

California Department of Conservation
FARMLAND MAPPING AND MONITORING PROGRAM

2016 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Stanislaus

FIELD MAPPER(S): Patrick Hennessy

IMAGE DATA USED:

Source: National Agriculture Imagery Program, USDA
Acquisition date: Summer 2016
Data description: True color mosaic, 1 meter resolution
Coverage gaps: None
Additional imagery used: None

WRITTEN, DIGITAL & ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES:

The following entities and individuals provided information used to conduct 2016 mapping.

Local Review Comments (submitted by cities, counties, & others on 2014 maps)
None
Personal Contacts
None
Websites Used for Reference
Google Maps, Street View: http://maps.google.com
GIS Data Used for Reference
None

2014-2016 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	39 changes
<p>Most of the changes from irrigated farmland to Urban Land were due to homes and various buildings and commercial structures. Notable changes included over 140 acres for the Scatec Westside Solar Ranch west of Interstate 5 near Crows Landing. In Patterson, a new warehouse was built for Restoration Hardware, converting over 90 acres. On the industrial west side of Turlock, a cold storage facility for Hilmar cheese was added that was just over 30 acres. The remaining changes were all less than 30 acres.</p>	
Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Urban Land	40 changes
<p>Most of the conversions to Urban Land from nonirrigated land uses were primarily due to an increased density of houses or commercial structures. This type of change occurred throughout the county but the periphery of Modesto and Turlock saw the majority of this transition. The largest conversion was over 70 acres to the east of Modesto, while the remaining conversions were all less than 30 acres each.</p>	
Conversions from Irrigated Farmland aside from urbanization	
Irrigated Farmland to Nonirrigated Land Uses	63 changes
<p>Conversions from irrigated farmland to nonirrigated land uses were primarily due to land going fallow or producing nonirrigated grains for three or more update cycles. Near Turlock Lake, 300 acres of inaccessible orchard went fallow. Several fields surrounding the old Crows Landing airfield were used for nonirrigated grains, individually converting 300, 190, 115 and 55 acres. In the industrial area of Patterson near Interstate 5, there were 220 acres of nonirrigated grains.</p>	
Irrigated Farmland to Other Land	171 changes
<p>This is a significant component of conversion during this update, particularly for the sheer quantity of changes. The majority of the changes were due to the delineation of farmsteads, low density housing and riparian areas found throughout the county. Agricultural processing, especially almond processing was another source of conversion. Dairy expansions also played a role in this change.</p>	
Conversions to Irrigated Farmland	
Nonirrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Irrigated Farmland	190 changes
<p>Conversion to irrigated farmland is primarily due to new almond orchards. New orchards are being planted in all parts of the county. East of Modesto Reservoir and north of Highway 132, a single 2,500-acre orchard was planted. The areas around Oakdale had orchards of 640, 530, 400, 370, 200, and 200 acres and they were nearly all almonds with an occasional walnut orchard. There were also dozens and dozens of small orchards added, along with additions to existing orchards.</p>	

Unusual Changes

(Types of change not already described or special circumstances during the 2016 update.)

One of the most unusual changes for Stanislaus County this update has been the conversion of irrigated pastures to orchards, particularly almonds. Irrigated pastures on Prime and Soils of Statewide Importance that are converted to an orchard will not show any land use conversion in the final Important Farmland Data. Yet, irrigated pastures that were on poor soils will show a conversion to Unique Farmland as an orchard. The total amount of irrigated pasture converted to orchards is almost 4,000 acres.

Areas of Concern for Future Updates

(Locations or map categories noted as needing careful checking during 2018 update, and reasons.)

The eastern foothills will continue to see an expansion of orchards, both almond and walnut.

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 2016 update.

Image interpretation, start date: February 9 th 2017
Image interpretation, number of days: 32
Ground truth dates: April 12 th , 19 th , 20 th , and 24 th , 2017
Number of days for post-ground truth clean-up: 10

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

<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx>