

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

2006 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Stanislaus

FIELD MAPPER(S): Larelle Burkham-Greydanus (update)
and Kerri Kisko (survey area addition)

IMAGERY:

source: National Agricultural Imagery Program, USDA

date: summer 2005 and 2006

scale: 2 meter resolution

film type: true color mosaic

coverage gaps: none

additional imagery: Landsat 7 infrared imagery from summer 2005, 30-meter resolution

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:* none available

cities:

county:

others:

➤ *personal contacts:* Eric Hopson, Assistant Wildlife Manager

San Luis Refuge Complex

For questions regarding following farmland in the San Luis National Refuge Complex

Joe Mota, Soil Conservationist

NRCS Modesto Service Center

For questions regarding following farmland within NRCS easements

➤ *websites:*

San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge

http://www.fws.gov/sanluis/sanjoaquin_info.htm

for updated information on farmland following to wetland

➤ *GIS data referenced:*

USFWS Federal Lands: O:\Vector\agency_data\Feds\esri\joint_venture

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:** 70 changes

Modesto/Salida- The largest total acreage change occurred in Modesto and Salida primarily for new homes, apartments, and schools additions. Housing additions included ~ 80 ac. Rancho Encantato Estate development, as well as the ~ 30 ac. Centex Homes and Brooks Landing Apartments. Conversions for schools and school playing fields were delineated including ~20 ac. each for Big Valley Christian High School and Paradise School, ~ 40 ac. for James Enoch High School, ~15 ac. Brethren Heritage School and sports field, and ~10 ac. for Blaker-Kinzer Jr. High School playing fields. The addition of Kaiser Hospital and an adjacent retail nursery accounted for ~60 ac. of change in Modesto.

Oakdale/Riverbank- Large additions of development include ~50 ac. total for The Vineyard and The Reserve homes in Oakdale and ~50 ac. for the Crossroads at Riverbank Shopping Center in Riverbank. Other additions delineated include ~25 ac. for Sterling Ridge and Elwood Estate Homes and ~10 ac. for Sequoia Gate Homes.

Turlock/Denair- Noteworthy conversions to urban land in these areas were ~140 ac. of Ventana and Summerfield Homes and ~ 40 ac. for Costco and Valero Gas off of Highway 99.

Patterson/Newman- In Patterson, ~100 ac. of change occurred with the addition of Kohl's and Longs Drug Distribution Centers; while Patterson Garden and Morrison Magnolia Homes accounted for another ~140 ac. Newman had ~30 ac. addition of urban for Silver Oaks, Sherman Ranch, and Classic Park Village Heritage homes.

Conversions to urban land were also found in Ceres and Waterford. In Ceres, ~ 60 ac. were delineated for The Enclave, Meritage, and Kimball Hill Homes, as well as, ~40 ac. for Ceres River Bluff Regional Park and ~20 ac. for Whitmore Charter School. The last noteworthy addition was found in Waterford for ~60 ac. of Riverpointe Homes.

➤ **Local, Grazing or Other Land to Urban Land:** 25 changes

Noteworthy examples in Modesto include ~ 20 ac. for Centex Homes and Brooks Landing Apartments, ~15 ac for Sinclair Elementary School, and ~10 ac. for River Bluff Business Park. In the Oakdale and Riverbank area, ~100 ac. were delineated for Chaparral, Laredo, Oakdale, Sterling Ridge, and Elwood Estate Homes. The Waterford Waste Water Treatment Plant accounts for another ~10 ac urban addition. Small, unnamed business complexes and strip malls were also delineated in Turlock (~20 ac), Modesto (~15 ac) and Riverbank (~10 ac.).

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Local or Grazing Land:** 38 changes

This category of change involved irrigated farmland, including irrigated pasture, which had undergone fallowing of three update or more cycles. The conversions ranged from 10 acres to ~170 acres with several greater than 100 acres. Conversions were mainly seen on the periphery of cities.

