

**California Department of Conservation  
FARMLAND MAPPING AND MONITORING PROGRAM**

**2008 FIELD REPORT**

**COUNTY:** San Benito

**FIELD MAPPER(S):** Michael Kisko

**IMAGE DATA USED:**

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Source                  | Digital Globe Inc.  |
| Acquisition date        | April 2007  |
| Data description        | True color mosaic, 1 foot resolution                                |
| Coverage gaps           | Southern two-thirds of county                                       |
| Additional imagery used | 2005 NAIP; 2003 and 2001 NASA imagery for El Rancho San Benito area |

**WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES:**

*The following entities and individuals provided information used to conduct 2008 mapping.*

|   |
|---|
| <b>Local Review Comments</b><br>(submitted by cities, counties, & others on 2006 maps)  |
| DMB El Rancho San Benito team   |
| <b>Personal Contacts</b>  |
| none  |
| <b>Websites Used for Reference</b>  |
| El Rancho San Benito: <a href="http://www.elranchosanbenito.com/vision-framework/index.php">http://www.elranchosanbenito.com/vision-framework/index.php</a> |
| <b>GIS Data Used for Reference</b>  |
| Sbt_boron_affected.shp (O:\Vector\ancillary_data\san_benito)  |

**2006-2008 CHANGE SUMMARY:**

*Changes made during the map update are summarized by type and location. Particular attention is paid to large or unusual changes and their estimated acreages. Please note that land use type, size of land use unit, soil quality, and Farmland of Local Importance definition (if any) determines the final Important Farmland (IFL) category. [See definitions](#) at bottom of table.*

| <b>Conversions to Urban Land</b>  |           |
|---|-----------|
| Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land  | 0 changes |
|   |           |
| Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Urban Land   | 3 changes |
| <p>The largest conversion to Urban Land this update was not due to new construction but, rather, to the improved, high-resolution imagery used this update. The use of this imagery as well as a field visit to the site allowed us to make out the extent of paved area present at the Thousand Trails San Benito Preserve (~80 acres) and determine that it should be mapped as Urban Land. The preserve is a facility primarily geared towards RV camping.</p> |           |

On the other hand, there were two, small additions of new homes made in the county. The first addition of new homes was made in the hills to the west of San Juan Bautista (~10 acres) while a second addition of new homes was made to the south of Hollister (~10 acres).

### **Conversions from Irrigated Farmland aside from urbanization**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Irrigated Farmland to Nonirrigated Land Uses | 47 changes |
|--|------------|

There were two primary reasons for the conversion of Irrigated Farmland to Nonirrigated Land Uses:

First, many of these changes (32 changes) were due to Irrigated Farmland having been fallow for three or more update cycles. Most of these changes were approximately 30 acres or less in size. Notable changes of 50 acres or more occurred on the San Felipe (5 changes) and Quien Sabe Valley (1 change) quads with the largest conversion encompassing approximately 300 acres on the San Felipe quad.

Second, areas of Irrigated Farmland were identified that are no longer being irrigated but, instead, are being used for the cultivation of nonirrigated grain crops. Making conversions in these areas in some cases involved tracking them over multiple update cycles to make sure they had not been irrigated, site visits, local review comments, and the use of additional imagery. The largest change of this type occurred at the El Rancho San Benito on the Chittenden quad and involved the conversion of approximately 1,400 acres of Irrigated Farmland. Notable conversions of Irrigated Farmland to nonirrigated crops also took place on the San Felipe (~1,000 acres) and Quien Sabe Valley (~500 acres) quads.

|                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Irrigated Farmland to Other Land | 21 changes |
|----------------------------------|------------|

These conversions were primarily due to the use of improved, high-resolution imagery that allowed for the delineation of existing areas of ranchettes, farmsteads, and rural commercial land uses, such as the identification of a compost facility on the San Felipe quad.

### **Conversions to Irrigated Farmland**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Irrigated Farmland | 9 changes |
|---|-----------|

The majority of the conversions to Irrigated Farmland occurred on the San Felipe quad (6 changes) with the largest change encompassing approximately 130 acres. The next largest change was an addition of Irrigated Farmland on the Three Sisters quad that converted 100 acres of formerly Nonirrigated Land. The remaining conversions were mostly 30 acres or less and consisted primarily of row crops, vineyards, and orchards.

### **Unusual Changes**

(Types of change not already described or special circumstances during the 2008 update.)

**Nonirrigated Land Uses to Grazing Land:** There were 52 of these types of conversions of Farmland of Local Importance to Grazing Land. These changes were due to areas formerly mapped as nonirrigated grain producing lands that had been fallow for four or more update cycles. These areas may have been overmapped in the past but were not able to be delineated more accurately due to imagery and access limitations. The largest acreage conversions occurred on the Tres Pinos (~1,600 acres), Topo Valley (~1,500), Quien Sabe Valley (~1,000 acres), and Cherry Peak (~500 acres) quads.

Irrigated Farmland to Farmland of Local Importance: There were 3 conversions of this type on the Three Sisters quad totaling approximately 70 acres. These areas were shifted from an Irrigated Farmland category to Farmland of Local Importance for mapping consistency as they were orchards located in an area designated as boron-affected by County Resolution Number 84-3.

### Areas of Concern for Future Updates

(Locations or map categories noted as needing careful checking during 2010 update, and reasons.)

The southern two-thirds of San Benito County should be more carefully scrutinized as imagery was lacking this update.

**Definitions:**

**Irrigated Farmland** includes most irrigated crops grown in California. When combined with soil data, these farmed areas become the Important Farmland (IFL) categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance & Unique Farmland. Because of the nature of the IFL definitions, some irrigated uses, such as irrigated pastures or nurseries, may not be eligible for all three IFL categories.

**Nonirrigated land uses** include grazing areas, land used for dryland crop farming, and formerly irrigated land that has been left idle for three or more update cycles. These uses are frequently incorporated into county Farmland of Local Importance definitions.

**Other Land** includes a variety of miscellaneous uses, such as low density rural residential development, mining areas, vacant areas and nonagricultural vegetation. Confined animal agriculture facilities are mapped as Other Land unless incorporated into a county Farmland of Local Importance definition.

**Urban Land** includes residential, industrial, recreational, infrastructure and institutional uses.

For more on map categories, including Farmland of Local Importance definitions, visit the [FMMP web site](#).

**LABOR ESTIMATE:**

*Time estimates for conducting the 2008 update.*

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Image interpretation, start date              | November 3, 2008     |
| Image interpretation, number of days          | 4                    |
| Ground truth dates                            | November 12-14, 2008 |
| Number of days for post-ground truth clean up | 2                    |

Further information on the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program can be found at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx>