State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
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September 25, 2025

Brenda Green
City Clerk's Office
77 Fair Drive
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Subject: DRAFT FAIRVIEW PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE, COSTA MESA, CA

Dear Brenda Green:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has reviewed the technical reports which provide the framework for the Draft Fairview Park Master Plan (Plan) from the City of Costa Mesa (City). Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations to the City Council regarding those activities that may affect California fish and wildlife. Likewise, CDFW appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Plan that CDFW, by law, may be required to carry out or approve through the exercise of its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is California's Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines[1] (Fish & Game Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a)). CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (Fish & G. Code, § 1802). Similarly, for purposes of CEQA, CDFW is charged by law to provide, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

CDFW may also act as a Responsible Agency under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381). CDFW expects that it may need to exercise regulatory authority as provided by the Fish and Game Code. As proposed, for example, the Project may be subject to CDFW's lake and streambed alteration

[1] CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

regulatory authority (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 *et seq*.). Likewise, to the extent implementation of the Project as proposed may result in "take" as defined by State law[2] of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA; Fish & G. Code, § 2050 et seq.) or the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA; Fish & G. Code, §1900 et seq.), the City may seek related take authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW also administers the Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program, a California regional habitat conservation planning program (Fish & G. Code, § 2800 et seq.). The City is a participating landowner under the Central/Coastal Orange County NCCP/Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP).

PLAN DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Objective: According to the City's website, the objective of the Fairview Park Master Plan Update (Update) is to revise the 1998 Fairview Park Master Plan, last updated in 2008. In addition to the goals of aligning the existing Plan with current biological assessments, land uses, and environmental regulations/policies, it will also be used to create priorities and strategies for long-term management, preservation of natural resources, and future park projects. Future projects include, but are not limited to, restoration projects, trail improvements, park amenities, and special events.

Location: Fairview Park is in the City, and its address is 2525 Placentia Avenue. It is bordered by residential areas to the north and east, Talbert Regional Park to the south, and the Santa Ana River to the west. The park itself is bisected by Placentia Avenue, which runs north/south.

Biological Setting: The regional biological significance of Fairview Park cannot be overstated. The Park is the northernmost parcel of a rare, contiguous undeveloped natural open space, which stretches from Fairview Park southward through Talbert Regional Park and terminates at the Randall Preserve. The 208-acre, topographically diverse Park contains a multitude of habitat types and micro-habitats, including one of the last coastal terrace vernal pools complexes in Orange County (USFWS 2007) on its mesa. Vernal pools in Fairview Park also support several plant species that are locally rare (City 2008 and Chung 2010). The artificial ponds in the lowlands provide nesting and foraging habitat for riparian species. Other natural and sensitive habitats include native grasslands, coastal bluff scrub, alluvial scrub, riparian woodlands, and coastal sage scrub. These habitats serve as foraging and reproductive habitat, providing refugia for many sensitive species in an otherwise developed watershed. Approximately 12-acres of the Park is landscaped.

According to the Biological Technical Report (BTR; Hamilton Biological 2025), 222 vascular plants and over 262 wildlife species have been documented in the Park, a remarkable number of flora and fauna for an area with just under 200 acres of habitat.

[2] "Take" is defined in Section 86 of the Fish and Game Code as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill."

Several listed species have been observed on site or have high or moderate potential to occur on site which include:

Invertebrates

- San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis;* Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed endangered),
- Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*; CESA Candidate for Threatened or Endangered Listing; CBB),

Birds

- Coastal California gnatcatcher [*Polioptila californica californica*; ESA- listed threatened; CDFW Species of Special Concern (SSC); gnatcatcher],
- Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*; ESA-listed endangered; CESA-listed endangered; vireo),
- White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*; CDFW Fully Protected Species),
- Belding's Savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi;* CESA-listed endangered),
- Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; SSC; CESA Candidate for Threatened or Endangered Listing),
- Coastal cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis*; SSC),
- Coopers hawk (*Astur cooperii*; SSC),

Plants

- San Diego button celery (*Eryngium aristulatum* var. parishii; California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Rank 1B.1), and,
- Southern tarplant (*Centromadia parrryi* ssp*. Australis*; California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Rank 1B.1).

Please see Attachment A for a complete list of sensitive species present or with potential to occur at Fairview Park (Hamilton Biological 2025).

Prior CDFW Engagement: CDFW has a long history of engaging with the City on natural resources matters at Fairview Park, most notably vernal pool complex management issues, historic violations, and ongoing impacts to areas subject to Fish and Game Code 1600 *et seq*. Additionally, fulfillment of outstanding mitigation obligations regarding compensatory mitigation obligations at Fairview Park for off-site projects with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), and the Department of Toxic Substances Control continue to languish and remain incomplete (OCTA 2018 and CDFW 2019). Despite repeated engagement with the City on natural resources matters at the Park, our attempts to partner with the City on these outstanding issues are largely ineffective. As outlined below, many of these obligations are incomplete or their status is unknown.

