



Harris & Associates

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING + COMPLIANCE

Can your environmental documentation survive legal scrutiny? Today's budgets and timelines leave no room for error. With in-depth knowledge of CEQA and NEPA, we deliver rigorous, objective analysis supported by substantial evidence.

Launched in 2015, Harris & Associates' Environmental Planning + Compliance team is led by three highly respected directors, each with 18–30 years of experience. With over 20 environmental professionals on staff, the team's specialized expertise spans project management, impact assessment, permitting, and technical writing, as well as California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance. Our staff has earned an esteemed reputation for providing high quality, legally defensible documents that are easily understood by the general public.

Agencies benefit from our experiences with planning, development, and infrastructure projects—including small residential infill and utility replacements, large master planned communities, creek restoration projects, and new roadways. We develop program-level, tiered, and project-specific documentation. To support the environmental documents, we also prepare technical studies for noise, air quality/greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and biological resources.

Because each project and lead agency are unique, Harris adjusts project management styles and approaches to provide the most effective environmental documentation process possible.

Legally Defensible Documentation

In this day and age, environmental legal challenges are a common tactic used to stop or slow projects. Our environmental staff have worked on many controversial projects that have been subject to legal challenges. Our strategy to withstand legal scrutiny is to write the environmental documents with both the public and the judge in mind. To this end, we identify environmental concerns and issues early in the process, coordinate with responsible stakeholders accordingly, and confirm the issues are thoroughly addressed with substantial evidence. Scoping meetings and outreach are vital tools for identifying potential legal issues on a controversial project. We also manage the administrative record throughout the environmental process so it is complete and available at the end of the process.

■ ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

Drawing from years of experience consulting on all types of projects throughout the western United States, we excel at identifying environmental issues and potential permit requirements to inform project design and the scope of environmental review.

■ CEQA COMPLIANCE

Regardless of project size, Harris thoroughly evaluates all potential environmental impacts, from aesthetics to wildfire. With careful consideration of CEQA requirements and guidelines, we thoroughly document our findings and make decisions with the administrative record in mind. We also represent our clients in city council meetings to answer questions related to the environmental analysis. Specific types of CEQA documents include:

- Categorical Exemption
- Initial Study (IS)
- Negative Declaration and Mitigated Negative Declaration (ND/MND)
- Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program (MMRP)

■ NEPA COMPLIANCE

We coordinate early with federal agencies to strategize the best way to achieve federal agency approval and expedite projects. We often prepare joint CEQA and NEPA documents that cover both federal and state requirements. We also prepare “CEQA Plus” documentation, which evaluates the federal Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act associated with NEPA compliance in the context of a CEQA document. Specific types of NEPA documents include:

- Categorical Exclusion
- Environmental Assessment (EA)
- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- CEQA Plus Documentation

■ TECHNICAL STUDIES

Our in-house technical experts prepare technical studies for the following environmental topics to support CEQA/NEPA documents, as well as funding and permit application packages:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Climate Change
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Noise

■ NATURAL RESOURCES

Our natural resource team is composed of three functional areas: biological resources, natural resources planning and permitting/restoration plans. Our staff includes biologists and planners with habitat and ecosystems expertise in plants, wildlife, wetlands, habitat restoration and mitigation planning, and Endangered Species Act compliance. We conduct analyses for stand-alone reports, CEQA/NEPA documents, and permit application packages. Our natural resources services include:

- Habitat management and conservation plans
- Vegetation Mapping and General Wildlife Surveys
- Protocol-level Sensitive Species Surveys
- Wetland Delineations
- Pre-construction surveys and construction monitoring
- Restoration services

■ PERMITTING AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Harris helps you determine permit requirements and navigate the regulatory compliance process. Our specialists delineate the limits of the sensitive resources, coordinate with regulatory agency staff, prepare the permit application package, develop the mitigation plan, and diligently track the process until the permit is in your hand.

We specialize in the following permitting and compliance services:

- Clean Water Act
- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
- Endangered Species Act
- California Fish and Game Code

■ QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY CONTROL REVIEW

Quality assurance and control (QA/QC) are essential for professional, legally defensible environmental documents. Harris adheres to a stringent QA/QC process to confirm that all deliverables meet local, state, and federal regulations, are easily understood by the general public, and are consistent with other relevant documents. The high quality of our documents is evident in the awards we have won from the Association of Environmental Professionals, including the Outstanding Environmental Analysis Document Award for Solana 101 Mixed Use Development EIR and the Santa Cruz County North Coast Rail Trail EIR.



Solana 101 Mixed-Use Development Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

City of Solana Beach

Solana Beach, CA

Harris & Associates prepared the environmental impact report (EIR) and technical studies for the City. The EIR evaluated a development concept based on the desire of the local residents for community compatibility, sustainability, and environmental conservation.



Fanita Development (EIR)

City of Santee

Santee, CA

Harris is managing a large team responsible for the technical analysis of key environmental issues and is leading the preparation of a specific plan to address development standards on the project site. The project proposes a residential area, a mixed-use village center, agricultural uses, a K-8 school site, as well as parks and open space.

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www.WeAreHarris.com

Harris partners with public agencies to enhance their communities.

