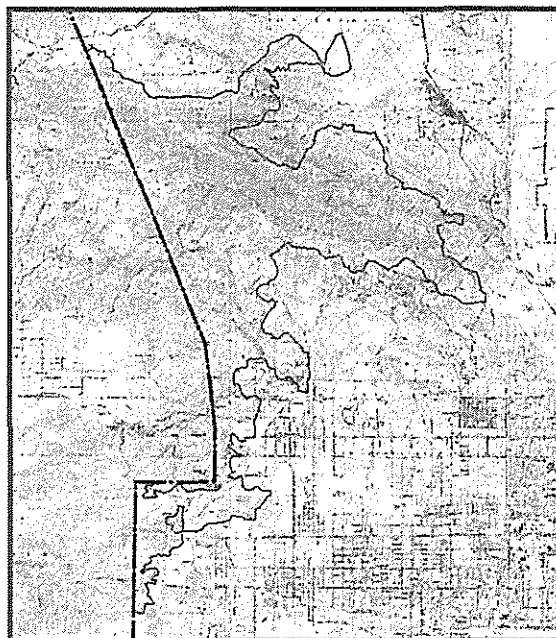


**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT
OF THE PROPOSED
SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS
SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREA**



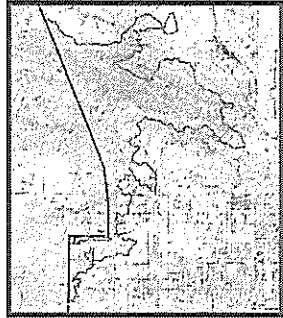
SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS
(Including Existing SEA Nos. 13, 14, 20, 21, 63, and 64)

Los Angeles County, California

November 2000

PCR

**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT
OF THE PROPOSED
SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS
SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREA**



SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS
(Including Existing SEA Nos. 13, 14, 20, 21, 63 and 64)

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November 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iv
1. LOCATION	1
1.1 GENERAL	1
1.2 BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION	1
2. DESCRIPTION	4
3. EXISTING LAND USE	4
4. LAND OWNERSHIP	5
5. VEGETATION	5
6. WILDLIFE	8
7. WILDLIFE MOVEMENT	9
8. SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	9
8.1 SENSITIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES/HABITATS	9
8.2 SENSITIVE SPECIES	10
9. REGIONAL BIOLOGICAL VALUE	28
10. RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	29
11. SOURCES	31

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1 Regional Map	2
2 Existing and Proposed Boundaries	3

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
Criteria Analysis	vii
Sensitive Species	11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Location: The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills Significant Ecological Area (SEA) is located northwest of the San Fernando Valley within unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and an incorporated area of the City of Los Angeles west of Chatsworth. The study area is south of State Route 126 (SR-126) and the Santa Clara River, west of the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5), and includes much of the Santa Susana Mountains in the north, the Santa Susana Pass, Chatsworth Reservoir, and the eastern portion of the Simi Hills in the south. It incorporates existing SEA numbers 13, 14, 20, 21, 63 and 64.

Description: The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA covers approximately 26,795 acres and includes a variety of topographic features including Oat Mountain, the Santa Susana Mountains, the Simi Hills, and many of their associated canyons. Several blue-line streams occur within these canyons as well as many natural springs. The majority of the land is natural open space with very sparse disturbances for ranches, oil wells, and unimproved access roads. The open space within the proposed SEA tends to support chaparral vegetation at the higher elevations and coastal sage scrub at the lower elevations with grasslands occurring in large flat areas. The creeks and canyons support riparian scrub and woodland communities. Chatsworth Reservoir forms a portion of the southeastern boundary. The majority of the 26,795 acres proposed for the Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA are within unincorporated Los Angeles County, accounting for approximately 23,425 acres. The remaining 3,370 acres of the SEA are within jurisdiction of the City of Los Angeles.

Existing Land Use: The majority of the land within the SEA is undisturbed open space supporting a diverse array of native vegetation communities. Open space areas within the proposed SEA consists mostly of native vegetation and infrequent minor disturbances such as fire breaks, unimproved dirt access roads, oil wells, tower pads, antennas, parks, and small ranches.

Ownership: The majority of the property within the proposed SEA is privately owned. Publicly owned exceptions include: Chatsworth Reservoir (managed by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power), Santa Susana Pass State Historical Park, Chatsworth Nature Preserve, Chatsworth Parks North and South, Chatsworth Oaks Park, Roscoe-Valley Circle Park, Bell Canyon Park, El Escorpion Park, Knapp Ranch Park, O'Melveny Park, and Bee Canyon Park

Vegetation: Plant communities within the proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA include: chaparral, coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, coast live oak woodland, valley oak woodland,

mainland cherry forest, non-native grassland, southern willow scrub, southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, and disturbed.

Wildlife: Wildlife within the proposed SEA is diverse and abundant due to the large amount of natural open space and the diversity of habitat types. The entire mosaic of vegetation communities within the proposed SEA and adjoining areas constitutes a functional ecosystem for a large variety of common wildlife and plant species; this applies to the SEA and the regional ecosystem.

Wildlife Movement: The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA includes several important linkages for wildlife movement. The Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains provide a vast open space corridor to foster wildlife movement between the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, San Gabriel Mountains to the east, and Los Padres National Forest to the north. Dense, natural habitat associated with the majority of the study area provides excellent opportunities for concealment while the grasslands provide an abundance of prey.

Sensitive Biological Resources: Sensitive plant communities within the proposed SEA include coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, valley oak woodland, valley oak savannah, mainland cherry woodland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest. Many sensitive plants and animals occur or potentially occur within the proposed SEA including Lyons pentachaeta, Nevin's Barberry, Braunton's milkvetch, Santa Susana tarplant, two-striped garter snake, golden eagle, San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit, and the San Diego desert woodrat.

Regional Biological Value: The proposed SEA meets several designation criteria and supports many regional biological values (see Criteria Table at the end of this summary). These values include: plant communities and habitats restricted in distribution on a regional basis as well as within Los Angeles County such as coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, coast live oak woodland, valley oak woodland, mainland cherry woodland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest; the open space of the proposed SEA which allows for connectivity between the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains, an important corridor for gene flow and species movement; and relatively undisturbed native, natural communities within Los Angeles County.

Recommended Management Practices: Proposed new development within the proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA should be designed to be highly compatible with the continued ecological function of each of the significant biological resources described above. In order to preserve the integrity of the SEA, the proposed comprehensive management practices described in the *Los Angeles County SEA Update Study 2000 Background Report* are recommended. These practices address:

- Core habitat
- Habitat linkages and wildlife corridors
- Fire management
- Public access and recreation
- Infrastructure
- Wetlands, riparian habitats, and streambeds
- Non-riparian/upland woodlands

In addition to the comprehensive management practices the following proposed management practices are recommended specifically for the proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA:

- Limit development densities to one residential unit per ten acre parcel, and constrain development design, where feasible, to cluster dwelling configuration along existing roadways in order to minimize clearing associated with fuel management, and to reduce the need for grading, fencing, and other habitat disturbances.
- Maintain the habitat of core populations of listed species including the federally endangered Braunton's milkvetch and rare plants such as Santa Susana tarplant.
- Retain rare communities with adequate buffers so as to allow for the long term viability and integrity of plant communities as a whole. Rare communities include: coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, valley oak woodland, valley oak savannah, mainland cherry woodland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest.
- Retain connectivity and habitat linkage values throughout the SEA but especially between the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills, between the Los Angeles County portion of the Simi Hills and the Ventura County portion, between the Santa Susana Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains, between the Santa Susana Mountains and the Santa Clara River, and between large canyons of the SEA.
- Require oil extraction activities to employ the best management practices recognized in the industry; avoid unnecessary direct impacts to habitat, and conform to legal standards for all procedures used.

