

Key Term Definitions  
Administrative Draft

**Term: Native Vegetation**

Proposed Definition:

“An assemblage of plants in a specific place or region that has adapted to environmental and biological conditions. Native vegetation is typically dominated by native plant species but may include non-native plants or naturalized plants. Vegetation may be classified by type based on characteristics such as dominant plant communities or dominant plant species. Some native vegetation assemblages, such as annual grassland, may contain significant numbers of introduced plant species that have adapted to local conditions. For the purposes of the INRMP process, “native vegetation” and “natural vegetation” can be used synonymously.”

Support for Proposed Definition

From General Plan Glossary, Draft EIR	From Scientific Literature Sources
<p><b><u>Natural Communities</u></b> A general term for an assemblage of naturally-occurring plants and animals coexisting together in a common area that is relatively undisturbed and unfragmented and that is self-perpetuating. These communities are generally comprised of a variety of plant and animal species that have evolved together over time in a specific location or region as a result of complex interactions among climate, soils, hydrology, topography, fire, vegetation, wildlife, and human. ( Source: EDC General Plan, July 2004, Glossary, p 245)</p> <p><b><u>Natural vegetation and native vegetation:</u></b> Urban areas in El Dorado County frequently include both ornamental and <b>natural vegetation</b>, with highly developed areas typically having a lower percentage of <b>native vegetation</b>. Low-density urban development is often found in association with patches of fragmented native habitats. (Source: DEIR, p 5.12-8)</p> <p><b><u>Native Vegetation.</u></b> This term occurs 11 times in the Draft EIR, and 3 times in the Conservation and Open Space element of the General Plan, usually in association with mitigation measures.</p> <p><b><u>Regarding annual grassland.</u></b> The DEIR states that annual grasslands in the County</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b><u>Native Vegetation.</u></b> The assemblage of native plants in a specific place or region that have adapted to environmental (e.g. edaphic) and biological (e.g. presence of other plants) conditions. These assemblages may be sorted into types based on characteristics such as dominant plant species. (e.g. blue oak woodlands.) (Source: Dr. Fraser Schilling)</li> <li>2. <b><u>Native.</u></b> Occurring naturally in an area, not as either a direct or indirect consequence of human activity; indigenous; not alien. (Source: <u>Jepson Manual</u>, 1993.)</li> <li>3. <b><u>Natural vegetation.</u></b> Plant species composition and cover of an area not planted by humans. Human impacts and exotic species are often present, but native species usually predominate. (Source: <u>Land Mosaics</u>, Richard Forman, author, 1997.)</li> </ol>

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include a variety of non-native annuals (p5.12-7) and states that annual grasslands are “invaluable to the grassland-dependent species found in El Dorado County.” (p5.12-10)  (No other definitions given)	
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Term: **Native Vegetation** (cont'd)

Additional comments and considerations:

1. Based on previous discussions, advisory committees may want to consider language excluding invasive plant species as part of the final definition.
2. For Phase 1 of the INRMP process, the definition of the term “Native vegetation” will be used to update the existing INRMP maps. The specific types of native vegetation (plant communities) will be identified and mapped for subsequent (Phase 2) use in the preparation of the INRMP.

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**Term: Important Habitat**

Proposed Definition:

“Important habitat is defined as habitats that support flora and fauna, including deer winter, summer, and fawning ranges and migration routes; stream, river, and lakeshore habitat; fish spawning areas; seeps, springs, and wetlands; oak woodlands; large expanses of native vegetation; and other unique plant, fish, and wildlife habitats.” (Source: DEIR, p5.12-45)

Support for Proposed Definition

From General Plan Glossary, Draft EIR	From Scientific Literature Sources
<p>No definition given for “important habitat” in General Plan. The term occurs 21 times in the EDC GP, 75 times in the DEIR.</p> <p><b>Habitat</b> The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or can be found. (Source: EDC General Plan, p239.)</p>	<p><b>Habitat:</b> The place or environment where a plant or animal naturally lives and grows (a group of particular environmental conditions). (Source: <a href="http://www.fws.gov/endangered/pdfs/glossary.pdf">http://www.fws.gov/endangered/pdfs/glossary.pdf</a>)</p>

Additional comments and considerations:

1. All plant and wildlife species have certain habitat requirements to meet life cycle requirements. For purposes of the INRMP, habitat is important if it fulfills these requirements and is needed for common species persistence or recovery of a species-at-risk. The definition specifically relates to General Plan Policy 7.4.2.8, but not to Policy 7.4.1.6 if so decided by the advisory committees.
2. Advisory committees declined to equate “important habitat” with “critical habitat” to avoid confusion or conflict regarding requirements of the Endangered Species Act.
3. For Phase 1 of the INRMP process, the definition of “Important Habitat” will be used for updating the existing INRMP map. The specific types of Important Habitat will be identified and mapped for subsequent (Phase 2) use in the preparation of the INRMP.

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**Term: Large Expanses**

Proposed Definition:

“The amount of less disturbed, contiguous land needed for both narrowly occurring and wide-ranging species or to maintain natural processes, where the extent of land needed depends on the species or natural process.”

Support for Proposed Definition

From General Plan Glossary, Draft EIR	From Scientific Literature Sources
<p>No definition given in the EDC General Plan or DEIR.</p> <p>The term is used 7 times in the DEIR, occasionally with the term “contiguous areas” for example, “standards for retention of contiguous areas/large expanses of other (non-oak and nonsensitive) plant communities” (p5.12-51)</p> <p>In the impact discussion for the Roadway Constrained Alternative, the following is found: “...standards for retention of contiguous areas/large expanses of other (non-oak and nonsensitive) plant communities...”</p>	<p>None.</p>

Additional comments and considerations:

1. There is no formal, scientific definition for this term other than to describe the amount of land needed for wide-ranging species or to maintain natural processes. Animals sensitive to landscape and habitat fragmentation may require “Large Expanses” of undisturbed vegetation of a certain type to survive and thrive in an area. Animals less sensitive to disturbance may still require large expanses of vegetation with high degrees of connectivity in order to fulfill foraging and daily, seasonal and dispersal movement requirements. In this way, “Large Expanses” refers to the needs of a species and is species-specific.
2. It will be necessary to develop a metric using GIS to identify disturbance and fragmentation in order to define “Large Expanses” on a map.