

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

2002 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Madera

FIELD MAPPER(S): Michael Kisko

IMAGERY:

source: NASA-Ames Research Center
date: August 28, 2001
scale: 1:130,000
film type: CIR Transparency
coverage gaps: 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:
county: Madera
others:

➤ *personal contacts* Robert Rolan, Madera County Agricultural Commissioner
Tim Murray at Madera Co. Planning Dept. (559) 675-7821

➤ *websites:* Madera County (www.madera-county.com)
San Joaquin River Conservancy (<http://sjriverconservancy.com>)
Liberty High School (<http://www.qvusd.k12.ca.us/Liberty/default.htm>)

➤ *GIS data referenced:* SWIS landfill, waste facility and DFG wildlife area and ecological reserve reference files

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.*

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land**

There were 9 conversions of irrigated farmland to urban land this update, with 6 occurring on the Madera quad, alone. New homes (~25 acres), including the new "Vista Del Sol" gated community, were noted near the Fresno River in the western portion of the City of Madera. A bit further to the west, new homes were also seen in the "Capistrano"

development (~25 acres). Next, on the southwestern urban fringe of the City of Madera, a couple of new warehouses were added in a fairly industrial area (~15 acres). Finally, the “Cottonwood Creek” multi-family housing development accounted for the conversion of approximately 5 acres in the Parksdale area.

Meanwhile, to the east of the City of Madera on the Gregg quad, there were two notable conversions of irrigated farmland to urban land. The first was the addition of a new building and parking lots at the Madera Center (~25 acres) and the second was the new Liberty High School (~50 acres).

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

There were 24 conversions of local, grazing, or other land to urban land. A conversion of note was the expansion of a golf course just to the east of the City of Chowchilla by approximately 120 acres. New homes and buildings scattered around the City of Madera accounted for the urbanization of another ~35 acres. A last notable conversion occurred on the Lanes Bridge quad, near the children’s hospital, where new buildings were evident in the Brickyard Industrial Park (~20 acres). The remaining conversions in this category were due, primarily, to the identification of small areas of homes or buildings throughout the county, refinements made to the urban line, or the reclassification of areas due to increased densities.

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

There were 12 conversions of irrigated farmland to local or grazing land. These conversions were spread throughout the county and were primarily due to land that had been fallow for three updates. An unusual conversion on the Madera quad was due to the identification of irrigated pasture on U soils that was subsequently shifted to farmland of local importance. Finally, a fairly sizeable area of dry grain was identified on the Lanes Bridge quad, adjacent to the children’s hospital.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land**

There were 93 conversions of irrigated farmland to other land. These conversions took place throughout the county with the Chowchilla (22), Madera (15), Bliss Ranch (12), Gregg (9), and Berenda (8) quads showing the most changes. The majority of these changes were due to small plots of farmland (<40 acres) that had been fallow for three or more updates or the identification of ranchettes or farmsteads. Finally, the identification of dairies also accounted for a good number of conversions with a couple of notable new dairies found on the Bliss Ranch (~120 acres) and Chowchilla (~135 acres) quads.

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

There were 21 conversions of local, grazing, or other land to irrigated farmland. In general, these new additions of irrigated farmland were small and scattered throughout the county and were due to new plantings of alfalfa, orchards, and vines. One notable addition was a large, new field of alfalfa or irrigated hay (~1200 acres) identified on the Firebaugh NE quad. Another sizeable conversion occurred on the Berenda quad where some orchards and irrigated crops were identified (~500 acres).

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

G,L→X There were numerous instances of this type of conversion due to the identification of ranchettes scattered throughout the county.

L→G,X There were also many instances of the conversion of irrigated pasture on U soil or dry grain areas that had been fallow for four updates.

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

Farmland of Local Importance polygons could use further scrutiny in the next update.

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

photo interpretation, start date: May 14, 2003

photo interpretation, number of days: 10

ground truthing dates: June 16-20, 2003

days for map compilation and clean up: 9

* **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