VITAL LANDS INITIATIVE & PROTECTING SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES IN SONOMA COUNTY

Sensitive Natural Communities in Conservation Webinar
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The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District permanently protects the diverse agricultural, natural resource, and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations.
AG + OPEN SPACE PROTECTED LANDS

- **Conservation Easement**
- **Fee Title**
- **Open Space Easement**
- **Other Public or Protected Land**
FINE-SCALE VEGETATION MAP

SONOMA VEG MAP

SONOMA COUNTY VEGETATION MAPPING & LIDAR PROGRAM

High-Quality Data for Planning, Conservation and Resource Management
FINE-SCALE VEGETATION MAP

• Vegetation Descriptions

• Sonoma Veg Map Final Report

www.sonomavegmap.org
VITAL LANDS INITIATIVE

• Long-term vision for land conservation
  • Reflects values of the community
  • Priorities for protection across multiple goal areas
  • Strategies for achieving goals given limited time and funds
“Protect the highest priority old-growth and mature conifer and conifer-hardwood forests...oak woodlands, shrublands, grassland, and other non-woody vegetation”
The Vital Lands Initiative identifies **priority vegetation communities** according to **state rarity ranks** per the Survey of California Vegetation/NatureServe’s Heritage Program and local rarity.

**High Priority**
- Critically imperiled (S1) or locally very rare (<0.1% cover)

**Medium-High Priority**
- Imperiled (S2) or locally rare (S3 or S4 with <1% cover)

**Medium Priority**
- Vulnerable (S3) or locally unique (S4 or S5 with <1% cover)

**Low Priority**
- Apparently secure (S4 or S5)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetation Alliance (Scientific Name)</th>
<th>Vegetation Alliance (Common Name)</th>
<th>Global Rank</th>
<th>State Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Arctostaphylos</em> (bakeri, montana) Alliance</td>
<td>Baker or Mount Tamalpais chaparral</td>
<td>G1</td>
<td>S1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pinus radiata</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Non-native Monterey pine stand</td>
<td>G1</td>
<td>S1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Abies grandis</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Grand fir forest</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Calamagrostis nutkaensis</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Pacific reed grass meadows</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Corylus cornuta</em> var. <em>californica</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Hazelnut scrub</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>S2?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Quercus parvula</em> var. <em>shrevei</em> Provisional Alliance</td>
<td>Shreve oak woodland</td>
<td>G2</td>
<td>S2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Acer macrophyllum</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Bigleaf maple forest</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Aesculus californica</em> Alliance</td>
<td>California buckeye groves</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Arbutus menziesii</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Pacific madrone dominated woodland</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ceanothus oliganthis</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Hairy leaf ceanothus chaparral</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hesperocyparis macnabiana</em> Alliance</td>
<td>McNab cypress woodland</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Hesperocyparis sargentii</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Sargent cypress stand</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Notholithocarpus densiflorus</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Tanoak woodland</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pinus lambertiana</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Sugar pine</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pinus muricata</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Bishop pine forest</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Populus fremontii</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Fremont cottonwood forest</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Quercus garryana</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Oregon white oak woodland</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Quercus lobata</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Valley oak woodland</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sequoia sempervirens</em> Alliance</td>
<td>Coast redwood forest</td>
<td>G3</td>
<td>S3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vital Lands Initiative Priority Vegetation Communities

**Priority Conifer Forests**
- High
- Medium-High
- Medium
- Low

**Priority Grasslands**
- High
- Medium
- Low

**Priority Shrublands**
- High
- Medium-High
- Medium
- Low
PROTECTING SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES

• Reactive land conservation
  o Project evaluation framework
  o Higher priority for sensitive natural communities

• Proactive land conservation
  o Identify targets and priority/focus areas

• Real-time gap analysis
  o Performance metrics and dashboard reporting

• Conservation easement design & negotiation

• Long-term stewardship
WITH GRATITUDE