In 2014, CDFW partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to provide comments on vernal pool restoration after the installation of a path in the Park that was routed within and adjacent to vernal pools occupied by the federally endangered San Diego fairy shrimp (USFWS 2014). Impacts to these pools from the installation of paths and parking areas, improvements to Estancia High School stadium, and the operation of motorized vehicles during the wet season were mitigated through restoration efforts at pools 2, 5, 6, and 7 (Glen Lukos Associates 2015). It is unclear to CDFW and the USFWS (hereafter referred to as the Wildlife Agencies) as to whether the stated mitigation and restoration efforts were achieved in full.

In 2016, CDFW investigated the City's fill of Little Canyon as a possible violation of Fish and Game Code, section 1602, when soil stockpiles from the artificial pond creation were used to fill Little Canyon for purposes of trail creation and realignment. CDFW concluded the unauthorized activities were subject to Fish and Game Code; however, the statute of limitations to issue a Notice of Violation had passed and no action was taken. (City 2015)

In 2018, the City contacted CDFW regarding clearing of vegetation in and around the artificial pond complex during the nesting season for coastal California gnatcatcher. At that time, CDFW communicated that a Routine Maintenance Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) per our Lake and Streambed Alteration program was required to move forward with the clearing. To date the City does not have a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement to authorize the work in those areas (Comment 3).

In 2019, the Wildlife Agencies and OCTA met with the City several times to discuss their outstanding mitigation obligations to OCTA and ACOE (OCTA 2018). These issues remain unresolved (Comment 4).

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist the City in reaching the stated goals of the Plan update; namely, aligning the existing Plan with current biological assessments, land uses, and environmental regulations and policies, while adequately identifying and/or mitigating the Plan's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources.

1. **Fly field Relocation.** CDFW strongly supports relocation of the model airplane fly field, as its continued operation in the vernal pool complex is in direct conflict with preservation and management of this important park feature. The goals of the Master Plan Update, as stated in the publicly available technical documents, cannot be achieved while private citizens continue take it upon themselves to grade and mow these sensitive habitats to maintain fly field runways on City property. Additionally, while these recreational activities have largely been considered passive, the degradation and improper maintenance of the pools is leading to a long-term reduction in vernal pool function and degradation.

Not only would relocation of the model airplane fly field reduce habitat degradation and risk of unauthorized take of CESA candidate species, but it would also reduce the regulatory burden for the City. Based on current seasonal survey data, operation and maintenance of the fly field in its current location would likely require a CESA Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for western burrowing owl and Crotch's bumble bee. Western burrowing owl over-winters regularly on the Park's mesa, within proximity of the existing fly field. Mowing, grading, or any other maintenance of the fly field could cause unauthorized take of these species.

On October 15, 2024, the Fish and Game Commission published a Notice of Findings that designates western burrowing owl as a CESA candidate species. If the fly field is not relocated, no avoidance measures are implemented, and regular survey data is not collected, unauthorized take could occur. Furthermore, without Park enforcement, inadvertent attempts to flush western burrowing owl from the site may lead to indirect impacts to the species. Crotch's bumble bee has also been recently observed in Fairview Park (Endemic Environmental Services 2024). The California Fish and Game Commission accepted a petition to list Crotch's bumble bee as threatened or endangered under CESA, determining the listing, "may be warranted" and advancing the species to the candidacy stage of the CESA listing process. At the fly field's current location, its operations and ongoing maintenance will substantially modify habitat and potentially reduce or impair the viability of future populations of bees. The Project may also reduce the number and range of the species without considering the likelihood that special status species on adjacent and nearby natural lands, such as Talbert Regional Park or Randall Preserve, may rely upon the habitat that occurs on the proposed Project site.

Finally, there is scientific evidence to support that the fly field activities lead to harassment of sensitive avian species, including raptors. Behavioral responses to model aircraft disturbances add to the daily energy expenditure of birds. When birds are disturbed, they can react with altered behaviors, such as agitation or flushing. Also, a bird may exhibit no outward signs of distress but experience an elevated heart rate (Ellenberg, Mattern and Seddon 2013), increased oxygen consumption, and change in metabolic rate, thus disrupting the bird's energy budget (Kempf and Hüppop 1998). Even outside breeding season, such disturbances can have a high impact to the individual bird as well as to the population. During the non-breeding season birds need to forage as much as possible to build up fat stores for migration, upcoming breeding activity, or harsh winter conditions (Kempf and Hüppop 1998). Birds that rely on Fairview Park for food and shelter could temporarily abandon these habitats during fly field use, leading to a loss of critical resources during key times, such as during migration or overwintering periods. This disruption can have significant consequences for their overall health, survival, and reproductive success. Depending on a species' breeding cycle, disturbances can have varying results (Ellenberg, Mattern and Seddon 2013). For fly field activities that occur at the beginning of nesting season, birds may choose not to nest in the area at all.

