CHAPTER 5 – AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the environmental setting (existing conditions and regulatory setting) for the agricultural resources in the MTP Plan Area. This chapter also presents the federal, state, and local policies and regulations that determine mitigation requirements and identifies impacts on agricultural resources that may result from implementation of the proposed MTP 2035 projects, and mitigation measures to reduce these impacts where necessary.

The study area consists of transportation routes, including highways, rail alignments, bicycle trails, state routes, roads, and Caltrans right-of-way in the MTP Plan Area. This chapter provides a basic summary of the extent, distribution, use, quality, and productivity of agricultural lands in the MTP Plan Area. This information is based on literature and maps published by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the California Department of Conservation (DOC).

SETTING

Environmental Setting

The MTP Plan Area has a long history of agricultural activities due to its location in the middle of the fertile Central Valley of California. The following is a profile of existing agricultural resources around the region.

El Dorado County

Agricultural lands and forestlands make up a large percentage of the undeveloped lands in the County. Agricultural influences and activities contribute to the economic stability of the county through crop production, serve as the foundation of the county's rural lifestyle, and serve as a key element in the sense of community of many rural regions. In 2005, the county had a gross crop value of $42.9 million, including timber (El Dorado County Department of Agriculture 2005). The overall contribution of agriculture to the county's economy (through employment, sales, tourism, and other related activities) totaled approximately $434 million in 2005 (El Dorado County Department of Agriculture 2005). Forestlands occupy 636,000 acres (55 percent) of the County (Lands on the west slope of the county are considered the most valuable for agriculture because of the area's gentler slopes and richer soils. Historically, grazing of cattle and other livestock was the primary economic contributor in El Dorado County. Recently, production of fruit (including wine grapes) and nuts has become a major contributor to the county's agricultural production value.

Placer County

Placer County has a long and proud history of agricultural activity, starting before the birth of the county in 1851 and continuing to this day. Historically, the county produces fruit and nut crops, timber, rice, flowers, cattle, poultry, and sheep. In 2005, the total gross value for agricultural products was $73.8 million (Placer County Agricultural Commissioner 2005). Recently, nursery products have become the leading agricultural industry due to urban growth and an increased demand for landscape plants. Cattle and calf operations, timber and rice production are also among the top grossing agricultural operations in the county. As in El Dorado County, Placer County's western lands are the most valuable for agriculture because of the flat to-gently sloped topography and richer soils.

Sacramento County

While it is the most urbanized of the counties in the region, Sacramento County has a long history of agricultural activity. The majority of agricultural lands and activities are located in the south and east county areas, including the Sacramento River delta region. In 2005 the county grossed more than $348 million in agricultural products, which was a record for a ten year period from 1995-2005 (County of Sacramento Agricultural Commissioner 2005). Top producing crops in the county include wine grapes, milk, nursery products, and pears.

Sutter County

Agriculture is the primary industry of Sutter County, with 96 percent of the county's acreage in farmland (U.S. Census of Agriculture 2002). The County's valley floor location between two major rivers has created over geological time a broad area of deep, rich agricultural soils with abundant surface and subsurface water. Together with an inland climate that provides for a long growing season, these factors have lead to a productive agricultural environment. Agricultural activities within the County can generally be placed into one of two classes, either intensive agriculture, which includes field crops, seed crops, vegetable crops, fruit and nut crops, nursery stock, and apiary products (bee keeping), or extensive agriculture, which involves animal husbandry forms of agriculture. In 2005, the agricultural production grossed over $298 million, with rice, fruit, and nut crops being the leading commodities (Sutter County Department of Agriculture 2005).

Yolo County

Agriculture is the primary industry of Yolo County. Of the county's agricultural land, cultivated crops are the most prevalent, accounting for the most land area in the county, followed by livestock operations (includes grazing and pasture land, as well as more intensive animal operations) and agricultural commodities, (feed and grain mills and agricultural-related businesses) are also prevalent agricultural resources in the county (Yolo County 2005). The 2005 gross valuation of agricultural products was more than $332 million and agriculture's overall contribution to the county's economy was $1 billion (Yolo County Department of Agriculture 2005). Fruit and nut crops, field crops, and vegetable crops are the county's top three commodities (Yolo County Department of Agriculture 2005).

Yuba County

Agriculture is the most extensive land use in Yuba County and the most significant component of the county's economy. The gross value of Yuba County's agricultural production for 2005 was more than $136 million (Yuba County Agricultural Commissioner 2005). Rice, fruit and nut crops, and cattle have been the leading agricultural products in Yuba County in recent years (Yuba County Agricultural Commissioner 2005).

Farmland Quality

In 2004, 64 percent of the region's 3,000,000 acres were classified as agricultural land (California Department of Conservation, 2004). Factors that affect farmland quality include the physical and chemical characteristics of a site's soils (i.e., soil quality) as well as climate, moisture supply, topography, and the quality and availability of irrigation water. The Land-Capability Classification System developed by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and the Storie Index Rating System developed by the University of California are two land classification systems commonly used to evaluate and rate the suitability of land for agriculture and other types of land use. In California, the Important Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) administered by DOC is the primary system by which the extent, distribution, and quality of farmland is evaluated and monitored. Maps of Important Farmland are prepared periodically (approximately every 2 years) by the FMMP for most of the state's agricultural regions, based on soil survey information and land inventory and monitoring criteria developed by the NRCS. The classification system employed by FMMP consists of eight mapping categories:

five categories of agricultural lands and three categories of nonagricultural lands. The characteristics of these eight categories are summarized below.

- **Prime Farmland.** Prime Farmlands are lands with the combination of physical and chemical features best able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. The land must be supported by a developed irrigation water supply that is dependable and of adequate quality during the growing season. It also must have been used for the production of irrigated crops at some time during the 4 years before the mapping data were collected.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland of Statewide Importance are lands with agricultural land use characteristics, irrigation water supplies, and physical characteristics similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as steeper slopes or less ability to hold and store moisture.
- **Unique Farmland.** Unique Farmlands are lands with lesser quality soils used for the production of California's leading agricultural cash crops. These lands are usually irrigated but may include nonirrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some of the state's climatic zones.
- **Farmland of Local Importance.** Farmlands of Local Importance are important to the local agricultural economy, as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.
- **Grazing Land.** Grazing Lands are lands on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.
- **Urban and Built-Up Land.** This category describes land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
- **Other Land.** This category encompasses land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low-density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines; borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres.
- **Water.** This category describes perennial bodies of water with an extent of at least 40 acres.

An Important Farmland map has been produced for the MTP Plan Area. Figure 5-1, Significant Agricultural Lands, depicts areas devoted to Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Local Important Farmland. (California Department of Conservation 2004)

Most of the land located west of the Sierra Nevada foothills and east of the Capay Hills is classified as Important Farmland (i.e., either Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance). Western Yolo County, the eastern 1/3 of Sacramento County, the Sutter Buttes region in Sutter County, and the foothill regions of El Dorado, Placer and Yuba counties are predominantly classified as grazing land (Figure 5-1). An acreage summary of FMMP mapping categories in the county is presented in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1 illustrates shows that Important Farmland is concentrated in the counties of Sacramento, Sutter and Yolo, due to the fertile soils and flat topography of these valley counties. Although El Dorado, Placer and Yuba Counties contain less "Important Farmland," these counties contain significant grazing and "Other" land. More than 63 percent of the region is classified as farmland and only ten percent is

currently urbanized. According to FMMP 2002-2004 Farmland Conversion reports, 25,222 acres of agricultural land were converted to other uses during the two-year span (California Department of Conservation, 2004). Urban development pressures affect the agricultural lands in all of the counties in the Plan Area due to high population growth in the region and Northern California in general. Agriculture conversion pressure is greatest at the edge of urban development.

Table 5-1. Acreage Summary of FMMP Mapping Categories in the SACOG Region (source: Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2002-2004 Farmland Conversion Reports)

County	El Dorado	Placer	Sacramento	Sutter	Yolo	Yuba	Region
Important Farmland Category:							
Prime Farmland	886	9,236	110,278	166,203	259,637	42,678	588,918
Farmland of Statewide Importance	926	5,509	56,141	107,743	18,123	11,094	199,536
Unique Farmland	4,388	23,283	15,188	19,480	53,157	33,108	148,604
Farmland of Local Importance	60,530	86,234	39,873	0	66,619	0	253,256
Important Farmland Total	**66,730**	**124,262**	**221,480**	**293,426**	**397,536**	**86,880**	**1,190,314**
Grazing Land	196,901	46,000	163,173	50,637	145,227	143,533	745,471
Farmland Subtotal	**263,631**	**170,262**	**384,653**	**344,063**	**542,763**	**230,413**	**1,935,785**
Urban and Built-Up Land	30,670	52,181	165,629	12,581	28,511	12,081	301,653
Other Land	235,334	184,058	67,548	30,914	74,357	163,034	755,245
Water	6,819	5,027	18,253	1,883	7,821	6,289	43,092
Non-Farmland Total	**272,823**	**241,266**	**251,430**	**45,378**	**110,689**	**181,404**	**1,102,990**
Total Area Inventoried	**536,454**	**411,528**	**636,083**	**389,441**	**653,452**	**411,817**	**3,038,775**

Source: The California Land Conservation (Williamson) Act Status Report 2006, CA Department of Conservation Division of Land Resource Protection

Table 5-2shows the amount of agricultural lands under Williamson Act contract in each of the Sacramento region's six counties (Yuba County does not participate in the Williamson Act program).

Table 5-2. Williamson Act Lands within the SACOG Region

	Prime	**Nonprime**	**Total**	**Percent**
El Dorado	2,136	33,016	35,152	5%
Placer	16,162	28,861	45,023	6%
Sacramento	86,979	90,339	177,318	24%
Sutter	43,135	11,376	54,511	7%
Yolo	242,090	176,845	418,935	57%
Yuba[1]	0	0	0	0%
Sacramento Region	**390,502**	**340.437**	**730,939**	**100%**

[1] Yuba County does not participate in the Williamson Act program.

