

April 30, 2024

Mr. David Nguyen
County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803-1331

Subject: Sunshine Canyon Landfill, Quarterly Vegetation Report
First Quarter 2024 Vegetation Report

Mr. Nguyen,

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

- Condition 18B of the Finding of Conformance
- Condition 44A of the Condition Use Permit (CUP)
- Los Angeles City Condition [Q] C.8 of the Ordinance No. 172,933

This report presents the progress of the site's landscaping and revegetation activities for the first quarter of 2024. The intent of these reports is to provide detailed information regarding the site's efforts related to vegetation including vegetation of interim and permanent slopes and activities conducted for the on-site sage mitigation areas.

Architerra Design Group continues to assist site personnel in evaluating current site conditions relating to vegetation and provide recommendations for future efforts. This report includes their assessment of the pilot sage vegetation area as well as recommendations for this area. Architerra's evaluation is in addition to the required quarterly monitoring performed by our consulting biologist.

1.0 Interim Slopes

For the purposes of this report, interim slopes are those defined as slope areas where no activities have taken place for 180 days or longer. CUP Condition 44A requires "a temporary hydroseed vegetation cover on any slope or landfill area that is projected to be inactive for a period of greater than 180 days".

1.1 Hydroseeding Activities

Based on the results of the trial project completed in August 2017, a 57-acre vegetative cover project using the approved seed mix was completed in mid-December 2017. Additionally, the site completed hydroseeding approximately 155 acres; application of the approved seed mix was completed during 2019. The increase in hydroseeding application is a result of our normal winterization efforts along with slope revegetation as a result of the Saddle Ridge Fire that impacted Sylmar, CA on October 2019. These areas had successful vegetation growth after the recent rains.

2.0 Permanent Slopes

Permanent slopes are defined as those where no landfilling activities will be conducted in the future.

As part of our Saddle Ridge Fire recovery efforts both the City and County permanent slopes of the landfill had hydroseed applied as necessary. This application of hydroseed was completed for soil stabilization purposes.

3.0 Non-Permanent Cut Slopes

Prior quarterly vegetation reports have illustrated one area above the front terminal sedimentation basin and one area near the temporary bypass road as “non-permanent cut slopes”. An evaluation of these areas has been conducted and it has been determined that these areas are “permanent slopes” because no landfilling activities will be conducted against these slopes in the future.

4.0 Activities Conducted in Sage Mitigation Areas – 1Q2024

During the first quarter of 2024, the following activities were conducted in the sage mitigation areas at the landfill.

4.1 City South Sage Pilot Project Area – Deck C

The lower Deck C mitigation project area was impacted by the Saddle Ridge fire in October 2019. As noted in Rincon’s (formerly JMA) City-Side Sage Mitigation Area Lower Deck report a substantial amount of the lower deck was burned or scorched. However, in previous reports they note that because this was an established site, they expect natural re-establishment of the native vegetation within the first two to three years. Rincon has noted a substantial amount of regrowth has occurred following the fire and included the most prevalent natives such as California Sunflower, Saltbush, Horsetweed, and pockets of Wild Ryegrass. Rincon also noted non-native plant cover has slightly decreased between third and fourth quarter monitoring.

As reported previously, Architerra Design Group indicates that there has been an abundance of Venturan CSS species germinating and crown-sprouting since the

fire. The species following the rebound include Purple Sage, Coast Sunflower, White Sage, Creeping Wild Rye, Deerweed, Black Sage, and Mexican Elderberry. Surprisingly there are also new species from the original seed mix are now sprouting up in decent numbers and included in the list below:

- Purple Sage (*Salvia leucophylla*)
- Coast Sunflower (*Encelia californica*)
- White Sage (*Salvia apiana*)
- Creeping Wild Rye (*Leymus triticoides*)
- Deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*)
- Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*)
- Mexican Elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*)
- Scarlet Bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolia*)
- Telegraph Weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*)
- Monkey Flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*)
- Smooth-Leaf Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon trichocalyx*)
- Thicketleaf Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon crassifolium*)
- Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*)
- California Bush Sunflower (*Encelia californica*)
- California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*)
- California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*)
- Quail Bush (*Atriplex lentiformis*)
- Four-Wing Saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*)
- Cattle Spinach (*Atriplex polycarpa*)
- Spinescale (*Atriplex spinifera*)
- Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)
- Foothill Needlegrass (*Nassella lepida*)
- Coyote Bush (*Baccharis pilularis*)
- Showy Penstemon (*Penstemon spectabilis*)
- Wright's Cudweed (*Pseudognaphalium microcephalum*)
- White Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*) Non-Native
- Australian Saltbush (*Atriplex semibaccata*) Non-Native

As reported from Architerra, the abundance of historic level rains last two winters and the summer 2023 storm Hillary has assisted in the emergence of many of the Venturan CSS Species. With the cooler temperatures and recent rains, many native and non-native seed germination has increased compared to first quarter of previous years and in the selected quadrats, non-native plant cover has declined slightly from Q4 2023 to Q1 2024. Weed germination on Deck C is dominated by Shortpod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), Yellow Star Thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), and Common Sowthistle (*Salsola ssp.*). Along with the invasive weeds listed, the following native Venturan Coastal Sage Scrub species have also germinated: Saltbush (*Atriplex sp.*), Coast Sunflower (*Encelia californica*), California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), and Coyote Bush (*Baccharis pilularis*).

It was recommended maintenance personnel work on flagging and removing non-natives before they flower and seed. In Q1, minimal maintenance work was done

on removing invasive species and it was also noted the interior of the deck still needed to be weeded. Also noted was to identify native species prior to any invasive removals. In addition, the majority of the Coast Live Oaks at the PM 10 berm have recovered from fire damage in 2020.

4.2 City South Deck B

The Deck B sage mitigation project began on April 9, 2018 and planting was completed by the end of the fourth quarter 2018. Soil samples indicated low pH and high salinity, as a result Deck B underwent a leaching schedule. Additional soil amendments and resampling were completed before planting began, which took place during the fourth quarter 2018. Pacific Restoration Group, Inc (PRG) has been working with Architerra for the completion of project. A summary of the progress is included in Attachment 3. The northwest portion of the Middle Deck burned during the Saddle Ridge Fire in October 2019. Architerra Design Group (ADG) indicated previously Deck B was doing quite well and there was evidence of desiccation of the seedlings especially the Common Yarrow and other native species that have recently spouted and are beginning to harden off and defoliate. Architerra has, in the past, also indicated the plant diversity on Deck B is impressive and many of the species in the seed mix have germinated and the containerized plants also are doing well and are blooming or just finished which are the White Sage, Mexican Elderberry, Menzie's Goldenbush, and Prickly Pear.

During Ricon's observation of Deck B, dominate native cover included brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), coast prickly pear (*Opuntia littoralis*), big saltbush (*Atriplex lentiformis*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), and coastal goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*).

Revegetation efforts have been successful in the establishment of the Venturan Coastal Sage Scrub habitat and evidence of species and age diversity and resprouting of larger species. Architerra also noted Deck B site is similar to those found on Deck C in the growth of the VCSS. Deck B is also dominated by California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum faciculatum*). However, the downslopes are primarily covered with little to no native species and should be addressed to remove the invasive weeds as soon as possible. The south side of the slope has been overtaken by invasive Slenderleaf Iceplant (*Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum*) and was growing in the revegetation area and has spread northward. Maintenance of the iceplant has been minimal and continues to spread. The northern part of Deck B has been completely filled in and is well established with shading to prevent weed growth. Overall, there is a good species diversity on this deck and planting is responding well with vigorous growth.

4.3 City South Deck A

In December 2022, Conversations with Architerra were started to discuss a plan to address the potential mitigation plans for Deck A. An onsite meeting occurred during May 2023 for an initial assessment of Deck A and determine what will need to be done. We anticipate a tentative schedule to be established in the coming months.

Prior to any mitigation efforts, soil was placed in a large area affected by subsidence and graded for proper drainage. This occurred in June and July 2023 and it is anticipated in quarter four 2024, mitigation plans will commence to address the area. Additional areas have also been identified that will require additional soils to fill in low lying areas prior to any mitigation in Q4 of 2024.

The Deck A sage mitigation is anticipated to restart late 2024. Recent grading activity on approximately 1.5 acres occurred during the second quarter and into early third quarter 2023. This grading activity was completed in order to fill a low spot resulting from subsidence and which led to ponding during this past winter. The initial plan for Deck A is to partition the approximately 25 acres into more manageable 5-acre plots. The recently graded area will be part of the initial revegetation plot and is expected to start after the first rains to allow the soil to properly leach. Soil sampling was conducted in September 2023 to determine the viability of the soil. The full report can be found in Attachment 3 of the third quarter report.

4.4 County Sage Mitigation Area

The County sage mitigation area is located on the western side of the County portion of Sunshine Canyon Landfill (Drawing 1). As noted in the first quarter Rincon County-Side Sage Mitigation Area report the upper half of the mitigation site was burned in the Saddle Ridge fire in October of 2019. No revegetation activities were conducted in this area during the first quarter of 2024, and as noted in multiple Rincon progress reports, the conditions in this mitigation area have remained unchanged for some time. Rincon notes in their attached 2024 first quarter vegetation report that this area remains problematic for establishment of vegetation due to barren soil. However, the southeastern portion of the plot is moderately covered with native and non-native vegetation and some small patches of vegetation have begun to establish a presence in the northern-central area. Soil samples from this location indicate low pH, high salinity, and Boron present in native soils.

5.0 Assessments of Sage Mitigation Areas

Assessments of the site's sage mitigation areas are conducted by a qualified biologist on a quarterly basis. The following sections present a summary of the recommendations for the sage mitigation areas from Rincon (City and County sage mitigation areas) and

Architerra (City South Sage Pilot Project Area (Deck C) and Middle Deck (Deck B) and the proposed actions in response to the recommendations.

5.1 Rincon Recommendations for City Sage Mitigation Areas

Rincon's progress reports for the City Sage Mitigation Areas for the first quarter of 2024 are provided in Attachment 1. These reports include recommendations based on the assessments. Table 1 presents a summary of these recommendations and the proposed actions.

- The booster pump and power that was destroyed in the Saddleridge Fire will need to be replaced for irrigation to deck A. Architerra's initial recommendation is to get a team on site to walk the deck and determine best strategy moving forwards to tackle the approximately 25 acres.

Table 1 – Rincon Recommendations and Proposed Actions – City Sage Mitigation Areas, First Quarter 2024

AREA		RECOMMENDATION	PROPOSED ACTION
Lower, Middle, and Upper Decks (Decks C, B, and A)	1	Weed Control – Implement a year-round weed control program to control non-native species.	A weed control program is already in place on Deck C and B as part of the pilot project and will continue. A weed control program on A will be implemented along with the mitigation plans for these areas.
Lower, Middle Decks (Decks C, B)	2	Irrigation – Reinstall irrigation system if drought conditions continue to the areas to alleviate stress on regrowth	Even with above average rainfall this winter, supplemental irrigation systems may be reinstalled to promote germination and growth of native plants if signs of desiccation appear.
Lower, Middle, and Upper Decks (Decks C, B, and A)	3	Prohibit Access – Continue to prohibit vehicle access to mitigation areas.	Repairs to the T-post fencing will be made as needed.
Upper Deck (Deck A)	3	Improve root zone and soil conditions	This will be addressed when the plans for Deck A is developed. Actions were taken to address improving the root zone in Decks B & C; it is expected that similar actions will be incorporated into the plans for Deck A.
Upper Deck (Deck A)	4	Plant natives in areas dominated with non-natives	This will be addressed when the plans for Deck A are developed. Various planting methods were used for the construction of the pilot project on Decks B & C; it is expected that similar actions will be incorporated into the plans for Deck A.

