Burrowing Owl Habitat Selection in Urban Southeast Phoenix, Arizona

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Background

- Burrowing Owls (Athene cunicularia) are often found in agricultural areas, but have experienced a significant population decline over the last 100 years in parts of the US and Canada, which may be due to habitat destruction.
- The southeastern valley of Phoenix features numerous agricultural areas, but is rapidly becoming more urbanized, potentially displacing owl residents.
- To aid in relocation and translocation efforts, the landscape and microhabitat features of known owl residents can be described and quantified. This will allow natural resource managers to relocate Burrowing Owls in the city by seeking features similar to habitats utilized by resident urban owls.

Study Sites

- Surveyed Burrowing Owls along canal trails and in agricultural fields.

Objectives

- Determine Burrowing Owls detectability and rate of occupancy.
- Identify habitat characteristics (micro and landscape-level) of Burrowing Owls in Phoenix.

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