

**California Department of Conservation  
FARMLAND MAPPING AND MONITORING PROGRAM**

**2010 FIELD REPORT**

**COUNTY:** San Luis Obispo

**FIELD MAPPER(S):** Kerri Kisko, Troy Dick

**IMAGE DATA USED:**

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Source                  | National Agriculture Imagery Program, USDA              |
| Acquisition date        | Summer 2010   |
| Data description        | True color mosaic, 1 meter resolution                   |
| Coverage gaps           | None  |
| Additional imagery used | National Agriculture Imagery Program, USDA; summer 2009 |

**WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES:**

*The following entities and individuals provided information used to conduct 2010 mapping.*

|   |
|---|
| <b>Local Review Comments</b><br>(submitted by cities, counties, & others on 2008 maps)  |
| None.   |
| <b>Personal Contacts</b>  |
| None.   |
| <b>Websites Used for Reference</b>  |
| County of San Luis Obispo: <a href="http://www.slocounty.ca.gov">http://www.slocounty.ca.gov</a><br>Google Earth, Street View: <a href="http://maps.google.com">http://maps.google.com</a><br>U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Santa Maria Project:<br><a href="http://www.usbr.gov/projects/Project.jsp?proj_Name=Santa+Maria+Project">http://www.usbr.gov/projects/Project.jsp?proj_Name=Santa+Maria+Project</a> |
| <b>GIS Data Used for Reference</b>  |
| California City Boundary Layer<br>San Luis Obispo County Base Map<br>San Luis Obispo County Digital Soil Surveys<br>Solid Waste Information System data   |

**2008-2010 CHANGE SUMMARY:**

*Changes made during the map update are summarized by type and location. Particular attention is paid to large or unusual changes and their estimated acreages. Please note that land use type, size of land use unit, soil quality, and Farmland of Local Importance definition (if any) determines the final Important Farmland (IFL) category. [See definitions](#) at bottom of table.*

## Conversions to Urban Land

### Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land

6 changes

These changes were primarily due to the construction of solar facilities, and the expansion of a runway at a community airport.

**Paso Robles:** Two wineries added solar power plants to their facilities. These were approximately 5 acres each.

**San Luis Obispo:** One winery added a solar power plant (~5 acres) and the airport expanded a runway (~20 acres).

Other changes were due to improved digital imagery that allowed for the delineation of more distinct urban boundaries.

### Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Urban Land

68 changes

These changes were primarily due to the construction of homes, buildings, and infrastructure.

**Paso Robles:** There were approximately 20 acres of new homes added throughout the City of Paso Robles. Also, the Golden Hills Plaza (~30 acres), two storage facilities (~20 acres), Sextant Wines tasting room and other businesses (~10 acres), and the Paso Robles Sports Club (~5 acres) were added. The Paso Robles Municipal Airport added a taxiway and some new buildings (~15 acres).

**Atascadero:** Approximately 70 acres of homes and apartments were added in the City of Atascadero, including the Dove Creek Apartments (~10 acres). A freeway interchange (~20 acres), water control ponds (~15 acres), and some new buildings (~5 acres) were also added.

**San Luis Obispo:** There were approximately 45 acres of homes added throughout the City of San Luis Obispo. Also, new buildings and parking lots (~40 acres) were added as well as a new agricultural processing facility (~15 acres) and a winery (~10 acres).

**Nipomo:** New homes and a golf course expansion were added at the Monarch Dunes retirement community and golf club (~130 acres). Approximately 45 acres of new homes were added as well as a paved lot for RV storage (~10 acres). Other changes were due to increased density of homes in existing housing areas resulting in approximately 90 acres of change from Other Land to Urban and Built-up Land.

**Other Conversions Throughout the County:** Approximately 30 acres of homes were added in Templeton. A golf course was expanded by approximately 20 acres in Los Osos. In Heritage Ranch, the Oak Hill Market (~5 acres) was added along with some new homes (~10 acres). The Pismo Beach Medical Center (~5 acres) was added in the City of Pismo Beach. In San Miguel, approximately 5 acres of new homes were added.

**Conversions from Irrigated Farmland  
aside from urbanization**

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Irrigated Farmland to Nonirrigated Land Uses | 103 changes |
|--|-------------|

The majority of these changes were due to irrigated farmland being fallow for three or more update cycles. These changes were primarily located in the interior and coastal valleys of San Luis Obispo County. These changes ranged in size from 10 acres to 80 acres. The majority of these changes were 20 acres or less. The largest changes occurred on the Cholame (~80 acres) and Paso Robles (~80 acres) quads. These changes will result in conversions to Farmland of Local Potential or Grazing Land.

