

# Chapter 4—Agriculture

## 4.1 Introduction

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This chapter describes existing conditions (environmental and regulatory) for agriculture and forestry resources and assesses the potential of the 2016 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (proposed MTP/SCS) to affect agriculture and forestry resources within the proposed MTP/SCS plan area. This chapter evaluates potential impacts on agriculture and forestry resources that may result from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Where necessary and feasible, mitigation measures are identified to reduce these impacts.

This chapter provides a basic summary of the extent, distribution, use, quality, and productivity of agriculture and forest lands in the region. This information is informed by eight years of research for SACOG's Rural-Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS), literature, maps and data published by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the California Department of Conservation (DOC), and county agricultural commissioners. Soil quality and conditions are analyzed in Chapter 9 – Geology, Seismicity, Soils and Mineral Resources. Agricultural and forestry resources are also discussed in the proposed MTP/SCS. Refer to Chapter 3 – Summary of Growth and Land Use Forecast, Chapter 7 – Environmental Sustainability, and Appendix E – Land Use and Environmental Technical Documents in the proposed MTP/SCS.

The information presented in this EIR chapter is based on review of existing and available information and is regional in scope. Data, analysis and findings provided in this chapter are programmatic rather than project-specific. This document is appropriate for general policy planning and to use for tiering in preparation of subsequent environmental documents; however, site-specific, project-level evaluations may be necessary to determine future project-level environmental effects and appropriate mitigation measures. Once certified, this EIR may be used to streamline CEQA compliance for those projects listed in the Preferred Scenario Project List as well as the anticipated community development shown on the 2016 Draft MTP/SCS Preferred Scenario map to the extent those projects are consistent with requirements set forth in the Public Resources Code for streamlined environmental review.

One comment letter regarding agriculture resources, submitted by the Delta Stewardship Council, was received during circulation of the Notice of Preparation (NOP). The comment letter requested that the EIR acknowledge Delta Plan regulations, recommendations, and proposed mitigation measures, as well as analyze potential loss of agricultural land from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Appendix PD-1 contains the full set of letters submitted during circulation of the NOP.

## 4.2 Environmental Setting

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The SACOG region has a long history of agricultural and forestry activity due to its location, encompassing part of the fertile Central Valley of California and the forested foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. There are nearly 1.8 million harvested agricultural acres and 1.2 million acres of forests in the region, together comprising 70 percent of the MTP/SCS plan area (see below for breakdowns of agricultural and forest land by county). The region's agricultural value fluctuates with commodity markets, but since 2008, international commodity markets have been strong,

supporting a farmgate value of almost \$2.2 billion (SACOG, 2014). The farmgate value is the value of the commodity when it is harvested. The region has also seen strong growth in market demand for locally grown food. Further, the agricultural industry generates economic activity beyond just the farmgate value of commodities. For example, tens of thousands of people in the region earn a living working in the agricultural industry, and the industry also supports a robust agri-tourism economy. Many of those jobs are in support services such as agricultural suppliers and processors, but also include others such as attorneys, accountants, and insurance sales.

The following paragraphs describe agriculture and forestry resources in each county in the region. The baseline data used are 2012 data, but to the extent more recent information is available, it is provided. The acreages for agricultural land identified in this chapter were confirmed with staff from counties and are therefore more accurate than solely relying on California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Monitoring and Mapping Program (FMMP) data. Table 4.1 summarizes the agricultural and forest land within the proposed MTP/SCS plan area.

**Table 4.1  
Acres of Agricultural and Forest Land in the Region**

County	Agricultural Land	Forest Land*	
		Publicly-Owned	Total
El Dorado	237,870	468,000	616,000
Placer	174,219	349,000	494,000
Sacramento	208,974	--	--
Sutter	345,733	--	--
Yolo	533,399	--	--
Yuba	278,943	57,000	61,000
<b>Region</b>	<b>1,779,138</b>	<b>874,000</b>	<b>1,171,000</b>

*\*Acres rounded to the nearest thousand.*

*Sources: BLM and USFS, 2006; El Dorado County Department of Agriculture, 2013; Placer County Department of Agriculture, 2013; SACOG, 2010; Sacramento County Department of Agriculture & Weights and Measures, 2013; Sutter County Department of Agriculture, 2013; Yolo County Department of Agriculture, 2013; Yuba County Department of Agriculture, 2013.*

#### 4.2.1 El Dorado County

In El Dorado County, agricultural lands, including pasture and grazing lands, account for 21 percent of the land area, with 237,870 total harvested acres. In 2013, the county had a gross crop value of \$46 million, excluding timber. The overall contribution of agriculture to the county’s economy (through employment, sales, tourism, and other related activities) totaled approximately \$441 million in 2013 (El Dorado County Department of Agriculture, 2013). 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 economy.

Forest lands account for 616,000 acres of the land in the county (excludes Tahoe Basin). Of this acreage, approximately 468,000 acres are publicly-owned (SACOG, 2010). Timber production is

economically important in the county. In 2013, the gross value of timber production in the county was \$11.4 million (El Dorado County Department of Agriculture, 2013).

#### **4.2.2 Placer County**

There are approximately 174,219 acres of harvested agricultural land, including pasture and grazing lands in Placer County, accounting for 18 percent of the land in the county (excludes Tahoe Basin). The county's primary agricultural products are fruit and nut crops, timber, rice, flowers, cattle, poultry, and sheep. In 2013, the total gross value for agricultural products was roughly \$82 million (Placer County Department of Agriculture, 2013). 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. Very recently, the county has seen an increase in rice production. Rice remained the number one crop in the county in 2013. Cattle and calf operations, timber, nursery stock and walnuts are also top commodities in the county. Agricultural returns declined during the recent recession but rebounded 12.9 percent in 2013 over 2012 returns (Placer County Department of Agriculture, 2013).

There are 494,000 acres of forest land in the county, of which 349,000 acres are under public ownership. The US Forest Service controls the largest amount of public lands, controlling over 355,000 acres within Placer County (BLM and USFS, 2006). The Bureau of Reclamation controls a smaller amount of land, about 24,000 acres in central Placer County. Timber harvesting had a gross value of \$9.0 million in 2013 (Placer County Department of Agriculture, 2013).

#### **4.2.3 Sacramento County**

Although it is the most urbanized county in the region, Sacramento County has a long history of agricultural activity. As of 2013, there were 208,974 acres of land in agricultural production including pasture or grazing lands, comprising 33 percent of the county. The majority of agricultural lands and activities are located in the south and east county areas, including the Sacramento River Delta region. In 2013 the county grossed approximately \$457 million in agricultural products. Top producing crops in the county include wine grapes, milk, Bartlett pears, poultry and field corn. Wine grapes continue to top Sacramento County's crop values and should see an increase in the next few years as newly planted vines come into production (Sacramento County Department of Agriculture & Weights and Measures, 2013). Sacramento County has no forest land.

#### **4.2.4 Sutter County**

Agriculture is the primary industry of Sutter County. Including pasture or grazing lands, agricultural land accounts for 345,733 acres, or 89 percent of the county's land area (Sutter County Department of Agriculture, 2013). 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 led to a productive agricultural environment. In 2013, agricultural production grossed almost \$600 million, with rice, walnuts, prunes, peaches, nursery products, and processing tomatoes as the leading commodities. In particular, almonds, prunes, peaches, and sunflowers increased in acres in production and/or value (Sutter County Department of Agriculture, 2013). Sutter County has no forest land.

#### **4.2.5 Yolo County**

Like Sutter County, Yolo County's flat valley topography and rich agricultural soils have made agriculture the primary economic development driver of the county. As of 2013 there were 533,399 acres in production, comprising 81 percent of total land in the county. The 2013 gross valuation of agricultural products was more than \$721 million, an all-time high and increase of 12.9 percent from 2012. Tomatoes have long been the county's leading commodity. Wine grapes, almonds, rice and walnuts are other top crops. The gross value of organic production saw a dramatic increase of nearly 50 percent in 2013 (Yolo County Department of Agriculture, 2013). Yolo County has no forest land.

#### **4.2.6 Yuba County**

Although Yuba County experienced rapid development for several years prior to the recent recession, agriculture remains a prominent land use in the county, with 278,943 acres, or 68 percent, of the county in agricultural production, including grazing and pasture lands. The gross value for agriculture in Yuba County in 2013 was almost \$235 million and contributed \$925 million to the overall local economy. Walnuts became the county's leading crop in 2013 followed by rice, prunes, peaches and milk (Yuba County Department of Agriculture, 2013).

There are about 61,000 acres of forest land in the county, primarily in the northeastern portion. Of these, about 57,000 acres are under public ownership, mainly by the Forest Service (SACOG, 2010). The gross value of timber production in 2010 was approximately \$3.5 million, lower than 2012's \$5.0 million due to decreased price and yield (Yuba County Department of Agriculture, 2013).

### **4.3 Regulatory Setting**

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#### **4.3.1 Federal Regulations**

##### *FARMLAND PROTECTION POLICY ACT OF 1981 (FPPA)*

FPPA (7 U.S. Code, § 4201, et seq.) is administered by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). NRCS maps soils and farmland to provide comprehensive information necessary for understanding, managing, conserving, and sustaining the nation's limited soil resources. 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 makes a determination, using set thresholds, as to whether additional project-specific mitigation is required. 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 federal programs are administered to be compatible with state, local government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland to the extent possible. Federal agencies are required to develop and review their policies and procedures to implement 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 forestland, pastureland, cropland, or other land, but not water or urban built-up land.

## *FEDERAL FARM BILL OF 1990 – FEDERAL FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM (FLP)*

FLP (16 U.S. Code, § 2103c) was part of the 1990 Federal Farm Bill. The purpose of the FLP is to protect environmentally-important forestland under private ownership from conversion to non-forest uses, such as residential or commercial development. The FLP promotes the use of voluntary conservation easements on these properties. Landowners who wish to participate may sell or transfer particular rights, such as the right to develop the property or to allow public access, while retaining ownership of the property and the right to use it in any way consistent with the terms of the easement. The agency or organization holding the easement is responsible for managing the rights it acquires and for monitoring compliance by the landowner. Forest management activities, including timber harvesting, hunting, fishing, and hiking are encouraged, provided they are consistent with the program's purpose.

