



Ventura County Watershed Protection District Environmental Services Section

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TO: Ray Gutierrez, Development & Inspection

FROM: Pam Lindsey, Watershed Ecologist
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SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SEEDING GRADED AREAS

The County's Strategic Goals include promoting native plants to minimize landscape water use, maintenance costs, and fire risk, among other benefits. To meet this goal, the Public Works Agency suggests the application of a native seed mix to stabilize exposed soil. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide recommendations for typical post-grading applications.

PLANT SPECIES

Plant species listed below are native to southern California and occur naturally in the Ventura area. We recommend a mix several of annual and perennial grasses with annual herbs to provide all-season soil stabilization for most soil types and site conditions. Once established, it may be mowed to 6 inches high in late May for fuel clearance, but mowing is not necessary in most areas due to the low cover and fuel load. Pounds of seed applied per acre depend on percent live seed per pound and cover goals.

Standard cover mixes to stabilize soil may include the following:

Species	Common Name	Type
<i>Bromus carinatus</i>	California brome	Perennial grass
<i>Elymus glaucus</i>	Western ryegrass	Perennial grass
<i>Festuca microstachys</i>	Small fescue	Annual grass
<i>Melica imperfecta</i>	Melic grass	Perennial grass
<i>Stipa lepida</i>	Foothill needlegrass	Perennial grass
<i>Stipa pulchra</i>	Purple needlegrass	Perennial grass
<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>	California poppy	Annual herb
<i>Lasthenia californica</i>	Gold fields	Annual herb
<i>Trifolium willdenovii</i>	Tomcat clover	Annual herb

SITE PREPARATION INFORMATION

For best results, implement a 'grow and kill' cycle of weed control prior to application of native seed. Weed seed present in graded soil germinates triggered by water applied for compaction and dust control. If not controlled before native seed is applied, the weeds interfere with the establishment of the native cover and are difficult to control without harming the native plants. Erosion and sediment control measures shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with industry accepted BMP Fact Sheets as published by CASQA and/or CalTrans. Each measure identified below is followed by the applicable Caltrans BMP Fact Sheet number as those are available online for free.

Recommended 'grow and kill' steps:

1. Finish grading per recommendation for planting.
2. Deploy sediment control measures such as fiber rolls (SC-05) which retard runoff but do not cover soil. On slopes 20% or steeper, effective sediment control often requires implementation of a combination of BMPs such as fiber rolls (SC-05), Slope Drains (SS-11), Gravel Bag Berms at top of slope (SC-06), and Silt Fence at toe of slope (SC-01).
3. Apply water to germinate weed seeds; how much water depends on soil moisture and weather conditions.
4. In 4 to 6 weeks kill weed growth with post-emergent herbicide per label instructions. Alternatively, conduct mechanical weed control which kills the plants yet maintains slope integrity. Do not allow weeds to set seed.
5. Repeat 'grow and kill' if weed growth is extensive.
6. Apply native seed (Hydroseeding SS-04), mulch (Hydraulic Mulch SS-03, Straw Mulch SS-06 or Wood Mulch SS-08), tackifier (Soil Binders SS-05), and other measures of slope protection such as geotextiles, mats, or covers (SS-07), as needed.
7. Conduct selective weeding after two to three months before any remaining weeds set seed, if needed.

REFERENCES

Recommended List of Native Plants for Landscaping in the Santa Monica Mountains. Los Angeles/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter, California Native Plant Society. 1996, revised 2007.

Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Vascular Plant Species List. National Park Service. 2006.

The Jepson Manual Vascular Plants of California. University of California Press. 2012.

Calflora. www.calflora.org

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California Native Plant Link Exchange. www.cnplx.info

Caltrans BMP Fact Sheets. www.dot.ca.gov

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