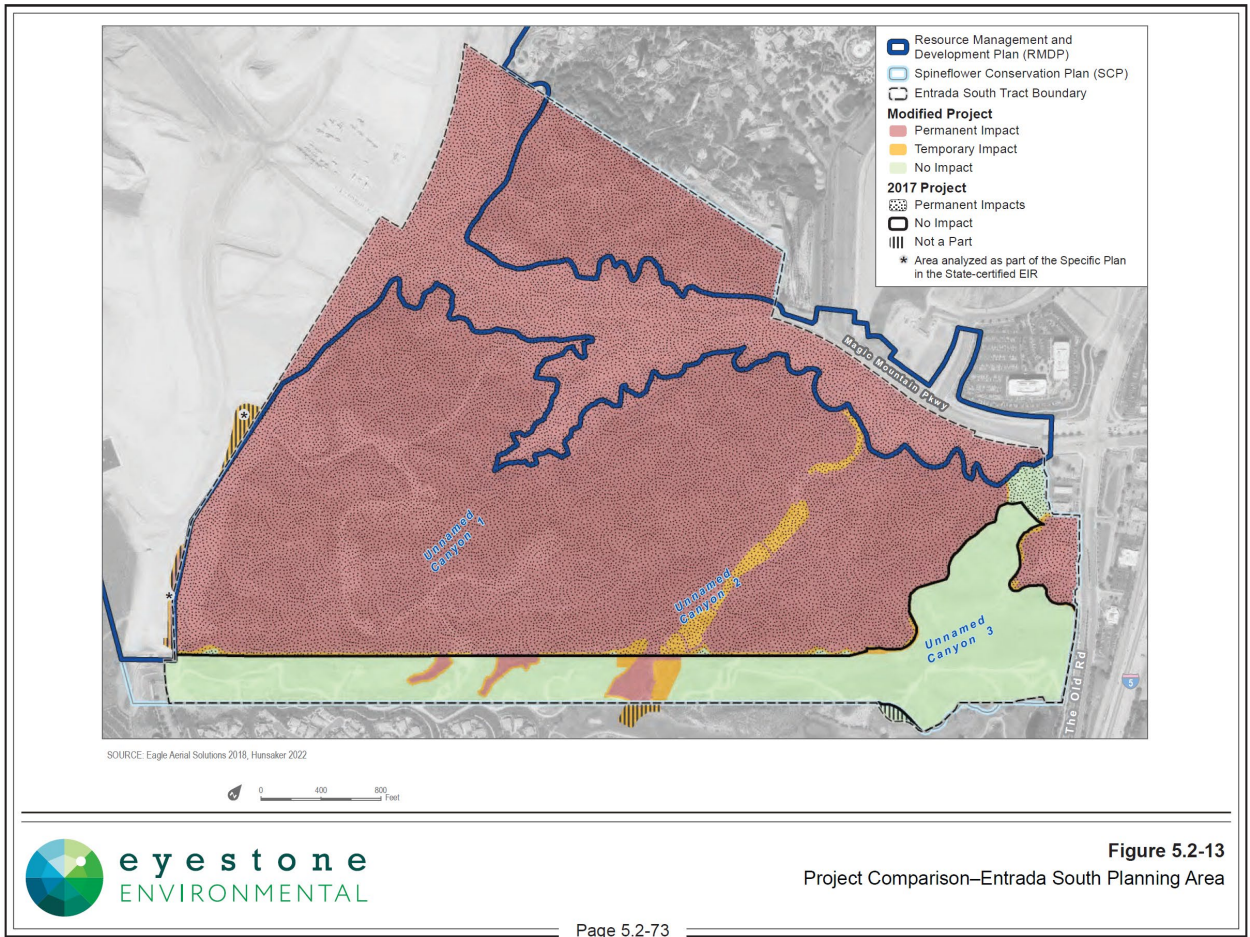
Relocation Sites

The Entrada South Planning Area will have limited upland habitats remaining post-development, however there is a 30-acre Spineflower Preserve, including ephemeral streambed, Unnamed Drainage 1, and the linear Edison/Gas Company corridor along the southern boundary (**Figure 3** – Project Comparison - Entrada South Planning Area). The VCC Planning Area will have the Castaic Creek corridor, ephemeral streambed river wash habitat in Hasley Channel, and other upland habitats in the vicinity that are outside of the development footprint, and are to remain post-development (**Figure 4** – Project Comparison – VCC Planning Area). These permanent open space areas contain the grassland, coastal scrub, chaparral and river wash habitats suitable for the glossy snake and would be prioritized for relocation of any captured individuals. Any special-status wildlife captured on the Project site during pre-construction surveys and during project monitoring, would, therefore, be released in suitable habitat within the Project site or in permanent open space in the vicinity of the Project site at a distance where the relocated animal would not be anticipated to return to the construction zone. Where necessary, exclusion fencing such as SWPPP silt fence, will surround the Project site to impede species re-entry into the construction zone.

CDFW approval of this Relocation Plan acknowledges the intended use of these areas for such a purpose. Of note, survival of relocated species is dependent on factors out of the control of the Qualified Biologist, including species already occupying relocation sites, overall carrying capacity of the relocation area, and other environmental factors, such as seasonal weather and overall habitat health in the relocation site. Relocation sites will also be selected on the expectation of minimal human disturbance over the long term.

