

Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) - Any area in which plant or animal life or their *habitats* are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an *ecosystem* and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and *development*.

Buffer Zone. A buffer zone is a transitional habitat between human activity or development and an environmentally sensitive habitat area or a protected parkland/open space area acquired by natural resource agencies or conservation organizations for habitat protection. ESHA buffer zones are sized and designed to protect the sensitive habitat/species, or protected parkland/open space area, from significant disruption or degradation.

Mandatory Fuel Modification Zone – The minimum area of vegetation clearance around structures required by the Ventura County Fire Protection District Ordinance, which is generally 100 feet.

Optional Fuel Modification Zone – An area of optional vegetation thinning for fire protection beyond the *mandatory fuel modification zone*. The *optional fuel modification zone* may extend up to 200 feet from the edge of permitted habitable structures.

Legally-Established Development- Development either permitted or legally established before the Coastal Act was implemented on January 1, 1977.

Fuel-Modification Thinning – The area where the density of vegetation is progressively thinned to lessen spread of fire as it approaches the mandatory fuel modification zone adjacent to structures. Remaining shrubs and trees are in islands and irregular boundaries to reduce the visual and ecological impact of fuel modification.

Compensatory Mitigation- The mechanism where a developer offsets the environmental impacts of their development activities on protected environmental resources. Compensatory mitigation can restore a degraded habitat, create new habitats where they did not exist before, enhance a habitat such as removing invasive species, or preserve sensitive resources that are not protected from development. Compensatory mitigation is required in the California Environmental Quality Act.

Ventura County In-Lieu Fee Program- A new County in-lieu fee program that would allow an applicant to meet compensatory mitigation requirements. Rather than having the applicant find and purchase a property with similar habitat that was impacted by the development project and find a conservation organization to manage it; the proposed program would allow for the applicant to pay a fee during the permit process that would allow the County to take on the legal responsibility to implement the applicant's mitigation. The applicant is not required to use this program, the County is creating this program to provide an additional option for the applicant to meet mitigation requirements.