

# Memorandum

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Date: October 23, 2015

To: Gary Koontz, Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services

From: Juan J Hernandez, Principal Biologist

Subject: Desert Tortoise Presence/Absence for the Yucca Valley Facility

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This memorandum provides the methods and results of a desert tortoise presence/absence survey conducted for the proposed 36.7-acre Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services Yucca Valley Facility located at the southeastern corner of Indio Avenue and Sunnyslope Drive in the town of Yucca Valley (Figures 1 and 2). Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services currently operates a truck terminal at an existing facility located at the northeast corner of Old Woman Springs Road and Buena Vista Road in the town of Yucca Valley. The proposed project would relocate the existing facility and all operations to the subject project site. Project development includes a truck terminal for Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services' collection fleet and an approximately 16,200 square foot solid waste transfer station. Additional improvements include landscape frontages on Indio Avenue and Sunnyslope Drive, a maintenance shop, a fueling station, an operations facility, in-ground truck scales, a stormwater detention basin, and associate parking (Figure 3).

## **Field Survey Methods**

On October 2, 2015 Hernandez Environmental Services (HES) conducted a survey of the action area. The action area is defined by regulation as all areas to be affected directly or indirectly and not merely the immediate area involved in the action (50 CFR §402.02). For this project the action area was determined to be the entire 36.7-acre Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services Yucca Valley Facility site and three buffer areas at 200 meters, 400 meters, and 600 meters around the site (Figure 4).

The entire action area was walked by foot and evaluated for the presence of desert tortoise, desert tortoise burrows, or any other desert tortoise sign. Any burrows or sensitive resources were identified and the locations marked with a hand-held Global Positioning Satellite device. Burrows were evaluated according to the Desert Tortoise Pre-project Survey Protocol 2010 Field Survey Season and Chapter 4 of the Desert Tortoise Field Manual. Any burrow that showed potential for once being

occupied by tortoise was marked and the location was noted. The action area was surveyed with 100% coverage by doing transects spaced at 10-meters apart.

## **Results**

The approximately 36.7 acre project site is located within Section 32, Township 1 North, Range 6 East, San Bernardino Base Meridian (SBBM), on the Joshua Tree North, Joshua Tree South, Yucca Valley North, and Yucca Valley South, United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles. The survey area consisted of a vacant site characterized by a mix of Joshua tree woodland, disturbed habitat, and crossed by an upland vegetated ephemeral stream which runs south to north across the southeastern portion of the site.

The project site slopes in a general south to north direction with an approximately four percent slope. All immediately surrounding properties are vacant. A continuation high school and a bush maintenance facility are located approximately 1,000 feet to the east and southeast. In addition, a business park that includes the Town of Yucca Valley Public Works Department is located approximately 1,000 feet to the south.

After visually surveying 100 percent of the action area, and the three buffer areas, HES found no desert tortoise, desert tortoise burrows or desert tortoise sign.

## **Recommendations**

All construction activities should be confined to the proposed Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services Yucca Valley Facility site. All work should be conducted during the desert tortoise inactive period between November and February. If construction activities need to be performed beyond these areas, or during the tortoise active period between March and October, a qualified biologist should be consulted to ensure no take of desert tortoise.

## Certification

I hereby certify that the statements furnished above, the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: October 23, 2015

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Juan J. Hernandez', is written over a horizontal line.

