

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

2006 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Kern

FIELD MAPPER(S): Patrick Hennessy

IMAGERY:

source: National Agriculture Imagery Program, USDA
date: 2005
resolution: 2 meter
color type: true color
coverage gaps: none

source: Air Photo USA
date: May 2006
scale: 1 foot resolution
film type: true color
coverage gaps: none

WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES: *Please list which local governments, interest groups, or individuals submitted comments on the 2004 maps. Also list all phone and in-person contacts made or related GIS data referenced while conducting the 2006 update.*

➤ *local review comments*

cities:

county:

others: Arvin-Edison Water Storage District

➤ *personal contacts:*

➤ *websites:* Kern County Public Online Mapping Viewer
http://maps.co.kern.ca.us/imf/sites/krn_pub/launch.jsp

Kern County GIS data
<http://www.co.kern.ca.us/gis/downloads.asp>

2006 Kern County Agricultural Crop Report
http://www.co.kern.ca.us/kernag/crop00_09/Crop06/06CropReport1.pdf

Kern County Communications
<http://www.co.kern.ca.us/gsd/communications/about.asp>

City of Bakersfield Recreation and Parks (The Park at Riverwalk)
<http://www.bakersfieldcity.us/recreation/Parks/parkatriverwalk.htm>

Silver Saddle Ranch and Club (verifying land use and location)
<http://www.silversaddle.com/index.htm>

Sunridge Nurseries (verifying land use and location)
<http://www.sunridgenurseries.com/index.html>

DWR projects including the expansion of the Sycamore Spreading Works
by the Arvin-Edison Water Storage District
http://www.grantsloans.water.ca.gov/docs/prop13/Prop13_Attachment_B_grants_director.pdf

Photo of Kern County Gun Club with distinctive walkway visible in photo
used for verification of land use.
<http://www.kernvalley.net/recreate/valley/photos/shooting.jpg>

- *GIS data referenced:* Water storage facilities and canal data from Arvin-Edison Water Storage District
Kern County GIS data downloaded from website listed above.
Crops 2005 - agricultural crop data
Kern Roads – road data used as spatial reference

2004-2006 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**

The conversion from Irrigated farmland to Urban land was very common and very large in a few instances. There were just over 50 changes and most were new homes in units of less than 50 acres. There was plenty of activity around the edges of Bakersfield where the agricultural and urban lands interface. Specific examples include the development called Stockdale Villas (40 acres) located near the intersection of Renfro Road and Stockdale Highway. The expansion of the Sycamore Spreading Works just east of Arvin was approximately 90 acres and was confirmed with internet searches and comments provided by the Arvin- Edison Water Storage District. Almost 200 acres of Irrigated farmland in western Bakersfield was converted into the Silver Oaks Development and over 600 acres of new homes with a new school were found in the northwest part of the city where Olive Road turns into Allen Road.

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

This was the most abundant change, adding up to almost 190 total changes. While the total amount of changes appears high, the majority were small additions adjacent to existing urban areas. The area around the Bakersfield Airport had various types of land use change. Several new buildings were erected, including new terminal structures (over

25 acres) and industrial buildings in the vicinity (over 125 acres). The airport also expanded the runway and added several new related buildings. Over at the Bakersfield Sanitary landfill, expansion contributed another 180 acres of new Urban land.

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

The conversion of Irrigated farmland to Grazing land is due to fields going fallow for three or more update cycles. While only three update cycles are required to make this type of change, many of the agricultural fields was allowed to go fallow for four update cycles in order to ensure that the land was definitely out of production. The total number of changes is just over 80, but the acreages of several are very large. There are 17 changes that range between 50-100 acres and 8 changes between 100-200 acres. The largest changes range from 200 to 500 acres, and there were 8 of them. In the Tehachapi area, 250 acres went fallow at the intersection of Highline Road and Dennison Road. A couple other changes in the vicinity of Interstate 5 and Lerdo Highway are just over 250 acres but were not accessible during the field check. Two large changes that were successfully field checked exceeded 300 acres, one at Lost Hills Road and Twisselman Road, and another in the mountain valley called Walker Basin. The largest change was over 450 acres in the desert near the Los Angeles county line, southwest of Willow Springs.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land**

The conversion of Irrigated Farmland to Other land occurred 50 times, but 40 of these changes were less than 50 acres. Several of the changes were identified as farmsteads or farmland that has gone fallow for three or more updates and too small to put into a separate Grazing land polygon. There were a couple changes of low density housing as well. The most significant changes were due to new or expanded feedlots and dairies. Expansions occurred near Interstate 5 and Highway 223 (15 & 130 acres), and near Highway 99 and Highway 223 (35 acres). Three large changes involved new feedlots and dairies. The largest is over 160 acres located on Lerdo Highway between Shafter and Interstate 5. Another one (115 acres) was found at Jumper Avenue and Schuster Road near the Tulare county line. Lastly, a very large feedlot exceeding 225 acres was built near Interstate 5 and Highway 119. Out of the total 225 acres, 70 of the acres converted Irrigated farmland while the remaining 155 acres come from Grazing land.

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

Over 60 changes from Grazing and Other land to Irrigated farmland occurred. New crops vary from alfalfa to orchards, sod and vegetables and a dozen of the changes were more than 100 acres. The three largest of these changes all exceeded 500 acres. The first of these is in the Sunflower Valley, near the northwest corner of the county, where almost 600 acres was added. This site was inaccessible during the field check, so the appearance in the photos was the basis for the change. In the Antelope Plain near Blackwells Corner, almost 650 acres of onions were planted, according to the 2005 county crop data. Lastly, there is a conversion of 1,400 acres to alfalfa and sudan grass located just southwest of the intersection of Interstate 5 and Highway 119.

➤ **UNUSUAL:** *Category changes, complications with the Farmland of Local Importance definition, or any other special circumstances in 2006.*

All of the unusual changes involve the conversion of Urban land to another land use. Most of these changes were small adjustments to improve the boundary between agriculture and Urban land, but a few of them are notable. Not far from the intersection of Vineland Road and Edison Highway, the identification of the Sunridge nursery converted 10 acres of Urban land. The website for the nursery was extremely helpful in the identification. The address listed matched the location of the area under scrutiny. In the southwestern part of the county, there were two instances where dense oil equipment, infrastructure and tanks were removed. The sites were noted by previous analysts and changed after a third update to the surrounding land use, which happened to be Other land. Lastly, a microwave facility south of Bakersfield was also noted for two updates as no longer having structures. After reading on the Kern County Communications website about the new microwave radio system that recently replaced a much older one, it was determined that this site was probably no longer in use and no longer has the characteristics of Urban land. The 2005 county crop data indicated that the land is used for growing oats. A site check proved unsuccessful due to a locked gate, but from a distance, the appearance seemed to coincide with the county data. Irrigation of the oats was questionable in the aerial photos, so the urban areas were changed to non-irrigated grains.

PROBLEM AREAS: *What locations and map categories need careful checking in 2008? Why?*

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

photo interpretation, start date: 11/5/2007
photo interpretation, number of days: 25
ground truthing dates: 1/29/2008 – 2/1/2008
days for map compilation and clean up: 3

* **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