



2565 Puesta Del Sol Road #3  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105  
(805) 682-2065  
www.storrerenvironmental.com

**CALIFORNIA TIGER SALAMANDER AQUATIC SURVEY RESULTS  
2200 W. HIGHWAY 246 (APN: 099-230-034),  
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**



**Submitted to:**

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office  
2493 Portola Road, Suite B  
Ventura, CA 93003  
Contact: Rachel Henry  
(805) 644-1766

California Department of Fish & Wildlife  
South Coast Region – Santa Barbara County Area  
4665 Lampson Avenue  
Los Alamitos, CA 90720  
Contact: Daniel Blankenship  
(661) 644-8469

**June 2019**

The survey described in this report was conducted by John Storrer and Mark De La Garza under the authority of Mr. Storrer's Federal Recovery Permit and CDFW Scientific Collecting Permit.

Approvals for the survey location and methodology were obtained from the Ventura Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and South Coast Region - Santa Barbara Area of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife prior to initiation, as noted in the Reference Section of the report.

Signature of the permitted biologist and his permit numbers are provided below.



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John Storrer

Federal Recovery Permit No. TE817397-5

CDFW Scientific Collecting Permit No. 3560

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An aquatic survey for California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) was conducted at 2200 W. Highway 246, Santa Barbara County (APN: 099-230-034) on June 4, 2019. Two wetland features, consisting of bermed artificial impoundments were sampled.

California tiger salamander larvae were not found at either of the locations sampled. One amphibian species, Baja California treefrog (*Psuedacris hypochondriaca*) was recorded.

## INTRODUCTION

An aquatic survey for California tiger salamander (CTS) was conducted at 2200 W. Highway 246, Santa Barbara County (APN: 099-230-034) on June 4, 2019 (Figure 1). The survey was done by Storrer Environmental Services, LLC (SES) under contract to Watershed Environmental, Inc. The survey was requested by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in relation to permitting for agricultural operations.

## SURVEY OBJECTIVE

The survey was intended to determine if CTS or other amphibian species had used the subject ponds for breeding.

## REGULATORY STATUS OF CTS

The Santa Barbara County Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of CTS was emergency listed by the USFWS as endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) in January of 2000 (USFWS 2000). Its distribution is limited to Santa Barbara County among six discrete regions. The six associated metapopulations inhabit ponds and adjacent uplands in the southwestern (West Orcutt) and southeastern (Bradley-Dominion) Santa Maria Valley, west Solomon Hills/north Los Alamos Valley, Purisima Hills, and Santa Rita Valley. The subject ponds lie within the range of the Santa Rita Valley metapopulation.

The California Fish and Game Commission listed the Santa Barbara County DPS of the California tiger salamander as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act in August of 2010 (CDFW 2010).

## ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The parcel is approximately three miles west of the City of Buellton (Figure 1). Primary land uses are livestock production and irrigated row crops. The prevailing vegetation types are annual grassland and oak woodland.

Two aquatic features were sampled during the June 4, 2019 field survey (Figure 2). They have been assigned field designations (“A” and “B”) for reference in data recording. They are two of four sequential man-made impoundments. The two larger impoundments were dry at the time of the field survey.

## SURVEY METHOD

The survey was conducted on June 4, 2019 between the hours of 0900 and 1100 under clear skies. Air temperature ranged between 65° and 70° F. The survey team included a permitted CTS biologist, John Storrer (Federal Recovery Permit No. TE817397-5, CDFW Scientific Collecting Permit No. 3560). Mr. Storrer was assisted by biologist Mark De La Garza.

The ponds were sampled using a 20-foot sein.

It should be noted that the survey did not conform to guidelines endorsed by the USFWS and CDFW for demonstrating presence/absence of CTS (USFWS 2003). That was not the intent of the survey.

## RESULTS

One species of larval amphibian was captured: Baja California treefrog (*Pseudacris hypochondriaca*).

CTS were not found at either of the two locations sampled.

Table 1 summarizes pond conditions and method and level of survey effort for each sampling location.

**Table 1: Pond Location, Characteristics, Sampling Method, and Results**

Pond Designation/Location	Pond Characteristics	Sampling Method	Captures
Pond A 34°30'58.70" N 120°15'50.76" W	80 ft. in diameter (approx.); maximum depth = 3.5 ft; slightly opaque, but not turbid. 65° F.	20-ft. sein. 6 passes.	<i>Pseudacris hypochondriaca</i> larva. 30-50 larvae per pass.
Pond B 34°36'56.85" N 120°15'47.80" W	100 x 60 ft. (approx.); maximum depth = 4 ft; slightly opaque, but not turbid. 66° F.	20-ft. sein. 5 passes.	<i>Pseudacris hypochondriaca</i> larva. ~100 larvae per pass.

## DISCUSSION

A “Potential CTS Breeding Pond” designated SARO-1 by the USFWS is approximately 0.75 miles to the northeast (USFWS 2010) (Figure 2). The nearest “Known CTS Breeding Pond” (LOAL-70) is 1.33 miles to the northwest.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

CTS larvae were not found in either of the two ponds sampled during the June 4, 2019 survey. Baja California treefrogs found at both ponds in modest abundance (Table 1).

## REFERENCES

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2010. California Code of Regulations Title 14,670.5, - Animals of California declared to be endangered or threatened, subdivision (b)(3)(G).

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2018. California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB). Commercial Version dated February 2, 2017. Accessed May 2019.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2003. Interim Guidance on Site Assessment and Field Surveys for Determining Presence or a Negative Finding of the California Tiger Salamander. October.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2000. Final Rule to List the Santa Barbara County Distinct Population of the California Tiger Salamander as Endangered. Federal Register (FR 65, No. 184 pages 57242 – 57264. September 2000.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2010. Maps of Ponds used by California Tiger Salamanders (Santa Barbara County Population). July 2010.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2005. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the California Tiger Salamander, Central Population. Federal Register / Vol. 70, No. 162 / Tuesday, August 23, 2005 / Rules and Regulations.

### Personal Communications

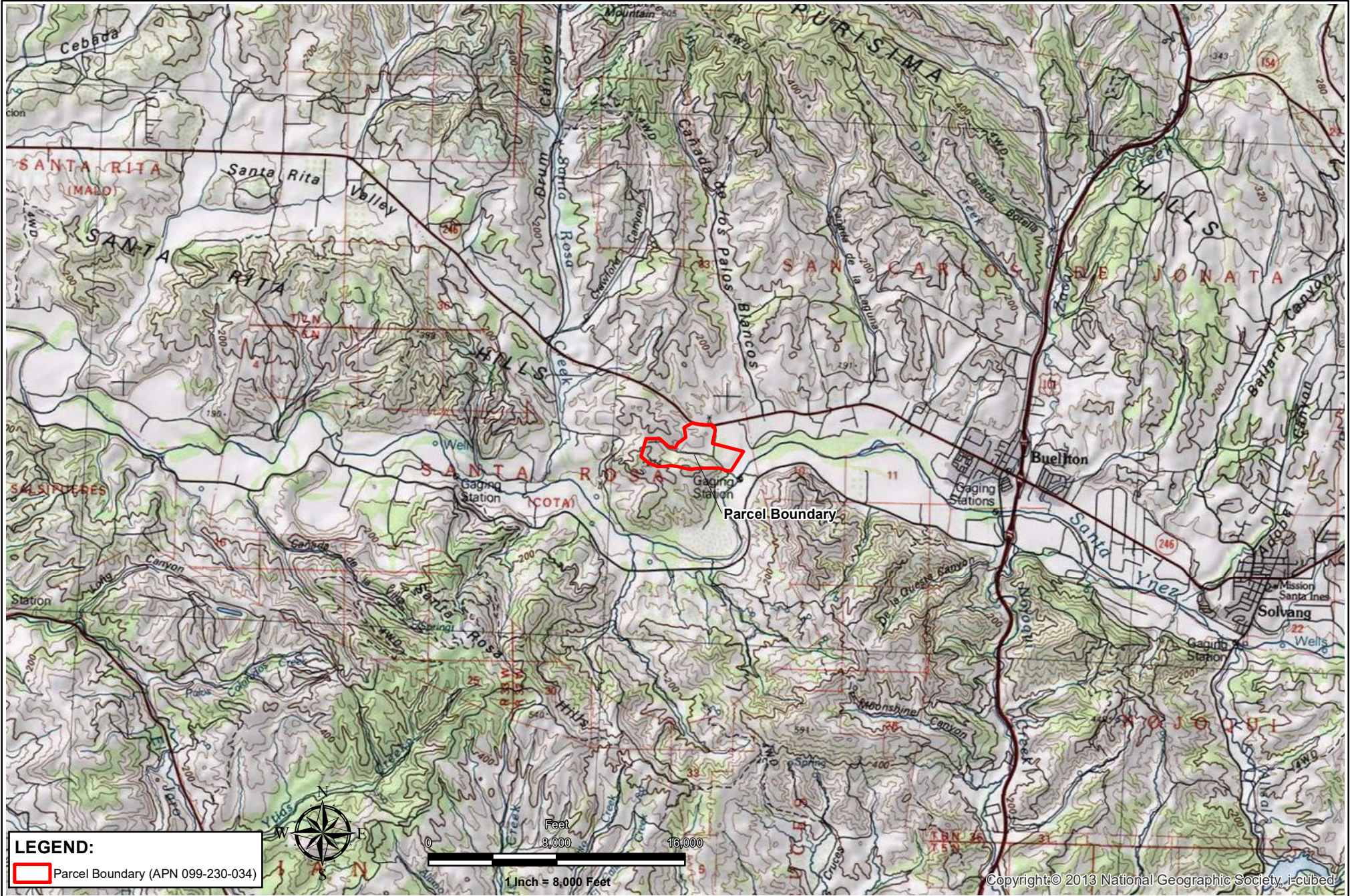
Kofron, C. 2019. Senior Biologist and Recovery Permit Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ventura Field Office. Request to Conduct Aquatic Surveys for California Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) - 2200 W. Highway 246 (APN: 099-230-034), Santa Barbara County, CA. Electronic transmittal May 28.