Juan J. Hernandez  
Principal Biologist

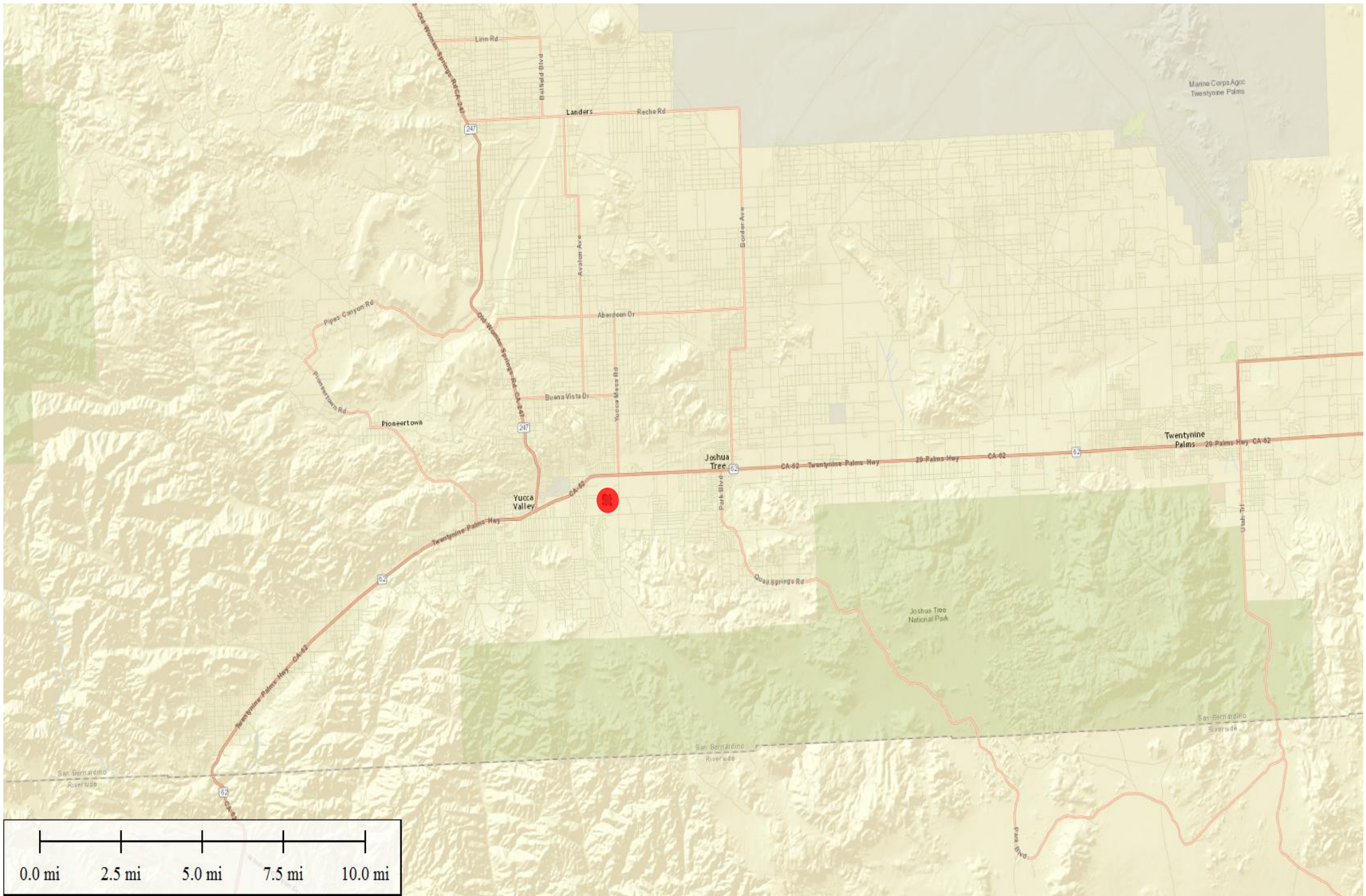
## Attachments:

