

**REVISION TO SEATAC PROCEDURES: EXPEDITED REVIEW POLICY FOR SMALL SCALE
USE PROJECTS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

Background

The Significant Ecological Areas (SEA) Technical Advisory Committee (SEATAC) is an expert advisory committee to the County Department of Regional Planning (DRP). Unless exempt, a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application is required for development projects within an SEA. Each CUP application is reviewed by SEATAC to identify significant biological resources and to recommend measures necessary to ensure that the development project is compatible with SEA resources.

Certain projects that require a CUP for development within an SEA consist of uses that are of a limited scale or impact, but nevertheless are required to undergo full SEATAC review. During the SEATAC meetings of September 10, 2012, and November 5, 2012, SEATAC requested that its procedures be revised to include standard criteria for small scale use projects and to allow for an expedited review procedure for projects meeting the standard criteria.

The expedited review procedure presumes that small scale use projects that meet the standard criteria can be compatible with the SEA in question. In cases where a small scale use project meets the standard criteria previously determined by SEATAC, the staff biologist will make technical recommendations and the project will be placed on SEATAC's agenda as a consent item.

Standard Criteria for Small Scale Uses

Standard criteria are objective measures used to evaluate project design features in order to determine whether the project is considered a small scale use. Examples of the standard criteria to be established include, but are not limited to: a maximum height of structures or development area, or a minimum physical buffer from specific resources (e.g. "this use is set back no less than [specific number] of feet from all streams").

Technical Recommendation for Small Scale Uses

Technical recommendations include an analysis by the DRP staff biologist of how the small scale use project meets the SEA Design Compatibility Criteria and how the project is compatible with the SEA in question. Technical recommendations also include measures recommended by the DRP staff biologist to address specific potential impacts to on-site resources and/or to ensure compatibility of the small scale use project with the SEA in question. Examples of technical recommendations include, but are not limited to: replacement of a removed or impacted species at another location at a specified ratio, or dedication of habitat as open space in compensation for loss of similar habitat.

The technical recommendations will be made by the DRP staff biologist once a small scale use project is determined to meet all applicable standard criteria previously established by SEATAC. The technical recommendations may later be incorporated into the recommended project conditions that will be considered by a Hearing Officer or the Regional Planning Commission.

Procedure

Resolution of SEATAC for Small Scale Projects
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1. The DRP staff biologist, in consultation with the lead planner for the CUP, will determine whether a project meets the standard criteria and qualifies as a small scale use project for the expedited review process. If the project does not qualify, it will undergo the full, standard SEATAC review process.
2. If the project qualifies, the DRP staff biologist will prepare written technical recommendations for the project.
3. Qualifying projects will be placed on a SEATAC meeting agenda as a consent item and will be posted to the SEATAC webpage at least 14 calendar days prior to the next SEATAC meeting. The agenda item shall include the project description, SEA description, an explanation of how the project meets the standard criteria, and technical recommendations prepared by the DRP staff biologist.
 - a. Should any member of SEATAC disagree with the small scale use project determination and/or with the technical recommendations made by the DRP staff biologist, during the SEATAC meeting he or she may pull the item from the consent agenda for SEATAC discussion.
 - b. Should any member of the general public disagree with the small scale use project determination and/or with the technical recommendations made by the DRP staff biologist, he or she may request in writing seven calendar days prior to the SEATAC meeting that the project be pulled from the consent agenda for SEATAC discussion at that meeting.
 - c. At the beginning of the SEATAC meeting, any member of the general public who disagrees with the small scale use determination and/or with the technical recommendations made by the DRP staff biologist will be given an opportunity to request that the project be pulled from the consent agenda for SEATAC discussion at that meeting.
4. Provided that no requests for discussion are received from SEATAC or the general public seven calendar days prior to the SEATAC meeting or at the beginning of the SEATAC meeting, by approval of its consent agenda SEATAC will determine that the project is compatible with the SEA in question, subject to the technical recommendations made by the DRP staff biologist.
5. All technical recommendations made by the DRP staff biologist or added by SEATAC will be discussed in the project staff report, and may be incorporated into the recommended project conditions that will be considered by a Hearing Officer or the Regional Planning Commission.

RESOLUTION OF SEATAC:

As the Department of Regional Planning concurs, and given the procedure presented to this Significant Ecological Areas Technical Advisory Committee, it is the concurrence of a quorum of our members that we approve the above revision to our procedures, effective immediately.