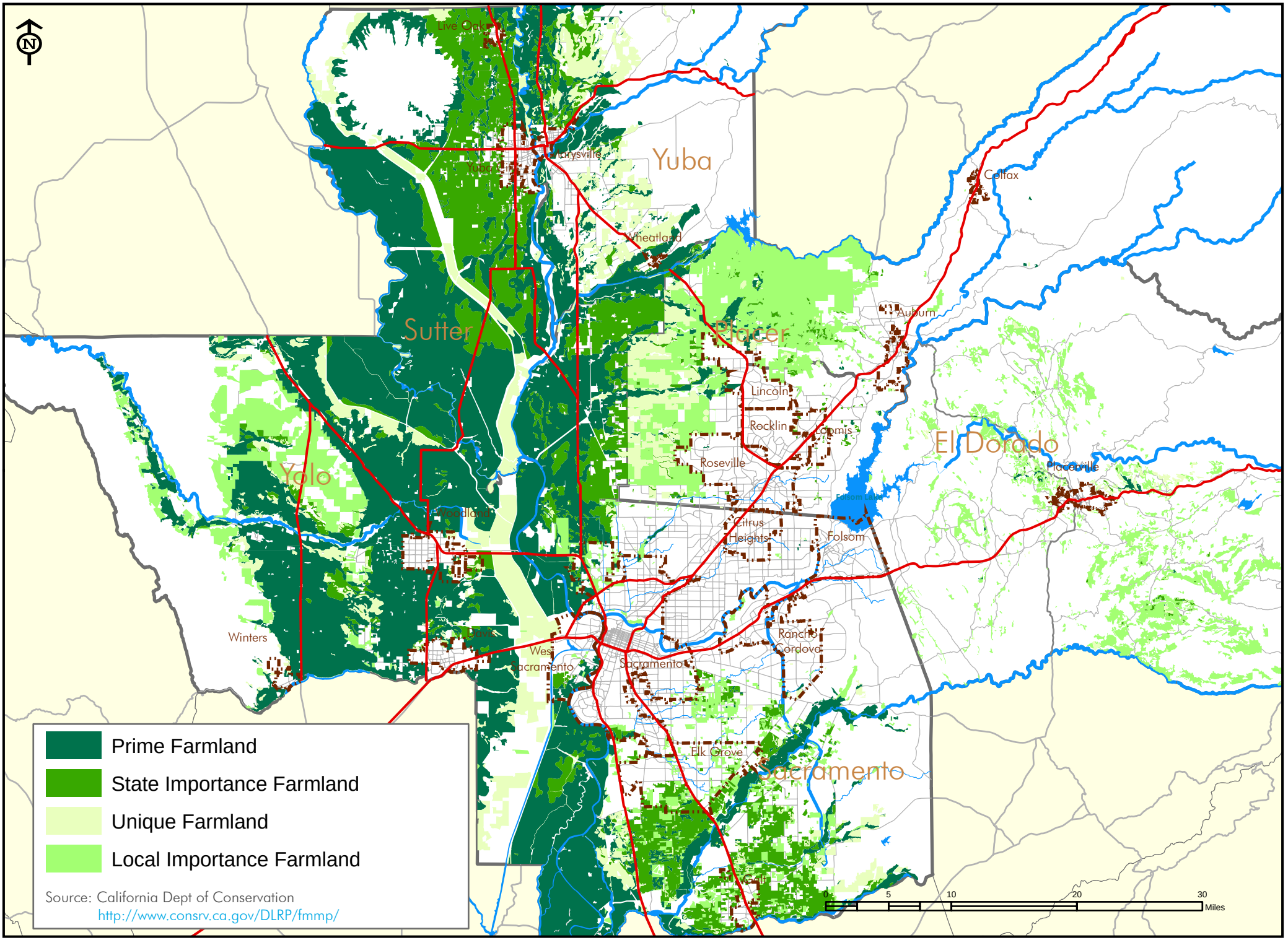

Figure 5-1: Significant Agricultural Lands

As of 2004, the Sacramento Region contained a total of 730,939 acres of land contracted under the Williamson Act. Of those acres, over 390,000 acres were prime farmland and about 340,000 acres were nonprime. More than 50 percent of both prime and nonprime lands under contract are located in Yolo County. Just under one quarter of all contract acres are located in Sacramento County.

Regulatory Setting

Federal Regulations

Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)
The FPPA is administered by the NRCS. The NRCS maps soils and farmland uses to provide comprehensive information necessary for understanding, managing, conserving and sustaining the nation's limited soil resources. The NRCS determines impacts to farmland that could occur due to a proposed project. The determination is made through coordination between the federal agency proposing or supporting the project and NRCS. NRCS will make a determination, using set thresholds, as to whether additional project-specific mitigation would be required. The FPPA is intended to minimize the impact Federal programs have on the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. It assures that—to the extent possible—Federal programs are administered to be compatible with state, local units of government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland. Federal agencies are required to develop and review their policies and procedures to implement the FPPA every two years. For the purpose of FPPA, farmland includes prime farmland, unique farmland, and land of statewide or local importance. Farmland subject to FPPA requirements does not have to be currently used for cropland. It can be forest land, pastureland, cropland, or other land, but not water or urban built-up land.

State Regulations

The California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)
The California Land Conservation Act, better known as the Williamson Act, was enacted by the California State Legislature in 1965 to encourage the preservation of agricultural lands. The Williamson Act program permits property tax adjustments for landowners who contract with a city or county to keep their land in agricultural production or approved open space uses for at least 10 years. Lands covered by Williamson Act contracts are assessed on the basis of their agricultural value instead of their potential market value under nonagricultural uses. In return for the preferential tax rate, the landowner is required to contractually agree to not develop the land for a period of at least 10 years.