**CRITERIA ANALYSIS
OF THE PROPOSED SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS SEA**

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Justification</u>
A) The habitat of core populations of endangered or threatened plant or animal species.	Not met	Although the proposed SEA does contain rare plant populations, it does not contain habitat of known core populations of listed species and therefore, does not meet this criterion.
B) On a regional basis, biotic communities, vegetative associations, and habitat of plant or animal species that are either unique or are restricted in distribution.	Met	The proposed SEA contains habitat of the extremely rare Santa Susana tarplant. In addition, several plant communities within the proposed SEA are CDFG highest inventory priority communities due to their restricted distribution in the Southern California region. These communities include: coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, valley oak woodland, valley oak savannah, mainland cherry woodland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest.
C) Within Los Angeles County, biotic communities, vegetative associations, and habitat of plant or animal species that are either unique or are restricted in distribution.	Met	All of the plant communities and habitats mentioned above as being restricted in distribution on a regional basis are further restricted in distribution within Los Angeles County.
D) Habitat that at some point in the life cycle of a species or group of species, serves as concentrated breeding, feeding, resting, or migrating grounds and is limited in availability either regionally or in Los Angeles County.	Met	The open space of the proposed SEA allows for connectivity between the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains. Due to the development within the vicinity, this is an important corridor for gene flow and species movement.
E) Biotic resources that are of scientific interest because they are either an extreme in physical/geographical limitations, or represent unusual variation in a population or community.	Not met	The proposed SEA does not contain biotic resource that are clearly an extreme in physical/geographical limitations, or represent unusual variation in a population or community and therefore does not meet this criterion.
F) Areas that would provide for the preservation of relatively undisturbed examples of the original natural biotic communities in Los Angeles County.	Met	The relatively undisturbed nature and large size of the plant communities within the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills provides many undisturbed examples of native, natural communities within Los Angeles County.

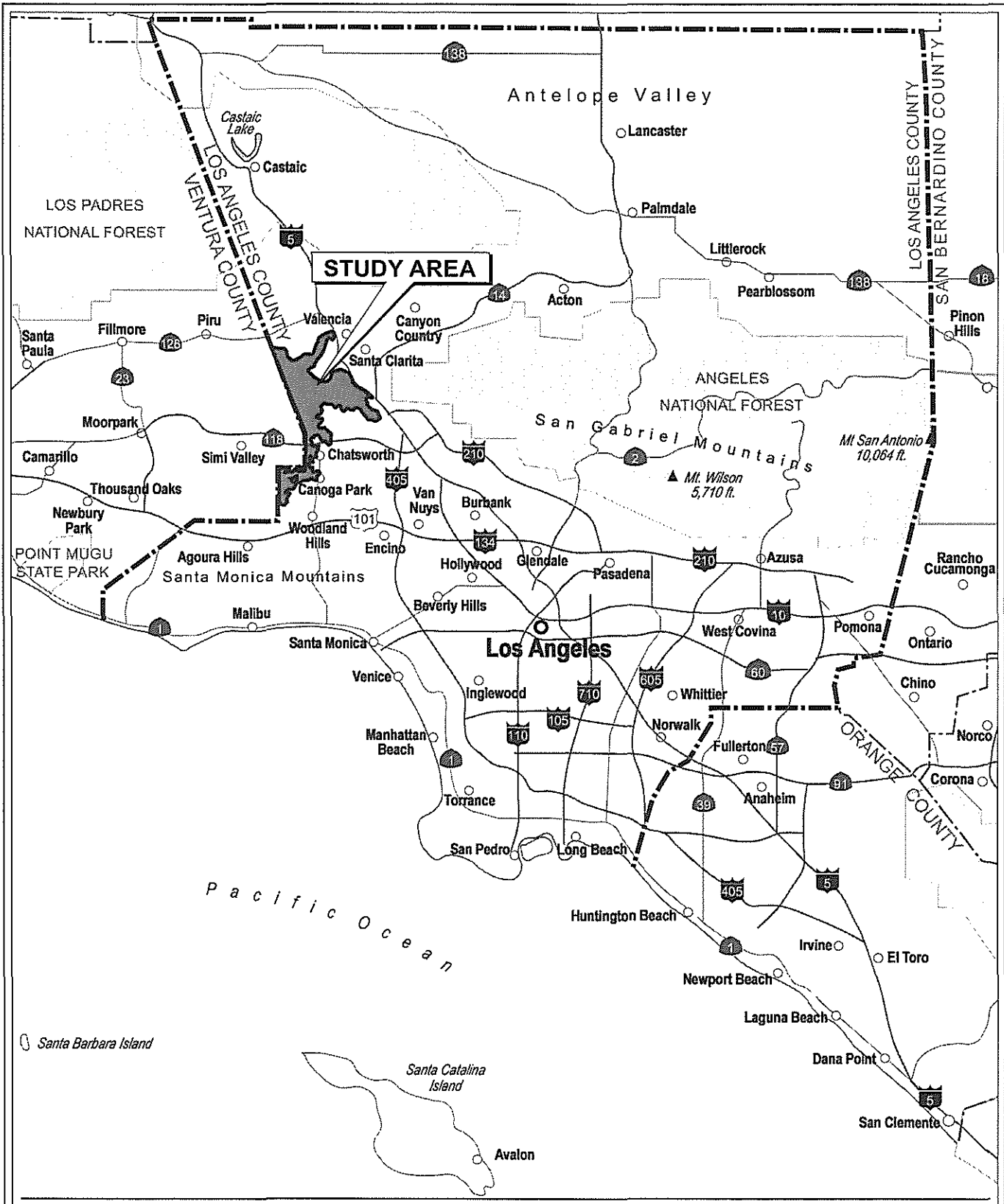
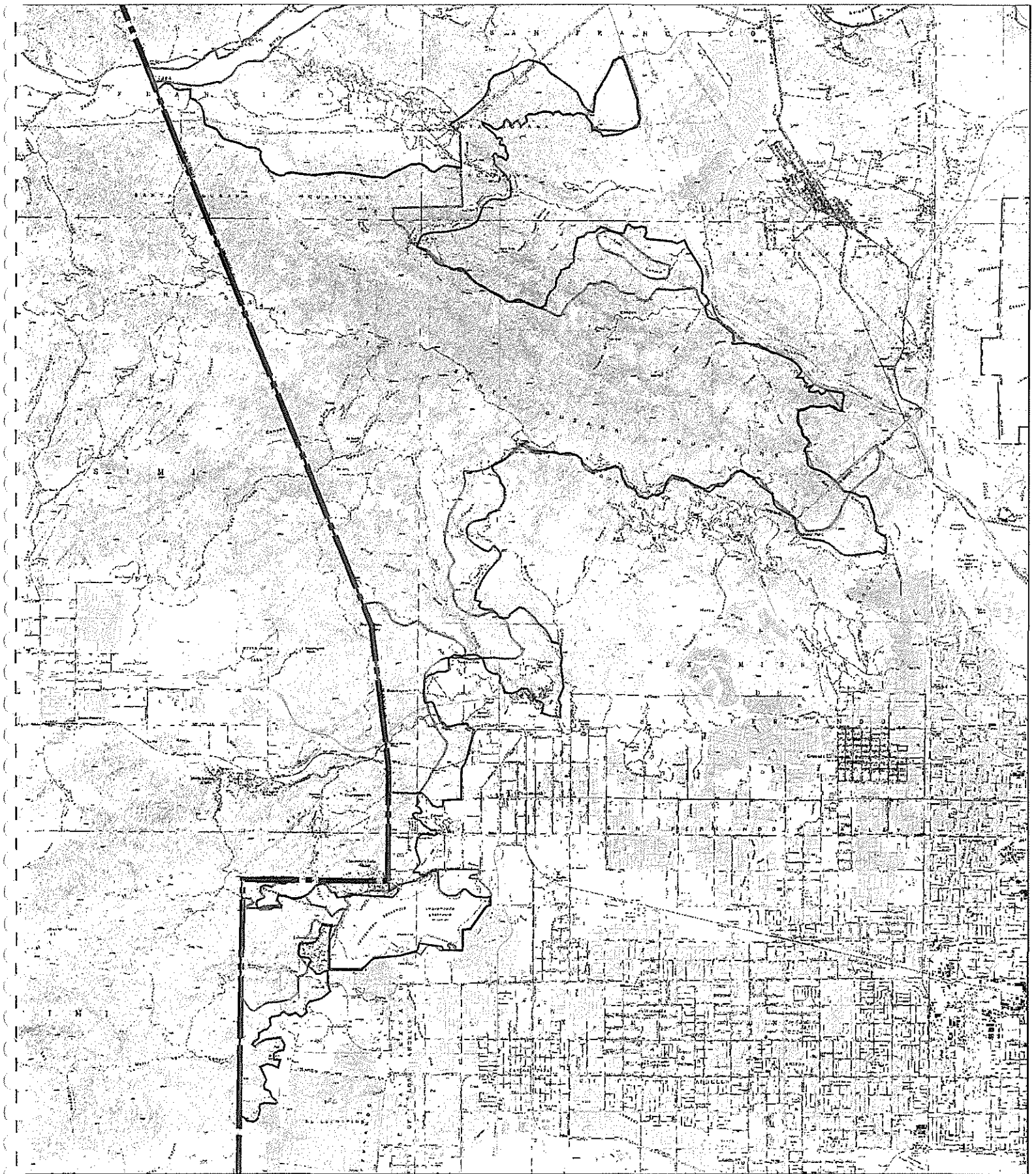


