

Appendix A Glossary

Table A- 1: Glossary

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
AB – Assembly Bill	A draft of a proposed law introduced by a Member of the California Assembly. ²
ACE—Areas of Conservation Emphasis	A project that provides data to help guide and inform conservation priorities in California launched by CDFW in 2010 ³ , or the latest update of that analysis.
adaptive management and monitoring strategy	A component of an RCIS that incorporates an adaptive management process that is informed by periodic monitoring of the implementation of both conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions. ⁴ Adaptive management means using the results of new information gathered through a monitoring program to adjust management strategies and practices to help provide for the conservation of focal species and their habitats. A monitoring strategy is the periodic evaluation of monitoring results to assess the adequacy of implementing a conservation action or habitat enhancement action and to provide information to direct adaptive management activities to determine the status of the focal species, their habitats, or other natural resources. ⁵
administrative draft NCCP	A substantially complete draft of a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) that is released after January 1, 2016, to the general public, plan participants, and CDFW.
advance mitigation	Compensatory mitigation for impacts on ecological resources (species and their habitats) and other natural resources that is implemented prior to impacts occurring.
biodiversity	The full array of living things considered at all levels, from genetic variants of a single species to arrays of species and arrays of genera, families, and higher taxonomic levels; includes natural communities and ecosystems.
CDFW – California Department of Fish and Wildlife	California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
CEHC—California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project: A Strategy for Conserving a Connected California	A statewide assessment of essential habitat connectivity completed by consultants and commissioned by CDFW and Caltrans; ⁶ the assessment used the best available science, data sets, and spatial analysis and modeling techniques to identify large remaining blocks of intact habitat or natural landscape and model linkages between them that need to be maintained, particularly as corridors for wildlife.
CEQA – California Environmental Quality Act	California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code, sections 21000 - 21178, and Title 14 CCR, section 753, and Chapter 3, sections 15000 - 15387).
CESA – California Endangered Species Act	California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code §2050-2115.5).
climate change vulnerability	Refers to the degree to which an ecological system, natural community, habitat, or individual species is likely to be adversely affected as a result of changes in climate and is often dependent on factors such as exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity.
CNDDDB – California Natural Diversity Database	California Natural Diversity Database is an inventory of the status and locations of rare plants and animals in California. ⁷
co-benefited species	Term used in this RCIS to describe additional rare species (other than focal and non-focal species) that will benefit from the conservation strategy
compensatory mitigation	Actions taken to fulfill, in whole or in part, mitigation requirements under state or federal law or a court mandate.
conservation, conserve	The use of habitat and other natural resources in ways such that they may remain viable for future generations. This includes permanent protection of such resources. See “permanently protect.”

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
conservation action	An action identified in an RCIS that, when implemented, would permanently protect, or restore, and perpetually manage, conservation elements, including focal species and their habitats, natural communities, ecological processes, and wildlife corridors. In contrast, a habitat enhancement action would have long-term durability but would not involve acquiring land or permanently protecting habitat – see habitat enhancement action. A conservation action is developed to achieve one or more conservation objectives. A conservation action may be implemented through a variety of conservation investments or MCAs. A conservation action that is implemented through an MCA would create conservation credits to be used as compensatory mitigation.
conservation easement	A perpetual conservation easement that complies with Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 815) of Title 2 of Part 2 of Division 2 of the Civil Code. ⁸
conservation element	An element that is identified and analyzed in an RCIS that will benefit from conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions set forth in the RCIS. Conservation elements include focal species and their habitats, natural communities, biodiversity, habitat connectivity, ecosystem functions, water resources, and other natural resources. Conservation elements may benefit through both conservation investments and MCAs.
conservation goal	Broad, guiding principle that describes a desired future condition for a focal species, other species, or other conservation element. Each conservation goal is supported by one or more conservation objectives.
conservation investment	Conservation actions or habitat enhancement actions that are implemented under an approved RCIS, but the implementer does not create credits through an MCA with CDFW. Conservation investments are typically funded by public agencies and nonprofit or other philanthropic organizations.

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
conservation priority	A conservation or habitat enhancement action (e.g., land acquisition, restoration, or habitat enhancement) that is identified based on its importance for benefiting and contributing to the conservation of focal species and their habitats, or other conservation elements within an RCIS area.
conservation purpose	Statement or statements in an RCIS that identify focal species and other conservation elements within the RCIS area and which outline conservation actions or habitat enhancement actions that, if implemented, will sustain and restore these resources.
creation (of natural community or focal species' habitat)	The creation of a specified resource condition where none existed before. See "establishment."
critical habitat	Habitat designated as critical ⁹ refers to specific areas occupied by a federally listed species at the time it is listed, and that are essential to the conservation of the species and that may require special management considerations or protection. Critical habitat also includes specific areas outside occupied habitat into which the species could spread and that are considered essential for recovery of the species.
CWHR—California Wildlife Habitat Relationships	System that contains the life history, geographic range, habitat relationships, and management information for over 700 regularly occurring species of amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals in the state; allows users to produce queries to generate lists of species by geographic location or habitat type and provides information on expert opinion–based habitat suitability ranks for each species within each habitat type. ¹⁰
ecological function	Ecological function refers to the roles and relationships (e.g., predator and prey relationships) of organisms within an ecological system, and the processes (e.g., pollination, decomposition) that sustain an ecological system. See also, "ecosystem function."

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
ecological resources	Species, habitats, biological resources, and natural resources identified in an RCA or RCIS. See “conservation element” and “natural resources.”
ecoregion, sub-ecoregion	As used in this document, ecoregion means a USDA Section ¹¹ and sub-ecoregion means a portion of the USDA Section or USGS Hydrological Units (assigned hydrological unit codes; HUC). ¹² The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) describes four geographic levels of detail in a hierarchy of regional ecosystems including domains, divisions, provinces, and sections. Sections are subdivisions of provinces based on major terrain features, such as a desert, plateau, valley, mountain range, or a combination thereof.
ecosystem	A natural unit defined by both its living and non-living components; a balanced system of the exchange of nutrients and energy. Compare with “habitat.”
ecosystem function	The ecosystem processes involving interactions between physical, chemical, and biological components, such as dynamic river meander, floodplain dynamism, tidal flux, bank erosion, and other processes necessary to sustain the ecosystem and the species that depend on it.
ecosystem services	The beneficial outcomes to humans from ecosystem functions such as supplying of oxygen; sequestering of carbon; moderating climate change effects; supporting the food chain; harvesting of animals or plants; providing clean water; recharging groundwater; abating storm, fire, and flood damage; pollinating and fertilizing for agriculture; and providing scenic views.
endemic	A species, subspecies, or variety found only in a specified geographic region.
enhancement	A manipulation of an ecological resource or natural resource that improves a specific ecosystem function. An enhancement does not result in a gain in protected or conserved land, but it does result in an improvement in ecological or ecosystem function.

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
essential connectivity areas	Those areas essential for ecological connectivity between natural landscape blocks, as depicted in the Essential Connectivity Map prepared as part of CEHC Project, ¹³ or other connectivity report, plan, or map approved by CDFW or that represents best available science.
establishment	The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics present on a site to develop an aquatic or terrestrial habitat resource for Focal Species. Establishment will result in a gain in resource area and/or function. See “creation.”
focal species	Sensitive species that are identified and analyzed in an RCIS and will benefit from conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions set forth in the RCIS. Focal species may benefit through both conservation investments and MCAs. See also, “sensitive species”, “special-status species”, and “non-focal species”.
Guidelines	Regional Conservation Investment Strategies Program Guidelines
habitat	An ecological or environmental area that is, or may be, inhabited by a species of animal, plant, or other type of organism. It is also the physical and biological environment that surrounds, influences, and is utilized by a species’ population and is required to support its occupancy. See also, “CWHR—California Wildlife Habitat Relationships.”
habitat connectivity	The capacity of habitat to facilitate the movement of species and ecological functions.

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
habitat enhancement action	An action identified in an RCIS that, when implemented, is intended to improve the quality of wildlife habitat, or to address risks or stressors to wildlife. A habitat enhancement action is developed to achieve one or more conservation objectives. A habitat enhancement action would have long-term durability but would not involve acquiring land or permanently protecting habitat. In contrast, a conservation action would permanently protect or restore, and perpetually manage, conservation elements – see Conservation Action. Examples of habitat enhancement actions include improving in-stream flows to benefit fish species, enhancing habitat connectivity, and controlling or eradicating invasive species. A habitat enhancement action may be implemented through a variety of conservation investments or MCAs. A habitat enhancement action that is implemented through an MCA would create habitat enhancement credits intended for use as compensatory mitigation for temporary impacts. ¹⁴
HCP – Habitat Conservation Plan	Habitat Conservation Plan. A planning document that is required as part of an application for an incidental take permit under the federal Endangered Species Act. HCPs provide for partnerships with non-federal parties to conserve the ecosystems upon which listed species depend, ultimately contributing to their recovery. HCPs describe the anticipated effects of the proposed taking, how those impacts will be minimized or mitigated, and how the HCP is to be funded. ¹⁵
HUC – Hydrologic Unit Code	A code identifying a unique hydrologic unit. ¹⁶
Implementing Entity	The organization designated in an NCCP and associated Implementing Agreement that is responsible for implementing the NCCP. Implementing Entities can be non-profit organizations, joint-powers authorities, local governments (such as cities or counties), or others.
invasive species	Invasive species means, with regard to a particular ecosystem, a non-native organism whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm, or harm to human, animal, or plant health. ¹⁷

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
LSA – Lake and Streambed Alteration	Lake and Streambed Alteration Program (Fish and Game Code sections 1600-1617). ¹⁸
MCA—Mitigation Credit Agreement	An agreement between CDFW and one or more persons or entities that identifies the types and numbers of credits the person(s) or entity(ies) proposes to create by implementing one or more conservation actions or habitat enhancement actions. An MCA includes the terms and conditions under which those credits may be used. The person or entity may create and use, sell, or otherwise transfer the credits upon CDFW’s approval that the credits have been created in accordance with the MCA. To enter into an MCA with CDFW, a person or entity shall submit a draft MCA to CDFW for its review, revision, and approval. An MCA may only be created within an area where an RCIS has been approved.
metric	The indicator (e.g., area, habitat quality, known or estimated population size, etc.) by which the net change can be measured, using existing technology, from implementation of the proposed conservation actions or habitat enhancement actions relative to performance standards, to determine achievement of the RCIS’s objectives.
natural community	A group of organisms living together and linked together by their effects on one another and their responses to the environment they share. ¹⁹ A general term often used synonymously with vegetation community and aquatic community.
natural resources	Biological and ecological resources including species and their habitats, Waters of the State, Waters of the United States, wetlands, and natural communities. See “ecological resources” and “conservation element.”
NCCP—Natural Community Conservation Plan	A plan developed pursuant to the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Fish and Game Code sections 2800-2835) which identifies and provides for the regional protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. ²⁰ An NCCP allows for take of species listed under CESA, as well as other, non-listed species.

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
NCCPA – Natural Community Conservation Planning Act	Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (Fish and Game Code sections 2800-2835).
NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act	The National Environmental Policy Act requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. ²¹
NMFS – National Marine Fisheries Service	National Marine Fisheries Service, or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries, is the federal agency responsible for the stewardship of the nation’s living marine resources and their habitat.
non-focal species	Species that are not “focal species”, as defined in these Guidelines, but which are associated with a focal species or other conservation element and will benefit from conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions set forth in the RCIS. Non-focal species may benefit through both conservation investments and MCAs. See also, “focal species”, “sensitive species”, and “special-status species”.
objective	A concise, measurable statement of what is to be achieved and that supports a conservation goal. The objective should be based on the best available scientific information to conserve the focal species or other conservation elements for which the conservation goal and objective is developed. It should be measurable by using a standard metric or scale (i.e., number, percent), in a region (e.g., county, watershed, jurisdictional area) over a period of time (e.g., years).
permanently protect	Permanent protection means: (1) recording a conservation easement and (2) providing secure, perpetual funding for management of the land, monitoring, legal enforcement, and defense.
population	The number of individuals of a particular taxon inhabiting a defined geographic area.
pressure	See “stressor, pressure.”

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
RCA—Regional Conservation Assessment	An assessment that provides information and analyses that document the ecosystems, ecosystem functions, species, habitat, protected and conserved areas, and habitat linkages within an ecoregion to provide the appropriate context for nonbinding, voluntary conservation strategies and actions. These assessments include information for the identification of areas with the greatest probability for long-term ecosystem conservation success incorporating co-benefits of ecosystem services, such as carbon cycling, water quality, and agricultural benefits. An RCA may be used to provide context at an ecoregional or sub-ecoregional scale to assist with the development of an RCIS. RCAs are intended to provide scientific information for the consideration of public agencies and their preparation is voluntary.
RCA or RCIS Area	The geographic area encompassed by an RCA or RCIS.
RCA or RCIS proponent	The public agency or group of public agencies developing an RCA or RCIS for review and approval by CDFW and who is responsible for the technical and administrative updates of an RCA or RCIS.
RCIS—Regional Conservation Investment Strategy	Information and analyses to inform nonbinding and voluntary conservation actions and habitat enhancement actions that would advance the conservation of focal species and their habitats, natural communities, and other conservation elements. The RCIS provides nonbinding, voluntary guidance for the identification of conservation priorities, investments in ecological resource conservation, or identification of priority locations for compensatory mitigation for impacts on species and natural resources. RCISs are intended to provide scientific information for the consideration of public agencies and are voluntary. RCISs do not create, modify, or impose regulatory requirements or standards, regulate the use of land, establish land use designations, or affect the land use authority of, or exercise of discretion by, any public agency. RCISs are required if MCAs are to be developed.

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
recovery	The process by which the decline of an endangered or threatened species is halted or reversed or threats to its survival are neutralized, so that its long-term survival in nature can be ensured. Recovery entails actions to achieve the conservation and survival of a species, ²² including actions to prevent any further erosion of a population’s viability and genetic integrity. Recovery also includes actions to restore or establish environmental conditions that enable a species to persist (i.e., the long- term occurrence of a species through the full range of environmental variation).
recovery plan	A document published by USFWS, NMFS, or CDFW that lists the status of a listed species and the actions necessary to remove the species from the endangered species list.
rehabilitation	Manipulation of a piece of land with the goal of repairing natural or historic ecosystem functions to degraded habitat or natural resources. This results in an improvement in ecological or ecosystem functions, but it does not result in a gain in area.
restore, restoration	Manipulation of a site with the goal of returning species, habitat, and ecological and ecosystem functions to a site that historically supported such species, habitat, and functions, but which no longer supports them due to the loss of one or more required ecological factors or as a result of past disturbance. Compare with “conservation,” “preserve,” and “rehabilitation.”
sensitive species	Any special-status species identified by a state or federal agency. See also, “focal species” and “special-status species”.
SCV – Survey of California Vegetation	The Survey of California Vegetation is the vegetation mapping standard developed and maintained for the state by CDFW (Fish and Game Code 1940). ²³
special-status species	For the purpose of the Program, a species identified as endangered, threatened, or candidate under state or federal law; as rare or fully protected under state law; or otherwise identified by CDFW through the approval of an RCIS. See also, “focal species” and “sensitive species”.

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
SGCN – Species of Greatest Conservation Need	Species of Greatest Conservation Need are selected, for each state, to indicate the status of biological diversity in the state, specifying at-risk species that have the greatest need for conservation. The latest SGCN list for the state of California is found in the California State Wildlife Action Plan 2015 Update. ²⁴
SSC – Species of Special Concern	Species of Special Concern ²⁵ is an administrative designation and carries no formal legal status. The intent of designating SSCs is to: 1) focus attention on animals considered potentially at conservation risk by CDFW, other state, local and federal governmental entities, regulators, land managers, planners, consulting biologists, and others; 2) stimulate research on poorly known species; and 3) achieve conservation and recovery of these animals before they meet CESA criteria for listing as threatened or endangered.
stressor, pressure	Stressor is a degraded ecological condition of a focal species or other conservation element that resulted directly or indirectly from a negative impact of pressures such as habitat fragmentation. A pressure is an anthropogenic (human-induced) or natural driver that could result in changing the ecological conditions of a focal species or other conservation element. Pressures can be positive or negative depending on intensity, timing, and duration. Negative or positive, the influence of a pressure to the target focal species or other conservation elements is likely to be significant.
sub-ecoregion	See “ecoregion, sub-ecoregion.”
SWAP– California State Wildlife Action Plan	The California State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) is a CDFW publication developed to address the highest conservation priorities of the state, providing a blueprint for actions necessary to sustain the integrity of California’s diverse ecosystems. ²⁶ CDFW also created companion plans to support SWAP 2015 ²⁷ implementation through collaboration with partner agencies and organizations. The companion plans identify shared priorities among partner organizations to conserve natural resources in nine sectors that are experiencing significant pressures affecting natural resources. ²⁸

Term/Acronym/ Abbreviation	Definition ¹
USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture	U.S. Department of Agriculture, the federal agency providing leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on public policy, the best available science, and effective management.
USFWS – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats.
USGS – U.S. Geological Survey	U.S. Geological Survey, the federal agency that provides science about natural hazards and natural resources.
VegCAMP – Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program	The Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program develops and maintains California’s expression of the National Vegetation Classification System. ²⁹
watershed	An area or ridge of land that contains a common set of streams and rivers that all drain into one location such as a marsh, stream, river, lake, or ocean.
working land	An area where people live and work in a way that allows ecosystems or ecosystem functions to be sustained (e.g., farms, ranches). Human activities are done in a way that minimizes disturbance on native plants and animals while still retaining the working nature of the landscape.

¹ ¹ Unless cited otherwise, all definitions are excerpted or modified from AB 2087 or are modified from the State Wildlife Action Plan.

² California State Legislature Glossary of Legislative Terms, definition of “Bill.”

³ Wildlife Data Analysis of Ace

⁴ Fish & G. Code, § 1856, subdivisions (b)(1) and (f)(14)

⁵ Adapted from Fish & G. Code, § 2805, subdivisions (a) and (g)

⁶ California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project

⁷ Wildlife California Data

⁸ “Conservation easement” includes a conservation easement as defined in Civil Code section 815.1 and an agricultural conservation easement as defined in Pub. Resources Code, § 10211.

⁹ 16 U.S.C. § 1532(5)(a)

¹⁰ Wildlife California Data

¹¹ Goudey, C.B., and D.W. Smith, eds. 1994. Ecoregions California07_3. McClellan, CA. Remote Sensing Lab. Updated with ECOMAP 2007: Cleland, D.T.; Freeouf, J.A.; Keys, J.E., Jr.; Nowacki, G.J.; Carpenter, C; McNab, W.H. 2007. Ecological Subregions: Sections and Subsections of the Conterminous United States [1:3,500,000] [CD-ROM]. Sloan, A.M., cartog. Gen. Tech. Report WO-76. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Miles and Goudey 1997. Ecological Subregions of California. Technical Report R5-EM-TP-005, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, San Francisco, CA.

¹² The United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), the United States Geological Survey (USGS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD) was created from a variety of sources from each state and aggregated into a standard national layer for use in strategic planning and accountability.

¹³ California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project

¹⁴ Fish & G. Code, § 1856, subdivision (d) states that “...the habitat enhancement action shall remain in effect at least until the site of the environmental impact is returned to pre-impact ecological conditions.”

¹⁵ Habitat Conservation Plans

¹⁶ The United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), the United States Geological Survey (USGS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD) was created from a variety of sources from each state and aggregated into a standard national layer for use in strategic planning and accountability.

¹⁷ Obama, Barack – the White House, Executive Order -- Safeguarding the Nation from the Impacts of Invasive Species. December 5, 2016.

¹⁸ Fish & G. Code, §§ 1600 – 1617

¹⁹ Sawyer, J.O., T. Keeler-Wolf, and J.E. Evens. 2009. *A Manual of California Vegetation*. Second Edition. Sacramento, CA: California Native Plant Society.

²⁰ Fish & G. Code, §§ 2800 – 2835

²¹ Pub. L. 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347, January 1, 1970, as amended by Pub. L. 94-52, July 3, 1975, Pub. L. 94-83, August 9, 1975, and Pub. L. 97-258, § 4(b), Sept. 13, 1982.

²² U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service. 1998. *Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley, California*. Portland, OR: Region 1.

²³ Wildlife California Mapping Standards

²⁴ California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2015. *California State Wildlife Action Plan, 2015 Update: A Conservation Legacy for Californians. Appendix C: Species of Greatest Conservation Need*.

²⁵ Wildlife California Conservation

²⁶ Wildlife California SWAP Final

²⁷ California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2015. *California State Wildlife Action Plan, 2015 Update: A Conservation Legacy for Californians*. Edited by Armand G. Gonzales and Junko Hoshi. Prepared with assistance from Ascent Environmental, Inc., Sacramento, CA.

²⁸ Wildlife California SWAP Final Companion Plans

²⁹ Wildlife California DATA VegCAMP