



Kevin Merk Associates, LLC

### **KEVIN B. MERK**

Principal Biologist

Kevin Merk is the founding principal of Kevin Merk Associates, LLC. With nearly 20 years of environmental consulting experience, Kevin has directed, managed, and conducted hundreds of natural resource and environmental studies throughout California. Mr. Merk has a diverse background in the biological sciences with expertise in plant taxonomy, quantitative vegetation analysis, habitat classification/evaluation procedures, surveys for special status species, habitat restoration and biotechnical erosion control. His work experience includes general biological and species-specific surveys, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and California Coastal Commission wetland delineations, as well as permit acquisition and regulatory compliance. He has prepared, implemented and monitored habitat mitigation/restoration projects throughout California. Mr. Merk is a well-versed regulatory specialist that provides a balance between rigorous scientific documentation, environmental regulatory requirements and project development goals and objectives. Prior to founding Kevin Merk Associates, Mr. Merk was a program manager for an environmental consulting firm in the Central Coast region.

### **TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES**

- Mr. Merk has an in-depth knowledge of the California flora and protocols for surveying rare, threatened and endangered plant species.
- He has conducted floristic surveys and mapped vegetation communities for private, state and local government clients including California State Parks, California State University System, Fort Ord Reuse Authority, Cities and Counties of Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara, and Cities of Arroyo Grande, Lompoc, Sand City, Santa Maria and Scotts Valley.
- Mr. Merk has also conducted rare wildlife surveys throughout California for species such as the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, western spadefoot toad, legless lizard, horned lizard, burrowing owl and other raptors and nesting birds.
- Mr. Merk has conducted multi-parameter wetland delineations throughout the state including within the Coastal Zone, and is an expert in environmental regulation compliance (e.g., Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Coastal Development Act, California Department of Fish and Game Code, Porter-Cologne Act).

### **EDUCATION, CERTIFICATIONS, REGISTRATIONS**

B.A. Biology (Plant Sciences), University of California, Santa Cruz

40 Hour OSHA HAZWOPER Training and 8 eight-hour annual refresher courses

Hydrogeomorphic Approach to Functional Assessment of Riverine Waters/Wetlands in the South Coast Region of Santa Barbara County

Biology and Handling Trainings for California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander, and Santa Cruz long-toed salamander

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Training

California Native Plant Society

California Botanical Society

California Invasive Plant Council

Society for Ecological Restoration

American Public Works Association

International Erosion Control Association

Wildlife Society, Western Chapter

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

Kevin Merk Associates, LLC, Founding Principal Biologist (2011 through present)  
Rincon Consultants, Inc., Biological Program Manager (2000-2011)  
Zander Associates, Senior Botanist/Restoration Ecologist (1995 through 2000)  
University of California, Santa Cruz Natural Resource Assessment Group, Botanist (1993-1995)  
Greening Associates, Restoration Ecologist (1991-1992)

**REPRESENTATIVE PROJECT EXPERIENCE***Biological Resources*

- Coastal Christian School Biological Resources Assessment, mapped/classified vegetation, conducted rare plant and California red-legged frog surveys, delineated USACE wetlands, and supported architect/design team during planning and CEQA review process, San Luis Obispo County.
- More Mesa Biological Resources Inventory, conducted rare plant surveys, mapped vegetation communities and delineated USACE and Coastal Commission wetlands, Santa Barbara County
- May Family Trust Biological Resources Assessment, mapped/classified vegetation, conducted rare plant surveys, delineated USACE wetlands, and assisted design team during planning and CEQA review process, San Luis Obispo County.
- Harmony Ranch Biological Resources Assessment, mapped/classified vegetation, conducted rare plant and California red-legged frog surveys, delineated USACE and Coastal Commission wetlands, and assisted design team during development planning process, San Luis Obispo County
- Mormann Property Biological Resources Assessment, mapped/classified vegetation and conducted rare plant surveys, San Luis Obispo County
- Laetitia Winery Biological Resources Assessment, Rare Plant Surveys, USFWS California red-legged frog surveys and wetland delineation, San Luis Obispo County
- Mahoney Ranch Biological Resources Assessment and Constraints Analysis, Santa Maria
- Birch Street Development project rare plant surveys and California red legged frog surveys in support of Coastal Development Permitting process, Cayucos, San Luis Obispo County
- Santa Rosa Creek Trail project rare plant surveys and habitat assessments for California red-legged frog, pond turtle, steelhead and tidewater goby, Cambria
- Pecho Valley Road Property vegetation classification, rare plant surveys and USFWS protocol Morro shoulderband snail surveys, Los Osos, San Luis Obispo County
- Grover Beach-Five Cities Trail Constraints Analysis, City of Grover Beach

