

STAFF BIOLOGIST REPORT:
Joe Decruyenaere, 14 January 2014

Recommendations

- Many of the areas mapped as “ruderal” in the biological report are manufactured slope areas that appear to have been planted with native species—chiefly native grasses and coyotebush, presumably as an erosion control method. Although, this vegetation is artificially created and the County does not regard it as sensitive, it is not ruderal and should not be mapped as such.
 - The house and landscaping shall be in earth tones to camouflage the structures, coordinating with the color of soil, rocks, and native vegetation of the site. Use of native vegetation in landscaping will help screen the structure.
 - Perimeter fencing shall not be allowed; however, security fencing adjacent to the house is acceptable, for example, around a swimming pool.
 - Exterior night lighting shall be minimized in observance of Rural Lighting District standards, using low intensity (not exceeding 800 lumens) lights on low stature (2.5 – 3 ft.) fixtures. Lights shall be directed downwards with full shielding against projection into the nighttime sky, surrounding properties, and undeveloped areas. If DPW does not require public lighting, then none shall be used. Security lighting, if used, shall be on an infrared detector or a motion sensor. Refer to the Outdoor Lighting District Ordinance for restrictions on shielding, height, intensity, and encroachment, especially 22.44.540.A – D:
http://planning.lacounty.gov/view/rural_outdoor_lighting_district_ordinance.
 - Avoid large reflective surfaces on house exteriors in order to reduce the likelihood of bird strikes.
 - Fish’s milkwort, southern California black walnut, oak woodland, and ESHA should be depicted on fuel modification plans and protected from fuel-modification impacts. The fuel modification plan should follow the standard regulations:
 - Zone A: 20 ft. wide; irrigated; non-invasive ground covers
 - Zone B: 30 ft. wide beyond Zone A; irrigated; contains non-invasive ground covers, native plants, deep-rooted perennials, some well-spaced shrubs and trees
 - Zone C: Beyond Zones A & B (to 200 ft. from the structure or to property line, whichever is less), mosaic of thinned, clumped, native vegetation, pruned on a staggered 2 – 3 year schedule, with clumps adjacent to one another in alternate pruning times.
- In preparing Zone C for fuel modification:
- Retain as many non-sprouting species as possible (they usually have a single trunk.) Do not cut off the trunk in pruning, as this kills the plant.
 - Choose multiple-trunked, resprouting species for removal over non-sprouters. The remaining multi-trunked remaining shrubs should be pruned in a staggered, clumped pattern on an alternating schedule, allowing 2 – 3 years between prunings for any one clump. Resprouting species can be pruned to near ground level.
- For guidance, refer to
- The California Native Plant Society website (especially good for botanic gardens where native plants can be seen and for nurseries that carry native plant stock):
<http://www.cnps.org/>
 - The Los Angeles County Fire List:
<http://www.fire.lacounty.gov/Forestry/BrushManagementPlantIDGuide.asp>
- Implement a temporary erosion control plan during construction in keeping with RWQCB requirements. Site septic facilities as far as possible from public open space and oak trees; incorporate filtration or micropore treatments in order to protect water quality.
 - A drainage plan is needed showing 100% capture of a ¾” storm, collecting both irrigation and rainfall runoff from roofs, driveways, and other hardscaped areas. For drainage and runoff control, ERB recommends using cisterns to capture and store water for irrigation and fire-fighting purposes. Consult www.oasisdesign.net for examples of ideas on cistern systems design. Cisterns may be located beneath buildings and/or driveways. A cistern below a driveway may require a permeable surface.
 - Incorporate project design features and provide a drainage plan to ensure detention of storm water complies with current RWQCB requirements.

- Submit a landscape/fuel modification plan for review and approval by DRP; landscaping shall provide a visual screening and erosion-preventative function. New landscaping shall consist only of locally indigenous native plants outside of fuel-modification zone A/B.
- Riparian and jurisdictional resource areas should be mapped and shown on all plot plans wherever present. The bridge crossing will require permitting from CDFW and USACE. Include a CRAM or HGM functional analysis and mitigation measures with the notification package sent to these agencies.
- Applicant must clearly delineate ESHA locations on all plans.