

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

2014 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Madera

FIELD MAPPER(S): Farl Grundy

IMAGE DATA USED:

Source: National Agriculture Imagery Program, USDA
Acquisition date: Summer 2014
Data description: True color mosaic, 1 meter resolution
Coverage gaps: None
Additional imagery used: None

WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES:

The following entities and individuals provided information used to conduct 2014 mapping.

Local Review Comments (submitted by cities, counties, & others on 2012 maps)
None
Personal Contacts
None
Websites Used for Reference
County of Madera: http://www.madera-county.com/ City of Madera: http://www.cityofmadera.org/ Google Maps, Street View: https://www.google.com/
GIS Data Used for Reference
California City Boundary Layer Madera County Base Map Madera County Digital Soil Surveys

2012-2014 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.

Conversions to Urban Land	
Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land	0 changes
There were no significant changes of irrigated farmland to urban land this update.	
Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Urban Land	12 changes
<p>Conversions this update were primarily due to the increased density of homes in existing low-density areas. This increased density allowed these area to now be classified into urban land. Ahwahnee had approximately 90 acres of added urban followed by Madera Acres with approximately 80 acres. The Yosemite Lakes area and the Bonadelle Ranchos area both added approximately 40 acres of urban this update. The city of Madera witnessed new home construction “Villa Granada” which added approximately 10 acres to urban land.</p>	
Conversions from Irrigated Farmland aside from urbanization	
Irrigated Farmland to Nonirrigated Land Uses	49 changes
<p>The majority of these changes were due to irrigated farmland having been fallow for three or more update cycles. These changes occurred throughout the county and while a large number of these changes were small (less than 30 acres) a few larger changes (greater than 60 acres) occurred in the: Chowchilla, Firebaugh, Gregg, Lanes Bridge, Le Grand, Madera, and Mendota Dam quads.</p> <p>Another reason for change among this category was due to the identification of nonirrigated grain. Nonirrigated grain is mapped as Farmland of Local Importance in Madera County. The Lanes Bridge quad had approximately 120 acres of nonirrigated grain identified followed by the Berenda quad (~60 acres), the Gregg and Herndon quad (~40 acres each), and the Bliss Ranch and Chowchilla quads both with approximately 30 acres of newly identified nonirrigated grain.</p>	
Irrigated Farmland to Other Land	17 changes
<p>Low-density housing (ranchettes), farmsteads, rural commercial, agricultural equipment storage areas and disturbed land accounted for the majority of the changes this update. The bulk of these changes were less than 30 acres in size and scattered throughout the county. A larger noteworthy change occurred at or near the Paramount Farms Pistachio Hulling, Storing, and Packing Plant near Firebaugh. This change involved approximately 180 acres around the plant changing from irrigated farmland to disturbed land.</p>	
Conversions to Irrigated Farmland	
Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Irrigated Farmland	85 changes
<p>Conversions this update typically involved the addition of orchards, vineyards, field crops, and row crops. The majority of these changes ranged between 10 and 30 acres in size. Larger notable changes occurred in the Berenda quad with the addition of approximately 700 acres of orchards including, almonds and pistachios. On the Gregg quad there were multiple additions of orchards, all of which were over 140 acres in size.</p>	

Approximately 570 acres of new orchards and field crops were added in the Firebaugh NE quad. Lastly the Kismet, Lanes Bridge, and the Raynor Creek quads all had new orchards which were over 100 acres in size.

Unusual Changes

(Types of change not already described or special circumstances during the 2014 update.)

Nonirrigated Farmland to Other Land use: There were 15 changes of this nature which occurred throughout the county and were primarily due to the identification of low density housing (ranchettes), farmsteads, rural commercial, agricultural equipment storage areas, and/or disturbed land. These changes generally involved the conversion of 30 acres or less.

Conversion between Irrigated Farmland uses: Changes of this type primarily involved the conversion from irrigated pasture to irrigated farmland. There were 12 of these changes occurring throughout the county and typically involved the planting of new orchards. Depending on the underlying soil type, this type of change may or may not result in a change to the Important Farmland classification, and in turn the Important Farmland Map. Another noteworthy change occurred with the identification of nonirrigated vines in the Chowchilla area. This type of change would cause a change in classification from Prime Farmland to Unique Farmland, because both Prime and Statewide Farmland have to be irrigated in California.

Farmland of Local Importance to Grazing Land: There were 12 conversions of Farmland of Local Importance to Grazing Land this update. These changes were primarily due to irrigated pasture having been fallow for three or more update cycles. This type of conversion typically involved 10 to 20 acres per conversion.

Grazing Land to Farmland of Local Importance: There were 8 conversions of Grazing Land to Farmland of Local Importance this update. These conversions were largely due to the identification of nonirrigated grain, which is mapped as Farmland of Local Importance in Madera County. The two quads with the largest changes were the Kismet quad (approximately 160 acres) and the Lanes Bridge quad (approximately 390 acres) converting from grazing to nonirrigated grain.

Areas of Concern for Future Updates

(Locations or map categories noted as needing careful checking during 2016 update, and reasons.)

This update there were a few areas of confined livestock that went out of production and were replanted with orchards. Continue to watch for this type of conversion particularly with some of the smaller confined livestock operations.

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 2014 update.

Image interpretation, start date: January 27, 2015
Image interpretation, number of days: 16
Ground truth dates: March 3-5, 2015
Number of days for post-ground truth clean-up: 5

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