Upper Deck (Deck A)	5	Reseeding – apply native seeds during the rainy season after soil mounds have been established	Deck A was partially regraded to fill in ponding locations. Reseeding will start in graded section in Q4 2024 or Q1 2025
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Rincon also recommended that a monitoring biologist should be present during weed control activities or the native plants should be flagged to ensure only non-native species are removed. A monitoring biologist will be consulted prior to any weed control activities to ensure native plants are protected.

Architerra and Rincon continue to provide support to the Oakridge maintenance personnel to assist in removal of the invasive weeds on both Deck B and C. Architerra has pointed out some of the more aggressive weeds that have flourished since the Saddle Ridge Fire. Architerra provided them with images of the invasive weeds to help identify and target these invasive species. Oakridge Landscape have been diligently removing Russian Thistle, Wild Oat, Shortpod Mustard, Red Brome Grass, False Barley, Tree Tobacco, and Yellow Star Thistle that took hold in the burned barren areas. During May 2023, An Architerra biologist was present during weeding activities to ensure native species are properly identified within the heavily non-native vegetation.

5.2 Rincon Recommendations for County Sage Mitigation Area

Table 2 presents a summary of the recommendations proposed by Rincon based on the assessment of the County Sage Mitigation Area and the proposed actions. Please refer to the full recommendations in the Rincon reports in Attachment 2.

Table 2 – Rincon Recommendations and Proposed Actions – County Sage Mitigation Area, First Quarter 2024

AREA	RECOMMENDATION		PROPOSED ACTION
County Sage Mitigation Area	1	Create benches to control soil erosion and improve soil conditions to improve plant establishment and seed dispersal	Rincon and ADG continue to evaluate recommendations from the County Task Force and UltraSystems.
County Sage Mitigation Area	2	Reseed and plant container plants	A trail test pilot plan will be discussed with California Native shrubs.
County Sage Mitigation Area	3	Use soil amendments	A trial test plot would need to be developed. This recommendation will be considered at a later date.

County Sage Mitigation Area	5	Signage – Install signage indicating revegetation efforts.	Due to the slopes, stormwater channel and overall difficulty to access this area, personnel are limited to access this area.
County Sage Mitigation Area	6	Weed Control – Continue weeding as needed on a quarterly basis.	Personnel continues to evaluate the current status.
County Sage Mitigation Area	7	Prohibit Access – continue to prohibit vehicle access to mitigation deck.	Upper entrance has a locked gate, no further action is required.

5.3 Architerra Inspection for City South Sage Mitigation Pilot Project Area – First Quarter 2024

The inspection report is included in Attachment 3 along with photos of the area taken at the photo stations.

5.4 Quarterly Assessment of City South Sage Pilot Project Area

The methodology for assessment of the City South Sage Pilot Project Area developed by Rincon (formerly JMA) was included in the first quarter 2015 Vegetation Report. The evaluation report for the first quarter of 2024 based on this methodology is included in Attachment 4 and Attachment 5 for Deck C and Deck B, respectively. Concerns for the county-side stability for soil erosion will be addressed in the coming months. Current plans require some regrading and infrastructure repairs due to the extremely heavy rains over this past winter.

6.0 Status of Other Vegetated Areas

Big Cone Douglas Fir Tree Mitigation

As reported in the vegetation report for the first quarter of 2015, 200 Big Cone Douglas fir tree saplings were planted the third week of March 2015. These big cone Douglas fir pine trees continue to be monitored and maintenance activities were conducted in this mitigation area for 2022 and into the future.

A meeting with Rincon biologist was conducted on November 18, 2022 at the Big Cone Mitigation area. We will begin to work with local nurseries to help replace and replant some of the existing dead big cone pine and canyon oak. We are also evaluating a new location for planting more big cone pines and canyon oak in this area, and finally to establish healthy big cone pine and canyon oak in a timely established schedule. Plans to replenish the mitigation bank will commence with seed collection in the fall of 2024. Once the seeds are collected and stratified, seed will then be potted in the spring of 2025 whereas they will be

allowed to germinate for a year at a nursery. Once saplings are viable, they will be brought to site to be planted in the mitigation area on site. This planting is anticipated the fall of 2026.

PM10 Berm

Republic Services hosted an Adopt-A-Tree event for employees and their family members. On Saturday, November 14th, 2020, at 2:00 pm, Fourteen (14) Coast Live Oak trees were planted in critical areas of the PM10 Berm that was damaged during the Saddleridge Fire. Architerra and JMA (i.e. Rincon) assisted in the planting efforts with their expertise and knowledge of tree growth and ideal planting locations. Republic Services is actively working on hosting another Adopt-A-Tree event in Q2 of 2024 for Arbor day.



Front Entrance Toe Berm

The proposed project involves the development of a landfill termination berm and construction of a roadway. There were 20 coast live oak trees surveyed within the project footprint by Rincon and project leads. One of the oak trees was dead, and all of them would be removed by the project activities. There are currently 48 coast live oak trees in the landfill's mitigation bank. As noted, the 20 coast live oak trees would be removed by the proposed project, therefore at a mitigation ratio of 2:1, a total of 40 coast live oak trees will be deducted from the landfill's oak tree mitigation bank, leaving 4 oak trees

remaining in the bank for future removals at the landfill, if needed. A report detailing the survey is located in Attachment 6.

Donation to Local Community

As part of community outreach, a rancher in the area asked if he could plant some oak trees on his ranch nearby, and Sunshine Canyon agreed it would be a great idea. Thereafter on September 9th 2021, twenty-two (22) coast live oaks and two sycamores were donated from the Sunshine Canyon nursery and given to the rancher. The rancher mentioned the oak trees shall provide shade for his livestock and beautify the surrounding private property and was very pleased with the trees. A planned tree giveaway is tentatively scheduled to occur during Arbor day in April 2024.



Please do not hesitate to contact me at (818) 200-3016 if you have any questions.

Regards,

Paul D. Koster II

Paul D. Koster II
Environmental Manager
Sunshine Canyon Landfill

Cc: Ms. Dorcas Dee Hanson-Lugo, SCL LEA
Mr. David Thompson, SCL LEA
Ms. Tiffany Butler, City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
Ms. Devon Zatorski, City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning
Ms. Ly Lam, City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
Mr. Nicholas Hendricks, City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
Enrique Casas, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
Ms. Maria Masis, County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning
Mr. Wayde Hunter, SCL CAC
Mr. Jim Aidukus, UltraSystems
County DPW Landfill Unit

Attachments

Attachment 1	Rincon Progress Report, 1Q2024 City-Side Sage Mitigation Area
Attachment 2	Rincon Progress Report, 1Q2024 County-Side Sage Mitigation Area
Attachment 3	Architerra Design Group, Field Observation Report, South City Sage Mitigation Pilot Project – 1Q2024 with Photo Log
Attachment 4	Rincon Quarterly Monitoring Report - Coastal Sage Scrub Deck C Pilot Study, 1Q2024
Attachment 5	Rincon Quarterly Monitoring Report - Coastal Sage Scrub Deck B Pilot Study, 1Q2024
Attachment 6	Rincon Sunshine Canyon Landfill Ultimate Entry Improvement Project, Oak Tree Survey Report

Drawing

Drawing 1	Site Vegetation Status and Activity
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ATTACHMENT 1





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April 25, 2024

Project No: 21-11086

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Via email: PKoster@republicservices.com

**Subject: Qualitative Monitoring Report for the City-Side Sage Mitigation Area – 1st Quarter 2024
Sunshine Canyon Landfill, Sylmar, California**

Dear Mr. Koster,

On March 21, 2024, Rincon Consultants performed the first quarter qualitative monitoring of 2024 for the Republic Services City-Side Sage Mitigation Area. This report qualitatively documents the current conditions of the City-Side Sage Mitigation Area with regards to the Landfill's coastal sage scrub restoration efforts. The City-Side Sage Mitigation Area consists of the Lower Deck, Middle Deck, and Upper Deck (including slope between middle and upper decks), which are discussed in detail below.

General Conditions

Lower Deck

In 2014, the Landfill initiated a pilot study at the Lower Deck (Deck C) to assess three different seeding applications of native species that included hand broadcasting, imprinting, and hydroseeding. Some container plants were also planted at the Lower Deck, but in low quantities. Germination, establishment, and natural recruitment of native plants ensued; however, the Lower Deck and surrounding area burned during the Saddleridge Fire in October 2019. The fire burned a substantial amount of the Lower Deck, scorching some of the vegetation entirely and partially burning some of the vegetation. The fire also burned the irrigation system, and the vegetation has been without supplemental water ever since.

A substantial amount of regrowth has occurred following the fire, including germination from the seed bank in the soil and resprouting of below- and above-ground plant parts. The Lower Deck appears to have almost fully recovered from the fire. The most prevalent native plant species observed within the Lower Deck in the first quarter of 2024 was California sunflower (*Encelia californica*), followed by big saltbush (*Atriplex lentiformis*), allscale saltbush (*Atriplex polycarpa*), and beardless wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*). Immediately following the Saddleridge Fire, areas that were previously dominated with saltbush species were largely replaced by mats of non-native grasses such as red brome (*Bromus rubens*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), foxtail barley (*Hordeum murinum*), and non-native forbs such as redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*). Native shrub species have resprouted and are almost fully re-established, and have shown signs of continuous growth since the fire.



Exotic annual plant species have increased slightly in the first quarter of 2024 following the winter and spring rain season. A majority of exotic annual plant species were observed in their vegetative state or in flower in the Lower Deck in the first quarter of 2024, with a few mid-season non-native plants (e.g., Russian thistle [*Salsola tragus*]) observed germinating. Non-native plant species cover is anticipated to increase throughout the spring and into summer of 2024 due to above average winter rainfall. The majority of non-native vegetation observed at the Lower Deck in the first quarter of 2024 consisted of non-native annual grasses, short podded mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), redstem filaree, and tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*).

Middle Deck

In 2019, the Landfill initiated a pilot study at the Middle Deck (Deck B) to assess germination and establishment rates (e.g., percent cover) of soil imprinting and broadcast seeding methods. Some container plants were also planted at the Middle Deck, but in low quantities. Germination and establishment of native plants ensued; however, there was not much evidence of natural recruitment due to the short timeframe from when the deck was seeded to when it burned during the Saddleridge Fire, which also decimated the irrigation system.

Native vegetation observed at the Middle Deck consists of woody species such as brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), California sunflower (*Encelia californica*), scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), coastal goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), and herbaceous species such as beardless wild rye. Of all the observed native species, brittlebush, coastal goldenbush, California sagebrush, and deerweed are in the greatest abundance. Almost all native shrub species were in their vegetative state, with the exception of brittlebush and California sunflower, which were in flower.

Non-native plants are in moderate abundance throughout the Middle Deck. Dominant non-native plants observed include exotic grasses such as foxtail barley, Mediterranean grass (*Schismus arabicus*), red brome, and forbs such as short podded mustard, tocalote, redstem filaree, and small flowered iceplant (*Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum*). These species were observed in their vegetative or flowering state during the first quarter of 2024. In general, non-native weed cover is moderate. Small flowered iceplant saw the greatest increase in cover of all non-native species. Non-native plants are anticipated to increase in cover throughout the spring and summer of 2024 due to the high amount of winter rainfall.

