

**Table 2-9: Elements of the Santa Cruz County RCIS Conservation Strategy**

Element in this RCIS	RCIS Guidelines Category	Description	Rationale for Inclusion	Selection Criteria
<b>Communities</b>	Other Conservation Elements	14 natural communities or other land cover types	A communities-based approach can provide the basis for a comprehensive and cohesive strategy to conserve the region’s multiple rare species while maintaining common species and supporting essential ecosystems services (Box 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports disproportionate number of rare species</li> <li>• Identified as a sensitive community</li> <li>• Widespread community that supports additional rare species, as well as more wide-ranging and common species, and can support ecosystem services</li> </ul>
<b>Other Conservation Elements</b>	Other Conservation Elements	Habitat connectivity and working lands	Other important aspects of the RCIS Area for the maintenance of native biodiversity and rare species	Other non-community and non-species elements of the landscape that are essential to address in developing a comprehensive conservation strategy for the region
<b>Focal Species</b>	Focal Species	7 special-status species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide focused analysis for species to meet the RCIS guidelines</li> <li>• Identify species that can be the subject of conservation investments or MCAs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State-listed species under CESA (primarily)<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Species collectively utilize a range of aquatic and terrestrial natural community types</li> <li>• Species collectively represent a range of taxonomic groups (plants, invertebrates, fish, etc.)</li> <li>• Species also include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate-vulnerable species</li> <li>• Wide-ranging species</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Non-Focal Species</b>	Non-Focal Species	29 state and/or federally listed species <sup>2</sup>	Identify additional listed species that can be the subject of conservation investments or MCAs during implementation	Listed species that are not focal species, but will benefit from the conservation actions identified for one more communities, other conservation elements, or focal species
<b>Co-benefited Species</b>	Not included in the RCIS guidelines	157 other rare species in the RCIS Area	Identify additional, <i>non-listed species</i> that could be benefit from conservation investments or MCAs during implementation; however, MCA credits for these species cannot be generated	Rare species that are not focal or non-focal species, and that can benefit from the actions listed for one or more communities, focal species, or other conservation elements

<sup>1</sup> The focal species include two species not listed under CESA, in order to provide taxonomic representation

<sup>2</sup> Listed as an endangered or threatened under CESA and ESA, or as a candidate under CESA