



Biotic Report Review Checklist

The biotic report should be a *stand-alone document* that summarizes all the relevant project details, baseline biotic information, and evaluates biotic resources, special status species, habitats, sensitive communities, regulatory constraints, potential impacts, and recommends avoidance/minimization and potential mitigation measures. All projects must meet the County's requirements to avoid and minimize impacts to sensitive species and habitats to the maximum extent possible. A complete Biotic Report should follow *standard protocol* in California for analysis of biological resources, and *must* provide the following:

- Summary/Synopsis** – Stand-alone condensed version of the entire assessment including findings and conclusions and results of the impact analysis. *The importance of a clear summary cannot be overstated!*
- Introduction**
- Detailed Project Description** – Describe all physical alterations that will occur (e.g., existing conditions versus proposed conditions, area, length, depth/volume of excavation if applicable, detailed construction related activities/construction methods, equipment use etc.). Please make sure to include in your project description all activities associated with permanent and temporary impacts, access and staging locations, proposed new construction, and creation and management of defensible space as required for fire safety.
- Project History/Background** – If applicable include information regarding agency coordination/communication, previous submittals, other permits/approvals obtained etc.
- Figures/maps**
 - Location map
 - Map of study area boundary with aerial imagery
 - Map of habitats/natural communities (please include all applicable sensitive habitats as defined in SCCC 16.30 & 16.32 including species and location of mature trees in and near the impact areas).
 - Project Impact Map - Shows the project footprint *in relation to* the natural communities and sensitive habitats identified on site. Aerial imagery is very helpful. *An Impact figure is a non-negotiable necessity in an impact evaluation.*

The development footprint must show all temporary and permanent disturbance associated with the project including grading, driveways, tree removal, location of new buildings, utilities, paving, landscaping, access routes, deposition of refuse or debris associated with the project, and areas needed for creation and management of defensible space.
- Methodology**
 - Research/Surveys/Field Methods/Timing
 - Personnel and qualifications
- Baseline Environmental** – Discussion/description/evaluation of:
 - Baseline Biotic/Habitat conditions on the project site and in surrounding area (e.g., description of vegetation/natural communities, habitat types, streams, wetlands, species observed)
 - Sensitive biotic resources with potential to occur on the property including all applicable sensitive biotic resources specific to Santa Cruz County Code (please see SCCC 16.30 and 16.32)
 - Trees and tree removal (reference and attach arborist report if applicable)



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- Special status species evaluation (e.g. species with potential to occur, presence or absence of habitat, presence and/or likelihood of species presence, and methods of determination)
- Riparian – location of buffer (as defined in SCCC 16.30) and project boundary, impacts and/or avoidance
- Wetlands /streams/drainages (i.e. description of features, results of delineation, location in relation to project)
- Results of rare plant surveys conducted during the evident and identifiable period of special status plant species with potential to occur. Floristic level analysis and attached plant list should be included **deferral to pre-construction botanical surveys does not provide adequate impact analysis for listed plant species.*
- Discussion of invasive species

- Impact Analysis**
 - Identify impacts to sensitive species and habitats or explain how/why impacts are not going to occur.
 - Discussion of trees in impact area, unavoidable tree removals, and/or other potential impacts to trees
 - Explain how avoidance and minimization of impacts have been achieved
 - Explain reasons for unavoidable impacts

- Recommendations for avoidance/minimization and mitigation**
 - Recommend avoidance and minimization measures as required to minimize impacts to sensitive species and habitats.
 - Recommend options for possible compensatory mitigation for *unavoidable* impacts to sensitive species and habitats.
 - Discussion of planned habitat restoration associated with unavoidable impacts *and* the requirements of General Plan Policy 5.1.12