



Performance Standards for Invasive Species Removal Within Surface Water Features

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division

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All Ministerial Invasive Species Removal Permits issued by the Ventura County Planning Division shall be deemed to incorporate the following performance standards, pursuant to Sec. 8109-4.8.3.5 (b) of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance, except as the permit may otherwise specifically provide. The Permittee is responsible for ensuring compliance with these standards.

Performance Standards

A. Protective Fencing for Sensitive Resources. All sensitive plants and animals identified in the Invasive Species Management Plan ([Weblink to ISMP form here](#)) shall be protected from disturbance through exclusion fencing. The fencing shall be temporary, readily visible, a minimum of 4-feet high and constructed of orange plastic mesh fence or a similarly visible material with stationary posts set at no greater than 10-foot intervals. Fencing shall effectively: a) keep native vegetation from direct contact and damage by equipment, materials or disturbances; and b) protect sensitive wildlife species that are nesting, denning or roosting from human disturbance. Installed fencing should not completely block wildlife movement through the SWF.

Unless otherwise recommended by a *qualified biologist* or Staff Biologist, the following distances shall be used to install fencing at the edge of a designated buffer for sensitive plants and animals: a) 15 feet for protected plants; b) 100 feet for nesting, roosting, denning wildlife; and c) 300 feet for bird nests (see (B) below). Fencing shall remain in place for entire project. Damaged fencing shall be immediately replaced or repaired. **Verification that fencing has been installed shall be provided to the Planning Division before vegetation removal commences.**

B. Protection of Nesting Birds. Pruning, removing or other vegetation alterations that could potentially disrupt known bird nests should not take place between January 1st to September 15th. If other timing restrictions make it impossible to avoid the nesting season, the construction areas should be surveyed by a County approved *qualified biologist* for nesting birds and active nests should be avoided. Construction activity within 300 feet of an active nest and 500 feet of an active hawk/raptor nest shall be delayed until the nest is no longer active. If an active nest is found, short follow-up surveys will be needed to check on the nest and determine when the nest is no longer active. The Ventura County Planning Division maintains a list of approved *qualified biologists* on our website at www.ventura.org/rma/planning that may be able to assist with the bird nest surveys.

C. Requirements Onsite and Conveyed to Workers. The approved Invasive Species Management Plan, Performance Standards, and Ministerial Permit shall be on-site during clearance activity. The Permittee shall provide a copy of the Permit and these Performance Standards to all responsible parties who will be performing work within a Surface Water Feature.

D. Before Vegetation Removal Starts.

1. Prior to starting work, staff and contractors shall receive training in invasive plant identification, as well as, performance and preventative standards to reduce the spread of invasive species during vegetation removal activities. Training materials shall include a description of those native species that may resemble the target invasive species. See

http://ceventura.ucanr.edu/Resources_930/invasive/

2. Schedule vegetation management activities as described within the Invasive Species Management Plan to maximize the effectiveness of control efforts and minimize introduction and spread of invasive plants.
3. Refer to site assessment for locations of invasive plant infestations before carrying out field activities.
4. Using site assessment map of invasive species locations, plan travel routes to reduce the risk of invasive plant spread (avoid travel through infested areas and travel from clean to infested worksites) and avoidance of sensitive biological resources when possible.
5. Designate waste disposal areas for invasive plant materials and cleaning areas for tools, equipment, vehicles, clothing, boots and gear outside the designated Surface Water Feature area.
6. Install any protective fencing to plant or animal species (see A and B) if protective buffer area overlaps with treatment area.
7. Implement erosion control practices. Rice straw, wood chips, or permeable landscape fabrics may help reduce erosion problems in areas where weed removal techniques like digging or scraping will leave bare ground. For slopes and creek banks over 15% it is important to outline an erosion control strategy prior and post weed removal. Use wildlife friendly erosion control materials. See Attachment A – Wildlife-friendly Erosion Control ([link to website](#)).
8. Treat invasive plants at access roads/trails and staging areas before using them.
9. Inspect and clean soil and plant materials from all tools, vehicles, and your clothing before entering worksite.
10. Integrate cleaning activities into travel planning.
11. Conduct nesting bird survey if within the nesting season within 3 days of scheduled work and once weekly thereafter while work occurs (See (B) above).

E. During Vegetation Removal Activities.

1. All work done within a Surface Water Feature shall follow the Ventura County Application Protocol for Pesticides, Fertilizers, and Herbicides, including working under the direction of a Qualified Applicator, using materials approved for aquatic use, following the manufacturer's application directions, avoiding application prior to forecasted storm events and ensuring wind conditions are suitable to avoid spray drift.
2. All work done within in a Surface Water Feature, including brush clearance, digging, trenching and planting, shall be done with hand tools or small hand-held power tools that are of a depth and design that will not cause root damage to protected trees.
3. Wear clothing, boots, and gear that do not retain soil or plant material.
4. Clean clothing, boots, vehicles, and other gear before entering and after leaving the site to ensure invasives are not spread throughout and outside the site.

5. Minimize soil disturbance. Many invasive plants rapidly move into disturbed areas.
6. Any equipment operated within the Surface Water Feature area shall be checked and maintained daily to prevent leaks of materials that, if introduced into the water, could be deleterious to aquatic life.
7. Bag seeds, flowering parts, and any plants that can spread by runners and dispose of them in the trash. Do not compost or add to municipal green collection bins if plants have flowered or if roots may still be able to propagate in the compost pile. Only parts of the plants that cannot grow into another plant can be composted. Disposal guidelines from Florida https://www.fleppc.org/Publications/Florida_InvasivePIDisposalGuidelines.pdf have useful information about the proper disposal of invasive plants.
8. Plants that reproduce through root fragments or have formed seeds should be disposed offsite. When moving and disposing invasive plant material around and off-site, contain it during transport.

F. After Vegetation Removal Activities

1. Remove all temporary fencing or flagging on the site.
2. Using native species appropriate for riparian areas, when feasible, revegetate areas of disturbance to increase resistance to invasive plant establishment in areas just cleared. Remove temporary erosion control materials once vegetation has stabilized disturbance areas.
3. Monitor the site for invasive plants after land management activities to inform future management activities.

G. Damage or Mortality to Native Species. The Permittee shall report unanticipated damage to native species from clearance activities to the Planning Division within 24 hours. Should unanticipated damage occur to protected resources from treatment activities, the Permittee shall submit to the Planning Division within 2 weeks of the incident a report prepared by a *qualified biologist* with an assessment of the damages to the habitat.

Modifications to Performance Standards per Planning Division or Invasive Species Management Plan:

By signing below I certify the following:

- I have read and understand these Performance Standards;
- I acknowledge that issuance of my Invasive Species Removal Permit is contingent upon my compliance with these Performance Standards;
- I agree to abide by these Performance Standards.

Applicant Signature

Date