Upper Deck

Overall, the Upper Deck (Deck A) continues to be sparsely covered with native vegetation due to compacted and poor soil conditions. However, in the southern-center of the Upper Deck, vegetation cover is higher than in other areas and includes native species such as California buckwheat, as well as non-native species such as foxtail barley, redstem filaree, and Australian saltbush (*Atriplex semibaccata*). Notably, California goldfields (*Lasthenia californica*) were observed in flower in this area during the first quarter of 2024. The presence of vegetation in the southern-center portion of the Upper Deck generally demonstrates that the soils in this area are suitable for supporting vegetation, both native and exotic. However, the soils elsewhere on the Upper Deck appear to be heavily compacted and gravelly, and vegetation coverage in these areas is sparse. Evidence of previous seeding is no longer discernible within the portions of the Upper Deck where plant establishment is visibly poor.



Non-native herbaceous species that dominate the Upper Deck currently include wild oats (*Avena fatua*), Russian thistle, ripgut brome, red brome, short podded mustard, and redstem filaree. California buckwheat is the most dominant native perennial woody plant species on the Upper Deck, and it is currently in its vegetative state. However, as described in previous monitoring reports, overall natural recruitment of native plant species within the Upper Deck is low due to poor and dry soil conditions.

Table 1 Summary of Observations in the Lower, Middle, and Upper Decks in Quarter 1, 2024

Location	Native Plant Vegetation			Exotic Plant Vegetation		
	Native Plant Cover	Plant Health Issues	Height of Native Species	Native Species Richness	Exotic Plant Cover	Phenological State
Lower Deck	Moderate-High	Recovering from fire, drought	12"-48"	Shrubs: Moderate Herbs: Low	Moderate	Vegetative and flowering
Middle Deck	Moderate	Recovering from fire, drought	12"-48"	Shrubs: Moderate Herbs: Low	Low to Moderate	Vegetative and flowering
Upper Deck	Minimal	Poor soils, drought	12"-24"	Shrubs: Low Herbs: Low	High	Vegetative and flowering

Recommendations

Lower and Middle Decks

Weed Control

- Implement a year-round weed control program to control non-native species. The weed control program should incorporate both chemical and mechanical control practices and should be initiated in the late winter to early spring prior to seed set, which typically occurs between the months of February and April. This will prevent further dispersal of exotic plants within the Lower and Middle Decks.
- Following weed control, any dead material harboring seeds should be removed to an off-site location to the extent feasible. Dense areas covered with red brome, ripgut brome, foxtail barley, and short podded mustard should be controlled by removing flowers and immature seeds heads before they drop. These areas should be reseeded with native herbaceous species that are known to grow well in the Lower (and Middle) Decks, such as beardless wild rye and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*).
- A qualified biologist should be present during weed control activities or flag the native plants that should remain prior to weed control activities to ensure only non-native species are removed and to minimize damage to native plant species to the greatest extent feasible. If a contractor is responsible for weed control, the contractor should verify with the Landfill that all personnel are experienced in native and non-native plant identification.
- Weeding is best performed just before, or at the onset of flowering, but before seed set. If seeds are already present, additional care should be taken to remove the plants with the seeds



attached, or the seeds should be removed from the plants prior to the plant removal. A consistent weed abatement schedule will reduce the potential for non-natives to set seed. Soil disturbance should be limited by hand weeding, wherever possible, and weeds should be disposed of off-site to avoid any reinfestation through reseeding or from plant propagules. If hand weeding is not possible, the monitoring biologist should be consulted regarding the appropriate method of weed removal. For example, using mechanical equipment to remove flowers and immature seed heads may be appropriate where dense mats of non-native grasses have established. If there continues to be high incidence of weed infestation, weed control may need to be increased to every four to six weeks. Otherwise, weeds should continue to be monitored and controlled on a quarterly basis.

Irrigation

- The Lower and Middle Decks burned during the Saddleridge Fire in October 2019. The fire burned the irrigation system that was installed prior to the fire, and the vegetation has been without supplemental water ever since. While southern California received above-average rainfall in the winter of 2023/2024, supplemental irrigation may be necessary if native plants show signs of desiccation stress. If indicators of drought stress are observed, it is recommended that the irrigation system within the Lower and Middle Decks are re-installed to promote germination and growth of native plant species.

Prohibit Access

- Continue to prohibit vehicle access to mitigation areas.

Upper Deck

Improve Root Zone and Soil Conditions

- Continue to investigate ways to import the soil layer to improve the root penetration and saturation zone to enable plant growth in heavily compacted areas. Consider applying soil in random undulations or uneven mounds to improve soil porosity and filtration and to control soluble salts from leaching from existing layer.
- Prior to seeding (broadcast, hydroseeding, or drilling) of native species, incorporate a soil amendment or mulch with high organic content by tilling it into the top 12 inches of the existing compacted soils to improve soil texture, drainage, porosity, and aerobic conditions. If an organic mulch or soil amendment is not feasible or available, incorporate available soil from borrow sites within the landfill that have the appropriate soil properties, so long as these borrowed soils have been determined to not have toxic conditions, such as boron or high salinity.

Plant Natives in Areas Dominated with Non-Natives

- The vegetated areas on the Upper Deck that are currently dominated with non-native annual species have decent soil-texture conditions. These areas are less compacted than adjacent areas that are gravelly and mostly devoid of vegetation. In general, the soil texture within the vegetated areas with non-native vegetation is friable down to approximately 8-12 inches in



depth. Various planting methods (i.e., planting container plants and hydroseeding) may be used to re-establish native plants on the Upper Deck where non-natives currently dominate.

Weed Control

- Implement a year-round weed control program to control non-native species. The weed control program should incorporate both chemical and mechanical control practices. Following weed control, any dead material harboring seeds should be removed to an off-site location to the extent feasible.
- A qualified biologist should be present during weed control activities or flag the native plants that should remain prior to weed control activities to ensure only non-native species are removed and to minimize damage to native plant species to the greatest extent feasible. A biologist should verify that the weed removal methodology does not encourage re-colonizing of non-native plant species.
- Weeding is best performed just before, or at the onset of flowering, but before seed set. If seeds are already present, additional care should be taken to remove the plants with the seeds attached, or the seeds should be removed from the plants prior to the plant removal. A consistent weed abatement schedule will reduce the potential for non-natives to set seed. Soil disturbance should be limited by hand weeding, wherever possible, and weeds should be disposed of off-site to avoid any reinfestation through reseeding or from plant propagules. If hand weeding is not possible, the monitoring biologist should be consulted regarding the appropriate method of weed removal. For example, using mechanical equipment to remove flowers and immature seed heads may be appropriate where dense mats of non-native grasses have established. If there continues to be high incidence of weed infestation, weed control frequency may need to be increased. Otherwise, weeds should continue to be monitored and controlled on a quarterly basis.

Reseeding

- Following the application of soil mounds as previously described, apply native seed (by means of broadcast seeding, hydroseeding or drilling) during the rainy season, between December and March, or prior to a forecasted rain event.

Prohibit Access

- Continue to prohibit vehicle access to mitigation areas.



Thank you for the opportunity to work with you on this important project. Please contact Greg Ainsworth if you have questions concerning the contents of this report. He may be reached by telephone at (818) 564-5544, or by email at gainsworth@rinconconsultants.com.

Sincerely,

Rincon Consultants, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Ainsworth", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Greg Ainsworth
Natural Resources Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Gern", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Kyle Gern
Biologist

Attachments

- Attachment A Figure 1. Photograph Locations
- Attachment B Site Photographs

Attachment A

Figure 1. Photograph Locations

Figure 1 Photograph Locations



Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2023.
Photo Locations have been georeferenced and are approximate locations.

21-11086 BHO
Fig 2 City Sage - Photo Locations

Attachment B

Site Photographs



Photograph 1. Facing west at Lower Deck. View of eastern limits dominated by *Atriplex* spp. and California sunflower (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 2. Lower Deck from western boundary (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 3. Facing east at the Middle Deck from western boundary (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 4. Facing west at the easterly-facing slope located between the Middle and Upper Decks. The vegetation on the slopes between the Upper Deck is dominated by California buckwheat (currently vegetative) and non-native annual grasses (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 5. Facing northeast at the Upper Deck. This area is compacted and gravelly and continues to be problematic for supporting vegetation. Non-native annual grasses and forbs, and California buckwheat shrubs are evident in the background (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 6. Facing southwest at the Upper Deck. This area is primarily dominated by wild oats, brome grasses, redstem filaree, and short podded mustard. Note flowering California goldfields on the right side of the photograph (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 7. Facing southeast at the western portion of the Upper Deck. This area is dominated by short podded mustard, Australian saltbush, and Russian thistle (March 21, 2024).

ATTACHMENT 2





Rincon Consultants, Inc.

180 North Ashwood Avenue
Ventura, California 93003

805 644 4455 OFFICE AND FAX

info@rinconconsultants.com
www.rinconconsultants.com

April 25, 2024
Project No: 21-11086

Paul Koster II
Environmental Manager
Republic Services
14747 San Fernando Road
Sylmar, California 91342

Via email: PKoster@republicservices.com

**Subject: Qualitative Monitoring Report for the County-Side Sage Mitigation Area – 1st Quarter 2024
Sunshine Canyon Landfill, Sylmar, California**

Dear Mr. Koster,

On March 21, 2024, Rincon Consultants conducted the first quarter qualitative monitoring of 2024 for the County-Side Sage Mitigation Area (mitigation area). This report documents the current conditions of the mitigation area.

General Conditions

Hydroseeded Areas

Germination and plant growth from hydroseeding that occurred several years ago is not discernible in some portions of the mitigation area. Conditions on the mitigation area remain relatively unchanged since the fourth quarter of 2023. Areas that are moderately covered with native and non-native vegetation are concentrated in the southeastern portion of the mitigation area. The northern and upper portions of the mitigation area continue to be bare and problematic for establishment of vegetation, primarily because of highly eroded soils, steep slopes, and Boron-toxic soils (See *Recommendations* section). However, there are some small patches of vegetation that have established in the northern-central portion of the mitigation area and include shrubs such as California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), and California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*).

Native plant coverage is similar to the previous quarterly monitoring reports. The southern half of the mitigation area has relatively good coverage of native species, mostly California buckwheat and California sunflower (*Encelia californica*), which was in flower during the first quarter of 2024. Established laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*) individuals are present as well. A majority of native shrub species were in their vegetative state, while California sunflower was in full flower during the monitoring event. The native vegetation coverage is assumed to be a direct result of seeding; however, some natural recruitment of native plant species is apparent based on the various sizes of shrubs and the presence of California sunflower seedlings within the understory. Due to rocky (hydrophobic) soil conditions, soil erosion and Boron-toxic soils on the northern-half and upper portions of the mitigation area, minimal plant growth is present. Due to the lack of plant establishment in these areas, erosional features have become prominent, especially following recent above-average rainfall events.

Annual non-native grasses and forbs currently dominate the understory and serve as ground cover in most of the vegetated areas. Brome grasses (*Bromus* spp.), wild oats (*Avena fatua*), short podded



mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), and tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*) are the most dominant non-native species present, and comprise approximately 25 to 30 percent of the total cover. California buckwheat dominates the native vegetation coverage with California sagebrush and California sunflower present as co-dominants. Native species comprise of approximately 75 to 80 percent of the native vegetation cover in areas where vegetation is present. Other less dominant native species observed include golden bush (*Ericameria linearifolia*), coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), deerweed, and laurel sumac.

Seed Mix Areas

Like the hydroseeded areas, germination and plant growth from the seed mix areas that occurred several years ago is not discernible. As described in previous monitoring reports, a substantial portion of the mitigation area continues to be bare and problematic, which has inhibited the establishment and growth of vegetation. However, in areas where vegetation is present, there is a moderate coverage of native species (e.g., California buckwheat and California sunflower).

As described in the *Hydroseeded Areas* discussion above, a moderate cover of native plants exists within vegetated areas in the southeastern portion of the mitigation area, and annual non-native grasses and forbs currently dominate the understory.