Figure 1
 Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills
 Significant Ecological Area
 Regional Map

Source: PCR Services Corporation, 2000






-  Proposed SEA Boundary
-  Existing SEA Boundary
-  Angeles National Forest

Figure 2
Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills
Significant Ecological Area
Existing and Proposed Boundaries

2. DESCRIPTION

The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA covers approximately 26,982 acres and includes a variety topographic features. The northern portion of the proposed SEA encompasses Oat Mountain and much of the Santa Susana Mountains from the Los Angeles County line east to Interstate 5. Portions of many of the canyons associated with the Santa Susana Mountains and Oat Mountain are also included such as Salt Canyon, Potrero Canyon, Pico Canyon, Towsley Canyon, El Toro Canyon, Sulphur Canyon, Devil Canyon, Ybarra Canyon, Browns Canyon, Bee Canyon, and Mormon Canyon. Several blue-line streams occur within these canyons and support many natural springs. The north slopes of the Santa Susana Mountains are within the Santa Clara River watershed which drains the Los Padres National Forest to the north, the Angeles National Forest to the northeast and east, and the Santa Susana Mountains to the south and southeast. The remainder of the SEA is within the Los Angeles River watershed. The majority of the land in the proposed SEA is natural open space with very sparse disturbances in the form of ranches, oil wells, and unimproved access roads. The proposed SEA consists of east-west and northwest trending primary ridges and north-south trending secondary ridges. The peak of Oat Mountain represents the highest point in the proposed SEA at 3,747 feet above mean sea level (MSL). The open space within the proposed SEA supports a variety of communities but is dominated by chaparral, oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, bigcone spruce-canyon oak woodland, and grasslands. The creeks and canyons support riparian scrub and woodland communities. At its southern end, the proposed SEA includes the eastern portion of the Simi Hills including the east-facing slopes descending from Chatsworth Peak. Chatsworth Reservoir forms a portion of the south boundary and is currently dry except for a small detention basin north of the reservoir.

The majority of the 26,795 acres proposed for the Antelope Valley SEA are within unincorporated Los Angeles County accounting for approximately 23,425 acres. The remaining 3,370 acres of the SEA are with jurisdiction of the City of Los Angeles.

3. EXISTING LAND USE

The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA currently supports a variety of land uses. The greater majority of the area is undisturbed open space supporting a diverse array of native vegetation communities such as chaparral, coastal sage scrub, grasslands, and woodlands. Minor disturbances within the open space areas of the proposed SEA are infrequent and consist mostly of recreational trails, fire breaks, unimproved dirt access roads, oil wells, antennas, tower pads, and small ranch in-holdings.

Surrounding land use ranges from the open space of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills within Ventura County, large oil fields to the east and southeast, to high-density residential development of San Fernando Valley to the south and Santa Clarita to the northeast.

4. LAND OWNERSHIP

The majority of the proposed SEA within the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills is unincorporated Los Angeles County land which is privately owned. South of the Santa Susana Pass, the land is within the City of Los Angeles and includes the westernmost portions of the communities of Chatsworth and West Hills. Several parks are within the proposed SEA including Santa Susana Pass State Historical Park, Chatsworth Nature Preserve, Chatsworth Parks North and South, Chatsworth Oaks Park, Roscoe-Valley Circle Park, Bell Canyon Park, El Escorpion Park, Knapp Ranch Park, O'Melveny Park, and Bee Canyon Park, as well as Chatsworth Reservoir and Oakwood Memorial Park.

5. VEGETATION

The plant communities within the proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA are composed of numerous plant species. These plant species are adapted to a Mediterranean climate with a cool, wet season followed by a hot, dry season. Due to the topographic complexity and coastal and desert influences, the proposed SEA supports a wide diversity of plant species. All plant species observed or recorded in previous documentation within the study area are indicated in the *Comprehensive Floral & Faunal Compendium of the Los Angeles County SEA Update Study 2000 Background Report*. Sensitive plant species occurring or potentially occurring within the proposed SEA are discussed in the Sensitive Biological Resources section of this document.

Plant communities within the proposed SEA were classified using standard methodology and terminology. Most of the communities discussed in this study correspond directly with those listed in Holland's *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California* (1986 and 1992 update). Other communities are named based on dominant species within them and/or commonly used terminology. Descriptions and general locations of each plant community present within the SEA are given below. These include chaparral, coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, coast live oak woodlands, valley oak woodland, mainland cherry forest, non-native grassland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, and disturbed communities.

