

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-05

A RESOLUTION OF THE COACHELLA CITY COUNCIL APPROVING THE COACHELLA VALLEY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN LIKE EXCHANGE FOR THE KPC COACHELLA SPECIFIC PLAN; THE KPC GROUP, APPLICANT

WHEREAS, The KPC Coachella Specific Plan proposes the development of a 2800-acre project in the northeast area of the City of Coachella and;

WHEREAS, the Draft Environmental Impact Report should be released for public review within the next few months. Public hearings at the Planning Commission and City Council will occur sometime following completion of the Final Environmental Impact Report and;

WHEREAS, the entire 2800 acre project site is located within the boundaries of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Plan (CVMSHCP). To provide westerly access to the project site, the project proposes the extension of Vista Del Norte across the All-American canal through the East Indio Hills Conservation Area (EIHCA) and:

WHEREAS, the land proposed for the Vista Del Norte Crossing occurs within the southern terminus of the EIHCA. Since the Vista Del Norte Crossing, as planned, is wider than the maximum road width considered a Covered Activity under the CVMSHCP, the Like Exchange has been prepared to compensate for the loss of habitats within the EIHCA and;

WHEREAS the Vista Del Norte Crossing is not located within a CVMSHCP designated sand transport/sand source area or mapped biological corridor/linkage. Therefore, no impacts to CVMSHCP mapped biological corridors or essential ecological processes (i.e., sand transport/sand source areas) are expected to occur and;

WHEREAS, the proposed development of the Vista Del Norte Crossing will result in a total of approximately 64.67 acres of impact to the EIHCA. The physical development of the Vista Del Norte Crossing within the EIHCA will result in 3.42 acres of permanent impacts and 4.5 acres of temporary impacts, totaling 7.92 acres of impacts. Additionally, approximately 56.75 acres of indirect impacts will occur to the southern terminus of the EIHCA from the development of the crossing. The area of impact associated with the physical development of the crossing within the EIHCA has been minimized to the maximum extent practicable and;

WHEREAS, to offset impacts related to biological resources (64.67 acres) within the EIHCA, KPC has acquired and proposes to dedicate 100 acres of land, under private ownership by the Applicant, to be included in the Dos Palmas Conservation Area (DPCA) within unincorporated Riverside County. The 100 acres is located adjacent to the DPCA. The 100 acres will be used to offset the 64.67 acres of impacts to land within the City of Coachella's portion of the EIHCA from implementation of the proposed project, resulting in a net increase of 35.33 acres of land being added to the DPCA. The 100 acres of land that will be added to the DPCA is surrounded by undeveloped/vacant land that is under a mix of both private and government/non-profit organization management and;

WHEREAS, the Like Exchange process within the CVMSHCP allows for Permittees to request a reduction of a Conservation Area in one locale in exchange for expanding a Conservation Area in another locale. To request such a boundary modification, a Permittee must seek wildlife agency concurrence on an equivalency analysis documenting that the proposed Conservation Area expansion is of equal or greater conservation value than the Conservation Area reduction. Like exchanges are generally requested when a proposed development is inherently inconsistent with Conservation Area Conservation Objectives. For example, insufficient take may be available within the Conservation Area, or infrastructure required to support the development may exceed the limits of what can be considered a Covered Activity and;

WHEREAS, on-site portions of the EIHCA are located within the core habitat for flat-tailed horned lizard, Le Conte's thrasher, Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel, and Palm Springs pocket mouse. On-site portions of the EIHCA support two natural plant communities, Sonoran creosote bush scrub and mesquite hummocks, one non-native plant community, Tamarisk Scrub, and disturbed and developed land associated with the All-American Canal and adjacent areas and;

WHEREAS, This proposed modification to CVMSHCP conservation within the EIHCA (reduction) and DPCA (addition) will result in biologically superior conservation acreage and value using the mandatory categories for equivalency analysis listed in the CVMSHCP Section 6.12.2, summarized as follows:

- The conservation of suitable habitat and level of take of MSHCP covered species with the proposed modifications to the EIHCA and DPCA would be biologically superior to what would otherwise occur;
- The proposed modification would result in greater benefits to natural communities as compared to those benefits analyzed under the MSHCP;
- The function and values of existing biological corridors and essential ecological processes are not expected to be reduced by the proposed modification;

- The proposed modification would result in biologically superior conservation configuration, and management requirements are not expected to significantly differ compared to what would have occurred under the MSHCP;
- Ecotones and overall species diversity are expected to be increased by the proposed modification;
- The additional conservation parcels are greater in size, resulting in a greater acreage in MSHCP Conservation Areas;
- The three parcels that constitute the additional conservation land have been acquired by the Applicant and, therefore, will be under the direct ownership of the applicant before being deeded to CVCC.

Based on this analysis, the proposed modification of conservation within the EIHCA and DPCA will result in biologically superior conservation value compared with implementation of the CVMSHCP without the proposed project and additional conservation that will be added because of the Like Exchange and;

WHEREAS, The proposed Like Exchange was submitted to the California Department Fish and Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife (Wildlife Agencies) for a 60-day review period on October 16, 2024. On January 14, 2025, the Wildlife Agencies transmitted their concurrence that the Like Exchange would result in equal or greater benefits to Covered Species and conserved natural communities as compared to those benefits analyzed in the CVMSHCP. (See Attachment No. 2). and;

WHEREAS, final approval of the Like Exchange is contingent on the Riverside County Board of Supervisors also approving the Like Exchange as the Dos Palmas Conservation Area is within unincorporated Riverside County and;

WHEREAS, the proposed Like Exchange is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15325 of the California Environmental Quality Act, as amended; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Coachella, as follows:

Section 1. The Council has considered the full record before it, which may include but is not limited to such things as the staff report, testimony by staff and the public, and other materials and evidence submitted or provided to it. Furthermore, the recitals set forth above are found to be true and correct and are incorporated herein by reference.

Section 2. The proposed Like Exchange is approved based on the following

findings:

The proposed Like Exchange is in substantial conformance with the goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures of the Coachella General Plan 2035 (as amended) and the CVMSHCP.

Section 3. The City Council has determined that the proposed Like Exchange is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15325 of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Section 4. The documents and materials that constitute the record of proceedings on which these findings are based are located at Coachella City Hall. The Development Services Director is the custodian of the record of proceedings.

Section 5. The Mayor shall sign the Resolution, and the City Clerk shall attest and certify to the passage and adoption thereof.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this 12th day of February 2025.

Steven A. Hernandez
Mayor

ATTEST:

Angela M. Zepeda
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

BEST, BEST & KRIEGER

City Attorney
STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE) ss.

CITY OF COACHELLA)

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Resolution No. 2025-05 was duly adopted by the City Council of the City of Coachella at a regular meeting thereof, held on the 12th day of February 2025, by the following vote of the City Council:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Delia Granados
Deputy City Clerk