Rodriguez, R.F. 2019. Senior Scientist, California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Request to Conduct Aquatic Surveys for California Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) - 2200 W. Highway 246 (APN: 099-230-034), Santa Barbara County, CA. Electronic transmittal May 28.

## **FIGURES**

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **SITE PHOTOGRAPHS (All photos taken on 4 June 2019)**



**Photo 1: Pond A**



**Photo 2: Pond B**



**Photo 3: Baja California Treefrog Larvae**



**Photo 4: Baja California Treefrog Larvae**

## **APPENDIX B**

# **CALIFORNIA NATURAL DIVERSITY DATABASE FORM**

Mail to:  
California Natural Diversity Database  
California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090  
CNDDDB@wildlife.ca.gov

**For Office Use Only**

Source Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Quad Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Elm Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Occ No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
EO Index: \_\_\_\_\_ Map Index: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Field Work (mm/dd/yyyy): 06/04/2019

Clear Form

**California Native Species Field Survey Form**

Print Form

Scientific Name: Ambystoma californiense

Common Name: California tiger salamander

Species Found?  Yes  No Not present.  
If not found, why? \_\_\_\_\_

Total No. Individuals: \_\_\_\_\_ Subsequent Visit?  Yes  No

Is this an existing NDDDB occurrence? \_\_\_\_\_  
Yes, Occ. # \_\_\_\_\_  No  Unk.

Collection? If yes: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number \_\_\_\_\_ Museum / Herbarium \_\_\_\_\_

Reporter: John Storrer

Address: 2565 Puesta Del Sol Road #3  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

E-mail Address: john@storrerenvironmental.com

Phone: 805.682.2065

**Plant Information**

Phenology:  
% vegetative \_\_\_\_\_ % flowering \_\_\_\_\_ % fruiting \_\_\_\_\_

**Animal Information**

# adults \_\_\_\_\_ # juveniles \_\_\_\_\_ # larvae \_\_\_\_\_ # egg masses \_\_\_\_\_ # unknown \_\_\_\_\_  
 wintering  breeding  nesting  rookery  burrow site  lek  other

**Location Description (please attach map AND/OR fill out your choice of coordinates, below)**

2200 State Highway 246 (APN: 099-230-034)

County: Santa Barbara Landowner / Mgr: Unknown

Quad Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Elevation: 483 feet abmsl

T \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ Sec \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ 1/4 of \_\_\_\_\_ 1/4, Meridian: H  M  S  Source of Coordinates (GPS, topo. map & type): \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ Sec \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ 1/4 of \_\_\_\_\_ 1/4, Meridian: H  M  S  GPS Make & Model: \_\_\_\_\_

DATUM: NAD27  NAD83  WGS84  Horizontal Accuracy: \_\_\_\_\_ meters/feet

Coordinate System: UTM Zone 10  UTM Zone 11  OR Geographic (Latitude & Longitude)

Coordinates: \_\_\_\_\_

**Habitat Description (plants & animals)** *plant communities, dominants, associates, substrates/soils, aspects/slope:*

**Animal Behavior** *(Describe observed behavior, such as territoriality, foraging, singing, calling, copulating, perching, roosting, etc., especially for avifauna):*

Two man-made impoundments were sampled with a 20-foot sein. No California tiger salamander larvae were found. Baja California treefrog (Psuedacris hypochondriaca) larvae were found in modest abundance.

Please fill out separate form for other rare taxa seen at this site.

Site Information Overall site/occurrence quality/viability (site + population):  Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor

Immediate AND surrounding land use: Livestock grazing, cultivated row crops.

Visible disturbances: Those associated with ranching/farming.

Threats: Conversion of upland habitat for agricultural uses.

Comments: Expansion of existing agricultural operations not currently proposed.

**Determination:** *(check one or more, and fill in blanks)*

- Keyed (cite reference): \_\_\_\_\_
- Compared with specimen housed at: \_\_\_\_\_
- Compared with photo / drawing in: \_\_\_\_\_
- By another person (name): \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Photographs:** *(check one or more)*

	Slide	Print	Digital
Plant / animal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Diagnostic feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

May we obtain duplicates at our expense?  yes  no