Chaparral consists of a broad mix of evergreen species and generally occurs below 5,000 feet in Southern California. Dominant species consist of broad-leaved or needle-leaved

sclerophyllous (hard-leaved) shrubs, forming a dense, impenetrable cover with little or no understory growth. The understory typically consists of considerable accumulation of leaf litter. In areas of less dense shrub cover, the understory consists of non-native grasses and other annual forbs. Dominant species include chamise, laurel sumac, hoary-leaved ceanothus, woolly-leaved ceanothus, and toyon. Chaparral is the dominant plant community within the proposed SEA and covers many of the steep slopes and hillsides in the upper elevations.

Coastal sage scrub communities consist of drought-deciduous, low, soft-leaved shrubs and herbs on gentle to steep slopes under 3,000 feet in elevation. Several dominant species may occur within scrub communities, with some areas overwhelmingly dominated by one or two species. Dominant species include California sagebrush, California buckwheat, California bush sunflower, purple sage, and deerweed. Coastal sage scrub is found at the lower elevations within the proposed SEA on drier south-facing slopes, but can also be found on the north-facing slopes and canyon of the Santa Susana Mountains.

Alluvial scrub consists of a mixture of shrubs that colonize sandy-gravelly flood deposited soils within intermittent creeks, arroyos, and drier terraces in large washes. This community intergrades with sage scrub communities and riparian communities and, therefore, occurs adjacent to these communities. Dominant species include great basin sagebrush, scalebroom, big saltbush, and squaw bush. Alluvial scrub is predominately found at the northern end of the SEA in Salt Canyon.

Coast live oak woodlands commonly occur along drainages that experience at least a seasonal flow or in other areas under mesic conditions. Soil structure and soil moisture are the most important limiting factors for the survival of oak woodlands; soils must be deep, uncompacted, fertile, well-aerated, and well-drained. This community is dominated by coast live oak. If sufficient groundwater is present, western sycamores, usually associated with riparian habitats, may also occur in the oak woodland. Oak woodlands occupy areas within the canyons and drainages of the proposed SEA.

Valley oak woodland is an open-canopy woodland found on deep, well-drained alluvial soils below 2,000 feet. This community is almost exclusively dominated by valley oak with a grassy understory to form a savannah-like community. This community is located in small pockets in the eastern portion of the proposed SEA.

Mainland cherry forest is not well described but is typically composed of tall stands of hollyleaf cherry on rocky, dry, north-facing slopes. Within the proposed SEA, coast live oak is co-dominant within this community and can be found in canyons in the northern portion of the study

area. This community can also be found in association with alluvial scrub in the northwestern portion of the study area as it approaches the Santa Clara River.

Grassland communities consist of low, herbaceous vegetation that are dominated by grasses but generally also harbor native forbs and bulbs as well as naturalized annual forbs. Topographic factors that contribute to grassland presence include gradual slopes or flat areas with deep, well-developed soils in areas below 3,000 above MSL. The species richness of grassland communities is dependent upon a number of land use factors, including intensity and duration of natural or anthropogenic disturbances such as grazing. Heavily grazed grasslands have a lower species richness. **Non-native grassland** consists of dominant invasive annual grasses that are primarily of Mediterranean origin. Dominant species found within this community include slender wild oat, wild oat ripgut brome, and foxtail chess.

Native grassland is often associated with coastal sage scrub and is found in pockets in close proximity to coastal sage scrub and non-native grassland. This community consists of at least 10 percent cover of native purple needlegrass. The remaining vegetative cover is made up of non-native grasses found in annual grassland and a variety of annual, showy flowers such as golden stars and blue-eyed grass. Small patches of native grassland can be found scattered throughout the SEA mostly in openings in coastal sage scrub and mixed with non-native grasslands.

Southern willow scrub is a riparian community occurring within and adjacent to water courses. The vegetation within this communities is adapted to seasonal flooding. Southern willow scrub is characterized by dense, broad leafed, winter-deciduous riparian thickets dominated by one or more willow species. Most stands are too dense to allow understory development. The dominant species of this community within the SEA is arroyo willow, red willow, and black willow, with less common associates mule fat. This community occurs in segments along portions of the intermittent drainages within the proposed SEA.

Southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest consists of an open, broad-leaved, winter-deciduous riparian forest dominated by Fremont cottonwood, black cottonwood, and several willow species including arroyo willow and red willow. This community occupies much of the Santa Clara River adjacent to the northern boundary of the proposed SEA and also occurs within the larger, intermittent and perennial drainages within the proposed SEA.

Disturbed or barren areas either completely lack vegetation or are dominated by ruderal species. Ruderal vegetation typically found onsite include non-native grasses and a high proportion of weedy species, including tocalote, telegraph weed, tree tobacco, doveweed, black mustard, and thistle species. Several disturbed areas occur scattered throughout the proposed SEA and take the

form of residential developments, highways, fire breaks, dirt access roads, trails, transmission poles, and other similarly disturbed areas.

6. WILDLIFE

Wildlife within the proposed SEA is generally diverse and abundant due to the large acreage of natural open space and the diversity of habitat types. While a few wildlife species are entirely dependent on a single vegetative community, the entire mosaic of all the vegetation communities within the study area and adjoining areas constitutes a functional ecosystem for a variety of wildlife species; this applies to the SEA and the regional ecosystem.

The analysis of invertebrates in this study is difficult due to the lack of data, although limited studies have been conducted. The SEA is believed to support healthy populations of a diverse assortment of countless invertebrate species. Amphibian populations are generally restricted in semi-arid and arid habitats but may be particularly abundant where riparian areas occur. The SEA is likely to support a variety of amphibians in abundance within wetland areas along the major canyon bottoms and the moister oak woodland areas. Many essential reptilian habitat characteristics such as open habitats that allow free movement and high visibility and small mammal burrows for cover and escape from predators and extreme weather are present within the SEA. These characteristics as well as the variety of habitat types present are likely to support a wide variety of reptilian species.

The scrubland, woodland, riparian, and grassland habitats in the proposed SEA provide foraging and cover habitat for year-round residents, seasonal residents, and migrating song birds. In addition, the SEA encompasses many year-round water sources, abundant raptor foraging, perching, and nesting habitat. The combination of these resources as well as the mosaic of many community types provides for an unusually high diversity of bird species. Several of these species may use this SEA as their only consistent occurrence in the southeastern portion of the county.

Not unlike other taxonomic groups, mammal populations within the proposed SEA are diverse and reflective of the diversity of habitat types. Unlike many other inland hills within the Los Angeles Basin, this SEA is large enough to support relatively stable large mammal populations despite the urban surroundings.

All wildlife species previously recorded, as well as those expected to occur, within the study area are indicated in the *Comprehensive Floral & Faunal Compendium of the Los Angeles County SEA Update Study 2000 Background Report*. Sensitive wildlife species occurring or potentially occurring within the SEA are discussed in the Sensitive Biological Resources section of this document.

7. WILDLIFE MOVEMENT

The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA includes several important linkages for wildlife movement. The Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains provide a vast open space corridor to foster wildlife movement between the Santa Monica Mountains to the south, San Gabriel Mountains to the east, and Los Padres National Forest to the north. Dense, natural habitat associated with the majority of the study area provides excellent opportunities for concealment and water sources while the grasslands provide an abundance of prey.

8. SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species that have special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, rare, or otherwise; this is due to the species' declining or limited population sizes, usually resulting from habitat loss. Watch lists of such resources are maintained by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and special groups such as the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). The following sections indicate the habitats as well as plant and animal species present, or potentially present within the proposed SEA, that have been afforded special recognition.