Figure 1 - Location Map

Figure 2 - Vicinity Map

Figure 3 - Site Plans

Figure 4 - Survey Area Map

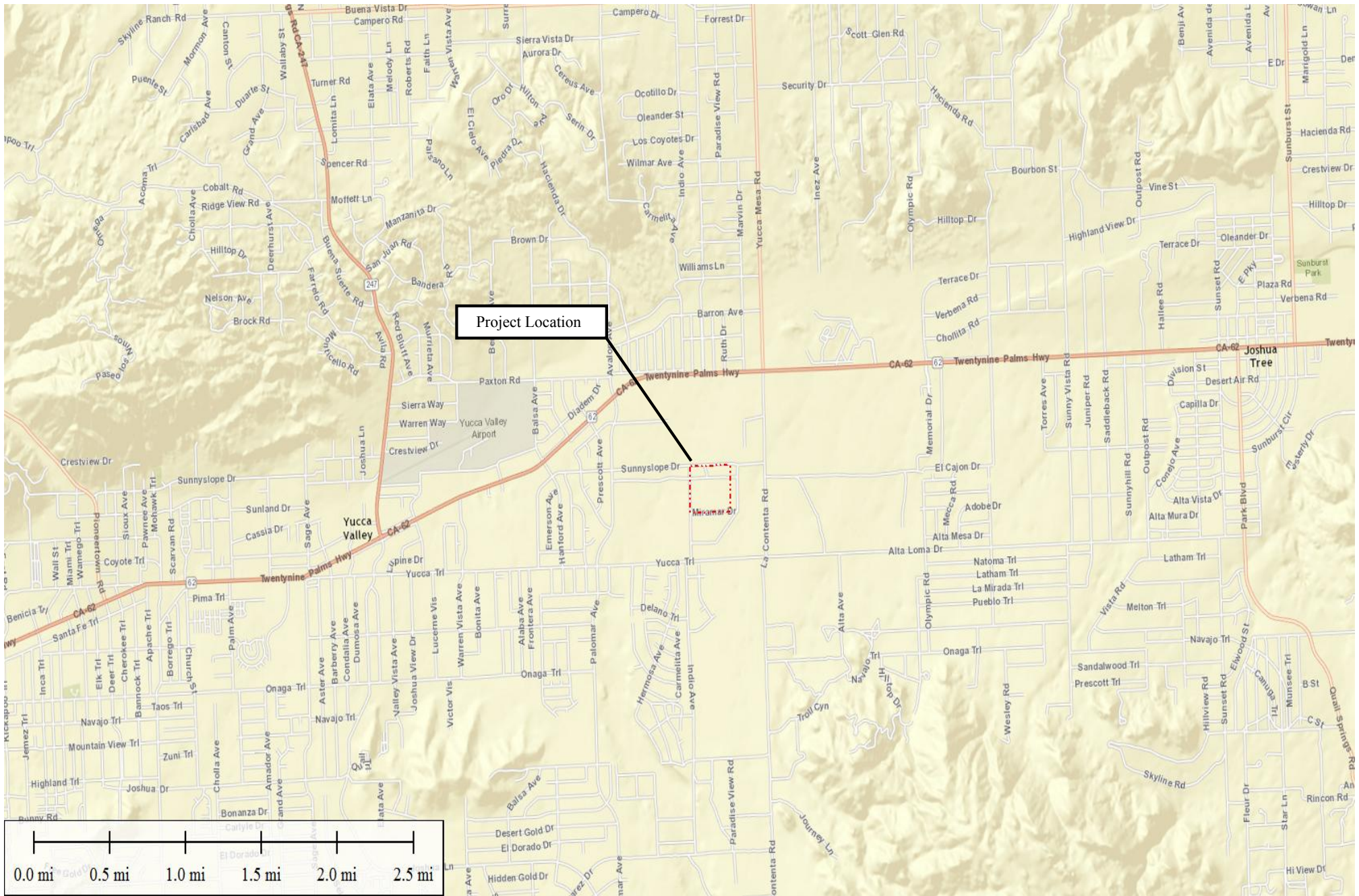


**Figure 1**  
 Vicinity Map  
 Biological Resources Study  
 Burrtec Yucca Valley Facility  
 Yucca Valley, San Bernardino County, CA

