

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

SOUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA  
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**Guidelines for Preparing a Biological Study for Property Located Within or Adjacent to Potential Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas**

Coastal development permit applications for development in the Santa Monica Mountains within or adjacent to potential Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA) should include a detailed biological study of the site, prepared by a qualified biologist, or resources expert, that includes but not limited to the following:

- A. A study identifying biological resources, both existing on the site and potential or expected resources. Where trees suitable for nesting or roosting or significant foraging habitat is present, a formal raptor survey will be conducted as part of the biological study. The biological study will account for seasonal variations in presence and abundance and will follow standard protocols developed by state or federal resource agencies when available. In the absence of standard protocols for raptors, for nesting raptor surveys (March 1-June 15) or for wintering raptor surveys (December 1-March 15), at a minimum, the area will be surveyed for 2 hours between dawn and 10:00 a.m. on five occasions with at least one week between surveys. If there is appropriate habitat for owls on site, on at least three of the surveys observations will also be made during the period immediately before nightfall.
- B. Photographs of the site.
- C. A discussion of the physical characteristics of the site, including, but not limited to, topography, soil types, microclimate, and migration corridors.
- D. An analysis of the frequency of wildfire affecting the site and the length of time since wildfire has last burned the site vegetation.
- E. A map depicting the location of biological resources.
- F. An identification of rare, threatened, or endangered species, that are designated or are candidates for listing under State or Federal Law, an identification of "fully protected" species and/or "species of special concern", and an identification of any other species for which there is compelling evidence of rarity, for example, plants designated "1B" or "2" by the California Native Plant Society, that are present or expected on the project site.
- G. An analysis of the potential impacts of the proposed development on the identified habitat or species.
- H. An analysis of any unauthorized development, including grading or vegetation removal that may have contributed to the degradation or elimination of habitat area or species that would otherwise be present on the site in a healthy condition.
- I. Project alternatives designed to avoid and minimize impacts to sensitive resources.
- J. Mitigation measures that would minimize or mitigate residual impacts that cannot be avoided through project alternatives.