

State Water Resources Control Board

Division of Water Rights

Template for Biological Survey Reports

This template is intended to be used as a general format for preparing biological reports to be submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), Division of Water Rights (Division). This format is not required, but using it will assist Division staff in reviewing the document and therefore allow the process to move forward in an expedited fashion. If you decide to use a format other than the one provided below, be sure to include all of the elements in this template in order to avoid delays resulting from inadequacies in the report.

**Biological Survey Report
Project Name
Water Right Application # A000000**

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Month Day, Year

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Project Name
Water Right Application # A000000

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Project Location:

Provide a brief description (with maps) describing the location of the project site with relation to major landmarks such as cities, highways, lakes, or some other recognizable feature.

Project Description:

Provide a short description of the water rights associated with this place of use (POU) and this point of diversion (POD), along with the water rights that are specifically associated with this report. Include riparian rights and any other sources of water being used at this project site. Incorporate a description of the diversion facilities as well as a description of how the water is to be applied and for what purpose it is being used. Basically, this section should give the reader a clear understanding of the past and present and future use of water at this site. Also provide a discussion of potential changes if the project is approved including foreseeable future stages of the project.

Site Description:

Provide a general description of the project site, including property size, habitat types, elevation, relief, geology, soil type, etc. Also describe each watercourse on the property using designations such as perennial, ephemeral, intermittent, etc. This section should give the reader a clear idea of the project site including the POU and POD.

Qualifications:

Provide a list of all of the people who will be directly involved in the field survey. Also provide a short description of their area of expertise and any special permits (i.e. scientific collecting permits, incidental take permits, etc issued by a federal, state or local agency) held by any individual or the company for use by its employees. However, be aware that some survey protocols require special permits and general permits held by the company may not be sufficient.

Methodology:

Include dates, times and hours spent by each biologist, organized by type of survey completed and approximate area surveyed during each attempt. This section should also include a detailed description for why any species or habitat that was listed in the CNDDDB/CNPS search has been dismissed. Very specific descriptions of the methods used should be included here for each particular aspect of the survey. For example:

On Wednesday, May 13th, 2004 John Doe performed an avian survey of the riparian corridor following Happy Creek, which crosses through the northeast corner of the subject property. The survey began at 0630 and ended at 0845. The survey followed the protocols described by the Point Reyes Bird Observatory for area searches. The survey consisted of six individual area search plots, which are shown on map two in Appendix B.

Data:

Present raw data collected in the field in tabular format. The full extent of data need not be included in this section; a reference to the appendix may be used. Required data in this section includes sensitive species and habitats encountered, as well as unusual observations.

Results:

This section should be in paragraph form and include a detailed description of the area similar to the Site Description above. This section should be extremely specific. Describe precise habitat types and vegetation coverage percentages along with animal communities present on

the site and reference to a resource map in the “maps” section. Include any statistically manipulated data. Also include a discussion of species that were surveyed for but not found.

Discussion:

This section should be in paragraph form and include the proposed project’s impact on the biological component of the environment. The discussion should not focus exclusively on the sensitive species or habitats, but take into account the entire biological community. This section should consist entirely of professional judgment derived from the data gathered as a result of this survey and other sources of information directly related to this project site. Also include references to information gained from peer reviewed publications that deal with impacts of similar activities. The discussion should be limited to the effects on this biological community if the project is completed as planned. Do not include opinions regarding the feasibility of the project, any possible mitigation measures or economic impacts.

Conclusion:

This section should be in paragraph and/or bulleted form and include recommended mitigation or impact reduction measures that the biological consultant believes are necessary for protecting biological resources in the area. The best method for mitigation is avoidance and every effort should be made to avoid the impacts in order to ease permitting restraints. These measures should be accompanied by a description of the justification and relevance of these measures as they relate to the impacts. The consultant may make suggestions or provide opinions that are outside the strict scientifically based format in the Discussion section. Division staff and the consultant will consider these mitigation recommendations when drafting mitigation-related permit terms in the environmental document.

Appendices

Complete Data:

Provide all of the data collected in the field. Tabular format should be used whenever possible for ease of reading. Include a full list of all species encountered in the field, along with an estimate of abundance, life stage, and any comments. This section should include information such as weather and potential interference (examples of potential interference include traffic noise, dogs barking, recent farm equipment use). The complete list of possible sensitive species, generated by CNNDB, CNPS, or some other acceptable source must be included in this appendix.

Maps:

Required maps include, but are not limited to, a general project site map, wetland delineation maps, habitat types (resource map), and sensitive species occurrences. These maps should be presented in full color and on a minimum of a full 8½ by 11-inch sheet of paper. The maps must be of sufficient quality to allow ease of reading.

Resumes:

There should be a resume or curriculum vitae (cv) for everyone who participated in the field surveys. The resumes or cv's should provide specific information regarding training to perform the tasks within the course of this survey.

References/Bibliography:

A references section or bibliography section must be included and follow a standard format. The use of footnotes is acceptable. Include references specifically used during the course of this field investigation and for preparing this biological report. Generic bibliographies are unacceptable.

Other Appendices:

Additional appendices (such as photographs) may be added as necessary.