Native Plant Conditions

The plant cover rating indicated further below in



Table 1 applies where vegetation is dominant in the southeastern portion of the mitigation area. Vegetation cover is moderate in the southeastern portion of the mitigation area and sparse along the upper slopes where rocky and eroded soil conditions occur, and in the northern portion of the mitigation area due to problematic soil conditions. As a result, most of the northern and upper portions of the mitigation area continue to have minimal coverage. Native vegetation coverage is good in vegetated areas and non-native plant cover is relatively low. Bare areas and non-native annual grasses are intermixed; however, as noted the northern and upper areas continue to be mostly bare where erosion and rocks are apparent.

California buckwheat is dominant and California sunflower is sub-dominant. Establishment of vegetation is problematic due to rocky soils with poor soil structure, and Boron toxicity has made plant growth (i.e., seed germination and recruitment) difficult. The species richness is low to medium within vegetated areas; however, species richness is considerably low when considering the entire county-sage mitigation area.

Exotic Plant Conditions

Annual non-native weed species consist primarily of brome grasses, wild oats, and mustards, which are currently in their vegetative state and/or flowering. Additionally, some mid-season non-native plants (e.g., Russian thistle) are currently germinating. Non-native plant cover is anticipated to increase throughout the spring months and into summer. Other established weeds that were observed include redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*) and telegraph weed (*Heterotheca grandiflora*; a weedy native plant species).



Table 1 Summary of Native and Exotic Plant Cover in the County-Side Sage Mitigation Area in Quarter 1, 2024

Location	Native Plant Vegetation				Exotic Plant Vegetation	
	Native Plant Cover	Plant Health Issues	Height of Native Species	Native Species Richness	Exotic Plant Cover	Phenological State
County-Side Sage Mitigation Area	Moderate	Drought	12"-36"	Medium	Moderate	Germinating, vegetative, and in flower

Recommendations

The following recommendations within the County-Side Sage Mitigation are suggested based upon the field survey performed in the first quarter of 2024.

- **Create Benches.** Consider creation of several benches throughout the mitigation area to control soil erosion and to improve soil conditions to improve plant establishment and seed dispersal. This technique has been widely used on steep slopes and in areas where soil erosion is problematic. This technique also allows for opportunities to introduce a high-quality soil layer above the poor soils that exist.
- **Reseed and Plant Container Plants With Irrigation.** If creation of benches is feasible, planting methods should include hydroseeding, broadcast seeding, and/or imprinting no more than 10 days prior to a forecasted rain event, unless an irrigation system is installed. Planting with container plants with supplemental irrigation should also be considered.
- **Use Soil Amendments.** Incorporate a soil amendment or mulch with high organic content in select areas as determined by a restoration specialist.
- **Signage.** Install signs indicating that the area is undergoing revegetation.
- **Weed Control.** Continue weed control program as needed on a quarterly basis.
- **Prohibit Access.** Prohibit equipment access to mitigation area.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you on this important project. Please contact Greg Ainsworth if you have questions concerning the contents of this report. He may be reached by telephone at (818) 564-5544, or by email at gainsworth@rinconconsultants.com.

Sincerely,

Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Greg Ainsworth
Natural Resources Director

Attachments

- Attachment A Figure 1. Photograph Locations
Attachment B Site Photographs

Attachment A

Figure 1. Photograph Locations

Figure 1 Photograph Locations



Attachment B

Site Photographs



Photograph 1. Facing southwest at the County-Side Sage Mitigation Area (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 2. Facing northwest at the northern portion of the County-Side Sage Mitigation Area where plant growth has been problematic due to poor soil conditions (March 21, 2024).

ATTACHMENT 3





ARCHITERRA DESIGN GROUP

FIELD OBSERVATION REPORT

DATE OF VISIT:	1/4/24
PROJECT:	Sunshine Canyon Mitigation Sites
PROJECT NUMBER:	1214
PROJECT MANAGER:	Gregg Denson
SITE INSPECTION #:	
PURPOSE OF VISIT:	Review site conditions/Photo Catalog
TIME OF SITE VISIT:	12:00pm
WEATHER/TEMPERATURE:	Sunny 90° - Winds 5-10 mph
ESTIMATED % COMPLETED:	100%
CONFORMANCE WITH SCHEDULE (+, -)	

WORK IN PROGRESS:	Weed abatement / Monitoring Period /Construction Observation
PRESENT ON SITE:	Gregg Denson

A site visit walk and evaluation has been completed to review the Venturan CSS vegetation establishment on Decks A, B, C, and County Mitigation Slopes. Additional items noted during the site visit are as follows:

City-Side Sage Mitigation (Deck A):

- A Gas Well Clearance Exhibit was provided to Republic Services to show pathways to the existing gas wells at Deck A.



- Weed growth on Deck A includes the following species, many of which are at flowering stages: Shortpod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), Russian Thistle (*Salsola* spp.), Horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*), Tree Tabacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), Yellow Star Thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), Common Sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), Buttonweed (*Althaea officinalis*), Red-Stem Filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), Red Brome (*Bromus madritensis* ssp. *rubens*)

City-Side Sage Mitigation (Trial Site Deck B):

- Weed growth on Deck B is minimal with mostly Shortpod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) and Slenderleaf Iceplant (*Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum*) flourishing on the deck. Slenderleaf Iceplant is found mostly along the southern edge of the deck, but now is migrating north.
- Quadrats were marked and staked with taller stakes to help locate the nine (9) random locations previously noted as part of the biologist's quarterly reports. Each quadrat is marked with the corresponding letter and flagged on the southwest corner stake.



New native seedlings of California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) and Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon californicum*) on left and invasive Shortpod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) on right



Side by side comparison of revegetated former gas well access road (image on left from April 2020, image on the right from April 2024)

City-Side Sage Mitigation (Trial Site Deck C):

- Due to the above average rainfall for 2023/2024, and consistent low temperatures this spring, weed growth, along with native seed germination, has increased when comparing the quarter with previous years. Weed germination on Deck B is dominated by Shortpod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), Tree Tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), Russian Thistle (*Salsola* spp.), Yellow Star Thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), and Common Sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*). Along with the invasive weeds listed, the following native Venturan Coastal Sage Scrub species have also germinated: Saltbush (*Atriplex* spp.), Coast Sunflower (*Encelia californica*), California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), and Coyote Bush (*Baccharis pilularis*). Invasive weeds are intermixed with native seedlings, so inspection by the contractor to flag and identify native species is critical; removals should minimize disturbance of seedlings. Over time, native species will help to crowd out the invasive species, but weed growth should be kept at bay and managed.



Saltbush and California Sunflower sprout up amongst Shortpod Mustard

- Quadrats were marked and staked with taller stakes to help locate the twelve (12) random locations previously noted as part of the biologist's quarterly reports. Each quadrat is marked with the corresponding letter and flagged on the southwest corner stake.



Example of newly staked Quadrat F

- Venturan Coastal Sage Scrub species are blooming throughout the deck area. Notable species include, Coast Sunflower (*Encelia californica*), Brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*), Purple Sage (*Salvia leucophylla*), Saltbush (*Atriplex* sp.), Mexican Elderberry (*Sambucus Mexicana*), and Deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*).



Blooming California Sunflower (*Encelia californica*)





Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*)



Mexican Elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*)

ARCHITERRA DESIGN GROUP
10221-A TRADEMARK STREET, RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CA 91730
Phone (909) 484-2800, Fax (909) 484-2802



Invasive Yellow Star Thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*) on left, Eucalyptus sp. on right



Invasive Shortpod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) with seedlings of Coast Sunflower (*Encelia californica*) and California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*) intermixed within weed growth.



Shortpod Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*) crowds California Sagebrush seedlings



Invasive Common Sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*) and Horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*) within reestablished native Wild Rye (*Leymus triticoides*)



Deck B Quadrat and Photo Station Locations



Deck C Quadrat Locations

Signed: Gregg Denson

Date: 4/23/24

DISTRIBUTION

Republic Services



Contractor



Project Manager (Gregg Denson)



Other _____





Photo Station #1 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #1 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #1 - April 2023 (East)



Photo Station #1 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #1 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #1 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #2 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #2 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #2 - April 2023 (South)



Photo Station #2 - April 2024 (South)



Photo Station #2 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #2 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #3 - December 2023 (North)



Photo Station #3 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #3 - December 2023 (East)



Photo Station #3 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #3 - December 2023 (West)



Photo Station #3 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #4 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #4 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #4 - April 2023 (East)



Photo Station #4 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #4 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #4 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #5 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #5 - April 2024 (North)



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Photo Station #5 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #6 - April 2023 (North)



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Photo Station #6 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #6 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #7 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #7 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #7 - April 2023 (East)



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Photo Station #7 - April 2023 (East)



Photo Station #7 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #8 - December 2023 (North)



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Photo Station #8 - December 2023 (East)



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Photo Station #8 - December 2023 (West)



Photo Station #8 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #1 - April 2023 (East)



Photo Station #1 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #1 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #1 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #1 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #1 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #2 - April 2023 (East)



Photo Station #2 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #2 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #2 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #2 - April 2023 (South)



Photo Station #2 - April 2024 (South)



Photo Station #3 - April 2023 (East)



Photo Station #3 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #3 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #3 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #3 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #3 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #4 - April 2023 (South)



Photo Station #4 - April 2024 (South)



Photo Station #4 - April 2023 (East)

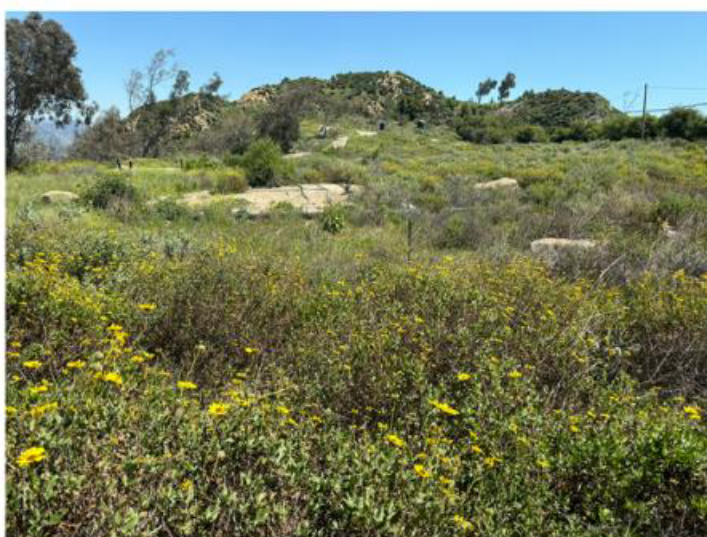


Photo Station #4 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #4 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #4 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #5 - April 2023 (East)



Photo Station #5 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #5 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #5 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #5 - April 2023 (West)



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Photo Station #6 - April 2023 (East)



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Photo Station #6 - April 2023 (North)



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Photo Station #6 - April 2023 (West)



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Photo Station #7 - April 2023 (East)



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Photo Station #7 - April 2023 (North)



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Photo Station #8 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #8 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #8 - April 2024 (West)



Photo Station #9 - April 2023 (East)



Photo Station #9 - April 2024 (East)



Photo Station #9 - April 2023 (North)



Photo Station #9 - April 2024 (North)



Photo Station #9 - April 2023 (West)



Photo Station #9 - April 2024 (West)

ATTACHMENT 4





Rincon Consultants, Inc.