Williamson Act contracts are renewed annually for 10 years unless a party to the contract files for non-renewal. The filing of a non-renewal application by a landowner ends the automatic annual extension of a contract and starts a 9-year phase-out of the contract. During the phase-out period, the land remains restricted to agricultural and open-space uses, but property taxes gradually return to levels associated with the market value of the land. At the end of the 9-year non-renewal process, the contract expires and the owner’s uses of the land are restricted only by applicable local zoning.

The Williamson Act defines *compatible use* of contracted lands as any use determined by the county or city administering the agricultural preserve to be compatible with the agricultural, recreational, or open-space use of land within the preserve and subject to contract (Government Code, Section 51202[e]). However, uses deemed compatible by a county or city government must be consistent with the principles of compatibility set forth in Government Code, Section 51238.1.

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP)

In 1982, the State of California created the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) within the DOC to carry on the mapping activity from the NRCS on a continuing basis. The FMMP is a non-regulatory program that provides consistent and impartial analysis of agricultural land use and land use changes throughout California for use by decision-makers in assessing present status, reviewing trends, and planning for the future of California's agricultural land resources. The FMMP produces Important Farmland Maps, which are a hybrid of resource quality (soils) and land use information. Information from the FMMP was used to identify agricultural resources within the MTP Plan Area. The FMMP is the primary system by which the extent, distribution, and quality of farmland is evaluated and monitored. Maps of Important Farmland are prepared periodically (approximately every 2 years) by the FMMP for most of the state's agricultural regions, based on soil survey information and land inventory and monitoring criteria developed by the NRCS.

Local Controls

General Plans: The most comprehensive land use planning for the SACOG region is provided by city and county general plans, which local governments are required by state law to prepare as a guide for future development. The general plan contains goals and policies concerning topics that are mandated by state law or which the jurisdiction has chosen to include such as: land use, conservation and open space, natural resources, parks and recreation, and agricultural elements. City and county general plans must be consistent with each other. County general plans must cover areas not included by city general plans (i.e., unincorporated areas).

Community and Specific Plans: A city or county may also provide land use planning by developing community or specific plans for smaller, more specific areas within their jurisdiction. These more localized plans provide for focused guidance for developing a specific area, with development standards tailored to the area, as well as systematic implementation of the general plan.

Zoning: The city or county zoning code is the set of detailed requirements that implement the general plan policies at the level of the individual parcel. The zoning code presents standards for different uses and identifies which uses are allowed in the various zoning districts of the jurisdiction. Since 1971, state law has required the city or county zoning code to be consistent with the jurisdiction's general plan, except in charter cities, such as Auburn, Colfax, Folsom, Marysville, Roseville, and Sacramento.

Public Ownership, Purchase of Development Rights, and Open Space Acquisition: Local governments and special districts, either on their own or working with land trusts and conservancies, can acquire fee title to agricultural and open space lands or purchase development rights to preserve rural and agricultural areas, watersheds, or critical habitat, or to create public parks and recreational areas. Such actions have been undertaken in the SACOG region and have had significant effects on the shape of cities and urban form in the region.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Methods and Assumptions

This agricultural resources analysis focuses on agricultural resources most likely to be affected by the construction and implementation of the transportation and related projects identified in the MTP for 2035. Agricultural resources impacts are evaluated by identifying the particular type of resource that could be affected by the projects. To conduct the farmland analysis, all new and expansion roadway

and highway projects proposed in MTP were identified as projects with potential physical impacts. These 247 projects were then studied using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and compared with the farmland maps referenced in the Environmental Setting (above) to determine the extent of the physical impacts of the proposed MTP projects on important agricultural.