8.1 SENSITIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES/HABITATS

The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA supports several habitat types considered sensitive by resource agencies, namely the CDFG [California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB), 2000], because of their scarcity and support of a number of state and federally listed endangered, threatened, and rare vascular plants, as well as several sensitive bird and reptile species. These communities include **coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, valley oak woodland, mainland cherry woodland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest** which occur throughout the study area. These communities or closely related designations are considered highest-inventory priority communities by the CDFG, indicating that they are experiencing a decline throughout their range. The array and composition of these communities has been discussed earlier in this report (see Section 5, Vegetation, above).

8.2 SENSITIVE SPECIES

Sensitive species include those listed, or candidates for listing by the USFWS, CDFG, and CNPS (particularly List 1A, 1B, and 2 as defined in the Sensitive Species Table). The Sensitive Species Table on page 11 lists those species which have been recorded within the proposed SEA as well as those reasonably expected to occur. The table includes locations of sensitive species observed, recorded in the CNDDDB, or reported in previous documentation as observed within or in the immediate vicinity of the proposed SEA. Additional species, such as native oak, walnut, or sycamore trees may be protected under local ordinances but are not included in this table.

**SENSITIVE SPECIES
OCCURRING OR POTENTIALLY OCCURRING
WITHIN THE PROPOSED SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS SEA**

VASCULAR PLANTS

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Agency Listing Status</u>	<u>CNPS Listing Status</u>	<u>Preferred Habitat</u>	<u>Record</u>
ANGIOSPERMS (Dicotyledons)					
Apiaceae Carrot Family					
<i>Perideridia pringlei</i>	adobe yampah		4	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub.	Potential where habitat occurs
Asteraceae Sunflower Family					
<i>Baccharis plummerae</i> <i>ssp. plummarae</i>	Plummer's baccharis		4	Chaparral, broad-leaved upland forest, cismontane woodland, sage scrub. Associated with rocky areas.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Hemizonia minthornii</i>	Santa Susana tarplant	FSC, SR	1B	Sage scrub, chaparral.	E of Simi Valley including Rocky Peak, Hummingbird Ranch and S to Santa Susana Pass (1987); along Hwy. 118, W of Topanga Cyn. Blvd. and 1 mi E of county line (1987)
<i>Microseris douglasii</i> <i>var. platycarpa</i>	small-flowered microseris		4	Cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland/clay.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Pentachaeta lyonii</i>	Lyon's pentachaeta	FE, SE	1B	Openings in chaparral, valley and foothill grasslands. Generally coastal habitats below 500 feet.	Simi Hills; Potential where habitat occurs

Legend

Agency Lists

FE	Federally Listed as Endangered	SE	State Listed as Endangered
FT	Federally Listed as Threatened	ST	State Listed as Threatened
FSC	Federal Special Concern Species	SCE	State Candidate for Endangered
FPE	Federally Proposed as Endangered	SCT	State Candidate for Threatened
FPT	Federally Proposed as Threatened	SP	State Protected
FPD	Federally Proposed for Delisting	SFP	State Fully Protected
		SR	State Rare
		CSC	California Special Concern Species

California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Lists

1A	Presumed extinct in California.
1B	Rare, threatened, or endangered throughout their range.
2	Rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common in other states.
3	Plant species for which additional information is needed before rarity can be determined.
4	Species of limited distribution in California (i.e., naturally rare in the wild), but whose existence does not appear to be susceptible to threat.

**SENSITIVE SPECIES
OCCURRING OR POTENTIALLY OCCURRING
WITHIN THE PROPOSED SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS SEA
(CONTINUED)**

VASCULAR PLANTS

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Agency Listing Status</u>	<u>CNPS Listing Status</u>	<u>Preferred Habitat</u>	<u>Record</u>
Berberidaceae		Barberry Family			
<i>Berberis nevinii</i>	Nevin's barberry	FE, SE	1B	Sage scrub, chaparral, cismontane woodland, riparian scrub; sandy or gravelly substrate.	Potential where habitat occurs
Boraginaceae		Borage Family			
<i>Harpagonella palmeri</i> var. <i>palmeri</i>	Palmer's grappling hook		2	Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill	Potential where habitat occurs
Campanulaceae		Bellflower Family			
<i>Nemacladus gracilis</i>	slender nemacladus		4	Cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland.	Potential where habitat occurs
Convolvulaceae		Morning-Glory Family			
<i>Calystegia peirsonii</i>	Pierson's morning glory	FSC	4	Sage scrub, chenopod (saltbush) scrub, chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, rocky slopes.	Recorded along San Francisquito Cyn. Rd. (1982); recorded 1.2 mi from Charlie Peak on dirt rd. in Bitter Cyn.
<i>Convolvulus simulans</i>	small-flowered morning glory		4	Coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland/clay, serpentinile seeps.	Potential where habitat occurs

Legend

Agency Lists

FE	Federally Listed as Endangered	SE	State Listed as Endangered
FT	Federally Listed as Threatened	ST	State Listed as Threatened
FSC	Federal Special Concern Species	SCE	State Candidate for Endangered
FPE	Federally Proposed as Endangered	SCT	State Candidate for Threatened
FPT	Federally Proposed as Threatened	SP	State Protected
FPD	Federally Proposed for Delisting	SFP	State Fully Protected
		SR	State Rare
		CSC	California Special Concern Species

California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Lists

1A	Presumed extinct in California.
1B	Rare, threatened, or endangered throughout their range.
2	Rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common in other states.
3	Plant species for which additional information is needed before rarity can be determined.
4	Species of limited distribution in California (i.e., naturally rare in the wild), but whose existence does not appear to be susceptible to threat.

**SENSITIVE SPECIES
OCCURRING OR POTENTIALLY OCCURRING
WITHIN THE PROPOSED SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS SEA
(CONTINUED)**

VASCULAR PLANTS

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Agency Listing Status</u>	<u>CNPS Listing Status</u>	<u>Preferred Habitat</u>	<u>Record</u>
Crassulaceae		Stonecrop Family			
<i>Dudleya multicaulis</i>	many-stemmed dudleya	FSC	1B	California plant communities including sage scrub, valley and foothill grassland; heavy clay soils or rock outcrops; below 2,000 ft.	10 plants observed on S side of Chatsworth reservoir (1978)
Fabaceae		Legume Family			
<i>Astragalus brauntonii</i>	Braunton's milk-vetch	FE	1B	Sage scrub, chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, closed cone coniferous forest; limestone endemic, carbonate soils, recent burns and disturbed areas.	2 plants seen along dirt rd. in Dayton Cyn., W of intersection of March Ave. and Justice (1989)
Lamiaceae		Mint Family			
<i>Acanthomintha obovata</i> ssp. <i>cordata</i>	heart-leaved thorn mint		4	Chaparral, valley and foothill grassland/heavy clay alkaline serpentinile.	Potential where habitat occurs
Polygonaceae		Buckwheat Family			
<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>fernandina</i>	San Fernando Valley spineflower	FSC	1A	Coastal scrub, sandy soils.	Potential where habitat occurs