*Focused Botanical Surveys*

- More Mesa Botanical Inventory and Wetland Delineation, Santa Barbara County
- Bradley Ranch Botanical Inventory and Wetland Delineation, Santa Maria
- Mahoney Ranch Botanical Inventory and Wetland Delineation, Santa Maria
- Pismo Lake Ecological Reserve Botanical Inventory, San Luis Coastal RCD
- Harmony Headlands Botanical Inventory, California State Parks
- Sheridan Lane Botanical Inventory, San Luis Obispo County
- Chevron Estero Marine Terminal Rare Plant Surveys and Wetland Delineation, San Luis Obispo County
- Biddle Ranch Rare Plant Surveys and Wetland Delineation, San Luis Obispo County
- Tract 1998 Rare Plant Surveys for Pismo Clarkia, City of Arroyo Grande
- James Way Fuel Modification Project Rare Plant Surveys, City of Arroyo Grande

- Jones' Harmony Ranch Project Rare Plant Surveys and Wetland Delineation, San Luis Obispo County
- Highland Ranch Rare Plant Surveys, San Luis Obispo County
- San Miguel Ranch Rare Plant Surveys and Wetland Delineation, San Luis Obispo County
- Continental Vineyards Rare Plant Surveys and Wetland Delineation, San Luis Obispo County
- Chandler Ranch Rare Plant Surveys, City of Paso Robles
- Various focused surveys for the rare Morro Manzanita in Los Osos

#### *Focused Animal Surveys*

- Salinas Road Interchange Project, Caltrans Designated Biologist conducted California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander aquatic surveys. Captured and relocated over 10,000 life stages of California red-legged frog during construction, Monterey County
- Santa Maria Integrated Waste Management Facility, USFWS protocol Vernal Pool Branchiopod and California Tiger Salamander Surveys (upland and aquatic) on 1,770-acre site in northern Santa Barbara County.
- Mahoney Ranch USFWS protocol California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander surveys, Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County
- Biddle Ranch USFWS California red-legged frog surveys and California tiger salamander habitat assessment, San Luis Obispo County
- Union Valley Parkway USFWS California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander surveys (upland and aquatic), Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County
- Monarch butterfly annual population censusing surveys for populations in Santa Cruz County from Natural Bridges to Capitola, University of California Santa Cruz
- Birch Street Project USFWS California red-legged frog surveys and Monarch butterfly habitat assessment, Coastal Development Permitting, Cayucos, San Luis Obispo County
- San Joaquin Kit Fox Habitat Evaluations for numerous projects ranging from winery expansion to telecommunication projects, northern San Luis Obispo County and southern Monterey County

#### *CEQA and NEPA Compliance Documents (primary author of Biological Resources Sections)*

- Ahmanson Ranch General Plan Amendment and Specific Plan EIR, Ventura County
- Keysite 3 EIR Biological Resources Section, Santa Barbara County
- Rancho Maria Estates EIR Biological Resources Section, Santa Barbara County
- Union Valley Parkway EIR/EA, City of Santa Maria
- Santa Maria Integrated Waste Management Facility EIR, City of Santa Maria
- Santa Maria Airport Specific Plan EIR, City of Santa Maria
- Mahoney Ranch Environmental Assessment (EA), City of Santa Maria
- Tract 1998 Rancho Grande EIR and supplements, City of Arroyo Grande
- COG Residential Development Project EIR, San Luis Obispo County
- Biddle Ranch Agricultural Cluster Subdivision EIR, San Luis Obispo County
- Chevron Estero Marine Terminal Source Removal Project EIR, San Luis Obispo County
- Downtown Specific Plan EIR, City of Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz County

