Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
Final Joint Project Review (JPR)

Date: February 22, 2019

Project Information

Applicant/Project Name: Desert Hot Springs Wind LLC

CVCC ID: 18-006

Conservation Area: Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area – City of Desert Hot Springs Area

Total Project Disturbance Acreage: 20 Acres

Project Disturbance Acreage within Conservation Area: 17 Acres

Project Location: APN's 667160001 (162 acres)

Project Summary:

The Project would produce up to approximately 17 MW of wind energy and would consist of up to four new wind turbines with a range of approximately 2.0 MW to 4.2 MW in nameplate capacity per turbine. In addition to the new wind turbines, the Project includes the following primary components:

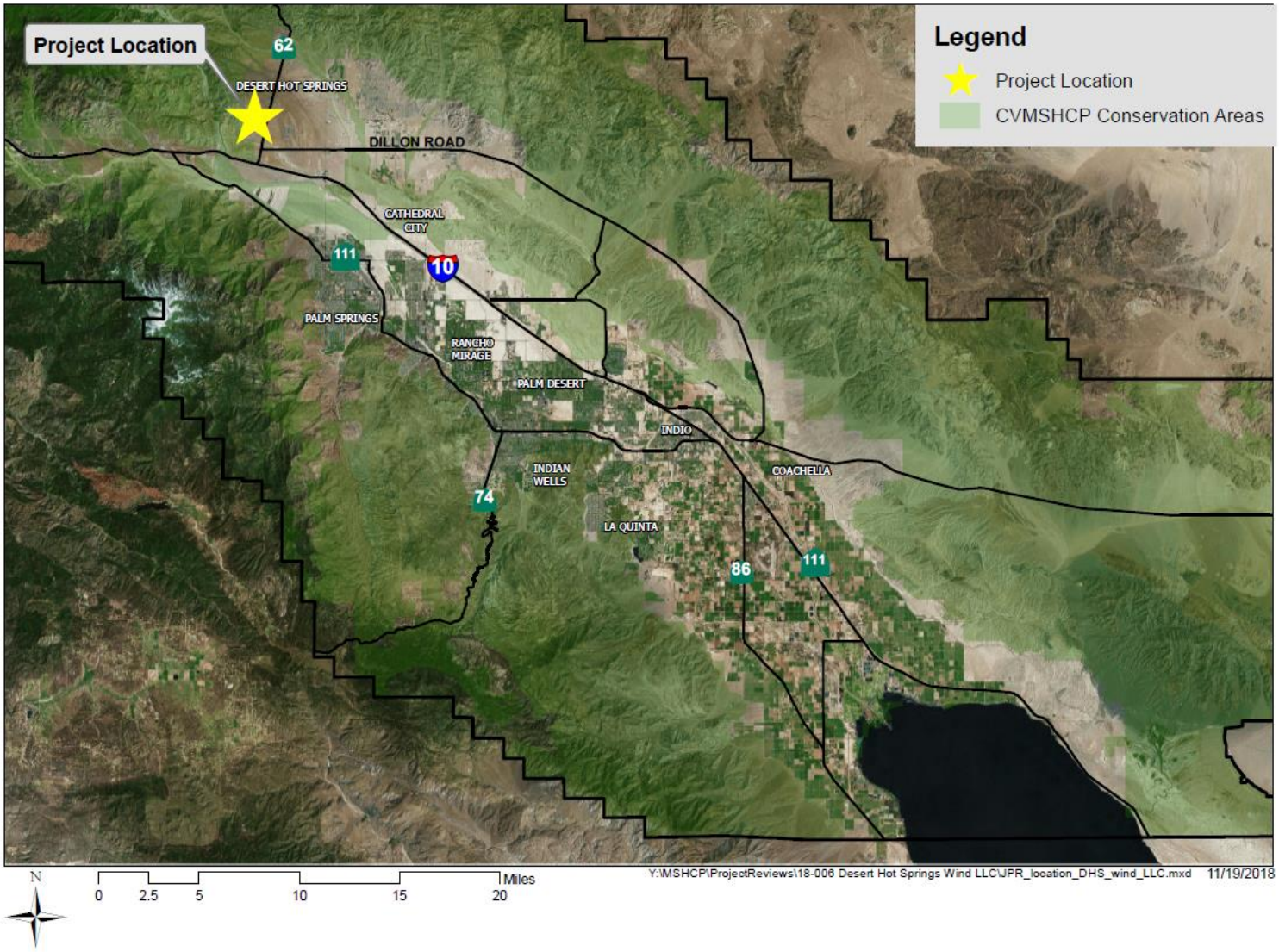
- Decommissioning of approximately 69 existing wind turbines and the appropriate ancillary equipment.
- Connection to an off-site substation (located on APN 516030014) through either a new underground collection line system of by tying into and existing, on-site, overhead 12-kilovolt (kV) collection line system.
- Construction of temporary and permanent access roads between turbines, as well as improvements to existing roadways to accommodate construction and delivery of equipment.
- Construction of a temporary laydown and parking area.
- Installation of one new temporary and one new permanent meteorological tower, each up to approximately 309 feet tall.
- Decommissioning of the new wind turbines at the end of their useful life.

The Project has species and natural impacts, (Map 4a) Desert Tortoise (7.75 acres), (Map 4b) Sand Source (7.25 acres)

Acres of Proposed New Disturbance: 8 Acres

Acres of Proposed Conservation: 0 Acres

Project Location



Conservation Objectives Review

Table 1 evaluates the proposed disturbance from this Project and compares it to the amount of authorized disturbance provide by the CVMSHCP to determine consistency with CVMSHCP conservation objectives.

Table 1. Consistency Analysis for the proposed Project.

Desert Hot Springs Wind Energy Repowering Project							
Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area – City of Desert Hot Springs Area							
Conservation Objective	Total Acres of Proposed Disturbance [1]	Acres of Disturbance Authorized by Plan	Proposed Disturbance as a Percentage of Authorized Disturbance	Rough Step (***If project is approved as submitted)***	Acres Conserved by Project	Acres to be Conserved by Plan	% Required Conservation
Conserve Core Habitat for Little San Bernardino Mtns. linanthus	*0.00*	*107*	*0.00%*	*68.75*	*0*	*966*	*0*
Conserve Other Cons. Habitat for CV Jerusalem cricket	*0.00*	*10*	*0.00%*	*3.00*	*0*	*90*	*0*
Conserve Core Habitat for desert tortoise	*7.75*	*252*	*3.00%*	*113.75*	*0*	*2271*	*0*
Conserve Other Cons. Habitat for Le Conte's thrasher	*0.00*	*215*	*0.00%*	*115.25*	*0*	*1931*	*0*
Conserve Core Habitat for Palm Springs pocket mouse	*0.00*	*207*	*0.00%*	*109.00*	*0*	*1865*	*0*
Conserve desert dry wash woodland	*0.00*	*8*	*0.00%*	*2.75*	*0*	*76*	*0*
Conserve sand source Areas	*7.25*	*16*	*45.25%*	*-5.50*	*0*	*141*	*0*
Conserve fluvial sand transport areas	*0.00*	*217*	*0.00%*	*116.25*	*0*	*1949*	*0*
Conserve Hwy 62 Biological Corridor	*0.00*	*10*	*0.00%*	*28.00*	*0*	*88*	*0*

Explanation of Columns

1) Total Acres of Proposed Disturbance – this is the Proposed Disturbance submitted by the applicant after subtracting existing disturbance that overlays the Proposed Disturbance

2) Acres of Disturbance Authorized by the Plan - this is the maximum amount of disturbance allowed to be consistent with Plan requirements for the project area; see Table 4-42a: Conservation and Take Authorization for Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area – City of Desert Hot Springs Area

3) Proposed Disturbance as a Percentage of Authorized Disturbance- this is simply column 1/column 2 x 100%.

4) Rough Step – see Plan Section 6.5 Rough Step and Rough Proportionality Analyses for a full explanation. Rough step is calculated based on all development and conservation from 1996 to today according to CVCC records

5) Acres Conserved by Project – the applicant does not plan any conservation on the site

6) Acres to be Conserved by The Plan – the applicant does not plan any conservation on the site

7) % Required Conservation – this is the amount of conservation that may be required by the applicant to meet conservation objectives. The applicant does not plan any conservation on the site.

Consistency Analysis

The proposed project in the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area – City of Desert Hot Springs would result in disturbance that would impact two conservation objectives. Based on the information submitted to CVCC, the Project would use 7.75 acres (3.00%) of the authorized disturbance for desert tortoise core habitat and 7.25 acres (45.25%) of Sand Source areas; 8.75 acres of authorized disturbance for Sand Source areas would be available for other applicants. As noted below, this amount of disturbance would exceed the rough step requirements; restoration to address this impact should be explored by the applicant.

CVCC requests that existing turbine foundations not be removed and if they are, the disturbance of that operation would be subject to another Joint Project Review.

Rough Step Analysis

If the City approves this project as submitted, it will exceed Rough Step for the Sand Source area in the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area – City of Desert Hot Springs Area. The City will not be able to approve any future project that impacts this natural community until more land with habitat for this natural community is conserved within the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area – City of Desert Hot Springs Area. CVCC is actively seeking such land to acquire for conservation but cannot guarantee when acquisition necessary to meet Rough Step requirements will occur. A Transfer of Conservation

Objectives may be possible but would require Wildlife Agency approval. Full details on Rough Step can be found beginning on page 6-13 of the following link

http://www.cvmshcp.org/Plan%20Documents/13.%20CVAG%20MSHCP%20Plan%20Section%206.0.pdf

The project will need to submit a plan for restoration to resolve the Rough Step issue. The City should condition the project applicant to meet with CVCC before issuance of the grading permit to begin the restoration process, see Exhibit A for restoration procedure. The City will be out of Rough Step until the restoration is found to be successful. It will take at least 66 months for restoration to be considered successful.

Acceptable Biologist

The Project applicant should submit qualifications of biologists to CVCC. The Wildlife Agencies shall have thirty (30) days to provide input on the qualifications of any biologists on the list. If the Wildlife Agencies have not responded within thirty days (30)of receipt of the qualifications from CVCC, the biologists shall be deemed acceptable.

Section 4.4: Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

This section describes certain avoidance, minimization, and mitigation requirements for Covered Activities within the Conservation Area, in addition to Conservation Area specific measures described in the Conservation Area subsections in Section 4.3. The City must condition the Project to complete these measures.

Biological Corridors. Specific roads in Conservation Areas, where culverts or undercrossings are required to maintain Biological Corridors, are delineated in the Section 4.3 subsections on individual Conservation Areas.

Burrowing Owl. This measure does not apply to single-family residences and any non-commercial accessory uses and structures including but not limited to second units on an existing legal lot, or to O&M of Covered Activities other than levees, berms, dikes, and similar features that are known to contain burrowing owl burrows. O&M of roads is not subject to this requirement. For other projects that are subject to CEQA, the Permittees will require burrowing owl surveys in the Conservation Areas using an accepted protocol (as determined by the CVCC in coordination with the Permittees and the Wildlife Agencies). Prior to Development, the construction area and adjacent areas within 500 feet of the Development site, or to the edge of the property if less than 500 feet, will be surveyed by an Acceptable Biologist for burrows that could be used by burrowing owl. If a burrow is located, the biologist will determine if an owl is present in the burrow. If the burrow is determined to be occupied, the burrow will be flagged and a 160-foot buffer during the non-breeding season and a 250-foot buffer during the breeding season, or a buffer to the edge of the property boundary if less than 500 feet, will be established around the burrow. The buffer will be staked and flagged. No Development or O&M activities will be permitted within the buffer until the young are no longer dependent on the burrow.

If the burrow is unoccupied, the burrow will be made inaccessible to owls, and the Covered Activity may proceed. If either a nesting or escape burrow is occupied, owls shall be relocated pursuant to accepted Wildlife Agency protocols. A burrow is assumed occupied if records indicate that, based on surveys conducted following protocol, at least one burrowing owl has been observed occupying a burrow on site during the past three years. If there are no records for the site, surveys must be conducted to determine, prior to construction, if burrowing owls are

present. Determination of the appropriate method of relocation, such as eviction/passive relocation or active relocation, shall be based on the specific site conditions (e.g., distance to nearest suitable habitat and presence of burrows within that habitat) in coordination with the Wildlife Agencies. Active relocation and eviction/passive relocation require the preservation and maintenance of suitable burrowing owl habitat determined through coordination with the Wildlife Agencies.

Within one (1) year of Permit issuance, CVCC will cooperate with County Flood Control, CVWD and IID to conduct an inventory of levees, berms, dikes, and similar features in the Plan Area maintained by those Permittees. Burrowing owl burrow locations will be mapped and each of these Permittees will incorporate the information into its O&M practices to avoid impacts to the burrowing owl to the maximum extent Feasible. CVCC in cooperation with County Flood Control, CVWD, and IID will prepare a manual for maintenance staff, educating them about the burrowing owl and appropriate actions to take when owls are encountered to avoid impacts to the maximum extent Feasible. The manual will be submitted to the Wildlife Agencies for review and comment within two (2) years of Permit issuance. In conjunction with the Monitoring Program, the maps of the burrowing owl locations along the above-described levees, berms, dikes, and similar features will be periodically updated.

Fluvial Sand Transport. Activities, including O&M of facilities and construction of permitted new projects, in fluvial sand transport areas in the Cabazon, Stubbe and Cottonwood Canyons, Snow Creek/Windy Point, Whitewater Canyon, Whitewater Floodplain, Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon, Mission Creek/Morongo Wash, Willow Hole, Long Canyon, Edom Hill, Thousand Palms, West Deception Canyon, and Indio Hills/Joshua Tree National Park Linkage Conservation Areas will be conducted in a manner to maintain the fluvial sand transport capacity of the system.

Le Conte's Thrasher. This measure does not apply to single-family residences and any non-commercial accessory uses and structures including but not limited to second units on an existing legal lot, or to O&M of Covered Activities. In modeled Le Conte's thrasher Habitat in all the Conservation Areas, during the nesting season, January 15 - June 15, prior to the start of construction activities, surveys will be conducted by an Acceptable Biologist on the construction site and within 500 feet of the construction site, or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet. If nesting Le Conte's thrashers are found, a 500 foot buffer, or to the property boundary if less than 500 feet, will be established around the nest site. The buffer will be staked and flagged. No construction will be permitted within the buffer during the breeding season of January 15 - June 15 or until the young have fledged.

Palm Springs Pocket Mouse. To avoid impacts to the Palm Springs pocket mouse and its habitat in the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon and Willow Hole Conservation Areas, Flood Control-related construction activities will comply with the following avoidance and minimization measures.

- **Clearing:** For construction that would involve disturbance to Palm Springs pocket mouse habitat, activity should be phased to the extent feasible and practicable so that suitable habitat islands are no farther than 300 feet apart at any given time to allow pocket mice to disperse between habitat patches across non-suitable habitat (i.e., unvegetated and/or compacted soils). Prior to project construction, a biological monitor familiar with this species should assist construction crews in planning access routes to avoid impacts to occupied habitat as much as feasible (i.e., placement of preferred routes on project plans and incorporation of methods to avoid as much suitable habitat/soil disturbance as possible). Furthermore, during construction activities, the biological monitor will ensure that connected, naturally vegetated areas

with sandy soils and typical native vegetation remain intact to the extent feasible and practicable. Finally, construction that involves clearing of habitat should be avoided during the peak breeding season (approximately March to May), and activity should be limited as much as possible during the rest of the breeding season (January to February and June to August).

- **Revegetation:** Clearing of native vegetation (e.g., creosote, rabbitbrush, burrobush, cheesebush) should be followed by revegetation, including natural reestablishment and other means, resulting in habitat types of equal or superior biological value for Palm Springs pocket mouse.

- **Trapping/Holding:** All trapping activity should be conducted in accordance with accepted protocols and by a qualified biologist who possesses a Memorandum of Understanding with CDFG for live-trapping of heteromyid species in Southern California.

- **Translocation:** Should translocation between distinct population groups be necessary, as determined through the Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program, activity should be conducted by a qualified biologist who possesses a Memorandum of Understanding with CDFG for live-trapping of heteromyid species in Southern California. Trapping and subsequent translocation activity should be conducted in accordance with accepted protocols. Translocation programs should be coordinated by or conducted by the CVCC and/or RMOC to determine the appropriate trapping, holding, marking, and handling methods and potential translocation sites.

Section 4.5 Land Use Adjacency Guidelines

The City is responsible for ensuring the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines are implemented. The purpose of Land Use Adjacency Guidelines is to avoid or minimize indirect effects from Development adjacent to or within the Conservation Areas. Adjacent means sharing a common boundary with any parcel in a Conservation Area. Such indirect effects are commonly referred to as edge effects, and may include noise, lighting, drainage, intrusion of people, and the introduction of non-native plants and non-native predators such as dogs and cats. Edge effects will also be addressed through reserve management activities such as fencing. The following Land Use Adjacency Guidelines shall be considered by the Permittees in their review of individual public and private Development projects adjacent to or within the Conservation Areas to minimize edge effects and shall be implemented where applicable.

4.5.1 Drainage

Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Storm water systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent Conservation Area.

4.5.2 Toxics

Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate bio-products such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife

and plant species, Habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation Area.

4.5.3 Lighting

For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.

4.5.4 Noise

Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA Leq hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.

4.5.5 Invasives

Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native plant materials to the maximum extent Feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112. The plants listed in Table 4-113 shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence.

Table 4-112: Coachella Valley Native Plants Recommended for Landscaping[1]

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Trees	
Washingtonia filifera	California Fan Palm
Cercidium floridum	Blue Palo Verde
Chilopsis linearis	Desert Willow
Olneya tesota	Ironwood Tree
Prosopis glandulosa var. torreyana	Honey Mesquite
Shrubs	
Acacia greggii	Cat's Claw Acacia
Ambrosia dumosa	Burro Bush
Atriplex canescens	Four Wing Saltbush
Atriplex lentiformis	Quailbush
Atriplex polycarpa	Cattle Spinach
Baccharis sergiloides	Squaw Water-weed
Bebia juncea	Sweet Bush
Cassia (Senna) covesii	Desert Senna
Condalia parryi	Crucilllo
Crossosoma bigelovii	Crossosoma
Dalea emoryi	Dye Weed
Dalea (Psorothamnus) schottii	Indigo Bush
Datura meteloides	Jimson Weed
Encelia farinosa	Brittle Bush
Ephedra aspera	Mormon Tea
Eriogonum fasciculatum	California Buckwheat
Eriogonum wrightii membranaceum	Wright's Buckwheat
Fagonia laevis	(No Common Name)
Gutierrezia sarothrae	Matchweed
Haplopappus acradenius	Goldenbush
Hibiscus denudatus	Desert Hibiscus
Hoffmannseggia microphylla	Rush Pea
Hymenoclea salsola	Cheesebush
Hyptis emoryi	Desert Lavender
Isomeris arborea	Bladder Pod
Juniperus californica	California Juniper
Krameria grayi	Ratany
Krameria parvifolia	Little-leaved Ratany
Larrea tridentate	Creosote Bush
Lotus rigidus	Desert Rock Pea
Lycium andersonii	Box Thorn
Petalonyx linearis	Long-leaved Sandpaper Plant
Petalonyx thurberi	Sandpaper Plant
Peucephyllum schottii	Pygmy Cedar
Prunus fremontii	Desert Apricot
Rhus ovata	Sugar-bush
Salazaria mexicana	Paper-bag Bush
Salvia apiana	White Sage
Salvia eremostachya	Santa Rosa Sage
Salvia vaseyi	Wand Sage

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Simmondsia chinensis	Jojoba
Sphaeralcia ambigua	Globemallow (Desert Mallow)
Sphaeralcia ambigua rosacea	Apricot Mallow
Trixis californica	Trixis
Zauschneria californica	California Fuchsia
Groundcovers	
Mirabilis bigelovii	Wishbone Bush (Four O'Clock)
Mirabilis tenuiloba	White Four O'Clock (Thin-lobed)
Vines	
Vitis girdiana	Desert Grape
Accent	
Muhlenbergia rigens	Deer Grass
Herbaceous Perennials[2]	
Adiantum capillus-veneris	Maiden-hair Fern (w)
Carex alma	Sedge (w)
Dalea parryi	Parry Dalea
Eleocharis montevidensis	Spike Rush (w)
Equisetum laevigatum	Horsetail (w)
Juncus bufonis	Toad Rush (w)
Juncus effuses	Juncus (w)
Juncus macrophyllus	Juncus (w)
Juncus mexicanus	Mexican Rush (w)
Juncus xiphioides	Juncus (w)
Notholaena parryi	Parry Cloak Fern
Pallaea mucronata	Bird-foot Fern
Cacti and Succulents	
Agave deserti	Desert Agave
Asclepias albicans	Desert Milkweed (Buggy-whip)
Asclepias subulata	Ajamete
Dudleya arizonica	Live-forever
Dudleya saxosa	Rock Dudleya
Echinocereus engelmannii	Calico Hedgehog Cactus
Ferocactus acanthodes	Barrel Cactus
Fouquieria splendens	Ocotillo
Mamillaria dioica	Nipple Cactus
Mamillaria tetrancistra	Corkseed Cactus
Nolina parryi	Parry Nolina
Opuntia acanthocarpa	Stag-horn or Deer-horn Cholla
Opuntia bigelovii	Teddy Bear or Jumping Cholla
Opuntia basilaris	Beavertail Cactus
Opuntia echinocarpa	Silver or Golden Cholla
Opuntia ramosissima	Pencil Cholla, Darning Needle Cholla
Yucca schidigera	Mojave Yucca, Spanish Dagger
Yucca whipplei	Our Lord's Candle