**Legend**

 Project Location





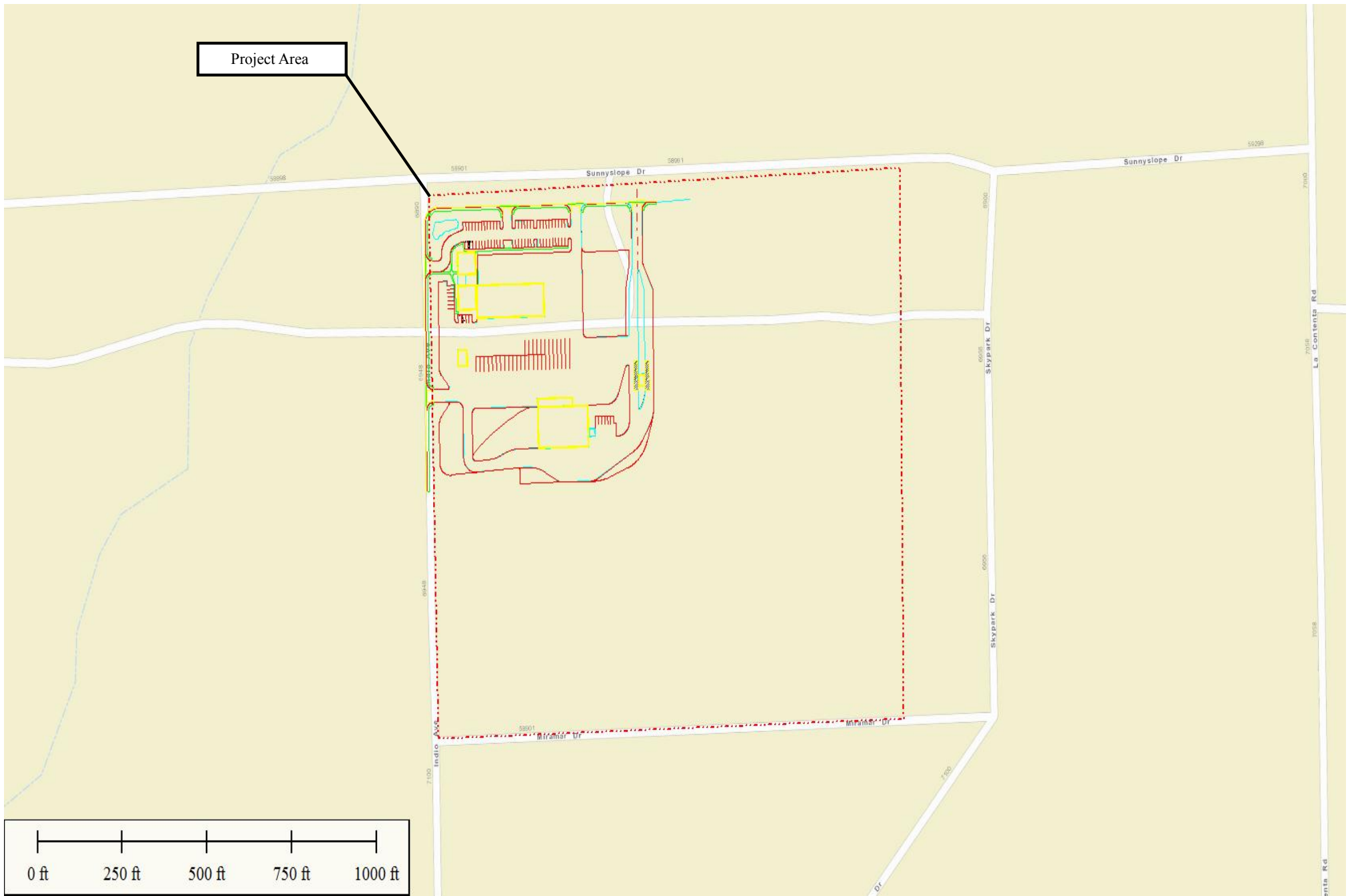
**Figure 2**  
 Location Map  
 Biological Resources Study  
 Burrtec Yucca Valley Facility  
 Yucca Valley, San Bernardino County, CA