As southern California's rare coastal open spaces are important stopovers for annual migration, model aircraft disturbances in those areas will affect many birds. Migratory birds rely on specific cues, including environmental factors such as light, temperature, and quiet, to guide their journeys. The presence of even lower-decibel noise and physical disturbances from fly field can interfere with these cues, potentially delaying or disrupting migration. This disruption could affect the birds' ability to arrive at their destination on time, impacting their survival and reproductive success (Schummer and Eddleman 2003). It can also interfere with the birds' flight paths, leading to potential collisions or forced changes in migration patterns. Noise and physical presence of model aircraft also affect the landscape and vegetation used by birds for cover and nesting. This is particularly concerning considering the known grading and mowing activities associated with the fly field maintenance.

2. **Enforcement.** To meet the stated goals of the Master Plan Update, CDFW strongly recommends that the Update include a discussion regarding the necessity for Park enforcement of adopted policy. Park enforcement is necessary to ensure the City complies with Fish and Game Code, as well as conditions as described in any forthcoming CDFW-issued permits (e.g., CESA ITP or LSAA). Without enforcement, continued habitat degradation through off-trail activity is likely, and unauthorized take under CESA is possible. We strongly recommend the City includes line-item funding for this purpose in its annual budget.

3. **Permitting Obligations.** The Fairview Park Master Plan Update should address in specific terms how and when it will meet its prior and ongoing wetland permitting obligations. CDFW has been engaging with the City since 2018, when CDFW was contacted regarding vegetation clearing in the artificial pond complex. Five years later in 2023, the City submitted a notification for routine maintenance in and around the ponds (EPIMS-ORA-38510-R5). On July 3, 2024, CDFW deemed that notification incomplete. To date, the City has not responded to CDFW regarding the outstanding items in our Notification Incomplete letter. It can only be assumed that, despite our efforts to negotiate in good faith with the City regarding wetland permitting obligations, seven years' worth of unauthorized impacts are likely to have occurred to areas subject to Fish and Game Code Section 1602. A Master Plan Update would not be complete without addressing the outstanding Routine Maintenance Agreement notification and any other one-time projects in the Park; this includes how they will be completed, funded, when, and by whom.

   Given the City continues to disregard our requests for compliance, CDFW is within our rights to issue a Notice of Violation associated with the ongoing unauthorized impacts. FGC Section 1602 requires an entity to submit a written Lake and Streambed Alteration Notification to CDFW before: 1) substantially diverting or obstructing the natural flow of a river, stream, or lake; 2) substantially changing the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; 3) using any material from the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; and/or 4) depositing or disposing of debris, waste, material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into a river, stream, or lake. Hence, any entity who engages in an activity

subject to FGC Section 1602 without first notifying CDFW violates Section 1602. However, we continue to assert that it is in the best interest of the wetland resources, the City, and CDFW to issue an LSAA to authorize the impacts, if possible.

CDFW is available to meet regarding wetland permitting issues at the City's earliest convenience.

4. **Mitigation Obligations.** It is CDFW's understanding that restoration efforts associated with the Fairview Park Mesa, for which the City applied for a Restoration Management Plan (RMP) under CDFW's Cutting the Green Tape Program, were approved at the City Council meeting held on September 16, 2025. This restoration is aligned with the stated goals of the Master Plan Update and would fulfil the City's outstanding OCTA mitigation obligations. The draft restoration plan and the proposed CEQA addendum, prepared by the City, provide a sufficient level of detail regarding the work which will be authorized by the RMP, such that a contract can be bid in the absence of an issued permit.

   In 2010, the City nominated the subject 23-acre Fairview Park Restoration Project (Restoration) for funding consideration to the OCTA. The Wildlife Agencies supported the recommendation for OCTA to fund the Restoration within Fairview Park. This Restoration was planned to be integrated into the OCTA Measure 2 (M2) NCCP/HCP as it has high potential to support similar vegetation communities to mitigate for identified M2 freeway construction activities; restores sensitive species listed under the California Natural Diversity Database; and should result in ecological benefits to the NCCP/HCP Covered Species. Once the Restoration is completed and approved by the Wildlife Agencies, OCTA will be able to use the restored habitat for mitigation as part of the OCTA M2 NCCP/HCP. The City agreed to ensure the long-term conservation of the natural resources at Fairview Park through verification of a conservation easement or other approved conservation instrument.