180 North Ashwood Avenue
Ventura, California 93003

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info@rinconconsultants.com
www.rinconconsultants.com

April 26, 2024
Project No: 21-11086

Paul Koster II
Environmental Manager
Republic Services
14747 San Fernando Road
Sylmar, California 91342
Via email: PKoster@republicservices.com

Subject: Coastal Sage Scrub City South C Trial Plot 1st Quarter 2024 Monitoring Report, Sunshine Canyon Landfill

Dear Mr. Koster,

This monitoring report has been prepared by Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) to inform Republic Services on the status of coastal sage scrub restoration at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill located at 14747 San Fernando Road, Sylmar, California 91342. Specifically, this letter report serves to document the abundance of vegetation at the Coastal Sage Scrub City South C Trial Plot in the first quarter of 2024.

Methods

On March 21, 2024, Rincon Consultants monitored the Coastal Sage Scrub City South C Trial Plot (trial plot) at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill, which constitutes the first quarter of monitoring for 2024. The sample methodology generally followed the *Methodology for Monitoring Percent Cover and Species Richness within Each Seeded Application Method on the Coastal Sage Scrub Pilot Project at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill* (JMA, April 23, 2014). Quadrat sampling of the Coastal Sage Scrub City South C Trial Plot consists of four 50-meter² quadrats that are randomly sampled within each of the following three seeded areas: hydroseed, imprint, and hand broadcast. The twelve quadrats sampled were randomly selected prior to the first initial monitoring event from a grid that was placed over the entire trial plot, and each quadrat was given a letter (A-L) and delineated in the field with wooden stakes (Attachment A).

As shown in Attachment A, three different seeding methods were used as follows:

- Hydroseed (Quadrats A, B, C, and D)
- Imprint (Quadrats E, F, G, and H)
- Hand broadcast (Quadrats I, J, K, and L)

Absolute Cover

The following qualitative data was collected in each quadrat to determine the absolute cover of native and non-native herbaceous and woody species:



- **Percent basal cover (shrubs).** Visual estimate of the amount of basal cover within each quadrat for all shrub species.
- **Percent basal cover (herbs).** Visual estimate of the amount of basal cover within each quadrat for all herb species.
- **Percent bare ground.** Visual estimate of the amount of available bare ground with no vegetation, but suitable for plant growth.
- **Percent rock or other.** Visual estimate of the amount of unavailable ground for supporting plant growth. Inhibitors generally included rocks and boulders, irrigation lines and valve boxes, and mulch.
- **Percent canopy.** Visual estimate of the percent canopy of each shrub and herbaceous species.
- **Photographs.** A photograph was taken from the southwest corner (facing northeast) of each quadrat.

Percent Cover

The following quantitative data was collected in each quadrat to determine the percent cover of native and non-native species.

- **Point intercept method.** Sampling began at the southwest corner of each quadrat and continued around the quadrat in a clockwise direction. The species located precisely at every meter point was tallied, including areas of bare ground, rock and other.

Field Results

Below are the average data collected for each planting method.

Absolute Cover (Qualitative)

Hydroseed – Quadrats A, B, C, and D (average)

- Percent basal cover (shrubs) – 15%
- Percent basal cover (herbs) – 4%
- Percent bare ground – 49%
- Percent rock or other – 6%
- Percent canopy (shrubs) – 43%
- Percent canopy (herbs) – 11%

Imprint – Quadrats E, F, G, and H (average)

- Percent basal cover (shrubs) – 18%
- Percent basal cover (herbs) – 4%
- Percent bare ground – 44%
- Percent rock or other – 5%
- Percent canopy (shrubs) – 45%
- Percent canopy (herbs) – 9%



Hand broadcast – Quadrats I, J, K, and L (average)

- Percent basal cover (shrubs) – 13%
- Percent basal cover (herbs) – 25%
- Percent bare ground – 36%
- Percent rock or other – 3%
- Percent canopy (shrubs) – 27%
- Percent canopy (herbs) – 36%

Percent Cover (Quantitative)

The representation of each species within a quadrat was estimated by broad cover classes (<1%, 1-5%, 5-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, and >75%). The percent cover of each species based upon the point intercept method is presented in Table 1 through Table 3 below.



Table 1 Hydroseed – Quadrats A, B, C, and D (Average)

Species	Plot A		Plot B		Plot C		Plot D	
	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover
Native Shrubs								
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>								
<i>Artemisia californica</i>								
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>			8	16%	8	16%	7	14%
<i>Atriplex polycarpa</i>	5	10%	7	14%	1	2%		
<i>Atriplex spinosa</i>								
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>								
<i>Diplacus aurantiacus</i>								
<i>Encelia californica</i>	14	28%	9	18%	7	14%	15	30%
<i>Salvia apiana</i>								
<i>Salvia mellifera</i>								
Native Herbs								
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>								
<i>Cryptantha intermedia</i>								
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>							1	2%
<i>Elymus triticoides</i>			3	6%				
<i>Nasella pulchra</i>								
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>								
<i>Vulpia microstachys</i>								
Non-Native Herbs								
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>							1	2%
<i>Bromus rubens</i>							1	2%
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>							1	2%
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>					3	6%		
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>			1	2%	1	2%	2	4%
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>			7	14%	6	12%	3	6%
<i>Salsola tragus</i>								
Bare ground	31	62%	15	30%	24	48%	19	38%
		Plot A		Plot B		Plot C		Plot D
Percent Cover Native Shrub		38%		48%		32%		44%
Percent Cover Native Herb		0%		6%		0%		2%
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub		0%		0%		0%		0%
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb		0%		16%		20%		16%
Percent Bare Ground		62%		30%		48%		38%
								A,B,C,D Percent Cover
								41%
								2%
								0%
								13%
								45%



Table 2 Imprint – Quadrats E, F, G, and H (Average)

Species	Plot E		Plot F		Plot G		Plot H	
	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover
Native Shrubs								
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>								
<i>Artemisia californica</i>								
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>			4	8%	2	4%		
<i>Atriplex polycarpa</i>	2	4%	10	20%			2	4%
<i>Atriplex spinosa</i>			2	4%				
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>								
<i>Diplacus aurantiacus</i>								
<i>Encelia californica</i>	14	28%	4	8%	29	58%	32	64%
<i>Salvia leucophylla</i>								
<i>Salvia mellifera</i>								
Native Herbs								
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>								
<i>Cryptantha intermedia</i>								
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>								
<i>Elymus triticoides</i>								
<i>Nasella pulchra</i>								
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>								
<i>Vulpia microstachys</i>								
Non-Native Herbs								
<i>Bromus rubens</i>			1	2%			2	4%
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>								
<i>Echinochloa crus-galli</i>								
<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>								
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	2	4%	2	4%				
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	3	6%	2	4%	2	4%	2	4%
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>			7	14%	1	2%		
<i>Salsola tragus</i>								
Bare ground	29	58%	18	36%	16	32%	12	24%
	Plot E		Plot F		Plot G		Plot H	
Percent Cover Native Shrub	32%		40%		62%		68%	
Percent Cover Native Herb	0%		0%		0%		0%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub	0%		0%		0%		0%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb	10%		24%		6%		8%	
Percent Bare Ground	58%		36%		32%		24%	
							E,F,G,H	
							Percent Cover	
Percent Cover Native Shrub	32%		40%		62%		68%	
Percent Cover Native Herb	0%		0%		0%		0%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub	0%		0%		0%		0%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb	10%		24%		6%		8%	
Percent Bare Ground	58%		36%		32%		24%	



Table 3 Hand Broadcast – Quadrats I, J, K, and L (Average)

Species	Plot I		Plot J		Plot K		Plot L	
	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover
Native Shrubs								
Acmispon glaber								
Artemisia californica			2	4%				
Atriplex lentiformis			2	4%				
Atriplex polycarpa							4	8%
Atriplex spinosa								
Baccharis pilularis							1	2%
Diplacus aurantiacus								
Encelia californica	21	42%	4	8%			26	52%
Non-Native Shrubs								
Atriplex semibaccata								
Native Herbs								
Achillia mellifolium								
Cryptantha intermedia								
Helianthus annuus								
Elymus triticoides					21	42%	8	16%
Nasella pulchra								
Sisyrinchium bellum								
Vulpia microstachys								
Non-Native Herbs								
Avena barbata					2	4%		
Bromus diandrus	1	2%	2	4%	1	2%		
Bromus rubens			4	8%			1	2%
Centaurea melitensis								
Erodium cicutarium	1	2%	5	10%				
Hirschfeldia incana			2	4%	3	6%		
Hordeum murinum	1	2%	18	36%	1	2%		
Bare ground	26	52%	11	22%	22	44%	10	20%
I,J,K,L Percent Cover								
		Plot I	Plot J		Plot K		Plot L	
Percent Cover Native Shrub		42%	16%		0%		62%	30%
Percent Cover Native Herb		0%	0%		42%		16%	15%
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub		0%	0%		0%		0%	0%
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb		6%	62%		14%		2%	21%
Percent Bare Ground		52%	22%		44%		20%	35%



Discussion

Table 4 below provides a summary of the vegetation cover of shrubs and herbs, including areas of bare ground. The percent cover of native and non-native species is summarized above in Tables 1-3.

Table 4 Summary of Vegetation Cover for Each Planting Method at the Coastal Sage Scrub City South C Trial Plot

	Hydroseed (Quadrats A, B, C, and D)		Imprint (Quadrats E, F, G, and H)		Hand Broadcast (Quadrats I, J, K, and L)	
	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative	Qualitative	Quantitative
Percent Cover Shrub	43%	41%	45%	51%	27%	30%
Percent Cover Herb	11%	15%	9%	12%	36%	36%
Percent Bare Ground	49%	45%	44%	38%	36%	35%

Native shrub species are the dominant vegetation cover in Trial Plot C, including as allscale saltbush (*Atriplex polycarpa*), big saltbush (*Atriplex lentiformis*), California sunflower (*Encelia californica*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), purple sage (*Salvia leucophylla*), and black sage (*Salvia mellifera*).

The quantitative percent cover of native shrub species currently has an average of 41 percent within the hydroseed quadrats, 51 percent within the imprint quadrats, and 30 percent within the hand broadcast quadrats (Tables 1-3). Native shrub quantitative percent cover did not substantially change from the fourth quarter monitoring event in 2023. All shrub species within the trial plot were either vegetative or in flower during the first quarter of 2024. Most notably, California sunflower was in full bloom during the monitoring event.

Non-native plant cover has slightly declined in cover within the trial plot between the fourth quarter of 2023 and the first quarter of 2024. Non-native annual grasses and forbs such as foxtail barley, Mediterranean grass (*Schismus arabicus*), red brome (*Bromus rubens*), and short podded mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), which were vegetative during the fourth quarter of 2023, appear to have been negatively impacted by recent above-average rainfall events. Large amounts of sediment deposition and scouring is evident throughout the trial plot following recent storm events, which likely uprooted non-native herbaceous vegetation. Non-native plant species cover is expected to increase throughout the spring and into summer of 2024, as winter storm events subside. Total non-native herbaceous cover currently has an average of 13 percent within the hydroseed quadrats (down from 16 percent in the fourth quarter of 2023), 12 percent within the imprint quadrats (up from 10 percent in the fourth quarter of 2023), and 21 percent (down from 30 percent in the fourth quarter of 2023) within the hand broadcast quadrats (Tables 1-3).

Recommendations

Successional Growth and Weed Control

Wildfires in Southern California have become more common in recent years and have impacted the native landscape, including established restoration sites. Non-native weed control is essential in establishing post-fire restoration sites and is recommended by such organizations as the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Society of Ecological Restoration.



Successional regrowth of herbaceous non-native species is to be expected within the first two to three years following a wildfire, which is currently being observed at the trial plot. Native shrubs are expected to recover over a longer period through germination of existing seed within the topsoil and basal growth from charred plants. Native shrubs have shown notable growth following the fire and appear to be well established in the trial plot.