In the Modesto area, a total of 330 ac. and in the Turlock area, a total of ~130 ac. were converted to grazing land. Along the Interstate 5 corridors near Newman and Patterson, ~230 acres were converted to grazing. In the Westley and Brush Lake area, two noteworthy conversions occurred. Approximately 110 ac. was converted to grazing due to having been found fallow near J16. And finally along the San Joaquin River, ~140 ac. of irrigated farmland was confirmed part of the San Luis Refuge Complex. But because the farmland had not undergone conversion to wetland, the land use was designated as grazing this update.

➤ **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land:** 124 changes

Most of these changes occurred throughout the county, representing additions of rural residential development less than 30 acres and waste treatment ponds for confined livestock less than 10 acres. However, Patterson and Oakdale had concentrated additions of rural residential development. Patterson had a total of ~250 ac. of ranchettes including ~60 ac. within Patterson city limits and ~50 ac. just southeast of Patterson. And just north and east of Oakdale, there were ~30 ac. and ~70 ac., respectively of ranchettes delineated.

Conversion of irrigated farmland to wetlands comprised large changes of this type in the Westley area. These areas had been fallowed for three update cycles in concert with conversion to wetlands. Approximately ~1540 ac. were identified as part of the San Juan National Refuge Complex, ~400 ac for a US Fish and Wildlife wetland restoration project, and ~100 ac. for the National Resource Conservation Service wetland restoration easement acquisition program. An additional ~75 ac. was also fallow and had undergone native vegetation restoration by an undetermined entity near these restoration projects.

➤ **Local, Grazing or Other Land to Irrigated Farmland:** 46 changes

Modesto Reservoir/Turlock Lake/Warnerville Area

Large additions of young orchards were made in the area between Modesto Reservoir, Turlock Lake, and Warnerville. The largest additions were for ~1600 ac. of almonds just southwest of Turlock Lake and ~600 ac. almond orchards just southeast of Warnerville. The Sandy Hills Orchards had ~200 ac. total orchard expansion. Additionally, a total of ~470 ac. of almonds were added adjacent to Turlock Lake and a total of ~420 ac. of almond orchards and vines were added northwest of Modesto Reservoir near Tim Bell Road.

Other noteworthy additions of irrigated farmland include a total of ~250 ac. of orchards east of Westley, and 110 ac of irrigated forage crop east of Oakdale off of Fogarty Road.

The land use trend of shifting between irrigated forage crops and irrigated pasture, or vice versa continues this update. These changes may reflect crop rotations or more permanent shifts. Depending on the underlying soil unit, the effect resulted in shifts between Farmland of Local Importance and Unique Farmland. Examples include a total acreage change of ~630 ac. east of Denair and a ~480 ac. single change near Hickman off of county route J9. Two other noteworthy changes, both ~160 ac., were west of Ripon.

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

Grazing to Local Farmland- ~600 ac. of non-irrigated grains was delineated north of Eugene in Bachelor Valley and an additional ~220 ac. non-irrigated grains were delineated near Turlock Lake.

Grazing to Other Land- ~160 ac. of historical mine tailings were delineated which represents a boundary adjustment versus actual new mining activity in the north county near the boundary with Calaveras County.

SURVEY AREA ADDITION: The completion of soil survey mapping by the Natural Resources Conservation Service allowed the addition of 100,830 acres to the Important Farmland survey area this update. This filled the one remaining data gap for the county, in the area of Knights Ferry and Valley Home. The work was accomplished by delineating land uses in the 2004 data file with imagery of that time period, so that the entire county could be updated with 2006 information.

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

Continued monitoring of permanent shifts between irrigated pasture and irrigated farmland, especially for forage crops, will need careful checking throughout the county. Also, farmland adjacent to the San Joaquin National Wildlife Refuge and San Luis National Refuge Complex will need careful monitoring in 2008 for continued conversion to wetlands.

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

photo interpretation, start date: 4/16/2007

photo interpretation, number of days: 7

ground truthing dates: 4/30-5/3/2007

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