Criteria for Determining Significance

The criteria for determining whether the MTP 2035 would have significant environmental impacts related to agricultural resources were based on the environmental checklist form in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.). According to the State CEQA Guidelines, significant impacts to agricultural resources would occur if the plan would:

- Convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance (farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the farmland mapping and monitoring program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Project

This section describes the impacts on agricultural resources that could result from the proposed project, including their significance. Some projects within the MTP 2035 could significantly affect agricultural resources. However, prior to final approval of each project considered in the MTP 2035, the implementing agency will conduct the appropriate project-specific environmental review. Significant impacts and mitigation measures will be considered during that project-level review.

Impact AG - 1: Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use

Overall there are 136 projects in the MTP 2035 that would construct new roadways and highways, occupying 413 corridor miles of new land. Of these new roadways, 152 miles would have the potential to directly impact 1,998 acres of farmland, assuming the worst case disturbance. (The acreage calculation is based on a 100-foot buffer on either side of the centerline of a project.)

There are also 111 projects in the MTP 2035 that would expand roadways and highways, which would impact 407 corridor miles of new land. Of these expanded roadways, 227 miles would have the potential to directly impact farmland. Because these expansion projects are additions to existing roadways, SACOG was not able to estimate an actual acreage impact due to the lack of existing roadway-width data. However, the evidence of 227 miles of going through existing farmland provides a conservative estimate of roadway expansion that would have a potentially significant impact on farmlands.

Combined, new and expansion roadway and highway projects have the potential to convert agricultural land to non-agricultural use along as many as 379 linear miles of roadway. This is 46% of the total new and expanded roadway miles. An estimated 1,998 acres of farmland would be converted to new roadways. Most converted land would be in the form of long, narrow bands adjacent to roadways (lane improvements or modifications), not large, contiguous parcels. The

magnitude of this impact will not be fully known until design of improvements (facilities) is completed.

This impact is considered significant at the program level because of the likelihood that open space would be permanently converted to a more intensive land use. The following mitigation measure does not reduce the impact to a less than significant level and this impact is significant and unavoidable:

Mitigation Measure AG - 1: Develop Rural-Urban Connections Strategy and Create Best Practices Toolkit

Within 3 years of adoption of the MTP 2035, SACOG shall develop a Rural-Urban Connections Strategy, to expand on and help to support implementation of, the Blueprint growth strategy and the MTP. The Rural-Urban Connections Strategy will utilize state-of-the-practice data collection, modeling, research and participation practices to develop a toolkit of best practices to promote land use practices in rural areas that are economically viable for land owners and local governments and environmentally sustainable. Issues to be addressed include, but are not limited, to: agricultural practices, natural resource protection, development practices that support agricultural and natural resource values, infrastructure needs in rural areas, energy production, and methods to promote jobs-housing balance (with a specific emphasis on effective jobs-generating practices in appropriate areas.) The toolkit of best practices will include assessment of vehicle miles traveled and air emissions, including greenhouse gases. Building on local conservation efforts, the strategy will identify areas where mitigation for development should be directed to maximize the benefit of such acquisitions. Another important outcome will be the identification of environmental services, such as flood control, groundwater recharge, and carbon sequestration, which are enhanced through a comprehensive approach to urban and rural planning. It is anticipated that the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy effort will be completed within 3 years.

At the project level, the extent of Impact AG-1 will depend on the final design of each transportation improvement and on the project-specific analysis required by CEQA to determine the importance of the farmland to be converted. When implementing agencies conduct project-level review, the following mitigation measures should be considered:

Mitigation Measure AG - 2: Evaluate the Potential for Direct Farmland Conversion at the Project Level and Avoid, Minimize, and Compensate for Loss of Farmland

For projects included in MTP 2035, project implementing agencies shall evaluate the environmental significance of potential farmland conversion impacts at the project level using the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model, which was developed by DOC's Division of Land Resource Protection to provide lead agencies with a systematic and objective method for evaluating the potential impacts of proposed projects on agricultural resources. Project proponents shall implement the following measures to reduce impacts to significant farmland:

- design the proposed MTP 2035 projects to avoid or minimize the direct conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural uses, and
- compensate for unavoidable Important Farmland conversion impacts by:

enrolling offsite agricultural lands under Williamson Act contracts,

protecting productive offsite agricultural land subject to conversion through the purchase or transfer of its development rights, or making agricultural improvements on "potential prime agricultural lands" identified by local jurisdictions.

pay the project–specific mitigation fee as required by local jurisdictions.

Mitigation Measure AG – 3: Identify Open Spaces Areas to be Preserved through Dedication or Fee Payment

For projects included in the MTP 2035, project implementation agencies shall identify open space areas that could be preserved and shall include mitigation measures (such as dedication or payment of in-lieu fees as required by local jurisdictions) for the loss of open space.

Impact AG - 2: Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract

The Williamson Act allows county and city governments to define compatible land uses for contract lands within their jurisdictions, as long as those uses are consistent with the compatibility principles set forth in Government Code, Section 51238.1. The proposed new roadway projects were overlaid with 2004 (for Sacramento County) and 2006 (for El Dorado, Placer, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba Counties) inventories of Williamson Act contract lands to estimate the potential extent of impact of the project on Williamson Act contract lands. Using a 100-ft buffer on either side of the centerline of a project), 363 acres of Williamson Act Contract lands have the potential to be impacted. SACOG was not able to estimate an actual acreage impact from road expansion projects due to the lack of existing roadway-width data. However, the evidence of 227 miles of going through existing farmland provides a conservative estimate of roadway expansion that would have a potentially significant impact on Williamson Act contract lands.

The magnitude of this impact will not be fully known until design of improvements (facilities) is completed and analysis of compatibility for individual projected is conducted. Based upon the general planning nature of the MTP 2035, development of detailed, site-specific information on zoning and Williamson Act contract compatibility at the program level is not feasible. As a result, SACOG does not have sufficient reliable data to permit preparation of a meaningful and accurate report on the impact and no significance determination can be reasonably made. The implementing agency will conduct appropriate project-level environmental review and will be responsible for consideration of mitigation measures for significant effects on the environment. The following mitigation measure could be used by implementing agencies to address potential impacts during project-level review:

Mitigation Measure AG - 4: Obtain Appropriate Permits, and Minimize Impacts of Agricultural Zoning Conflicts

Evaluate the project's potential to create any agricultural zoning conflicts in the proposed project area. If the proposed project significantly conflicts with current zoning, obtain necessary permits in order to minimize agricultural zoning impacts.

Impact AG - 3: Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.

Of the new and expansion roadway and highway projects, some are planned to occur at the edge of urban development (Placer Parkway, Placer County and the Elk Grove-Rancho Cordova-Folsom Connector Road, Sacramento County). These projects have the potential to result in conversion of farmland beyond that planned for in existing land use plans. If these roads provide access to designated agricultural lands, they could increase growth pressures on the areas.

Based upon the general planning nature of the MTP 2035, development of detailed, site-specific information on this impact at the program level is not feasible. As a result, SACOG does not have sufficient reliable data to permit preparation of a meaningful and accurate report on the impact and no significance determination can be reasonably made. The implementing agency will conduct appropriate project-level environmental review and will be responsible for consideration of mitigation measures for significant effects on the environment. The following mitigation measures could be used by implementing agencies to address potential impacts during project-level review:

Mitigation Measure AG - 2: Evaluate the Potential for Direct Farmland Conversion at the Project Level and Avoid, Minimize, and Compensate for Loss of Farmland

This mitigation measure is discussed above.

Mitigation Measure AG - 5: Design Project Improvements to Minimize Impacts on Open Space and Agriculture

Design improvements to minimize the amount of open space conversion. Design measures may include, but are not limited to, reducing the proposed roadway width or realigning the improvement to avoid open space and agricultural lands. Lands with significant economic, scenic, or local value, such as Prime Farmland, will be avoided when feasible.