

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

2002 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: San Luis Obispo

FIELD MAPPER(S): Michael Kisko

IMAGERY:

source: NASA-Ames Research

date: 8/8/03

scale: 1 :130,000

film type: CIR Transparency

coverage gaps: extreme southern edge of county, filled by AirPhotoUSA

additional imagery: AirphotoUSA 2002 true color imagery; Landsat IR 2002

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: Paso Robles

county:

others:

➤ *websites:*

Mondavi Cuesta Ridge Vineyard:

<http://www.environmentaldefense.org/article.cfm?contentid=3709>

Fetzer Five Rivers Ranch: <http://www.pasowine.com/profile.php?winery=58>

➤ *GIS data referenced:* SLO County Ag. Department crop file; SWIS waste facility file; SLO digital soil surveys: slo_cp and slo_pra as well as Santa Barbara North scanned soil survey sheets for the Cuyama Valley area

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 10 conversions of irrigated farmland to urban land this update, most of which were small and were due to the addition of new homes. The most notable conversion occurred on the northern fringe of the City of Atascadero where the build-out of "The Lakes" development was the cause of the conversion of approximately 100 acres of

irrigated farmland. A further conversion occurred to the south of Paso Robles at the Highway 1/Highway 46 interchange where a new Hampton Inn was in evidence. Meanwhile, further south in the county, homes were added in the Arroyo Grande area (~10 acres) as well as two additions of new homes in the Grover City area (~35 acres).

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

There were 62 conversions of local, local potential, grazing, or other land to urban land this update. Most of these conversions were due to small additions of homes and industrial buildings in and around cities throughout the county. Identification of areas of existing homes with increased densities was another cause of conversion.

First, new apartment homes were in evidence in the southern San Luis Obispo area along Los Osos Valley Road where the new de Tolosa Ranch apartment homes and Rancho Obispo apartments were added (~40 acres). Adjacent to the new apartments along Los Osos Valley Road, a new Home Depot store (~10 acres) was also added. Finally, new homes were seen on the southern edge of Arroyo Grande nearby Highway 101 (~30 acres).

Second, additions of new homes took place west of Nipomo nearby Black Lake Golf Course (~20 acres) and not far from the Nipomo Regional Park (~40 acres). Other, notable additions in the Nipomo area included the new Nipomo High School (~50 acres) and a new strip mall and mini storage facility alongside Highway 101 (~20 acres). Another new mini storage, the “Paso Robles Self Storage” (~10 acres) was an addition alongside Highway 46 to the east of Paso Robles.

Finally, the Cold Canyon Landfill (~100 acres) was an addition this update that wasn't a new facility but was more easily identified due to our SWIS waste facility reference file.

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

There were 35 conversions of irrigated farmland to local, local potential, or grazing land this update. The vast majority of these conversions were due to irrigated farmland having been fallow for three updates. These conversions were spread throughout the county with a majority occurring in the north--21 of the 34 conversions occurred from the Creston area to the north. Due to the county's Farmland of Local Importance definition, farmland taken out of production on Prime or Statewide soils went into the Farmland of Local Potential category while farmland taken out of production on lesser quality soils went into the Grazing Land category.

Finally, the identification of dryland farming areas, such as nonirrigated grains, was a further source of conversion.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land**

There were 5 conversions of irrigated farmland to other land this update. The majority of these were due to the identification of farmsteads. The remaining conversions were due to small plots of farmland <40 acres on U soils having been fallow for three updates.

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

There were 198 conversions of local, local potential, grazing, or other land to irrigated farmland this update. The vast majority of these conversions were due to the identification of vineyards. Again, a majority of these additions (128) occurred from the Creston area north in the Paso Robles (21), Estrella (20), York Mtn. (16), Templeton (16), and Creston (30) areas. Many of these additions of vineyards were small additions or expansions of existing vineyards. Some of these additions may have been put in a couple of years previous and are just exhibiting enough foliage to show up on our infrared photos.

Some notable examples of large vineyard additions include plantings at the Carmody McKnight Estate Wines vineyards (~235 acres), the James Berry and Denner Vineyards (~180 acres), the Fetzer Five Rivers Ranch (~500 acres), and the Mondavi Co. Cuesta Ridge Vineyards on Santa Margarita Ranch (~600 acres).

Other conversions to irrigated farmland made throughout the county but to a much lesser extent include the addition of avocado orchards, strawberry fields, nurseries with stock grown in containers, and a Christmas tree farm.

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

Ranchettes: There were quite a lot of ranchettes added this update throughout the county. They were not necessarily new but there is a heightened awareness of their presence since undertaking the 4-county rural land mapping pilot project where they were “broken out” of the Other Land category. Also, some county comments submitted alerted us to the location of rural residential areas—they can be hard to spot in heavily wooded sites.

Urban to greenhouse: There were a few greenhouses growing stock in containers identified that had been previously mapped as urban land.

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

Farmland of Local Importance will need careful checking in the next couple of updates to determine if nonirrigated grain is present, especially if digital soils are incorporated.

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

photo interpretation, start date: 4/26/04

photo interpretation, number of days: 9

ground truthing dates: 5/10/04-5/14/04

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; **Local Potential** = Farmland of Local Potential

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

www.consrv.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp