

REVISED - PEA Pole Numbers

**Coastal Cactus Wren Breeding Survey Report Bloom 2015**



July 17, 2015

Ms. Amy Rowland  
Managing Partner  
Pangea Biological  
Encinitas, California 92024

[via email]

**SUBJECT:** Results of Coastal Cactus Wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) breeding surveys for the San Diego Gas & Electric TL 695/6971 Reconductor Project in Orange and San Diego Counties, California.

Dear Ms. Rowland:

Bloom Biological, Incorporated (BBI) was retained by Pangea Biological (Pangea) for the San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) to conduct breeding surveys for Coastal Cactus Wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) within the TL 695/6971 Reconductor Project (Project), situated in the northwestern corner of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton (MCBCP), and in portions of both Orange and San Diego Counties, California. BBI conducted three surveys of all potential breeding habitat within the study area between 8 April and 13 June, 2015. The following letter report documents the methods, results and conclusions of BBI's surveys.

## SURVEY AREA DESCRIPTION

The Survey Area for this report is comprised of approximately 18.6 acres of potential Coastal Cactus Wren breeding habitat. The Survey Area falls includes all potential habitat within 150 feet of Project components, and lays entirely within San Diego County due to the lack of potential Coastal Cactus Wren habitat in the Orange County portions of the Project. The Survey Area includes one large polygon north of Basilone Road, on a south-facing slope, and a smaller polygon within California State Parks lands near the Orange County border. The entirety of the Survey Area is located in the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute *San Clemente* quadrangle. Elevations in the Survey Area range from 75 to 525 feet (25 To 175 meters) above mean sea level (ams). The Survey Area boundaries are depicted the attached Exhibit.

Potential Coastal Cactus Wren breeding habitat within the Survey Area is comprised of Diegan coastal sage scrub with a significant cactus presence. Cactus species present included prickly pear (*Opuntia* sp.) and cholla (*Cylindropuntia* sp.).

## SURVEY METHODS

BBI Senior Biologist Michael Kuehn, Ph.D. conducted three complete Coastal Cactus Wren breeding surveys between 8 April and 13 June (Table 1). The first two surveys were dedicated to surveying the entire Project area for suitable habitat within 150 feet of Project components, and conducting the initial breeding surveys in areas of potential habitat (i.e., Survey Area). The last two surveys focused on detecting nests and birds within the Survey Area only. Dr. Kuehn recorded GPS waypoints for all Coastal Cactus Wren individuals and nests detected, and a list of all faunal species observed.

*Table 1. Survey dates, times and weather conditions*

Date	Time (h)	Temp (F°)	Cloud (%)	Wind (m.p.h)	Precip.	Biologist
8-Apr-15	0800-1600	64-73	0-0	0-0	None	Michael Kuehn
20-Apr-15	0700-1700	62-68	0-90	0-5	None	Michael Kuehn
12-May-15	0700-1300	58-66	75-100	3-5	None	Michael Kuehn
13-Jun-15	0730-1430	61-71	0-0	0-0	None	Michael Kuehn

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Over the course of the three surveys, two Coastal Cactus Wren nests and one family group were detected within the Survey Area (Table 2). All detections were in the larger portion of the Survey Area north of Basilone Road (see attached Exhibit).

The first nest was discovered in a cholla north of Basilone Road, near PEA pole 50 during the second survey on 20 April. The nest was in good condition but appeared inactive, as no adults were detected in the area during that survey or any of the following surveys.

No other Coastal Cactus Wren nests or birds were detected until the final survey on 13 June, when a family group consisting of two adults and at least two fledglings were detected north (uphill) of the first nest. While following these birds visually, a second nest was discovered in a prickly pear cactus. This nest was not approached in an effort to avoid disturbing the family group utilizing the area nearby. From the observation point, it was apparent that the nest was a Coastal Cactus Wren nest, but its condition and activity status for the 2015 breeding season could not be determined.

It is improbable that this second nest was active and the source of the young in the family group present in the area during the third survey because a significant amount of time was spent observing the vicinity surrounding the second nest during previous surveys. Suitable habitat for Coastal Cactus Wrens extends to the north and east from the portion of the Survey Area north of Basilone Road, and it may be that this pair bred there and the family group is simply moving around together in the vicinity. Nonetheless, Coastal Cactus Wrens clearly occupy and have attempted to nest within the Survey Area recently and construction activities in this area have the potential to result in take.

*Table 2. Coastal Cactus Wren species and nest detections*

Date	Type	Quant.	Latitude	Longitude	Comments
20-Apr-15	Nest	1	33.391703	-117.56391	Cactus Wren nest in cholla along access road. Good condition but apparently currently inactive.
13-Jun-15	Nest	1	33.392406	-117.5639	Cactus Wren nest observed near Cactus Wren family group. Nest was not approached, but appeared in good condition when viewed through spotting scope from road. Nest opening could not be seen.

Date	Type	Quant.	Latitude	Longitude	Comments
13-Jun-15	Species Observation	4	33.392406	-117.5639	Two adult and at least two juvenile Cactus Wrens observed near newly discovered nest

A list of all wildlife species detected during the survey is provided as Appendix A.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this letter please feel free to call us at 949-272-0905.

Sincerely,

**BLOOM BIOLOGICAL, INC.**



Michael Kuehn  
Senior Biologist/Statistical Analyst

## APPENDIX A. FAUNAL COMPENDIUM

The following 22 bird, one mammal, and one reptile species were detected in Survey Area during surveys conducted by BBI biologist Michael Kuehn, Ph.D. from 8 April to 13 June, 2015.