   Below are the outstanding concerns pertaining to the Restoration that we have communicated to the City during meetings and phone calls over the past several years:

   a. Failure to restore the agreed upon habitat restoration acreage and implement a solution to resolve this shortcoming;
   b. Lack of documentation to demonstrate that adjacent mitigation for other projects does not overlap with the Project;
   c. Lack of progress on developing and recording a conservation easement or other approved conservation instrument over the entire project area; and,
   d. Lack of Lake and Streambed Alteration Notification for one-time work and ongoing maintenance of the Fairview Park ponds subject to Fish and Game Code section 1600 *et seq*.

CDFW is committed to assisting the City in fulfilling its outstanding obligations. We look forward to working with the City to provide a complete RMP application package so that issuance of the RMP can move forward.

CONCLUSION

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the technical documents associated with the Master Plan Update to advise the City of Costa Mesa in identifying and mitigating the Updates' impacts on biological resources. Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Jennifer Turner[3], Senior Environmental Scientist, Supervisor.

Sincerely,

Signed by:
Glen Lubcke
AD7D070BCB66466...

Glen M. Lubcke
Environmental Program Manager
South Coast Region

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Sensitive Species at Fairview Park

ec: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Jennifer Turner, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory)
Cindy Hailey, Staff Services Analyst

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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REFERENCES

CDFW. 2019. RE: Remedial Action Plan for Ascon Landfill Site Project, Huntington Beach, CA (SCH# 2013041010). Electronic mail received by X. Zhai from J. Turner on April 17, 2019. On file at CDFW.

CDFW. 2023. EPIMS-ORA-38510-R5. Lake and Streambed Notification. Submitted by the City of Costa Mesa on June 26, 2023. On file at CDFW.

CDFW. 2025. Incomplete Notification of Routine Maintenance Agreement No. EPIMS-ORA-38510-R5, Fairview Park Wetlands Maintenance Project. Issued July 3, 2024 to the City of Costa Mesa. On file at CDFW.

ACOE. 2010. Personal Communication. Electronic mail received by C. Medak from J. Chung on April 16, 2010. On file at Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office.

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USFWS. 2007. Endangered and threatened wildlife and plants; Designation of critical habitat for the San Diego fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta sandiegonensis*). Federal Register 72:70648-70714.

USFWS. 2014. Restoration, Management, and Protection of Vernal Pools within Fairview Park, City of Costa Mesa. Prepared by the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, Carlsbad, California.

Attachment A: Sensitive Species at Fairview Park

Latin name Common name	Fed.	Global/ State	CNPS	Habitat/Regional Status	Potential to Occur in Fairview Park
Plants					
Abronia villosa var. *aurita* Chaparral Sand-Verbena	—	G5T2/ S2	1B.1	Open sandy soils in alluvial washes, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub. Mainly in Riverside and San Diego Counties. Last extant Orange County population is at Fairview Park.	**Possibly Extirpated.** Small numbers found in northern lowlands in recent years; not detected in 2023, possibly due to brush clearance in area.
Atriplex coulteri Coulter's Saltbush	—	G3/S1S2	1B.2	Clay soils on bluffs, mesas and open coastal areas. San Luis Obispo County south.	**Moderate.** Occurs within 5- 10 miles of park.
Atriplex pacifica South Coast Saltscale	—	G4/S2	1B.2	Clay soils on bluffs, mesas and open coastal areas. Santa Barbara County south.	**Moderate.** Historically occurred within 5-10 miles of park.
Atriplex serenana var. *davidsonii* Davidson's Saltscale	—	G5T1/S1	1B.2	Coastal cliff faces and bluffs. Santa Barbara County south to Orange County.	**Moderate.** Historical records within 5-10 miles of park.
Calystegia sepium ssp. *binghamiae* Santa Barbara Morning- Glory	—	G5TXQ/ SX	1A	Coastal saltmarshes and stream banks. Localized populations in western Central Valley and southern California.	**None.** Name misapplied erroneously to plants in Orange County.
Camissoniopsis lewisii Lewis's Evening-Primrose	—	G4/S4	3	Sandy or clay soils on bluffs, mesas, and open coastal areas. San Luis Obispo County south.	**Present.** Scattered small populations along trail margins and other open areas.
Centromadia parryi ssp. *australis* Southern Tarplant	—	G3T2/S2	1B.1	Disturbed ground in saltmarshes and coastal sage scrub. Santa Barbara County south.	**Present.** Occurs along disturbed margins of trails; numbers fluctuate from year to year; more abundant in the park before creation of ponds in the northern lowlands.

Chaenactis glabriuscula var. *orcuttiana* Orcutt's Pincushion	—	G5T1/S1	1B.1	Coastal dunes, bluffs, and mesas. Ventura County south; mostly in San Diego County.	**Low.** Potentially suitable habitat present, but species not known to occur within 15 miles of the site.
Dudleya multicaulis Many-stemmed Dudleya	—	G2/S2	1B.2	Clay banks, slopes, and sandstone outcrops. Kern County south to northwestern San Diego County.	**Moderate.** Occurs within 5- 10 miles of the park.
Eryngium aristulatum var. *parishii* San Diego Button-Celery	E	E	1B.1	Vernal pools. Mainly in San Diego County; the only Orange County population is at Fairview Park.	**Present.** Found in Ponds 4a, 4b, 4c. Numbers have declined over time; in recent years, plants appear to have been intentionally removed.
Hordeum intercedens Vernal Barley	—	G3G4/ S3S4	3.2	Grasslands and vernal pools. Santa Barbara County south; scattered populations in the Central Valley.	**Present.** Occurs in grasslands and vernal pools; numbers in 2023 greatly reduced from previous years, probably due to increasing competition from non-native species.
Horkelia cuneata var. *puberula* Mesa Horkelia	—	G4T1/S1	1B.1	Sheltered coastal chaparral. San Luis Obispo County south to northwestern San Diego County.	**Low.** Occurs within 5-10 miles, but park lacks coastal chaparral habitat.
Lasthenia glabrata ssp. *coulteri* Coulter's Goldfields	—	G4T2/S2	1B.1	Alkali soils and vernal pools. San Luis Obispo County south; scattered populations in the Central Valley.	**Present.** Pools 5 and 6 hold the County's largest population, with 100s to 1000s of plants; smaller numbers occur in a vernally wet half-pipe feature in the central mesa, adjacent to a large, disturbed area.
Lycium californicum California Boxthorn	—	G4/S4	4.2	Scrub habitats, mainly along the coast. Los Angeles County south.	**Present.** Occurs in coastal bluff scrub on the park's western slope.
Microseris douglasii ssp. *platycarpha* Small-flowered Microseris	—	G4T4/S4	4.2	Vernal pools and seasonally wet plains. Los Angeles County south; one record from southern Central Valley.	**Present.** Occurs in vernal pools and grasslands in the park on both sides of Placentia Avenue.

Myosurus minimus ssp. *apus* Little Mousetail	—	G5T2Q/ S2	3.1	Alkali soils and vernal pools. Mainly in the Central Valley and western Riverside County; the only Orange County population is at Fairview Park.	**Present.** Occurs around the margins of Pool 1; very few plants recorded in 2023, apparently due to competition from non-native plants and trampling.
Nama stenocarpa Mud Nama	—	G4G5/ S1S2	2B.2	Vernal pools and seasonally wet plains. Los Angeles County south; one record from southern Central Valley.	**Present.** Occurs in deepest parts of Pool 1.
Nasturtium gambelii Gambel's Watercress	E	T	1B.1	Freshwater marshes, streams, and drainage areas. San Luis Obispo County south to Orange County.	**Low.** Potentially suitable habitat present, but no extant populations known in Orange County.
Navarretia prostrata Prostrate Vernal Pool Navarretia	—	G2/S2	1B.2	Seasonally wet alkali soil and vernal pools. Central Valley; coastal slope from Alameda County south; one of two Orange County populations is at Fairview Park.	**Present.** Occurs around the margins of Pool 1, but fewer plants than expected were recorded in 2023, apparently due to competition from non-native plants and trampling.
Orcuttia californica California Orcutt Grass	E	E	1B.1	Vernal pools. Ventura County south; scattered populations in the Central Valley; the only Orange County population is at Fairview Park.	**Present.** Found in Pool 4a; several dozen plants emerged in 2023 after exceptional rains.
Pentachaeta aurea ssp. *alleni* Allen's Daisy	—	G4T1/S1	4.3	Clay grasslands and openings in coastal sage scrub. Known from San Joaquin Hills and Santa Ana Mountains of Orange County.	**Low.** Occurs within 5-10 miles of the park, but suitable habitat may not be present.
Saltspring Checkerbloom *Sidalcea neomexicana*	—	G4/S2	2B.2	Alkali springs and marshes. Ventura County south.	**Low.** Potentially suitable habitat present, but species not known to occur within 15 miles of park.
Invertebrates					
San Diego Fairy Shrimp *Branchinecta sandiegonensis*	E	G2/S1		Vernal pools and other ephemeral wetlands. Orange County south.	**Present.** Documented in seasonal pools on both sides of Placentia Avenue.