Legend

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<i>Chorizanthe procumbens</i>	prostrate spineflower		4	Clearings in sage scrub and chaparral and pinyon-juniper woodland on gabbro, clay and granitic soils.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Dodecahema leptoceras</i>	slender-horned spineflower	FE, SE	1B	Alluvial sage scrub vegetation on sandy flood-deposited rivers and washes.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Mucronea californica</i>	California spineflower		4	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland.	Potential where habitat occurs
Portulacaceae	Purslane Family				
<i>Calandrinia breweri</i>	Brewer's calandrinia		4	Chaparral, coastal scrub/disturbed sites, burns.	Potential where habitat occurs
Primulaceae	Primrose Family				
<i>Adrosace elongata</i> ssp. <i>acuta</i>	California androsace		4	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub.	Potential where habitat occurs
Ranunculaceae	Buttercup Family				
<i>Delphinium parryi</i> ssp. <i>blochmaniae</i>	dune larkspur	FSC	1B	Chaparral, coastal dunes.	Potential where habitat occurs

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(CONTINUED)**

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Rubiaceae		Madder Family			
<i>Galium cliftonsmithii</i>	Santa Barbara bedstraw		4	Cismontane woodland.	Potential where habitat occurs
Saxifragaceae		Saxifrage Family			
<i>Boykinia rotundifolia</i>	round-leaved boykinia		4	Chaparral, riparian woodland, streambanks.	Potential where habitat occurs

ANGIOSPERMS (Monocotyledons)

Liliaceae		Lily Family			
<i>Calochortus catalinae</i>	Catalina mariposa lily		4	Openings in chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, cismontane woodland; heavy soils.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Calochortus clavatus</i> var. <i>gracilis</i>	slender mariposa lily	FSC	1B	Chaparral, especially in foothill cyns.; generally found in shade.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Calochortus plummerae</i>	Plummer's mariposa lily	FSC	1B	Sage scrub, valley and foothill grassland, yellow pine forest; dry, rocky or sandy sites, granitic or alluvial soil; to 4,800 feet.	Potential where habitat occurs

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(CONTINUED)**

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<i>Lilium humboldtii</i> ssp. <i>ocellatum</i>	ocellated Humboldt lily	FSC	4	Openings in chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest; below 5,500 feet.	Potential where habitat occurs
Poaceae	Grass Family				
<i>Orcuttia californica</i>	California Orcutt grass	FE, SE	1B	Vernal pools.	Potential where habitat occurs

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(CONTINUED)**

VERTEBRATES				
<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Agency Listing Status</u>	<u>Preferred Habitat</u>	<u>Record</u>
AMPHIBIANS				
Pelobatidae		Spadefoot Toad Family		
<i>Scaphiopus hammondi</i>	western spadefoot	FSC, CSC, SP	Prefers relatively open areas in lowland grasslands, chaparral, and pine-oak woodlands, areas of sandy or gravelly soil in alluvial fans, washes, and floodplains.	Recorded W of Black Cyn., at Santa Susana Knolls (1998)
Bufo		True Toads		
<i>Bufo microscaphus californicus</i>	arroyo southwestern toad	FE, CSC, SP	Washes/streams, sandy banks, grown to willows, cottonwoods or sycamores; riparian habitats of semiarid areas, small cobbly streambeds.	Potential where habitat occurs
Ranidae		True Frog Family		
<i>Rana aurora draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	FT, CSC, SP	Humid forests, woodlands, grasslands and streamsides, especially where cattails and other plants provide good cover.	Potential where habitat occurs
REPTILES				
Emydidae		Box and Water Turtle Family		
<i>Clemmys marmorata pallida</i>	southwestern pond turtle	FSC, CSC, SFP	Ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, irrigation ditches.	Potential where habitat occurs

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VERTEBRATES		Agency Listing Status	Preferred Habitat	Record
Scientific Name	Common Name			
Iguanidae		Iguanid Lizard Family		
<i>Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei</i>	San Diego coast horned lizard	FSC, CSC, SP	Valley-foothill hardwood, conifer, and riparian habitats, pine-cypress, juniper and annual grassland habitats below 6,000 feet, open country, especially sandy areas, washes, flood plains, and windblown deposits.	SW end of Santa Susana Mts. above Chatsworth (1989); S Devil's Cyn., 5mi. W of Granada Hills (1947)
<i>Phrynosoma coronatum frontale</i>	California horned lizard	CSC, SP	Scrubland, grassland, coniferous forest, broad-leaf woodlands.	Cyn. bottom near Grape Vine Mesa and Newhall Ranch (1993)
Teiidae		Whiptail Lizard Family		
<i>Cnemidophorus tigris multiscutatus</i>	coastal western whiptail	FSC	Arid and semi-arid desert to open woodlands, where vegetation is sparse.	SW end of Santa Susana Mts., above Chatsworth (1989)
Anniellidae		Legless Lizard Family		
<i>Anniella pulchra pulchra</i>	silvery legless lizard	CSC	Several habitats but especially in coastal dune, valley-foothill, chaparral, and coastal scrub habitats.	Potential where habitat occurs
Boidae		Boa Family		
<i>Lichanura trivirgata myriolepis</i>	rosy boa	FSC	Desert and rocky areas in chaparral covered hillsides and canyons.	Potential where habitat occurs

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(CONTINUED)**

VERTEBRATES				
Scientific Name	Common Name	Agency Listing Status	Preferred Habitat	Record
Colubridae				
Colubrid Snake Family				
<i>Diadophis punctatus modestus</i>	San Bernardino ring-neck snake	FSC	Open, relatively rocky areas within valley-foothill, mixed chaparral, and annual grass habitats.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Lampropeltis zonata pulchra</i>	San Diego mountain kingsnake	FSC, SP	Moist woods, coniferous forests, woodland and chaparral.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Salvador hexalepis virgulata</i>	coast patch-nosed snake	FSC, CSC	Found in coastal chaparral, desert scrub, washes, sandy flats, and rocky areas. Barren creosote bush desert flats. Sagebrush semi-deserts; sea level to 7,000 feet.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Thamnophis hammondi</i>	two-striped garter snake	FSC, CSC, SP	Riparian and freshwater marshes with perennial water.	3 observed by Dames and Moore, 2 at Via Pond, 1 at Salt Creek (1992)
BIRDS				
Cathartidae				
New World Vulture Family				
<i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>	California condor	FE, SE, SFP	Montane and foothill regions; vast expanses of open savannah, grasslands, and chaparral, with cliffs, large trees, and snags.	Potential where habitat occurs

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Accipitridae	Hawks, Kites, Harriers and Eagle Family			
<i>Accipiter cooperi</i>	Cooper's hawk	CSC	Open woodlands especially riparian woodland.	Long Cyn. Rd., where it meets Santa Clara River; Potrero Cyn.
<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	sharp-shinned hawk	CSC	Woodlands; forages over chaparral and other scrublands; prefers riparian habitats and north-facing slopes, with plucking perch sites.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	golden eagle	CSC, SFP	Mountains, deserts, and open country; prefer to forage over grasslands, deserts, savannahs and early successional stages of forest and shrub habitats.	W part of Santa Susana Mts. (1974)
<i>Buteo regalis</i>	ferruginous hawk	CSC	Rivers, lakes, and coasts; open tracts of sparse shrubs and grasslands, and agricultural areas during winter.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson's hawk	ST	Plains, ranges, open hills, sparse trees.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	northern harrier	CSC	Coastal salt marshes, freshwater marshes, grasslands, and agricultural fields; occasionally forages over open desert and brushlands.	Over open grassland near Potrero Cyn. Rd. (1995)