### Birds

Common Name	Scientific Name	FE	FT	CE	CT	CFP	CP	SSC
California Quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>							
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>							
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>							
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>							
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>							
Greater Roadrunner	<i>Geococcyx californianus</i>							
Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>							
Allen's Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus sasin</i>							
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>							
Cassin's Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>							
Western Scrub-Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>							
Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>							
Coastal Cactus Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</i>							X
Wrentit	<i>Chamaea fasciata</i>							
California Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma redivivum</i>							
Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Oreothlypis celata</i>							
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>							
Spotted Towhee	<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>							
California Towhee	<i>Melospiza crissalis</i>							
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>							
Black-headed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>							
Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Spinus psaltria</i>							

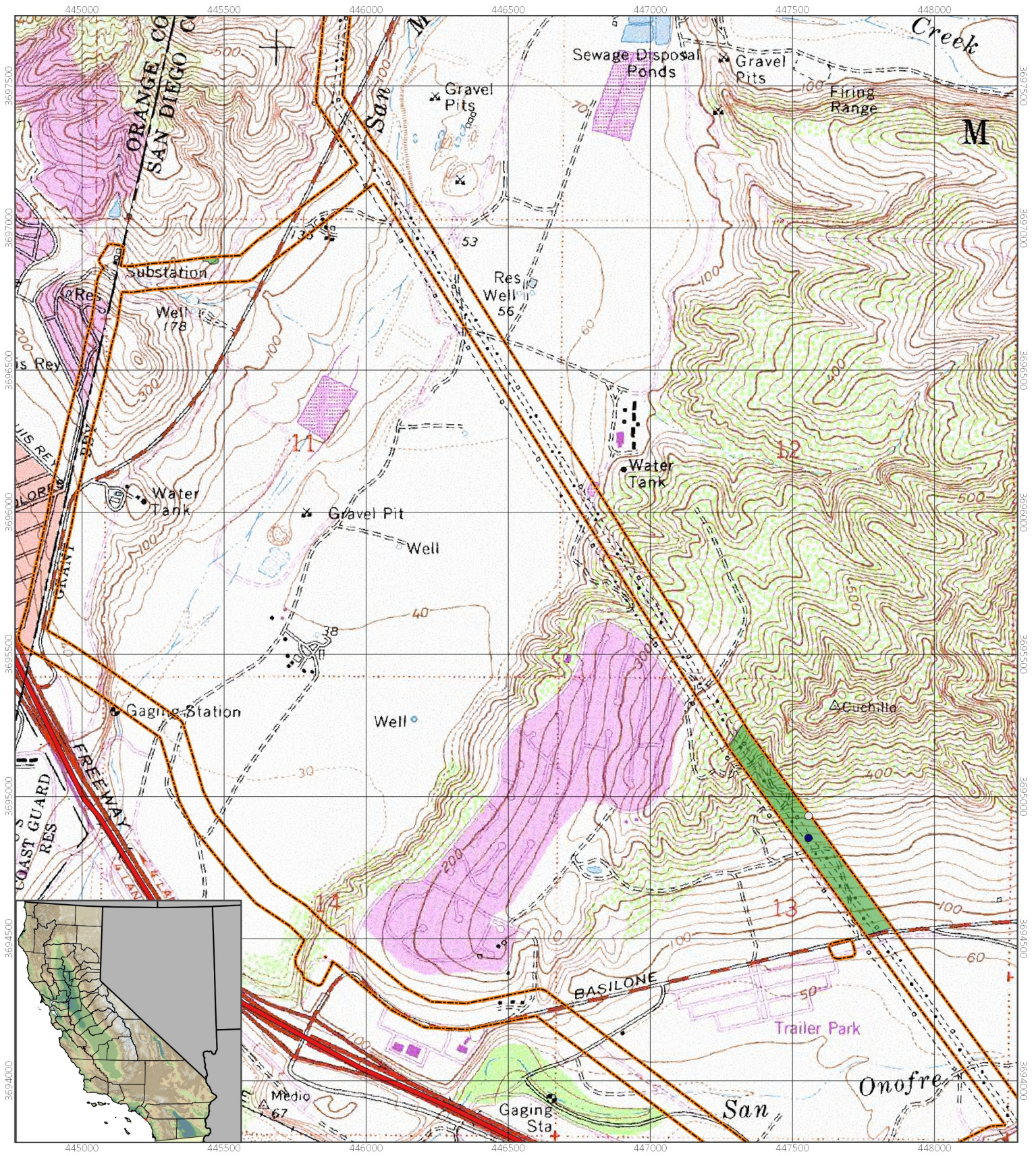
### Mammals

Common Name	Scientific Name	FE	FT	CE	CT	SSC
California Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>					

### Reptiles

Common Name	Scientific Name	FE	FT	CE	CT	SSC
Western Fence Lizard	<i>Sceloporus occidentalis</i>					





■ Coastal Cactus Wren Survey Areas  
- - - TL695 150-meter Buffer

### Coastal Cactus Wren observations

- Nest observation
- Nest & Species Observation



Coordinate Grid: UTM NAD 83 Zone 11  
 Background: US Geological Survey 24k Topo Series  
 San Clemente quadrangle  
 Map Date: July 17, 2015  
 Author: Michael J. Kuehn

Exhibit 1. Coastal Cactus Wren Breeding Survey Results  
 SDG&E TL 695/6971 Reconstructor Project | San Diego County, California