Riverside Fairy Shrimp *Streptocephalus woottoni*	E	G1G2/ S2		Vernal pools and other ephemeral wetlands. Ventura County south.	**Present.** Documented in seasonal pools on west side of Placentia Avenue.
Bombas crotchii Crotch's Bumble Bee	—	C/S1S2	—	Many habitats. California and northwestern Baja California; most records from southern California.	**Present.** Uses native and non-native flowering habitats in the park (Endemic Environmental Services 2024). Nests in burrows, tufts of vegetation, cavities, rock piles, etc.
Danaus plexippus Monarch	C	G4T1T2 Q/S2	—	Breeds in areas with milkweed from Mendocino County south. In southern California, overwinters mainly in large stands of eucalyptus near the coast.	**Present.** Occurs as a transient; not known to breed or overwinter in the park.
Panoquina errans Wandering Skipper	—	G4G5/ S2	—	Coastal salt marsh with the required food plant, salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*). Santa Barbara County south.	**Present.** James Bailey observed one in the northern lowlands, but scarcity of salt grass in the park may preclude the species from becoming established.
Helminthoglypta traskii traskii Trask Shoulderband	—	G1G2T1 /S2S3	—	Many habitats. Coastal slope from Ventura County south.	**High.** Likely occurs in the less disturbed parts of the park.
Amphibians					
Spea hammondii Western Spadefoot	PT	SSC	—	Seasonal pools with nearby uplands suitable for aestivation. Shasta County south, excluding deserts.	**Low.** The species likely occurred at Fairview Park historically, because suitable habitat is present, but no records exist.
Reptiles					
Actinemys pallida Southwestern Pond Turtle	PT	SSC	—	Expansive natural areas that include permanent water and generally lack non-native turtles or exotic predators. Alameda County south, excluding deserts.	**Present.** One reported in Pond D in the northern lowlands (Endemic Environmental 2021).
Phrynosoma blainvillii Coast Horned Lizard	—	SSC	—	Expansive natural areas with sandy openings and native harvester ants. Shasta County south, excluding deserts.	**Low.** Unlikely to occur due to degradation and fragmentation of habitat, including presence of

					Argentine ants.
Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri Coastal Whiptail	—	SSC	—	Widespread, in various habitats. Coastal slope from Santa Barbara County south.	**Present.** One reported at base of the park's western slope (Dudek 2003).
Anniella stebbinsi Southern California Legless Lizard	—	SSC	—	Various habitats with sandy soil or deep leaf-litter. Coastal slope from Ventura and Kern Counties south.	**Moderate.** May occur in areas with loose soils.
Arizona elegans occidentalis California Glossy Snake	—	SSC	—	Widespread, but uncommon, in habitats with loose soil. Coastal slope from Contra Costa County south.	**Moderate.** May occur in areas with loose soils.
Salvadora hexalepis virgultea Coast Patch-nosed Snake	—	SSC	—	Brushy and rocky habitats. Coastal slope from San Luis Obispo County south.	**Low.** Unlikely to occur due to degradation and fragmentation of habitat.
Thamnophis hammondii Two-striped Garter Snake	—	SSC	—	Widespread in the region, in and around perennial water.	**Moderate.** May occur in and around perennial water.
Crotalus ruber Red Diamond Rattlesnake	—	SSC	—	Various rocky habitats. Coastal slope from Los Angeles County south.	**Low.** Along the coast, not recorded west of the San Joaquin Hills. Records from Seal Beach area reportedly involve released animal(s).
Birds					
Aythya americana Redhead	—	SSC	—	Nests in various freshwater habitats; winters on lakes and bays. Range includes most of North America.	**Present.** A few have been recorded during winter. Some potential exists for nesting in the northern lowland ponds.
Plegadis chihi White-faced Ibis	—	G5/S3S4	—	Various freshwater habitats. Breeding range includes most of western North America; winters south to Central America.	**Present.** Up to several dozen non-breeders occur in the park in fall, winter, spring; small numbers have been recorded breeding in the northern lowland ponds.
Sternula antillarum browni California Least Tern	E	E	—	Breeds on sandy beaches, and in similar open coastal habitats, from Solano County south. Winters in western Mexico.	**Present.** Not expected to nest in the park, but local breeders occasionally forage in ponds in the northern