Other conversions were due to the identification of nonirrigated grain, which is mapped as Farmland of Local Importance in San Luis Obispo County. Most of these changes were less than 30 acres. The largest conversions occurred on the Creston (~95 acres) and Pismo Beach (~130 acres) quads.

|                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Irrigated Farmland to Other Land | 15 changes |
|----------------------------------|------------|

Low-density housing (ranchettes), farmsteads, rural commercial, agricultural equipment storage areas and disturbed land accounted for the majority of the changes. These changes were scattered throughout the county and were primarily between 10-15 acres in size.

**Conversions to Irrigated Farmland**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Irrigated Farmland | 134 changes |
|---|-------------|

The majority of the irrigated farmland was added in the interior and coastal valleys of the county. Most of the changes were 10-60 acres in size and consisted of grape vines, orchards, row crops, field crops, and irrigated pasture. Some changes of note included the addition of vineyards (~100 and 155 acres) on the La Panza quad, row crops (~150 acres) on the Nipomo quad and vineyards (~220 acres) on the Paso Robles quad.

**Unusual Changes**

(Types of change not already described or special circumstances during the 2010 update.)

Nonirrigated Land Uses to Other Land: There were 258 conversions of nonirrigated land uses to Other Land. These changes were primarily due to low-density housing (ranchettes), farmsteads, rural commercial, agricultural equipment storage areas, disturbed land and nonagricultural vegetation. These changes occurred throughout the county and were primarily 10-40 acres in size.

Grazing Land to nonirrigated grain: There were 121 conversions of Grazing Land to nonirrigated grain, which is mapped as Farmland of Local Importance in San Luis Obispo County. Most of these changes were less than 60 acres. The largest conversions (100 acres or larger) occurred on the California Valley (~660 and 810 acres), Estrella (~100 and 165 acres), Holland Canyon (~190 and 450 acres), La Panza NE (~130, 160, 615 and 3,930 acres), La Panza Ranch (~120 and 135 acres), Packwood Creek (~110 acres), Paso Robles (~180 acres), Pozo Summit (~130 acres), Shedd Canyon (~235 acres) and Tent Hills (~165 acres) quads.

Nonirrigated grain to Grazing Land or Farmland of Local Potential: There were 71 conversions of nonirrigated grain to Grazing Land or Farmland of Local Potential. These changes were due to nonirrigated grain being fallow for four or more update cycles. These changes ranged in size from 10 acres to 660 acres. The majority of these changes were 60 acres or less. The largest changes (100 acres or larger) occurred on the Creston (~190 acres), Estrella (~660 acres), Nipomo (~155 acres), Paso Robles (~135, 180 and 195 acres), Shedd Canyon (~145 and 225 acres) and Tent Hills (~150 acres) quads.

Conversions from Urban Land: There were 18 conversions from Urban Land. Urban Land was converted to irrigated farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, Grazing Land and Other Land due to abandonment of urban uses for three or more update cycles. Other small conversions were due to the use of detailed digital imagery to delineate more distinct urban boundaries.

Conversions between Irrigated Farmland categories: There were 3 conversions between irrigated farmland categories. Two of these changes were due to irrigated farmland having been converted to potted plant nurseries. The other change was due to the identification of a nonirrigated orchard. Potted plant nurseries and nonirrigated orchards are considered Unique Farmland regardless of the underlying soil. These changes may result in conversions between Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland.

Water conversions: The upper reaches of Twitchell Reservoir were observed to be dry in most years. This reservoir is used to hold excess water in wet years for short periods to recharge the local groundwater basin. In dry years the land is used for other purposes, such as irrigated farmland, grazing of livestock and open space. Therefore, approximately 1,740 acres of Water was reclassified as irrigated farmland, Farmland of Local Potential, Grazing Land and Other Land.

### Areas of Concern for Future Updates

(Locations or map categories noted as needing careful checking during 2012 update, and reasons.)

None.

#### Definitions:

**Irrigated Farmland** includes most irrigated crops grown in California. When combined with soil data, these farmed areas become the Important Farmland (IFL) categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance & Unique Farmland. Because of the nature of the IFL definitions, some irrigated uses, such as irrigated pastures or nurseries, may not be eligible for all three IFL categories.

**Nonirrigated land uses** include grazing areas, land used for dryland crop farming, and formerly irrigated land that has been left idle for three or more update cycles. These uses are frequently incorporated into county Farmland of Local Importance definitions.

**Other Land** includes a variety of miscellaneous uses, such as low density rural residential development, mining areas, vacant areas and nonagricultural vegetation. Confined animal agriculture facilities are mapped as Other Land unless incorporated into a county Farmland of Local Importance definition.

**Urban Land** includes residential, industrial, recreational, infrastructure and institutional uses.

For more on map categories, including Farmland of Local Importance definitions, visit the [FMMP web site](#).

**LABOR ESTIMATE:**

*Time estimates for conducting the 2010 update.*

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Image interpretation, start date              | January 6, 2012  |
| Image interpretation, number of days          | 21 days          |
| Ground truth dates                            | June 11-15, 2012 |
| Number of days for post-ground truth clean up | 18 days          |

*Further information on the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program can be found at:*  
<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx>