

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

2004 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: San Luis Obispo

FIELD MAPPER(S): Patrick Hennessy

IMAGERY:

source: NASA-Ames Research Center

date: August 8-11, 2003

scale: 1:130,000

film type: CIR Transparencies

coverage gaps: San Simeon Area

additional imagery: National Agriculture Imagery Program

date: 2004

resolution: 2 meter

color type: true color

coverage gaps: San Simeon and North along coast to county line

WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES: *Please list which local governments, interest groups, or individuals submitted comments on the 2002 maps. Also list all phone and in-person contacts made or related GIS data referenced while conducting the 2004 update.*

➤ *local review comments*

cities: Morro Bay

county: San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture

others:

➤ *personal contacts:* Via voice mail:

Ray Smith, Supervising Ranger, Montaña de Oro State Park
Verified no grazing leases within park.

Via E-mail:

Lisa Norris, Public Affairs Office, Camp Roberts

Verified grazing leases, primarily sheep, on the property.

➤ *websites:* California State Parks - http://www.parks.ca.gov/lat_long_map/default
Montaña de Oro State Park boundaries

<http://www.californiacoastline.org/> California Coastal Records Project
Used in photo coverage gaps along north coast of county.

➤ *GIS data referenced:* San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture
ESRI shapefile of existing agricultural crops

California Spatial Information Library

<http://gis.ca.gov>

Public and Conservation Trust Lands (2005)

2002-2004 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 are only 8 changes from irrigated farmland to urban land and each was under fifteen acres. New homes were the standard reason for this change, but there was also a warehouse found on irrigated farmland in the San Luis Obispo area. Near Shandon, a grade school yard changed approximately one and a half acres to urban.

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

There are approximately eighty changes of this type. Most of the changes are small additions to existing urban land. A few of the noticeable changes include the Damon Garcia Sports Park in San Luis Obispo (20 acres), and the "Country Hills" housing development southeast of Paso Robles (25 acres). Another change occurred in Paso Robles with seventy acres allocated to a golf course and the new Cuesta College North County Campus (north of Highway 46).

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

This happens to be a very significant change in San Luis Obispo County during this update. There were approximately two hundred seventy changes that occurred in various locations, and their acreage makes them so significant. Sixteen of the changes were over one hundred acres and all of the changes were the result of land going fallow for three or more updates. Some may have been out of production for longer than six years, but imagery gaps made making determinations difficult during earlier map updates.

The following is a list of the largest of the changes. South of San Miguel where the Estrella River meets the Salinas River, one hundred and fifty acres went fallow. To the east of Creston, there were one hundred seventy acres that went fallow. Just southeast of Atascadero, approximately one hundred ninety acres changed. The Paso Robles area experienced large amounts of irrigated farmland going out of production. In particular, the orchards primarily to the west of the city had been going fallow for a number of years. Due to a lack of quality imagery for several past updates, this area had remained in irrigated agriculture. Now these orchards are finally fallow for a third update cycle. The largest individual changes involved 150, 180, 215, 290, 450, and even a nine hundred acre change. Several hundred acres are marked as fallow for two update cycles and will probably be removed from the irrigated categories during the 2006 update.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land**

There are only 26 changes from irrigated farmland to other land. These changes were the result of small areas going fallow for three update cycles. A majority of the land had farmsteads and agricultural related structures, so Other Land is the appropriate map category for that type of change. Several of the changes also include adjustments to the boundaries between the irrigated agriculture and Other Land.

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

A large number of changes of this type; just over three hundred in total. An overwhelming majority of these changes were small additions to existing irrigated farmland and some adjustments to the boundaries. The noteworthy changes include seventy acres of carrots in the Cuyama Valley, avocados near Nipomo (110 acres) and east of Morro Bay off of Highway 41 (140 acres). Vines were added southwest of Shandon (115 acres) and south of Santa Margarita (175 acres). One hundred acres of row crops in San Luis Obispo converted Local to irrigated farmland. Olive trees were identified north of Paso Robles on ninety acres and some irrigated pasture was verified in San Simeon (40 acres) and north of San Simeon (50 acres). The irrigated pasture is worth mentioning due to the lack of irrigated agriculture on that isolated part of the coast.

➤ **UNUSUAL:** *Category changes, complications with the Farmland of Local Importance definition, or any other special circumstances in 2004.*

A few unusual changes this update. Six acres of water was identified from the Twitchell Reservoir polygon as irrigated grape vines. This is on the upper reaches of the reservoir which hasn't seen water in quite a while. Two changes removed urban land. One is fifteen acres in Cuesta by the Sea where urban land was slightly overmapped in the past. Similarly, fifty five acres of urban was removed north of Highway 101 in the Pismo Beach, Grover City area.

Based on the county's Farmland of Local Importance (Local) definition, digital soil survey data (SSURGO data) and the extent of dryland farming areas were used to delineate this category when compiling the 2002 map. Acreage of Local decreased significantly relative to that of Grazing Land in the 2002 data due to this improved method of compiling the map. Both the automated selection of qualifying soil units and decreases in dryland farming were responsible for this change. Data to improve dryland farming boundaries was provided by the county Agricultural Commissioner's office and improved digital imagery.

PROBLEM AREAS: *What locations and map categories need careful checking in 2006? Why?*

Watch the orchards that surround the hills around Paso Robles, several hundred acres may go fallow for a third update soon, or possibly change to grape vines.

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

photo interpretation, start date: August 15, 2005

photo interpretation, number of days: 28

ground truthing dates: November 30 – December 2, 2005

days for map compilation and clean up: 7

* **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