

California Farmland Conversion Report 2008 – 2010

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF LAND RESOURCE PROTECTION
FARMLAND MAPPING AND MONITORING PROGRAM

APRIL 2014

Acknowledgements

MANY INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT AND THE GIS DATA FROM WHICH IT WAS DERIVED.

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Staff

Molly Penberth, Manager

Troy Dick

Karen FitzGerald*

Patrick Hennessy

Kerri Kisko

Michael Kisko

Amy Klug*

Judith Santillan*

*Until March 2012. Thanks also to all past FMMP staff members for their cumulative contributions.

Division of Land Resource Protection

John Lowrie, Assistant Director

David Thesell, Deputy Chief

Monica Cea, Administrative Liaison

Principal Data Sources include digital soil survey data, produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service; with aerial imagery from the National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), Google Maps, and Google Streetview.

Cultural base information for the Important Farmland Maps was derived from public domain data sets, based upon design of the U.S. Geological Survey, with updates generated by digitizing over current imagery.

Additional data on land management and land use conversion activity was made available from the U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Transportation, the California Energy Commission, and CalRecycle. GIS data posted at county and city websites proved valuable in many locations.

Map reviewer comments contributed substantially to improving the quality of the information. These reviewers include county and city planning offices, county agricultural commissioners, resource conservation districts, Natural Resources Conservation Service district conservationists, California Farm Bureau Federation, University of California Cooperative Extension, California Cattlemen's Association, local water and irrigation districts, public interest groups, and building industry representatives. Many of these groups also participated in development of the Farmland of Local Importance definitions for their respective counties.



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Managing California's Working Lands

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

801 K STREET • MS 24-01 • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

PHONE 916 / 322-1080 • FAX 916 / 445-0732 • TDD 916 / 324-2555 • WEB SITE conservation.ca.gov

April 2014

Dear Land Conservation Partner:

On behalf of the Department of Conservation (Department), I am pleased to present the California Farmland Conversion Report 2008-2010. This analysis of agricultural land use conversion trends, based on detailed geographic information system mapping, is the thirteenth biennial report of the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP).

The FMMP was established in 1982 to document the location and extent of California's important farmlands, and to report on how they change over time. The Important Farmland Maps are used in the planning process to gauge the impact of planning decisions on agricultural land throughout the State. Population projections and today's environmental challenges make this information more important than ever.

Irrigated farmland in California decreased by more than 263 square miles (168,039 acres) between 2008 and 2010. The highest-quality agricultural soils, known as Prime Farmland, comprised 61 percent of the decrease (102,554 acres). Urban land increased by 44,504 acres, a 39 percent decrease relative to the 2006-2008 reporting period. This was the lowest urbanization rate recorded in the program's history, reflecting the impact of the recent economic recession. Long-term land idling was the largest factor contributing to irrigated land decreases, primarily in the southern San Joaquin Valley and in counties surrounding the San Joaquin-Sacramento Delta. The report contains county and regional summaries of the dynamics that occurred beyond the urban edge, providing context for larger planning issues.

Identifying strategic farmland resources is an important first step in maintaining California's agricultural vitality. The Department of Conservation thanks the agricultural organizations and local governments that work with us to produce these useful tools for conservation planning.

Sincerely,

Mark Nechodom
Director

This page left intentionally blank.



California Farmland Conversion Report 2008 – 2010

Table of Contents

Executive Summary, 2008-2010.....	1
1 The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program	5
Important Farmland Map Categories.....	6
2 2010 Improvements and Challenges.....	9
3 Understanding the Data	11
4 Land Use Conversion, 2008-2010.....	13
Urbanization	14
Other Changes Affecting Agricultural Land	18
Counties with Rural Land Mapping Enhancements	23
Net Irrigated Farmland Change.....	24
1984-2010 Net Land Use Change.....	26
APPENDIX A 2008-2010 County Conversion Tables	28
APPENDIX B 2008 and 2010 County Acreage Tallies	76
APPENDIX C County and Regional Conversion Summaries	80
APPENDIX D Rural Land Use Mapping Tables.....	84
APPENDIX E Farmland of Local Importance Definitions	96

FIGURES	Figure 1	Urbanization in the Bakersfield Area, Kern County, 1988-2010.....	5
	Figure 2	2010 Important Farmland Survey Area.....	7
	Figure 3	California Important Farmland Finder Example, Buffered Polygon and Acreage.....	9
	Figure 4	Conversion Table Structure	11
	Figure 5	Regions Used for FMMP Analysis	12
	Figure 6	Statewide Important Farmland Conversion Summary	13
	Figure 7	Sources of Urban Land 2008-2010	17
	Figure 8	Conversions to Irrigated Farmland 2008-2010.....	18
	Figure 9	Vineyard Expansion in the Sierra Foothills, Stanislaus County	19
	Figure 10	Conversions Out of Irrigated Categories 2008-2010.....	20
	Figure 11	Land Reclassified from Irrigated to Dryland Farming Categories, Western Fresno County	21
	Figure 12	New Dairy Facilities in Kings County	23
	Figure 13	Net Change in Urban Land, Irrigated Farmland, and Dryland Agriculture 1984-2010	27
TABLES	Table 1	County Urbanization Ranks, Urbanization from All Categories	14
	Table 2	Regional Urbanization Ranking, Urbanization from All Categories.....	14
	Table 3	California Farmland Conversion Summary 2008-2010..	15
	Table 4	Irrigated Farmland to Urban Ranks	16
	Table 5	Decreases of Irrigated Land Ranks, Net Losses of Irrigated Land	24
	Table 6	Increases of Irrigated Land Ranks, Net Increases of Irrigated Land.....	25
	Table 7	Net Important Farmland Conversion 1984-2010	26

Appendix A: 2008-2010 County Conversion Tables

Table A-1	Alameda	29
Table A-2	Amador	30
Table A-3	Butte	31
Table A-4	Colusa	32
Table A-5	Contra Costa	33
Table A-6	El Dorado	34
Table A-7	Fresno	35
Table A-8	Glenn	36
Table A-9	Imperial	37
Table A-10	Kern	38
Table A-11	Kings	39
Table A-12	Lake	40
	Lassen (see Sierra Valley)	65
Table A-13	Los Angeles	41
Table A-14	Madera	42
Table A-15	Marin	43
Table A-16	Mariposa	44
Table A-17	Mendocino	45
Table A-18	Merced	46
Table A-19	Modoc	47
Table A-20	Monterey	48
Table A-21	Napa	49
Table A-22	Nevada	50
Table A-23	Orange	51
Table A-24	Placer	52
	Plumas (see Sierra Valley)	65
Table A-25	Riverside	53
Table A-26	Sacramento	54
Table A-27	San Benito	55
Table A-28	San Bernardino	56
Table A-29	San Diego	57
Table A-30	San Joaquin	58
Table A-31	San Luis Obispo	59
Table A-32	San Mateo	60
Table A-33	Santa Barbara	61
Table A-34	Santa Clara	62
Table A-35	Santa Cruz	63
Table A-36	Shasta	64
Table A-37	Sierra Valley (Lassen/Plumas/Sierra)	65
Table A-38	Siskiyou	66
Table A-39	Solano	67
Table A-40	Sonoma	68
Table A-41	Stanislaus	69
Table A-42	Sutter	70
Table A-43	Tehama	71
Table A-44	Tulare	72
Table A-45	Ventura	73
Table A-46	Yolo	74
Table A-47	Yuba	75

Appendix B: 2008 and 2010 County Acreage Tallies

Table B-1	Important Farmland Acreage Summary 2008	77
Table B-2	Important Farmland Acreage Summary 2010.....	78
Table B-3	Important Farmland Acreage Summary, By Region, 2010	79

Appendix C: County and Regional Conversion Summaries

Table C-1	Sources of Urban Land 2008-2010 and Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use	81
Table C-2	Irrigated Farmland Changes 2008-2010	82
Table C-3	Net Change in Irrigated Land 2008-2010.....	83

Appendix D: Rural Land Use Mapping Tables

Table D-1	Rural Land Use Conversion Summary.....	85
Table D-2	Rural Land Mapping Changes 2008-2010.....	86
Table D-3	Fresno	87
Table D-4	Kern	88
Table D-5	Kings	89
Table D-6	Madera.....	90
Table D-7	Mendocino.....	91
Table D-8	Merced.....	92
Table D-9	San Joaquin.....	93
Table D-10	Stanislaus.....	94
Table D-11	Tulare	95

This page left intentionally blank.