

**California Department of Conservation
Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program**

2002 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Los Angeles

FIELD MAPPER(S): Kerri Kisko

IMAGERY:

source: Air Photo USA
date: February 2002
scale: 2 foot resolution
type: true color
coverage gaps: none
additional imagery: none

WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES: *Please list which local governments, interest groups, or individuals submitted comments on the 2000 maps. Also list all phone and in-person contacts made or related GIS data referenced while conducting the 2002 update.*

➤ *local review comments*

cities: Agoura Hills, Palmdale
county: Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures
others: none

➤ *personal contacts:*

Bill Verdery, Mojave Desert State Parks (661)-726-1672
Al Aikens, California State Parks-Survey Unit (916)-445-8880

➤ *websites:*

California State Parks: www.parks.ca.gov
Castaic Lake: www.castaiclake.com
Gorman WHR Pyramid Lake RV Resort: www.whresorts.com
Los Angeles County: <http://lacountyinfo>
Mojave Desert State Parks: www.calparksmojave.com

➤ *GIS data referenced:*

Antelope Valley Area digital soil survey: CA675
SWIS landfill/waste facility reference file: SWIS.dgn

2000-2002 CHANGES*: *Please summarize the most common changes to the maps. List representative locations (quads) of each type of change encountered. Make sure to list and describe particularly large, unusual or notable changes and give estimates of the acreage involved.*

Note: This is the first digital update for Los Angeles County. Using improved digital resources, more accurate boundaries were drawn throughout the county. Therefore, adjustments were made in all categories throughout the county. The changes listed below are only representative of the total number of actual changes. See additional note below under 'unusual changes'.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land**

There were five conversions of irrigated farmland to urban land this update. These changes were scattered throughout the county. The developments include a new shopping center, a few commercial buildings, and the new Scattaglia Farms packing facility.

➤ **Local, Grazing or Other Land to Urban Land**

There were 99 conversions of local, grazing, or other land to urban land. The majority of these changes occurred in the Lancaster/Palmdale area and the Santa Clarita Valley. In the Lancaster/Palmdale area the development was primarily in the form of homes. Some examples of new housing communities include Harris Homes (~15 acres) on the Lancaster West quad, Sierra Colony Ranch (~45 acres) on the Sleepy Valley quad, Belmont at Delta Ridge (~35 acres) on the Ritter Ridge quad, and the expansion of the Rancho Vista master planned community (~170 acres) on the Ritter Ridge quad. Other developments in the Lancaster/Palmdale area include a new shopping center (Wal-Mart, Jack in the Box, Del taco, etc.) totaling approximately 20 acres on the Lancaster East quad, The Place on 47th Street shopping center (~25 acres) on the Palmdale quad, and some large buildings (~20 acres) on the Del Sur quad.

In the Santa Clarita Valley the development was a mixture of new homes and commercial buildings. Some examples of new housing communities include Lakeview (~50 acres) on the Val Verde quad, Haskell Canyon (~45 acres) and Hasley Hills (~110 acres) on the Newhall quad, and St. Clair (~25 acres) and Glen Brook (~40 acres) on the Mint Canyon quad. Some commercial developments include new warehouses at the Valencia Commerce Park (~65 acres) on the Val Verde quad, new warehouses (~20 acres) and the Lowe's shopping center (~30 acres) on the Newhall quad, new warehouses (~20 acres) on the Mint Canyon quad, All Purpose Storage and other buildings (~10 acres) on the Agua Dulce quad, and the expansion of the Sunshine Canyon Landfill (~155 acres) on the Oat Mountain quad.