#### *Regulatory Compliance and Construction Monitoring*

- Salinas Road Interchange, Senior Biologist overseeing environmental permit compliance during construction, Caltrans District 5 through DeSilva Gates Construction
- Cross Creek Bridge Replacement, prepared and implemented riparian habitat restoration plan, monitored construction and restoration activities to comply with Coastal Development Permit, Malibu, Los Angeles County

- Surfer's Point Shoreline Retreat Project, prepared Coastal Dune Habitat Restoration Plan in support of Coastal Development Permit acquisition, City of Ventura
- North of Playa Habitat Conservation Plan, Sand City, Monterey County. Prepared HCP, implemented coastal dune restoration program and Conservation Strategy for Smith's blue butterfly, and oversaw construction activities including environmental awareness training. Implemented HCP monitoring program for five years and prepared annual reports.
- Cherry Creek Residential Development, conducted USACE wetland delineation, prepared USACE, CDFG, and RWQCB permit applications, monitored construction, Arroyo Grande
- Bach Hotel, conducted USACE wetland delineation, prepared USACE, CDFG, and RWQCB permit applications and habitat mitigation program, City of Buellton
- Highway 46 East Improvement Project, Senior Biologist overseeing environmental permit compliance during construction, Caltrans District 5 through Papich Construction
- Union Valley Parkway, prepared EIR/EA, BA, ESA Section 7 Consultation, Designated Biologist overseeing environmental permit compliance during construction, Caltrans/City of Santa Maria Local Assistance Project
- Biddle Ranch Agricultural Cluster Subdivision Project, County of San Luis Obispo designated environmental monitor overseeing construction of roads and infrastructure improvements
- California State University, Channel Islands, biological studies and wetland delineation, prepared habitat mitigation program and USACE, CDFG and RWQCB permit applications, monitored construction, implemented habitat mitigation program and monitored for five years, Ventura County
- Damon Garcia Sports Complex Project, conducted focused studies including California red-legged frog surveys and wetland delineation, prepared habitat mitigation program and USACE, CDFG and RWQCB permit applications, monitored construction and implemented habitat mitigation program, City of San Luis Obispo
- Santa Maria River Mining, CDFG and Department of Conservation permit acquisition, monitoring and annual permit compliance reporting, City of Santa Maria
- Bret Harte Unified High School District Sports Fields Complex, conducted wetland delineation, prepared habitat mitigation program and USACE, CDFG and RWQCB permit applications, Calaveras County

#### *Open Space Management Plans*

- Bailey Wetland Area Management Plan, City of Lompoc, Santa Barbara County
- Leffingwell Ranch Open Space Resource Management Plan, Cambria, San Luis Obispo County
- East West Ranch Public Access and Resource Management Plan, Cambria, San Luis Obispo County

#### *Teaching*

- Workshop Instructor - California Native Plant Society Rare Plants and Habitats of San Luis Obispo County (separated into coastal and inland sections)
- Workshop Instructor/Field Coordinator - Elkhorn Slough Coastal Training Program's Management and Conservation of Coastal Grasslands
- Guest lecturer - CalPoly Natural Resource Management and Landscape Architecture Departments
- Teaching Assistant - Ecology of California Flora, Plant Anatomy, Plant Taxonomy, Plant Physiology, Mycology, and Plants and Human Affairs, University of California, Santa Cruz
- Presenter - Association of Environmental Professionals state and national conferences; Society of Ecological Restoration annual conferences, and International Erosion Control Association conferences