[1] Source: "Coachella Valley Native Plants, Excluding Annuals (0 ft. to approximately 3,000 ft. elevation)." Compiled by Dave Heveron, Garden Collections Manager, and Kirk Anderson, Horticulturist, The Living Desert, May, 2000, for the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy. [2] Common names for herbaceous perennials that are followed by "(w)" indicate a water or riparian species.

Table 4-113: Prohibited Invasive Ornamental Plants[1]

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Acacia spp. (all species except A. greggii)	Acacia (all species except native catclaw acacia)
Arundo donax (✓)	Giant Reed or Arundo Grass
Atriplex semibaccata (✓)	Australian Saltbush
Avena barbata	Slender Wild Oat
Avena fatua	Wild Oat
Brassica tournefortii (✓✓)	African or Saharan Mustard
Bromus madritensis ssp. *rubens (✓)*	Red Brome
Bromus tectorum (✓✓)	Cheat Grass or Downy Brome
Cortaderia jubata [syn.*C. atacamensis*]	Jubata Grass or Andean Pampas Grass
Cortaderia dioica [syn. *C. selloana*]	Pampas Grass
Descurainia sophia	Tansy Mustard
Eichhornia crassipes	Water Hyacinth
Elaegnus angustifolia	Russian Olive
Foeniculum vulgare	Sweet Fennel
Hirschfeldia incana	Mediterranean or Short-pod Mustard
Lepidium latifolium	Perennial Pepperweed
Lolium multiflorum	Italian Ryegrass
Nerium oleander	Oleander
Nicotiana glauca (✓)	Tree Tobacco
Oenothera berlandieri (#)	Mexican Evening Primrose
Olea europea	European Olive Tree
Parkinsonia aculeata (✓)	Mexican Palo Verde
Pennisetum clandestinum	Kikuyu Grass
Pennisetum setaceum (✓✓)	Fountain Grass
Phoenix canariensis (#)	Canary Island Date Palm
Phoenix dactylifera (#)	Date Palm
Ricinus communis (✓)	Castorbean
Salsola tragus (✓)	Russian Thistle
Schinus molle	Peruvian Pepper Tree or California Pepper
Schinus terebinthifolius	Brazilian Pepper Tree
Schismus arabicus	Mediterranean Grass
Schismus barbatus (✓✓)	Saharan Grass, Abu Mashi
Stipa capensis (✓✓)	No Common Name
Tamarix spp. (all species) (✓✓)	Tamarisk or Salt Cedar
Taeniatherum caput-medusae	Medusa-head
Tribulus terrestris	Puncturevine
Vinca major	Periwinkle
Washingtonia robusta	Mexican fan palm
Yucca gloriosa (#)	Spanish Dagger

[1] Sources: California Exotic Pest Plant Council, United States Department of Agriculture-Division of Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services, California Native Plant Society, Fremontia Vol. 26 No. 4, October 1998, The Jepson Manual; Higher Plants of California, and County of San Diego Department of Agriculture.

Key to Table 4-113:

\# indicates species not on CalEPPC October 1999 "Exotic Pest Plants of Greatest Ecological Concern in California" list

✓ indicates species known to be invasive in the Plan Area

✓✓ indicates particularly troublesome invasive species

4.5.6 Barriers

Land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate barriers in individual project designs to minimize unauthorized public access, domestic animal predation, illegal trespass, or dumping in a Conservation Area. Such barriers may include native landscaping, rocks/boulders, fencing, walls and/or signage.

4.5.7 Grading/Land Development

Manufactured slopes associated with site Development shall not extend into adjacent land in a Conservation Area.