**Legend**




Project Location



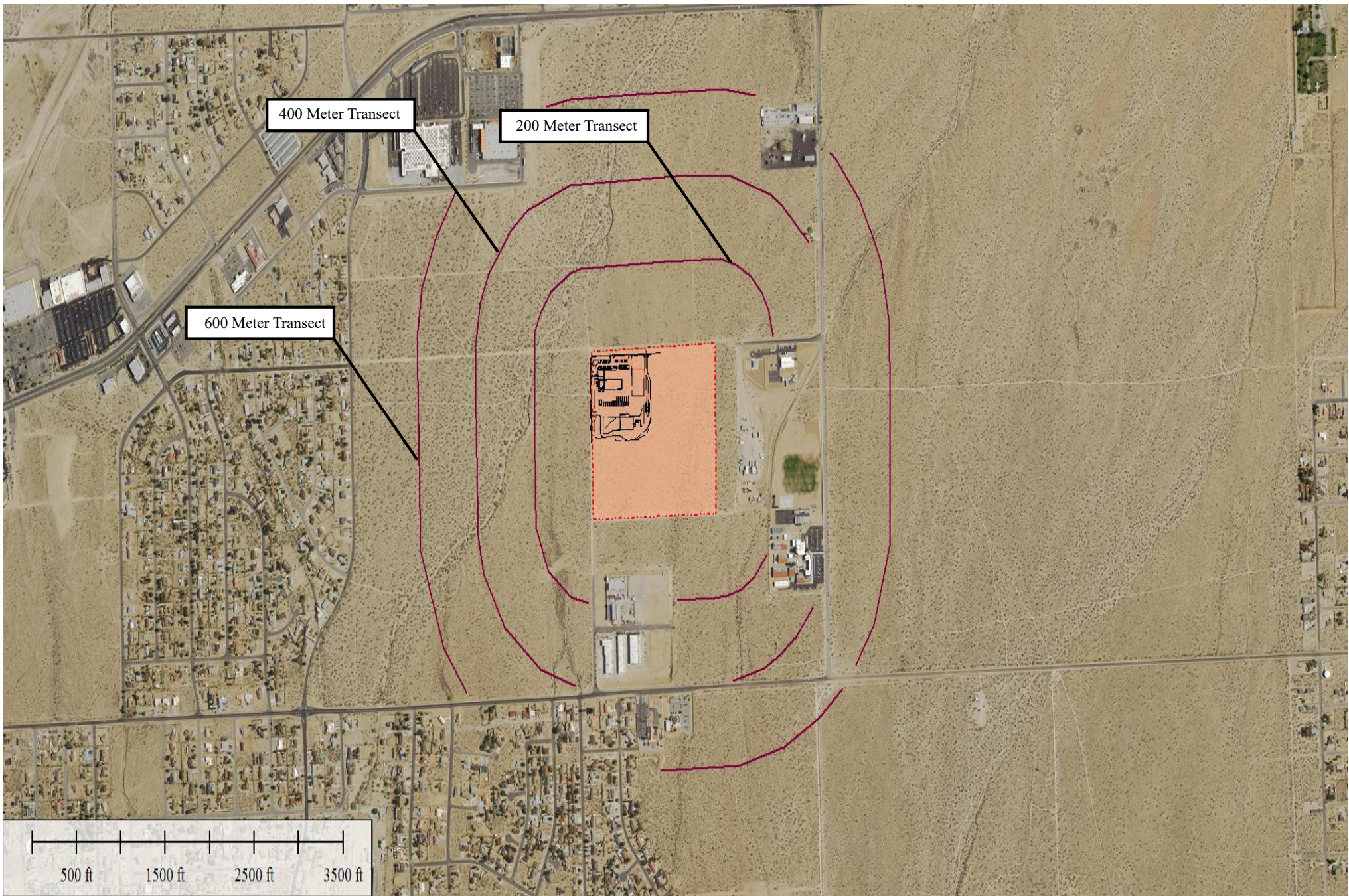


**Figure 3**  
 Project Plans  
 Biological Resources Study  
 Burrtec Yucca Valley Facility  
 Yucca Valley, San Bernardino County, CA

**Legend**

-  Property Boundary





**Figure 4**  
 Desert Tortoise Survey Areas  
 Biological Resources Study  
 Burretec Yucca Valley Facility  
 Yucca Valley, San Bernardino County, CA

**Legend**



36.7 Acre Property Boundary



100% Survey Area