Successional growth of herbaceous species is also important, as native herbaceous species provide natural erosion of topsoil. To control the spread non-native herbaceous species such as foxtail barley, red brome, and short podded mustard, and minimize competition with native herbaceous and woody species for water, nutrients, and sunlight, weed maintenance should occur no less than every four months, and special attention should be afforded to minimizing impacts to native grasses that may appear to be non-native (i.e., beardless wild rye), native seedlings, and native shrub resprouts. Weed maintenance should be scheduled to maximize removal of non-native species prior to seed set, which typically occurs in spring between the months of February and April, but may also occur throughout the growing season based upon precipitation events.

Supplemental Irrigation

While southern California received above-average rainfall in the winter of 2023/2024, supplemental irrigation is a valuable restoration technique to promote re-establishment of native vegetation, particularly during the dry months of the year (i.e., summer and fall). If native herbaceous vegetation continues to be sparse throughout the trial plot, and/or if native shrubs senesce or show indicators of drought stress, the irrigation system within the trial plot should be re-installed to increase water availability and promote seed germination and re-establishment of native vegetation.



References

John Minch and Associates, Inc. (JMA). 2014. Methodology for Monitoring Percent Cover and Species Richness within Each Seeded Application Method on the Coastal Sage Scrub Pilot Project at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you on this important project. Please contact Greg Ainsworth if you have questions concerning the contents of this report. He may be reached by telephone at (818) 564-5544, or by email at gainsworth@rinconconsultants.com.

Sincerely,

Rincon Consultants, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Ainsworth", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Greg Ainsworth
Natural Resources Director

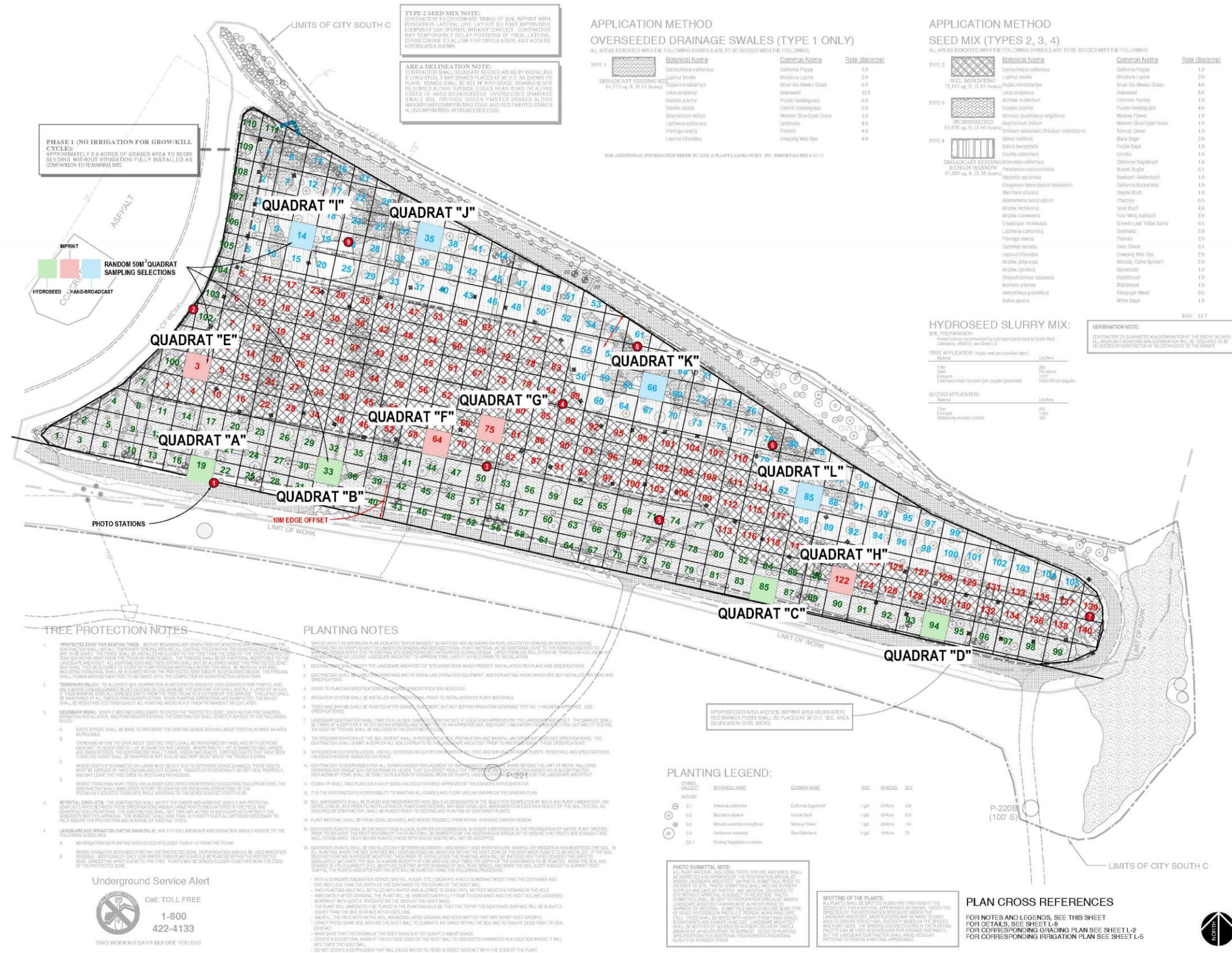
Attachments

- Attachment A Deck C Revegetation Area Quadrat Layout and Planting Plan
- Attachment B Representative Site Photographs

Attachment A

Deck C Revegetation Area Quadrat Layout and Planting Plan

Deck C Revegetation Area Quadrat Layout and Planting Plan



Attachment B

Photographs of Sample Plots



Photograph 1. Quadrat A facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 2. Quadrat B facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 3. Quadrat C facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).

4/28/2024



Photograph 4. Quadrat D facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 5. Quadrat E facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 6. Quadrat F facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 7. Quadrat G facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 8. Quadrat H facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 9. Quadrat I facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 10. Quadrat J facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 11. Quadrat K facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 12. Quadrat L facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).

ATTACHMENT 5





Rincon Consultants, Inc.

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April 26, 2024
Project No: 21-11086

Paul D. Koster II
Environmental Manager
Republic Services
14747 San Fernando Road
Sylmar, California 91342
Via email: PKoster@republicservices.com

Subject: Coastal Sage Scrub City South B Trial Plot 1st Quarter 2024 Monitoring Report, Sunshine Canyon Landfill

Dear Mr. Koster,

This monitoring report has been prepared by Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) to inform Republic Services on the status of coastal sage scrub restoration at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill located at 14747 San Fernando Road, Sylmar, California 91342. Specifically, this letter report serves to document the abundance of vegetation at the Coastal Sage Scrub City South B Trial Plot in the first quarter of 2024.

Methods

On March 21, 2024, Rincon Consultants monitored the Coastal Sage Scrub City South B Trial Plot (trial plot) at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill, which constitutes the first quarter of monitoring for 2024. The sample methodology generally followed the *Methodology for Monitoring Percent Cover and Species Richness within Each Seeded Application Method on the Coastal Sage Scrub Pilot Project at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill* (JMA, April 23, 2014). Quadrat sampling of the revegetation area consists of nine 50-meter² quadrats that are randomly located throughout the revegetation area. The quadrats were randomly selected prior to the first initial monitoring event from a grid that was placed over the entire trial plot, and each quadrat was given a letter (A-I) and delineated in the field with wooden stakes. As shown in Attachment A, five different planting methods were used as follows:

- Soil imprinting with hand broadcast overseeded drainage swales (Quadrats A and G)
- Soil imprinting (Quadrats B, F and H)
- Broadcast seeding (Quadrat C)
- Broadcast seeding with soil imprinting (Quadrat D and I)
- Soil imprinting and hand broadcast (Quadrat E)

Absolute Cover

The following qualitative data was collected in each quadrat to determine the absolute cover of native and non-native herbaceous and woody species:

- **Percent basal cover (shrubs).** Visual estimate of the amount of basal cover within each quadrat for all shrub species.



- **Percent basal cover (herbs).** Visual estimate of the amount of basal cover within each quadrat for all herbaceous species.
- **Percent bare ground.** Visual estimate of the amount of available bare ground with no vegetation.
- **Percent rock or other.** Visual estimate of the amount of unavailable ground for supporting plant growth. Inhibitors generally included rocks and boulders, irrigation lines and valve boxes, and mulch.
- **Percent canopy.** Visual estimate of the percent canopy of each shrub and herbaceous species.
- **Photographs.** A photograph was taken from the southwest corner (facing northeast) of each quadrat.

Percent Cover

The following quantitative data was collected in each quadrat to determine the percent cover of native and non-native species.

- **Point intercept method.** Sampling began at the southwest corner of each quadrat and continued around the quadrat in a clockwise direction. The species located precisely at every meter point was tallied, including areas of bare ground, rock and other.

Field Results

Below are the average data collected for each planting method.

Absolute Cover (Qualitative)

Soil imprinting with hand broadcast overseeded drainage swales – Quadrats A and G (average)

- Percent basal cover (shrubs) – 3%
- Percent basal cover (herbs) – 9%
- Percent bare ground – 69%
- Percent rock or other – 3%
- Percent canopy (shrubs) – 19%
- Percent canopy (herbs) – 21%

Soil imprinting – Quadrats B, F, and H (average)

- Percent basal cover (shrubs) – 9%
- Percent basal cover (herbs) – 5%
- Percent bare ground – 56%
- Percent rock or other – 3%
- Percent canopy (shrubs) – 25%
- Percent canopy (herbs) – 17%

Broadcast seeding – Quadrat C

- Percent basal cover (shrubs) – 20%



- Percent basal cover (herbs) – 15%
- Percent bare ground – 15%
- Percent rock or other – 3%
- Percent canopy (shrubs) – 78%
- Percent canopy (herbs) – 26%

Broadcast seeding with soil imprinting – Quadrats D and I (average)

- Percent basal cover (shrubs) – 4%
- Percent basal cover (herbs) – 9%
- Percent bare ground – 73%
- Percent rock or other – 7%
- Percent canopy (shrubs) – 16%
- Percent canopy (herbs) – 24%

Soil Imprinting and hand broadcast – Quadrat E

- Percent basal cover (shrubs) – 7%
- Percent basal cover (herbs) – 3%
- Percent bare ground – 75%
- Percent rock or other – 1%
- Percent canopy (shrubs) – 30%
- Percent canopy (herbs) – 12%

Percent Cover (Quantitative)

The representation of each species within each quadrat was estimated by broad cover classes (<1%, 1-5%, 5-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, and >75%). The percent cover of each species based upon the point intercept method is presented in Table 1 through Table 5 below.