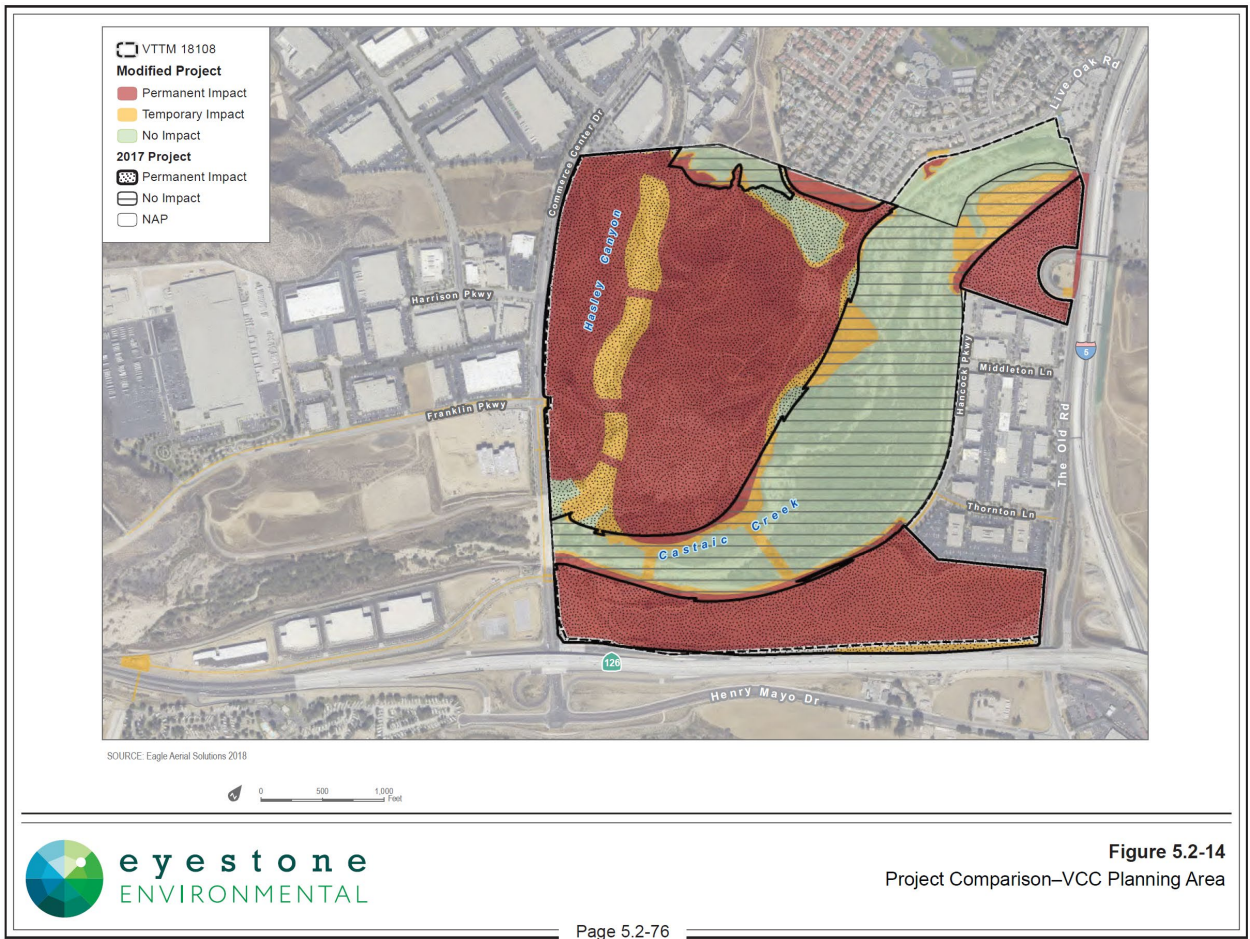
The Qualified Biologist will determine the best locations for relocation of captured individuals, which will depend on vegetation characteristics, soils, water conditions, relative density of preexisting herpetofauna, other habitat features, and proximity to human activities. Priority for relocation sites will be given to those habitats closely matching the habitat where the animal was captured.

Figure 3



Source: Dudek, 2023.

Figure 4



Source: Dudek, 2023.

Reporting

The results of the pre-construction surveys will be submitted to The Newhall Land and Farming Company (Newhall), which is responsible for providing survey data to CDFW and any other regulatory agencies, as appropriate. Reports to CDFW will include at least the following elements:

- Pre-construction survey methods and conditions (time, weather, etc.)
- Data including the number of individuals of glossy snakes, size and age class collected, holding times and any incidental mortality, and relocation site designations
- Weekly (Monday to Friday) data collection summaries including a tabular total of the glossy snake data: quantity captured, size and age classes discovered, the designation of the relocation sites used, and the number of glossy snakes relocated to each relocation site during the weekly reporting period and cumulatively.
- Aerial map with GPS points for species collected, locations of individual detections, and each relocation site used with the glossy snakes placed in each location tied to the GPS data
- Representative photographs of collected and relocated glossy snakes, including photos of original habitat and photos of the relocation sites
- Conclusions and recommendations regarding results.

Newhall will notify CDFW via email or verbally if special-status species are discovered during pre-construction surveys. Consultation with the Project Biologist will be at the discretion of CDFW and will include developing additional specific relocation methods or alternate relocation sites.

References

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- Jennings and Hayes. 1994. *Amphibians and Reptile Species of Special Concern in California*. Published by California Department of Fish and Game & California Academy of Sciences.
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- Thomson et al. 2016. *California Amphibian and Reptile Species of Special Concern*. Published by California Department of Fish and Wildlife