Throughout the rest of the county the urbanization was less intense. On the El Mirage quad, a runway at Gray Butte Field was recently paved (~80 acres). Two areas of new homes (~10 acres each) were noted on the Acton quad. On the San Fernando quad a new warehouse (~10 acres) and some new homes (~40 acres) were added. Two areas of commercial buildings (~25 and 10 acres) were added on the Thousand Oaks quad. On the Calabasas quad some new homes (~50 acres) and the expansion of the Calabasas Sanitary Landfill (~80 acres) were noted. An area of new homes (~30 acres) was added on the Point Dume quad.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Local or Grazing Land**

There were nine conversions of irrigated farmland to local or grazing land this

update. The majority (8) of these changes were due to irrigated farmland being fallow for three or more update cycles. These changes occurred in the northwestern portion of the county. Large conversions of 50 acres or more occurred on the Val Verde (1) and Newhall (3) quads. The other change was due to a parcel of irrigated farmland being converted to nonirrigated grain on the Lake Hughes quad (\approx 285 acres).

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land**

There were 34 conversions of irrigated farmland to other land. The majority (17) of these changes were due to irrigated farmland being fallow for three or more update cycles. These changes occurred throughout the county. Large conversions of 50 acres or more occurred on the Lancaster East (1), Valyermo (1), and Van Nuys (1) quads. The other changes were due to ranchettes, agricultural staging areas, and a rural freeway interchange.

➤ **Local, Grazing or Other Land to Irrigated Farmland**

There were 59 conversions of local, grazing, or other land to irrigated farmland this update. These changes were scattered throughout the county and primarily were in the form of alfalfa, row crops, and orchards. The most notable changes include an approximately 670-acre parcel of alfalfa on the El Mirage quad, an approximately 490-acre parcel of alfalfa on the La Libre Ranch quad, and an approximately 300-acre parcel of alfalfa on the Lake Hughes quad.

This increase in irrigated land in the Antelope Valley is the continuation of a trend documented during the 1998-2000 update. Carrots, potatoes, and onions are the primary crops, as described in an August 2003 article/interview in *California Farmer* magazine.

➤ **UNUSUAL:** *Category changes, complications with the Farmland of Local Importance definition, or any other special circumstances in 2002.*

Urban Land to Other Land, Grazing Land: Because of the availability of terrain-corrected high-resolution imagery, urban boundaries throughout the county were replaced to improve accuracy. The improvements, particularly in hilly areas, actually resulted in a decrease in total urban acres in the county, despite the new urban uses described above. This is a one-time correction which ultimately created a more accurate product but which created anomalous statistics in the 2000-2002 farmland conversion table.

Local, Grazing to Other Land: There were 36 conversions. The majority of these changes were due to the addition of low-density housing (ranchettes). Other changes also include rural commercial, small water bodies, equestrian centers, low-density oil fields (for consistency), and the fallowing of farmland of local importance. One change of note was the Antelope Valley Poppy Reserve (\approx 1,750 acres). The preserve was converted to other land due to its designation as a no-grazing area.

Other Land to Local: The one conversion was due to the identification of an approximately 25-acre parcel of nonirrigated farmland on the Neenach School quad.

Local to Grazing Land: There were approximately 33 conversions. These changes

were due to the fallowing of farmland of local importance and the use of highly detailed imagery in assessing the long-term idling of dryland farming areas where imagery had been previously lacking. Large conversions occurred on the La Liebre Ranch, Neenach School, Fairmont Butte, and Lake Hughes quads.

Urban to Unique, Prime: There were five conversions. Four of these changes were due to the identification of small container nurseries. The other conversion was due to the expansion of a sod farm.

Irrigated agriculture was shifted between prime, statewide, and unique due to soil line corrections.

Grazing Land increased relative to Farmland of Local Importance as a result of the automated selection of qualifying soil units using SSURGO and assessment of long-term idling of dryland farming areas.

PROBLEM AREAS: *What locations and map categories need careful checking in 2004? Why?*

A large amount of the farmland of local importance is in some stage of fallowing. Watch for more fallowing in the future.

LABOR ESTIMATE: *Please estimate the amount of time spent on the following tasks.*

photo interpretation, start date: Feb. 27, 2003
photo interpretation, number of days: 10
ground truthing dates: Mar. 24-27, 2003
days for map compilation and clean up: 11

* **Note:** **Irrigated Farmland** = Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Unique Farmland; **Local** = Farmland of Local Importance

Further information on the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program can be found at:

www.consrv.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp