



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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Salamander Protection Zone Regulations

Santa Cruz County's Sensitive Habitat protection Ordinance ([Chapter 16.32](#)), establishes a salamander protection zone (S-P zone) which provides additional protection of the population and habitat of the Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum croceum*). The salamander is listed with both the Federal and State governments as an endangered species. Properties located in the S-P zone are subject to additional requirements which are summarized below. The requirements are found in section 16.32.090 of the County Code.

Location

The S-P zone is approximately located in Aptos between the Rio Del Mar and Freedom Boulevard exits. It extends approximately 1,500 feet south of Highway 1, between these two exits. To determine if your parcel is located in the S-P zone, click [here](#) for instructions on how to determine your zoning. If your zoning ends with "SP", your property is located in the S-P zone.

Requirements During Construction

- Total site disturbance during construction may not exceed 25% before re-vegetation. (For instance, on a 10,000 square foot lot, only 2,500 square feet can be disturbed.)

Requirements Upon Completion

- Total site disturbance after construction and re-vegetation of areas disturbed re-vegetation of areas disturbed during construction may not exceed 15% of the lot.
- Impervious surfaces (i.e., driveways, houses, patios, etc.) may not exceed 10% of the lot.

Additional Requirements. The following are some, but not all of the design requirements.

- Grading or filling within drip line of 24" or larger diameter trees shall be avoided.
- A landscape plan consisting of nature shrubs and/or trees shall be submitted with building plans for areas of vegetation removal.
- Native trees shall be retained to the maximum extent possible.
- Disturbed areas shall be retained to the maximum extent possible.
- Step or pole foundations shall be required on slopes over 15%. Pole foundations shall be required on slopes over 30%.
- All curbs and gutter shall be rounded.
- No grading shall be allowed between October 15 and April 15.
- Grading and removal of vegetation shall be minimal.
- A minimum 50 foot buffer between cypress communities and location of development shall be required.

If you have additional questions, Resource Planners are available Monday-Thursday 8 a.m. - Noon and 1p.m-3 p.m. at the County Planning Department.

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