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VERTEBRATES				
Scientific Name	Common Name	Agency Listing Status	Preferred Habitat	Record
<i>Elanus leucurus</i>	white-tailed kite	SFP	Grasslands with scattered trees, near marshes, along highways.	Near Newhall Ranch along Santa Clara River (1995)
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	osprey	CSC	Rivers, lakes, and coasts, mixed conifer.	Potential where habitat occurs
Falconidae	Falcon Family			
<i>Falco columbarius</i>	merlin	CSC	Coastlines, wetlands, woodlands, agricultural fields, and grasslands.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Falco mexicanus</i>	prairie falcon	CSC	Grasslands, savannahs, rangeland, agricultural fields, and desert scrub; often uses sheltered cliff ledges for cover.	Potential where habitat occurs
Cuculidae	Cuckoos and Roadrunner Family			
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	western yellow-billed cuckoo	SE	Riverine woodlands, thickets, and farms.	Potential where habitat occurs
Strigidae	True Owl Family			
<i>Asio flammeus</i>	short-eared owl	CSC	Prairies, marshes (fresh and salt) dunes, tundra.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Asio otus</i>	long-eared owl	CSC	Riparian and live oak woodlands.	Potential where habitat occurs

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VERTEBRATES

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<i>Athene cunicularia hypugea</i>	burrowing owl	FSC, CSC	Dry grasslands, desert habitats, and open pinyon-juniper and ponderosa pine woodlands below 5,300 feet elevation. Prefers berms, ditches, and grasslands adjacent to rivers, agricultural, and scrub areas.	Potential where habitat occurs
Tyrannidae		Tyrant Flycatcher Family		
<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	southwestern willow flycatcher	FE	<u>Low elevational sites</u> : Riparian woodlands that contain water and low growing willow thickets. <u>High elevational sites</u> : Large, flat, wet meadows that contain patches of willow trees.	Santa Clara River between Castaic Creek and Ventura County line (1993)
<i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i>	Vermilion flycatcher	CSC	Cottonwood-willow woodland and riparian scrub.	Potential where habitat occurs
Alaudidae		Lark Family		
<i>Eremophila alpestris actia</i>	California horned lark	CSC	Open habitats, grasslands along the coast, deserts near sea level to alpine dwarf shrub habitat, uncommonly in coniferous and chaparral habitats.	Salt Creek Cyn. and to the S of Six Flags Magic Mt. (1995)

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Hirundinidae		Swallow Family		
<i>Progne subis</i>	purple martin	CSC	Towns, farms, open or semi-open country.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Riparia riparia</i>	bank swallow	ST	Riparian and other lowland habitats west of the desert.	Potential where habitat occurs
Muscicapidae		Kinglets, Gnatcatchers, Thrushes, and Babbler Family		
<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>	California gnatcatcher	FT, CSC	Coastal sage scrub vegetation below 2,500 feet elevation in Riverside County and generally below 1,000 feet elevation along the coastal slope; generally avoids steep slopes and dense vegetation for nesting.	Potential where habitat occurs
Laniidae		Shrike Family		
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	loggerhead shrike	FSC, CSC	Open habitats with scattered shrubs, trees, posts, fences, utility lines, or other perches.	Along Santa Clara River near Newhall Ranch (1994)
Vireonidae		Vireo Family		
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	least Bell's vireo	FE, SE	Perennial and intermittent streams with low, dense riparian scrub and riparian woodland habitats below 2,000 feet elevation; nests primarily in willows and forages in the riparian and occasionally in adjoining upland habitats.	Oat Mt. quad, exact location unknown (1977); along a 0.6 mi. section of Castaic Creek (1988)

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<i>Vireo vicinior</i>	gray vireo	CSC	Pinyon-juniper, juniper, chamise-redshanks, chaparral.	Potential where habitat occurs
Emberizidae Wood Warblers, Tanagers, Buntings, and Blackbird Family				
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	tricolored blackbird	FSC, CSC	Freshwater marshes and riparian scrub.	Middle Potrero Cyn. and just N of Mayo Crossing (1993)
<i>Aimophila ruficeps canescens</i>	Southern California (ashy) rufous-crowned sparrow	FSC, CSC	Generally, steep, rocky areas within coastal sage scrub and chaparral, often with scattered bunches of grass; prefers relatively recently burned areas.	Common in Salt Creek Cyn., Via Cyn., Airport Mesa, Chiquito Cyn., and Off Haul Cyn. (1995)
<i>Amphispiza belli</i>	Bell's sparrow	FSC, CSC	Dense, dry chamise chaparral and coastal slopes of coastal sage scrub.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i>	yellow warbler	CSC	Riparian woodlands, montane chaparral, and mixed conifer habitats.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Icteria virens</i>	yellow-breasted chat	CSC	Riparian woodlands with a thick understory.	Along Santa Clara River riparian zones (1996)
<i>Piranga rubra</i>	summer tanager	CSC	Riparian, wooded desert habitat, cottonwoods and willows.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Vermiform Virgilia</i>	Virginia's warbler	CSC	Arid, shrubby, mixed conifer, pinyon-juniper, montane chaparral.	Potential where habitat occurs

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MAMMALS				
Phyllostomidae		Leaf-Nosed Bat Family		
<i>Macrotus californicus</i>	California leaf-nosed bat	FSC, CSC	Desert riparian, desert wash, desert scrub, desert succulent shrub, alkali desert scrub, and palm oasis. Roosts in tunnels, caves and possible buildings and bridges.	Oat Mt. quad (1950), location info suppressed by CNDDB
Vespertilionidae		Evening Bat Family		
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	pallid bat	CSC	Nests in dry, rocky habitats/caves, crevices in rocks, arid habitats including deserts, chaparral, and scrublands.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Corynorhinus (Plecotus) townsendii pallescens</i>	pale big-eared bat	FSC, CSC	Needs caves, tunnels, or other structures for roosting, vegetation and mesic edges for feeding, extremely sensitive to roosting site disturbance, maternity roosts are in warm places.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Corynorhinus (Plecotus) townsendii townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat	FSC, CSC	Caves, mine tunnels, and buildings.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Euderma maculatum</i>	spotted bat	FSC, CSC	Deserts, scrublands, chaparral, and coniferous woodlands.	Potential where habitat occurs

Legend

Agency Lists

FE	Federally Listed as Endangered	SE	State Listed as Endangered
FT	Federally Listed as Threatened	ST	State Listed as Threatened
FSC	Federal Special Concern Species	SCE	State Candidate for Endangered
FPE	Federally Proposed as Endangered	SCT	State Candidate for Threatened
FPT	Federally Proposed as Threatened	SP	State Protected
FPD	Federally Proposed for Delisting	SFP	State Fully Protected
		SR	State Rare
		CSC	California Special Concern Species

**SENSITIVE SPECIES
OCCURRING OR POTENTIALLY OCCURRING
WITHIN THE PROPOSED SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS SEA
(CONTINUED)**

