



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



**Amy J. Bodek, AICP**  
Director of Regional Planning

**Dennis Slavin**  
Chief Deputy Director,  
Regional Planning

## **CERTIFIED BIOLOGICAL CONSULTANT MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

The Department of Regional Planning (DRP) oversees the review of private development within the unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County. Development sometimes occurs within biologically sensitive areas, necessitating additional biological review to assess the resources on a property. Regulations applicable to a property are dependent upon the property's location and potential resource impacts. Depending on the type of development proposed and its location, the application may be subject to review by one of two biological advisory committees: the Significant Ecological Areas Technical Advisory Committee (SEATAC) or the Environmental Review Board (ERB).

To connect project applicants to biologists who can provide consistent and reliable inventory and reporting of biological resources as required by permit applications, the DRP maintains a Certified Biological Consultant List. Biological consultants on the list are contracted directly by the project applicant.

The minimum qualifications required to be placed on the Certified Biological Consultant List are outlined below. If you meet these requirements and would like to be added to the list, complete the Certified Biological Consultant Application and submit the application along with the application materials to [SEATAC@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:SEATAC@planning.lacounty.gov).

Two certification tiers are offered:

- Tier 1 is restricted to preparation and submittal of only Biological Constraints Maps as outlined within the Significant Ecological Areas (SEA) Implementation Guide Chapter 6 ([found here](#)).
- Tier 2 prepares and submits all types of biological reports including Biological Constraints Maps, Biological Constraints Analysis, Biota Reports, Biological Inventories and Biological Assessments.

### **TIER 1 QUALIFICATIONS**

Applicants who would like to only prepare Biological Constraint Maps need to only meet the following minimum requirements:

- A Bachelor's Degree in Biological Sciences, Natural Resources, Environmental Sciences, or related field; or
- An undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, botany, biological statistics and measurement, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology and environmental biology. It may be determined on a case-by-case basis that other degrees or combinations of experience and course work meet the intent of this minimum standards.
- Coursework in basic statistics and analysis of plant cover.

**TIER 2 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

- A Bachelor's Degree in Biological Sciences, Natural Resources, Environmental Sciences, or related field; or
- An undergraduate or graduate degree with coursework in biology, botany, biological statistics and measurement, wildlife biology, natural resources, ecology, conservation biology and environmental biology. It may be determined on a case-by-case basis that other degrees or combinations of experience and course work meet the intent of this minimum standards.
- At least four years of professional experience which included writing and directing the preparation of biological assessment reports in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (one year must include the preparation of reports for projects located in Los Angeles County). A masters or doctoral degree in the fields mentioned will count towards one and two years of work experience respectively; and
- At least four years of experience performing both botanical and wildlife surveys within the region (Los Angeles, Ventura, Kern, San Bernardino, Riverside, or Orange Counties).
- At least four years of professional experience evaluating compliance with relevant federal and state regulations, policies, and procedures, including:
  - Army Corps Permitting for Waters and Wetlands of the US
  - California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
  - California Fish and Game Code (CFGF) Section 1600
  - Clean Water Act (CWA) Sections 401 and 404
  - Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) Sections 7 and 10
  - Regional Water Quality Control Board Permitting
  - State Endangered Species Act
- Experience in habitat evaluation and assessment of potential environmental impacts.
- Experience in basic statistics and analysis of plant cover.
- Experience or training using the Manual of California Vegetation (Sawyer/Keeler-Wolf) classification system to identify and map plant communities to the Alliance level.
- Access to an up-to-date subscription to the California Natural Diversity Database/BIOS and experience using its products and in keeping the dataset current using online tools, as well as experience using the CNDDDB field survey form for reporting occurrences of rare plants, animals and natural community stands.

**TIER 2 PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

Preferred qualifications in addition to the minimum qualifications include:

- Local Los Angeles County experience in identification of flora or fauna, particularly rare, endangered, and threatened species with some knowledge of their local and range-wide population status and trends.
- Knowledge and experience with Los Angeles County's plans and regulations including:

- Oak Tree Ordinance
- Los Angeles County Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan
- Significant Ecological Areas Ordinance
- Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan
- Santa Monica Mountains North Area Community Standards District
- Los Angeles County Local Coastal Program for Unincorporated Santa Monica Mountains (Land Use Plan and Local Implementation Program)
- General Plan