Table 1 Soil Imprinting with Hand Broadcast Overseeded Drainage Swales – Quadrats A and G (Average)

Species	Quadrat A		Quadrat G	
	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover
Native Shrubs				
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>	1	2%	1	2%
<i>Artemisia californica</i>			1	2%
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>			4	8%
<i>Atriplex polycarpa</i>			9	18%
<i>Atriplex spinosa</i>				
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	2	4%		
<i>Baccharis salicifolia</i>				
<i>Encelia californica</i>				
<i>Salvia apiana</i>				
<i>Salvia mellifera</i>				
Non-Native Shrubs				
<i>Atriplex semibaccata</i>			1	2%
Native Herbs				
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>				
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>				
<i>Elymus triticoides</i>			4	8%
<i>Nasella pulchra</i>				
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>				
Non-Native Herbs				
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>				
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	1	2%		
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	4	8%		
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	4	8%	1	2%
<i>Salsola tragus</i>				
Bare ground	38	76%	29	58%
	Quadrat A	Quadrat G	A and G (% Cover)	
Percent Cover Native Shrub	6%	30%	18%	
Percent Cover Native Herb	0%	8%	4%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub	0%	2%	1%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb	18%	2%	10%	
Percent Bare Ground	76%	58%	67%	



Table 2 Soil Imprinting – Quadrats B, F, and H (Average)

Species	Quadrat B		Quadrat F		Quadrat H	
	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover
Native Shrubs						
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>	5	10%				
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	14	28%				
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>			3	6%	2	4%
<i>Atriplex polycarpa</i>						
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>	3	6%				
<i>Encelia californica</i>	2	4%				
<i>Encelia farinosa</i>	2	4%				
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	2	4%	2	4%	5	10%
<i>Hesperoyucca whipplei</i>						
<i>Isocoma menziesii</i>	5	10%				
<i>Lepidospartum squamatum</i>						
<i>Salvia leucophylla</i>	1	2%				
<i>Salvia mellifera</i>	9	18%				
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> ssp. <i>caerulea</i>	1	2%				
Native Herbs						
<i>Elymus triticoides</i>					1	2%
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>						
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>						
<i>Vulpia microstachys</i>						
Non-Native Herbs						
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>			1	2%		
<i>Bromus rubens</i>			2	4%	2	4%
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>	1	2%				
<i>Festuca myuros</i>					1	2%
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>			2	4%	3	6%
<i>Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum</i>			22	44%	2	4%
Bare ground	5	10%	18	36%	34	68%
	Quadrat B		Quadrat F		Quadrat H	B, F, H (% cover)
Percent Cover Native Shrub	88%		10%		14%	37%
Percent Cover Native Herb	0%		0%		2%	1%
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub	0%		0%		0%	0%
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb	2%		54%		16%	24%
Percent Bare Ground	10%		36%		68%	38%



Table 3 Broadcast Seeding – Quadrat C

Species	Quadrat C	
	Number of Hits	Percent Cover
Native Shrubs		
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>	14	28%
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	21	42%
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>		
<i>Atriplex polycarpa</i>		
<i>Atriplex spinosa</i>		
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>		
<i>Encelia californica</i>		
<i>Encelia farinosa</i>	2	4%
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>		
<i>Lepidospartum squamatum</i>		
<i>Salvia apiana</i>	1	2%
Native Herbs		
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>		
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>		
<i>Elymus triticoides</i>		
<i>Nasella pulchra</i>		
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>		
<i>Vulpia microstachys</i>		
Non-Native Herbs		
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>	12	24%
<i>Echinochloa crus-galli</i>		
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>		
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>		
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>		
<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>		
Bare ground	0	0%
Quadrat C (% cover)		
Percent Cover Native Shrub	76%	
Percent Cover Native Herb	0%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub	0%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb	24%	
Percent Bare Ground	0%	



Table 4 Broadcast Seeding with Soil Imprinting – Quadrats D and I (Average)

Species	Quadrat D		Quadrat I	
	Number of Hits	Percent Cover	Number of Hits	Percent Cover
Native Shrubs				
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>				
<i>Artemisia californica</i>				
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>	2	4%		
<i>Atriplex polycarpa</i>			1	2%
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>			3	6%
<i>Isocoma menziesii</i>				
<i>Opuntia littoralis</i>				
Non-Native Shrubs				
<i>Atriplex semibaccata</i>			3	6%
Native Herbs				
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>				
<i>Descurainia pinnata</i>				
<i>Elymus triticoides</i>	2	4%	1	2%
<i>Nasella pulchra</i>				
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>				
<i>Vulpia microstachys</i>				
Non-Native Herbs				
<i>Avena barbata</i>				
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>			1	2%
<i>Bromus rubens</i>	4	8%	11	22%
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	1	2%		
<i>Festuca myuros</i>			4	8%
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	1	2%		
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	2	4%	5	10%
<i>Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum</i>	8	16%		
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	1	2%	1	2%
<i>Salsola tragus</i>	1	2%		
Bare ground	28	56%	20	40%
	Quadrat D	Quadrat I	D and I (% cover)	
Percent Cover Native Shrub	4%	8%	6%	
Percent Cover Native Herb	4%	2%	3%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub	0%	6%	3%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb	36%	44%	40%	
Percent Bare Ground	56%	40%	48%	



Table 5 Soil Imprinting and Hand Broadcast – Quadrat E

Species	Quadrat E	
	Number of Hits	Percent Cover
Native Shrubs		
<i>Acmispon glaber</i>		
<i>Artemisia californica</i>	1	2%
<i>Atriplex lentiformis</i>	4	8%
<i>Atriplex polycarpa</i>	5	10%
<i>Atriplex spinosa</i>		
<i>Baccharis pilularis</i>		
<i>Encelia californica</i>	1	2%
<i>Encelia farinose</i>	2	4%
<i>Eriodictyon californicum</i>	1	2%
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	4	8%
<i>Isocoma menziesii</i>	4	8%
<i>Opuntia littoralis</i>		
<i>Salvia apiana</i>		
<i>Salvia mellifera</i>		
Native Herbs		
<i>Achillia mellifolium</i>		
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>		
<i>Elymus triticoides</i>		
<i>Nasella pulchra</i>		
<i>Sisyrinchium bellum</i>		
<i>Vulpia microstachys</i>		
Non-Native Herbs		
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>		
<i>Centaurea melitensis</i>		
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	1	2%
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>		
<i>Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum</i>	4	8%
Bare ground	23	46%
Quadrat E (% cover)		
Percent Cover Native Shrub	44%	
Percent Cover Native Herb	0%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub	0%	
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb	10%	
Percent Bare Ground	46%	



Discussion

Table 6 below provides a summary of the percent cover of native and non-native shrubs and herbs, including areas of bare ground within the Coastal Sage Scrub City South B Trial Plot.

Table 6 Summary of Percent Cover for Each Planting Method Using the Point Intercept Method

	Soil Imprinting with Hand Broadcast Overseeded Drainage Swales (Quadrats A and G)	Soil Imprinting (Quadrats B, F, and H)	Broadcast Seeding (Quadrat C)	Broadcast Seeding with Soil Imprinting (Quadrats D and I)	Soil Imprinting and Hand Broadcast (Quadrat E)
Percent Cover Native Shrub	18%	37%	76%	6%	44%
Percent Cover Native Herb	4%	1%	0%	3%	0%
Percent Cover Non-Native Shrub	1%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Percent Cover Non-Native Herb	10%	24%	24%	40%	10%
Percent Bare Ground	67%	38%	0%	48%	46%

Dominant native shrub species include brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), coast prickly pear (*Opuntia littoralis*), big saltbush (*Atriplex lentiformis*), deerweed (*Acmispon glaber*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), and coastal goldenbush (*Isocoma menziesii*).

Non-native plant cover increased in all of the treatment types between the fourth quarter of 2023 and the first quarter of 2024 (Table 6). The increase in non-native plant cover likely occurred as a result above-average rainfall in the winter of 2023/2024. Species such as small flowered iceplant (*Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum*), redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), short podded mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), foxtail barley (*Hordeum murinum*), and red brome (*Bromus rubens*) were observed in their vegetative and flowering forms in the first quarter of 2024. Small flowered iceplant saw the greatest increase in cover between the fourth quarter of 2023 and the first quarter of 2024. Non-native plant species cover is expected to increase through the spring months and into summer of 2024.

Broadcast seeding (Quadrat C) had the highest percent cover of native shrubs using the point intercept method at 76 percent. Deerweed, which is one of the most dominant species in Quadrat C, is an early-successional shrub species that is extremely beneficial for restoration purposes, as it fixes nitrogen into the soil and thereby increases soil fertility for other native plant species. The second highest percent cover of native shrubs was in the soil imprinting and hand broadcast treatment (Quadrat E; 44 percent), and the third highest was the soil imprinting treatment (Quadrats B, F, and H; 37 percent; Table 6). As described above, the percent cover of native herbaceous plant species was low in all planting methods, ranging between zero and four percent in the first quarter of 2024.

Recommendations

Successional Growth and Weed Control

Wildfires in Southern California have become more common in recent years and have impacted on the native landscape. Non-native weed control is essential in establishing post-fire restoration sites and is



recommended by organizations such as the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Society of Ecological Restoration. Successional regrowth of herbaceous non-native species is to be expected within the first two to three years following a wildfire, which is currently occurring at the trial plot. Native shrubs are expected to recover over a longer period through germination of existing seed within the topsoil and basal growth from charred plants. Native shrubs have shown notable growth in the past two years, and now appear to be well established in the trial plot.

Successional growth of herbaceous species is also important, as native herbaceous species provide natural erosion of topsoil. To promote establishment and growth of native herbaceous species, controlling the spread of non-native herbaceous species such as foxtail barley, red brome, and short podded mustard is essential. Reducing non-native herbaceous species growth minimizes negative competitive effects on native herbaceous and woody species for water, nutrients, and sunlight. Weed maintenance should occur no less than every four months, and special attention should be afforded to minimizing impacts to native grasses that may appear to be non-native (i.e., beardless wild rye), native seedlings, and native shrub resprouts. Weed maintenance should be scheduled to maximize removal of non-native species prior to seed set, which typically occurs in spring between the months of February and April, but may also occur throughout the growing season based upon water availability.

Supplemental Irrigation

While southern California received above-average rainfall in the winter of 2023/2024, supplemental irrigation is a valuable restoration technique to promote re-establishment of native vegetation, particularly during the dry months of the year (i.e., summer and fall). As described above, native herbaceous vegetation has continued to be notably low throughout all planting methods. If native herbaceous vegetation continues to be sparse throughout the trial plot, and/or if native shrubs senesce or show indicators of drought stress, the irrigation system within the trial plot should be re-installed to increase water availability and promote seed germination and re-establishment of native vegetation.



References

John Minch and Associates, Inc. (JMA). 2014. Methodology for Monitoring Percent Cover and Species Richness within Each Seeded Application Method on the Coastal Sage Scrub Pilot Project at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you on this important Project. Please contact Greg Ainsworth if you have questions concerning the contents of this report. He may be reached by telephone at (818) 564-5544, or by email at gainsworth@rinconconsultants.com.

Sincerely,
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Ainsworth", written over a horizontal line.

Greg Ainsworth
Natural Resources Director

Attachments

- Attachment A Deck B Revegetation Area Quadrat Layout
- Attachment B Representative Site Photographs

Attachment A

Deck B Revegetation Area Quadrat Layout

Deck B Revegetation Area Quadrat Layout



Attachment B

Photographs of Sample Plots



Photograph 1. Quadrat A facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 2. Quadrat B facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 3. Quadrat C facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 4. Quadrat D facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 5. Quadrat E facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 6. Quadrat F facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 7. Quadrat G facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 8. Quadrat H facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).



Photograph 9. Quadrat I facing northeast from southwest corner (March 21, 2024).

ATTACHMENT 6





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March 22, 2021
Project No: 21-11086

Tuong-phu Ngo
Republic Services
14747 San Fernando Road
Sylmar, California 91342
Via email: [email address](#)

**Subject: Sunshine Canyon Landfill Ultimate Entry Improvement Project, Oak Tree Survey
14747 San Fernando Road, Sylmar, California, 91342**

Dear Mr. Ngo:

Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) prepared this report for the Ultimate Entry Improvement Project (project) located at the Sunshine Canyon Landfill (landfill) in Sylmar, Los Angeles County, California. This report, prepared by ISA certified arborist Greg Ainsworth, documents the results of an oak tree survey and assessment of impacts to protected oak trees from the project and provides a current tally on the remaining oak trees in the landfills' s oak tree mitigation bank.

Introduction

This oak tree report was prepared to disclose information on native oak (*Quercus sp.*) trees that would be removed by the proposed project.

Pursuant to the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance, any tree of the oak genus that is 25 inches in circumference (8 inches in diameter) or has a combined trunk circumference of any two trunks of at least 38 inches (12 inches in diameter), as measured 4.5 feet above the mean natural grade (i.e., diameter at breast height [DBH]), is considered a "protected tree" (Ordinance 88-0157 1, 82-0168 2, Section 22.56.2050, 1988). An oak tree that has a trunk DBH equal to or greater than 36 inches is considered a heritage tree, as defined in the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance. In accordance with the Ordinance, no damage shall occur within the protective zone (the area within the dripline of an oak tree and extending to a point at least 5 feet outside the dripline, or 15 feet from the trunk[s] of the tree, whichever distance is greater) of a protected oak tree. Damage is defined as any act causing or tending to cause injury to the root system or other parts of an oak tree, including, but not limited to, burning, application of toxic substances, operation of equipment or machinery, paving, changing of natural grade, and trenching or excavating.

Sunshine Canyon Landfill Oak Tree Mitigation Bank

In accordance with landfill's Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Oak Tree Permit (OTP) #86312-(5) (dated February 19, 1991) for the Sunshine Canyon Landfill Extension Project, all native oak trees that will be removed for any project-related impact shall be mitigated at a ratio of 2:1, and heritage-size oak trees (36-inch DBH or greater) shall be mitigated at a ratio of 10:1. All mitigation oaks shall be monitored for 7 years after the tree reaches 0.5 inches in diameter.



A surplus of coast live oak trees was previously planted in the landfill's mitigation areas, which now serves as a mitigation bank for the landfill to draw from for future removals of coast live oak trees. There are currently 48 coast live oaks remaining in the mitigation bank (JMA, Sunshine Canyon Landfill Oak Tree and Bigcone Douglas Fir Monitoring Report No. 28, March 8, 2021).

Project Description

The proposed project involves the development of a landfill termination berm and cut/fill graded entrance roadway that will provide a down-slope buttress and access for a proposed landfill expansion. The nearly 190-foot-high proposed roadway and berm embankment across the mouth of the main canyon of Sunshine Canyon Landfill is designed to buttress the expanded landfill refuse prism that will be situated to the west. This new road embankment includes the associated cut and fill grading, three retaining walls, and a sedimentation basin with stormwater controls.

Methods

All oak trees located within and immediately adjacent to the project footprint that could be impacted by the proposed project were surveyed by certified arborist Greg Ainsworth (I.S.A. Cert# WE-7473A). The tree survey was conducted on March 4, 2021. Using a forester's diameter-equivalent tape, the diameter of all native oak trees having a trunk diameter of 8 inches or greater (or combined trunk diameter of 12 inches or greater) were measured at 4.5 feet above the mean natural grade to obtain the DBH. The location of each tree was recorded from the base of the tree using a Global Positioning System (GPS) with sub-meter accuracy. The following parameters were assessed from the base of each tree (or from the nearest vantage point):

Tree Characteristics

- Trunk diameter (DBH)
- Height
- Crown radius in all directions (north, south, east, and west).
- Balance or symmetry of the tree based on the crown radius measurements and whether the tree leans or is unstable.

Physical Condition

- Identification of damage caused by pathogens or insect pests, by natural causes such as lightning, or by human activity.
- Evaluation of vigor based on such parameters as amount of new growth, leaf color, abnormal bark, dead wood, evidence of wilt, excessive necrosis or leaf chlorosis, thinning of crown, etc.
- Assessment of the overall health of the tree based on the evaluation of vigor, presence of damage, and comparison to the typical archetype tree of the same species.



Health Grade

A subjective alphabetical ranking was assigned for overall health (vigor, aesthetic value, and balance) for each native oak and big cone fir tree based on the criteria described below:

- “A” = Excellent: A healthy and vigorous tree characteristic of its species and reasonably free of any visible signs of stress, disease, or pest infestation.
- “B” = Good: A healthy and vigorous tree with minor visible signs of stress, disease, and/or pest infestation. Some maintenance measures may need to be implemented, such as pruning of dead wood or broken branches.
- “C” = Fair: Although healthy in overall appearance, there is abnormal amount of stress or disease/insect infestation, and a substantial amount of maintenance may be needed.
- “D” = Poor: A tree that may be exhibiting a substantial amount of stress, disease, or insect damage than what the amount that is expected for the species. The tree may be in a state of rapid decline, and may show various signs of dieback, necrosis, or other symptoms caused by pathogens or insect pests.
- “F” = Dead: This tree has no foliage and exhibits no sign of life or vigor.

Results

There are 20 coast live oak trees located within the project footprint, one of which is dead, and all of which would be removed by the proposed project. No other oak trees would be encroached or otherwise impacted by the proposed project. Data on these 20 oak trees is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Oak Tree Survey Data

Tree #	Species	DBH	Canopy Spread				Health	Physical Condition	Impact Status	Reason for Impact
			North	West	South	East				
1	Coast live oak	13	14	3	8	21	Fair		Removal	Grading
2	Coast live oak	--	--	--	--	--	Dead		Removal	Grading
3	Coast live oak	16	3	8	25	35	Poor	fire scar	Removal	Grading
4	Coast live oak	12	12	7	18	15	Good	fire scar	Removal	Grading
5	Coast live oak	18	11	15	30	7	Good	fire scar	Removal	Grading
6	Coast live oak	9	4	8	18	2	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
7	Coast live oak	15	7	16	15	8	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
8	Coast live oak	9	7	3	18	8	Good	fire scar	Removal	Grading
9	Coast live oak	18	30	15	22	10	Good	fire scar	Removal	Grading
10	Coast live oak	16	8	17	15	6	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
11	Coast live oak	10	15	14	1	2	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
12	Coast live oak	10	20	6	4	2	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
13	Coast live oak	22	18	21	16	10	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
14	Coast live oak	10	19	1	1	1	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
15	Coast live oak	21	10	7	18	22	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading



Tree #	Species	DBH	Canopy Spread				Health	Physical Condition	Impact Status	Reason for Impact
			North	West	South	East				
16	Coast live oak	18	1	22	19	8	Fair	fire scar, split trunk	Removal	Grading
17	Coast live oak	19	15	11	15	10	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
18	Coast live oak	12	15	7	15	7	Fair	fire scar	Removal	Grading
19	Coast live oak	12	17	10	4	8	Good		Removal	Grading
20	Coast live oak	8	4	12	6	1	Fair		Removal	Grading

Mitigation

There are currently 48 coast live oak trees in the landfill's mitigation bank. As noted in Table 1, 20 coast live oak trees would be removed by the proposed project. Therefore, at a mitigation ratio of 2:1, 40 coast live oak trees will be deducted from the landfill's oak tree mitigation bank, leaving 4 oak trees remaining in the bank for future removals at the landfill.

Please contact Greg Ainsworth at (818) 564-5544 or email at gainsworth@rinconconsultants.com if you have any question or comments regarding the information provided in this report.

Sincerely,
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Greg Ainsworth, I.S.A. Cert # WE-7473A
Director of Urban Forestry

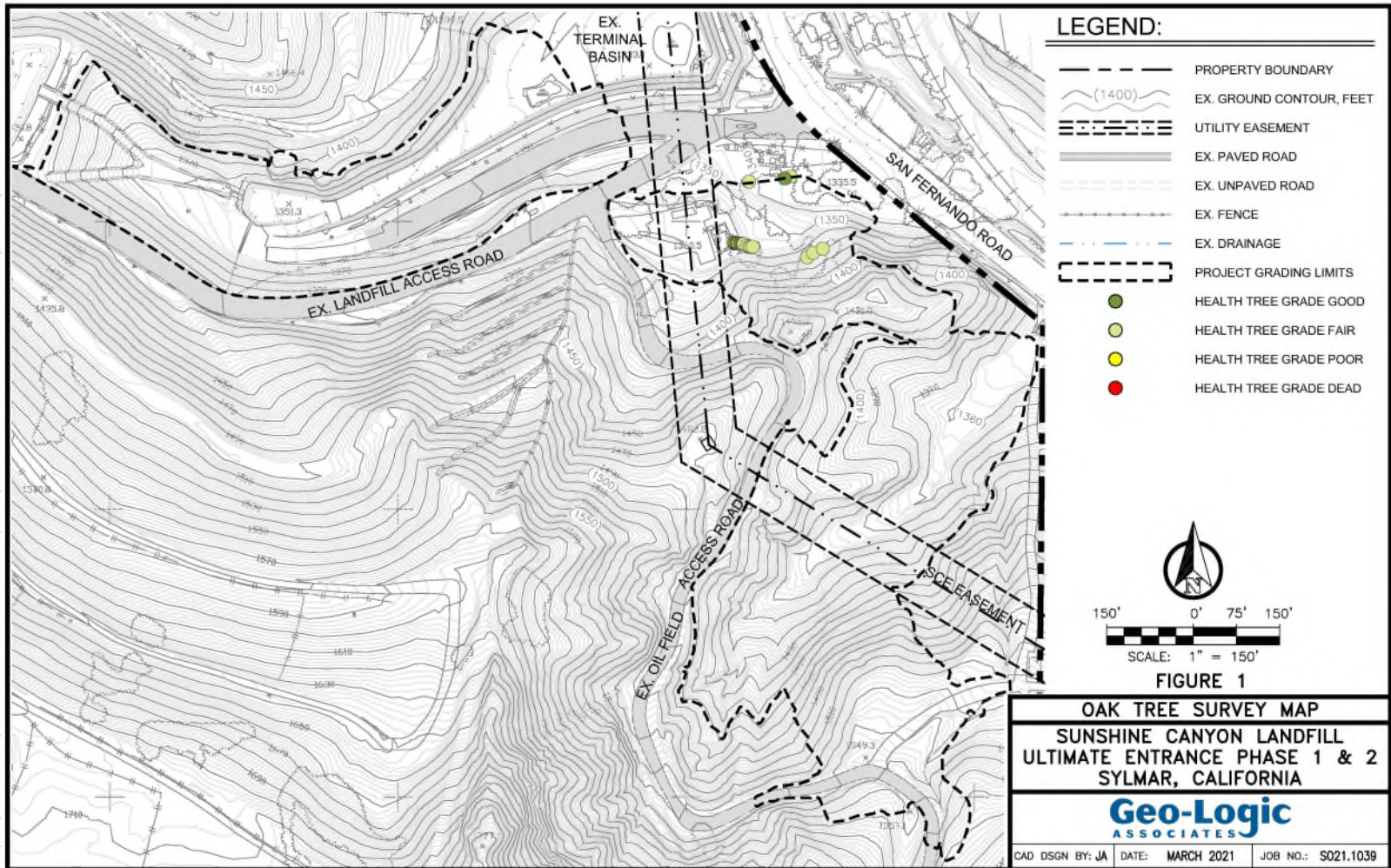
Attachments

Oak Tree Map

DRAWING 1



P:\SITES\SUNSHINE CANYON\ULTIMATE ENTRANCE ROAD CONST PHASE 1-2\EXHIBITS\S021.1039-SCL-VHBT-OAK TREES LOCATIONS-FIG 1-(2021-03-24).DWG March 26, 2021 - 10:30 AM BY: GJA-USER



10/10/2021 10:10:10 AM C:\Users\jg\Documents\Projects\Sunshine Canyon Landfill\Site Vegetation Status and Activity\DWG\1011001.dwg 2/28/2018 10:10:10 AM