VERTEBRATES

<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Agency Listing Status</u>	<u>Preferred Habitat</u>	<u>Record</u>
<i>Myotis lucifugus occultus</i>	occult little brown bat	FSC, CSC	Sagebrush, bitterbrush, alkali desert scrub, wet meadow, montane chaparral.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Myotis volans</i>	long-legged myotis	FSC	Most common in woodland and forest habitats above 4,000 feet; also forages in chaparral, coastal scrub, shrub habitats from sea level to 11,400 feet.	Potential where habitat occurs
<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>	Yuma myotis	FSC, CSC	Open forests and woodlands.	Potential where habitat occurs
Molossidae		Free-Tailed Bat Family		
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>	western mastiff bat	FSC, CSC	Primarily arid lowlands, especially deserts. Open, semiarid to arid habitats including conifer and deciduous woodlands, coastal scrub, annual and perennial grasslands, palm oases, chaparral, desert scrub, and urban.	Potential where habitat occurs
Leporidae		Hares and Rabbit Family		
<i>Lepus californicus bennettii</i>	San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit	FSC, CSC	Open brushlands and scrub habitats between sea level and 4,000 feet elevation.	Upper Potrero Cyn. (1995)

Legend

Agency Lists

FE	Federally Listed as Endangered	SE	State Listed as Endangered
FT	Federally Listed as Threatened	ST	State Listed as Threatened
FSC	Federal Special Concern Species	SCE	State Candidate for Endangered
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**SENSITIVE SPECIES
OCCURRING OR POTENTIALLY OCCURRING
WITHIN THE PROPOSED SANTA SUSANA MOUNTAINS/SIMI HILLS SEA
(CONTINUED)**

VERTEBRATES				
Scientific Name	Common Name	Agency Listing Status	Preferred Habitat	Record
Heteromyidae				
Pocket Mice and Kangaroo Rat Family				
<i>Perognathus longimembris brevinasus</i>	Los Angeles pocket mouse	FSC, CSC	Coastal sage scrub, and grasslands, desert cactus, creosote bush and sagebrush habitats.	Potential where habitat occurs
Muridae				
Mice, Rats, and Vole Family				
<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i>	San Diego desert woodrat	FSC, CSC	Chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and pinyon-juniper woodland.	N side of Old Santa Susana Pass Rd. (1992); just E of Santa Susana Pass (1992); Weldon Cyn., 0.5 mi. NW of I-5/Hwy 14 jct (1947)
<i>Onychomys torridus ramona</i>	southern grasshopper mouse	FSC, CSC	Grasslands, desert areas, especially scrub with friable soils.	Potential where habitat occurs
Procyonidae				
Raccoon Family				
<i>Bassariscus astutus</i>	ringtail cat	SFP	Mixture of forest and shrublands in close association with rocky areas or riparian habitats.	Potential where habitat occurs

Legend

Agency Lists

FE	Federally Listed as Endangered	SE	State Listed as Endangered
FT	Federally Listed as Threatened	ST	State Listed as Threatened
FSC	Federal Special Concern Species	SCE	State Candidate for Endangered
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9. REGIONAL BIOLOGICAL VALUE

The proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills meets several SEA designation criteria that consider regional biological values. Each criterion and how it is met or why not is described below.

Criterion A: The Habitat of Core Populations of Endangered or Threatened Plant or Animal Species.

Although the proposed SEA does contain rare plant populations, it does not contain habitat of known core populations of listed species and therefore, does not meet this criterion.

Criterion B: On a Regional Basis, Biotic Communities, Vegetative Associations, and Habitat of Plant or Animal Species that are either Unique or are Restricted in Distribution.

The proposed SEA contains habitat of the extremely rare Santa Susana tarplant. In addition, several plant communities within the proposed SEA are CDFG highest inventory priority communities due to their restricted distribution in the Southern California region. These communities include: coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, valley oak woodland, valley oak savannah, mainland cherry woodland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest.

Criterion C: Within Los Angeles County, Biotic Communities, Vegetative Associations, and Habitat of Plant or Animal Species that are either Unique or are Restricted in Distribution.

All of the plant communities and habitats mentioned above as being restricted in distribution on a regional basis are further restricted in distribution within Los Angeles County.

Criterion D: Habitat that at some point in the Life Cycle of a Species or Group of Species, Serves as Concentrated Breeding, Feeding, Resting, or Migrating Grounds and is Limited in Availability either Regionally or in Los Angeles County.

The open space of the proposed SEA allows for connectivity between the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains. Due to the development within the vicinity, this is an important corridor for gene flow and species movement.

Criterion E: Biotic Resources that are of Scientific Interest because they are either an Extreme in Physical/Geographical Limitations, or Represent Unusual Variation in a Population or Community.

The proposed SEA does not contain biotic resource that are clearly an extreme in physical/geographical limitations, or represent unusual variation in a population or community and therefore does not meet this criterion.

Criterion F: Areas that would Provide for the Preservation of Relatively Undisturbed Examples of the Original Natural Biotic Communities in Los Angeles County.

The relatively undisturbed nature and large size of the plant communities within the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills provides many undisturbed examples of native, natural communities within Los Angeles County.

In conclusion, the area described in this report is proposed to be an SEA because it contains: 1) biotic communities, vegetative associations, and habitat of plant and animal species that are restricted in distribution in Los Angeles County and regionally; 2) concentrated breeding, feeding, resting, or migrating grounds which are limited in availability in Los Angeles County; and 3) areas that provide for the preservation of relatively undisturbed examples of original natural biotic communities in Los Angeles County.

10. RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Proposed new development within the proposed Puente Hills SEA should be designed to be highly compatible with the continued ecological function of the component biological resources described above; retention of existing natural biotic resources should be ensured. Although a comprehensive evaluation of all possible future land uses within this SEA cannot be made here, a general approach is outlined below and is recommended for use on a project specific basis. In order to preserve the integrity of the SEA, the proposed comprehensive management practices described in the *Los Angeles County SEA Update Study 2000 Background Report* are recommended. These practices address:

- Core habitat
- Habitat linkages and wildlife corridors
- Fire management

- Public access and recreation
- Infrastructure
- Wetlands, riparian habitats, and streambeds
- Non-riparian/upland woodlands

In addition to the comprehensive management practices the following proposed management practices are recommended specifically for the proposed Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA:

- Limit development densities to one residential unit per ten acre parcel, and constrain development design, where feasible, to cluster dwelling configuration along existing roadways in order to minimize clearing associated with fuel management, and to reduce the need for grading, fencing, and other habitat disturbances.
- Maintain the habitat of core populations of listed species including the federally endangered Braunter's milkvetch and rare plants such as Santa Susana tarplant.
- Retain rare communities with adequate buffers so as to allow for the long term viability and integrity of plant communities as a whole. Rare communities include: coastal sage scrub, alluvial scrub, valley oak woodland, valley oak savannah, mainland cherry woodland, native grassland, southern willow scrub, and cottonwood-willow riparian forest.
- Retain connectivity and habitat linkage values throughout the SEA but especially between the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills, between the Los Angeles County portion of the Simi Hills and the Ventura County portion, between the Santa Susana Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains, between the Santa Susana Mountains and the Santa Clara River, and between large canyons of the SEA.
- Require oil extraction activities to employ the best management practices recognized in the industry; avoid unnecessary direct impacts to habitat, and conform to legal standards for all procedures used.

Additionally, proposed development should be reviewed when required by federal, state, or local laws before implementing plans which may impact biotic resources and/or sensitive species. Potential impacts to listed species or wetland areas require permitting in accordance with applicable laws.

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