					lowlands.
Nannopterum auritum Double-crested Cormorant	—	G5/S2	—	Freshwater and nearshore marine environments across most of North America. Nests in trees and snags near water.	**Present.** Non-breeders regularly forage in ponds in the northern lowlands. Could nest there as trees around the ponds mature.
Ixobrychus exilis Least Bittern	—	SSC	—	Resident of freshwater marshes with extensive emergent vegetation across large parts of North and South America.	**Present.** Small number of records from ponds in the northern lowlands; may nest in tules.
Elanus leucurus White-tailed Kite	—	FP	—	Nests in trees within expansive open space areas; more widespread during migration and winter. Forages in rangelands and marshy areas. Range includes large parts of North and South America.	**Present.** Forages regularly in the park. Could potentially nest in riparian woodlands.
Aquila chrysaetos Golden Eagle	—	FP	—	Extensive open areas across a cosmopolitan range; nests on cliffs and in tall trees away from settlements. In Orange County, occurs mainly in the foothills and mountains.	**Low.** Transients could occur rarely.
Circus hudsonius Northern Harrier	—	SSC	—	Nests on the ground in expansive open space areas; more widespread during migration and winter. Range includes most of North America.	**Present.** Small numbers regularly forage in the park's grassland and scrub habitats in fall, winter, and spring. Could possibly nest in the local area.
Haliaeetus leucocephalus Bald Eagle	—	E	—	Nests in tall trees, usually near water; forages in lakes, rivers, and marine environments. Range includes most of North America.	**Present.** Occurs rarely as a transient.
Buteo regalis Ferruginous Hawk	—	G4/S3S4	—	Breeds in central North America and winters mainly in expansive rangelands and agricultural areas to the south.	**Present.** Occurs rarely as a transient.

Buteo swainsoni Swainson's Hawk	—	G5/S4	—	Breeds in Canada and western North America and winters from western Mexico to southern South America.	**Present.** Occurs rarely as a transient.
Athene cunicularia Burrowing Owl	—	C/SSC	—	Occurs across large parts of North America; nesting population west of the deserts nearly extirpated. Rare winter visitor in coastal southern California.	**Present.** Up to three often winter in Fairview Park, using open habitats on either side of Placentia Avenue. Not known to nest in the park.
Asio flammeus Short-eared Owl	—	SSC	—	Extensive open areas across a cosmopolitan range; nests in northern North America. Very rare fall/winter visitor across most of southern California.	**Present.** Occurs rarely as a transient.
Empidonax traillii extimus Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	E	E	—	Formerly a widespread breeder in southern California but now highly localized in areas of extensive riparian woodlands. Uncommon during migration.	**Low (as a breeder).** Habitat is marginal; no recent nesting records from Orange County. Occurs regularly, but uncommonly, as a transient.
Pyrocephalus rubinus Vermilion Flycatcher	—	SSC	—	Open country with trees. Formerly nested in the desert Southwest and into Mexico; now nests sparingly across southern California, including Orange County.	**Present.** Now apparently resident in small numbers; courtship behavior by a pair on 3/25/25.
Vireo bellii bellii Least Bell's Vireo	E	E	—	Nests uncommonly in riparian scrub and woodlands from Ventura County south; winters in western Mexico.	**Present.** Small numbers nest in riparian habitats in Fairview Park and elsewhere along the lower Santa Ana River.
Lanius ludovicianus Loggerhead Shrike	—	SSC	—	Occurs in open habitats across most of North America; nesting population on coastal slope of southern California nearly extirpated. Rare winter visitor in coastal southern California.	**Present.** Occurs rarely in fall and winter; does not nest.
Polioptila californica californica Coastal California Gnatcatcher	T	SSC	—	Resident of coastal sage scrub habitat, favoring shallow slopes and elevations below 1,500 feet; Ventura County south.	**Present.** Small numbers resident in scrub habitats in Fairview Park and elsewhere along the lower Santa Ana River.

Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus Cactus Wren, coastal populations	—	SSC	—	Rare and declining resident of cactus scrub habitat on the coastal slope from Ventura County south.	**Extirpated.** Small numbers formerly resident along the western bluff and elsewhere along the lower Santa Ana River have died out in recent years.
Cistothorus palustris clarkae Clark's Marsh Wren	—	SSC	—	Resident of marshes with extensive emergent vegetation; Los Angeles County to San Diego County.	**High.** A few late spring and summer records of Marsh Wren in the lowland ponds likely refer to *C. p. clarkae*, the local breeder. Records of Marsh Wren in fall and winter may involve migrant subspecies from elsewhere.
Ammodramus savannarum Grasshopper Sparrow	—	SSC	—	Nests in expansive grasslands and rangelands across most of North America. In Orange County, breeds mainly in the San Joaquin Hills and Lomas de Santiago; occurs rarely in fall and winter.	**Low (as a breeder).** Occurs rarely as a transient or winter visitor. Nesting unlikely, but possible, east of Placentia Avenue.
Pooecetes gramineus affinis Oregon Vesper Sparrow	—	SSC	—	Breeds in the Pacific Northwest and winters mainly in expansive open areas on the coastal slope of California.	**High.** Vesper Sparrows of unknown subspecies recorded in the park; *P. g. affinis* likely to occur occasionally in fall and winter.
Passerculus sandwichensis rostratus Large-billed Savannah Sparrow	—	SSC	—	Breeds in the northern Gulf of California; winters on the coast of southern California.	**Present.** Occurs rarely in fall and winter.
Icteria virens Yellow-breasted Chat	—	SSC	—	Nests uncommonly and locally in riparian woodlands with dense tangles across most of North America.	**Present.** Small numbers nest in riparian habitats in Fairview Park and elsewhere along the lower Santa Ana River.
Agelaius tricolor Tricolored Blackbird	—	T	—	Nests in wetlands near expansive grasslands and rangelands required for foraging, mainly in California. Winters in rangelands and parks.	**Low (as a breeder).** Occurs rarely as a transient or winter visitor. Nesting unlikely, but possible.

Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus Yellow-headed Blackbird	—	SSC	—	Nests in wetlands with tall emergent vegetation across much of central and western North America. Winters mainly in Mexico.	**Low (as a breeder).** Occurs rarely as a transient or winter visitor. Nesting unlikely, but possible.
Setophaga petechia Yellow Warbler	—	SSC	—	Nests in woodlands across most of North America. Winters mainly from Mexico to South America.	**Present.** Small numbers nest in riparian habitats in Fairview Park and elsewhere along the lower Santa Ana River.
Mammals					
Microtus californicus stephensi South Coast Marsh Vole	—	SSC	—	Wetland communities and associated grasslands along the coast from southern Ventura County to northern Orange County (Sunset Beach).	**None.** Fairview Park lies seven miles southeast of the described range of this taxon; voles along the Santa Ana River should be *M. c. sanctidiegi* (Hall 1981).
Perognathus longimembris pacificus Pacific Pocket Mouse	E	SSC	—	Shrublands, coastal dunes, coastal sage scrub, and river alluvium habitats with loose, sandy soil. Coastal areas from Los Angeles County to San Diego County.	**Low.** Not recorded in Fairview Park or elsewhere along the Santa Ana River but may have occurred there historically. Very little sandy habitat potentially suitable for this species remains in the northern lowlands.
Sorex ornatus salicornicus Southern California Salt Marsh Shrew	—	SSC	—	Coastal salt marshes, and nearby freshwater wetlands, from Ventura County to Orange County.	**Low.** Fairview Park lacks the coastal salt marsh habitat with which this species is most closely associated.
Neotoma lepida intermedia San Diego Desert Woodrat	—	SSC	—	Widespread in scrub habitats, especially those with cactus, but sensitive to habitat fragmentation. Coastal slope from Monterey County south.	**Moderate.** Suitable cactus scrub occurs in the park, but this species may not be present due to fragmentation of the habitat.
Lepus californicus bennettii San Diego Black-tailed Jackrabbit	—	SSC	—	Occurs in various open settings, usually in expansive open space areas, from Santa Barbara County south.	**Extirpated.** Formerly recorded in the park (Hamilton 1995) and elsewhere along the lower Santa Ana River, but no recent observations known.

Choeronycteris mexicana Mexican Long-tongued Bat	—	SSC	—	Ventura County south to Central America, often in coastal areas. Roosts in caves, crevices, under tree roots, and in man-made structures. Forages on nectar and pollen of agaves.	**Low.** Fairview Park generally lacks suitable roosting habitat and the agaves associated with this species.
Eumops perotis californicus Western Mastiff Bat	—	SSC	—	Roosts in crevices in cliffs and in tall buildings; feeds aerially. Widely distributed in California and Desert Southwest.	**Low.** The species may occasionally fly over the site while foraging, but suitable roosting is absent.
Lasiurus frantzii Western Red Bat	—	SSC	—	Roosts in foliage of many types of trees; feeds over a wide variety of habitats, often close to water in coastal lowlands. Widespread from western North America south to northern South America.	**High.** Riparian woodlands in the park appear suitable for roosting, and the park contains ample water and suitable foraging habitat.
Lasiurus xanthinus Western Yellow Bat	—	SSC	—	Roosts primarily or entirely in palms; often forages over water but also grasslands and scrub habitats. Southwestern United States south to Central America.	**Moderate.** Fairview Park lacks the palm trees most closely associated with this species, but Western Yellow Bats could roost in riparian woodlands and/or forage in the park.
Antrozous pallidus Pallid Bat	—	SSC	—	Widespread in western North America, in chaparral and similar habitats. Forages on the ground and in vegetation. Roosts in rock crevices and under tree bark.	**Low.** Fairview Park lacks extensive rocky areas or oak woodlands that would provide suitable roosting habitat, but Pallid Bats from other areas could potentially forage in the park.
Taxidea taxus American Badger	—	SSC	—	Occurs in expansive open space areas across most of western and central North America. In Orange County, recent records from the mountains and foothills.	**Low.** American Badgers have not been recorded at Fairview Park or elsewhere along the lower Santa Ana River. It is likely that the natural habitat is too reduced and fragmented to support a population.