### **4.3.2 State Regulations**

#### *FARMLAND MAPPING AND MONITORING PROGRAM (FMMP)*

In 1982, the State of California created the FMMP within the Department of Conservation to carry on the mapping activity from NRCS. 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 SACOG region. 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 two 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 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 water supply that is dependable and of adequate quality during the growing season. It must also have been used for the production of irrigated crops at some time during the four 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 one unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately six 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.

Figure 4.2 depicts areas devoted to prime farmland, unique farmland, farmland of statewide importance, and farmland of local importance (California Department of Conservation, 2012). Most of the land located west of the Sierra Nevada foothills and east of the Capay Valley 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 third 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.

An acreage summary by FMMP mapping category for MTP/SCS plan area land is presented in Table 4.2. The table 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. Almost 62 percent of the region is classified as farmland and only 11 percent is currently urbanized. Urban development pressures affect agricultural lands throughout the region due to high population and employment growth. Agriculture conversion pressure is greatest at the edge of existing urban development.

**Table 4.2**  
**Acres Summary by FMMP Mapping Category for Lands in the proposed MTP/SCS Plan Area**

<b>Farmland Category:</b>	<b>El Dorado</b>	<b>Placer</b>	<b>Sacramento</b>	<b>Sutter</b>	<b>Yolo</b>	<b>Yuba</b>	<b>Region</b>
Prime Farmland	645	7,330	93,918	161,475	250,667	39,942	553,976
Farmland of Statewide Importance	835	4,044	43,579	104,558	17,296	10,852	181,164
Unique Farmland	3,226	17,891	15,063	16,032	42,398	32,390	127,000
Farmland of Local Importance <sup>2</sup>	59,406	99,222	56,980	0	58,129	0	273,737
Grazing Land	193,774	27,879	154,737	53,223	163,619	140,761	733,993
<b>All Farmland</b>	<b>257,887</b>	<b>156,366</b>	<b>364,277</b>	<b>335,288</b>	<b>532,109</b>	<b>223,945</b>	<b>1,869,871</b>
Urban and Built-Up Land	32,316	59,699	180,231	13,608	30,833	14,063	330,750
Other Land	239,169	190,325	73,397	38,468	82,629	167,319	791,307
Water	6,972	5,010	18,149	1,883	7,804	6,628	46,446
<b>Non-Farmland</b>	<b>278,457</b>	<b>255,034</b>	<b>271,777</b>	<b>53,959</b>	<b>121,266</b>	<b>188,010</b>	<b>1,168,503</b>
<b>TOTAL AREA SURVEYED<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>536,344</b>	<b>411,400</b>	<b>636,054</b>	<b>389,247</b>	<b>653,375</b>	<b>411,955</b>	<b>3,038,374</b>

<sup>1</sup> Approximately 1,157,000 acres of land within the MTP/SCS plan area in Placer and El Dorado counties were not surveyed. The survey area excludes most of the Sierra Nevada, as well as desert and forested parts of California that are less likely to have productive farmland. Some of these locations may be added in the future, while most areas identified as "Local, State, and Federal Owned Land" will not be added. Some small areas of public land are included in the survey area, generally as "Other Land." See California Farmland Conversion Report 2008-2010, pg. 6 (California Department of Conservation, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Includes Farmland of Local Potential in Yolo County.

Source: California Department of Conservation, 2012.

*THE CALIFORNIA LAND CONSERVATION ACT (WILLIAMSON ACT) OF 1965*

The Williamson Act (Gov. Code, § 51200-51207) 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 ten years. Williamson Act contracts have an initial term of 10 years or more with renewal occurring automatically each year. Sacramento and Sutter County participate in Williamson Act contracts. The Farmland Security Zone (FSZ) program added to the Williamson Act in 1998 offers landowners greater property tax reduction in return for an initial contract term of 20 years, with renewal occurring automatically each year. El Dorado, Placer, and Yolo County participate in the FSZ contracts. Yuba County does not participate in the Williamson Act program.

The Williamson Act required contracts to be 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 nine-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 nine-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 preserve to be compatible with the agricultural, recreational, or open-space use of land within the preserve and subject to contract (Gov. Code, § 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 51231, 51238, or 51238.1. Table 4.3 shows the amount of agricultural lands under Williamson Act contract in each of the counties in the SACOG region as of 2014, the most recent year for which data is available.

**Table 4.3**  
**Williamson Act Lands within the SACOG Region as of 2014**

County	Acres of Williamson Act Lands			Percent of Total Land Acres in Williamson Act Contracts
	Prime	Nonprime	Total	
El Dorado	5,588	26,604	32,192	5%
Placer	12,606	21,695	34,301	5%
Sacramento	92,701	81,256	173,956	25%
Sutter	51,094	13,172	64,266	9%
Yolo <sup>1</sup>	228,388	172,563	400,951	57%
Yuba <sup>2</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>SACOG Region</b>	<b>390,376</b>	<b>315,290</b>	<b>705,666</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Yolo County data is from 2011.

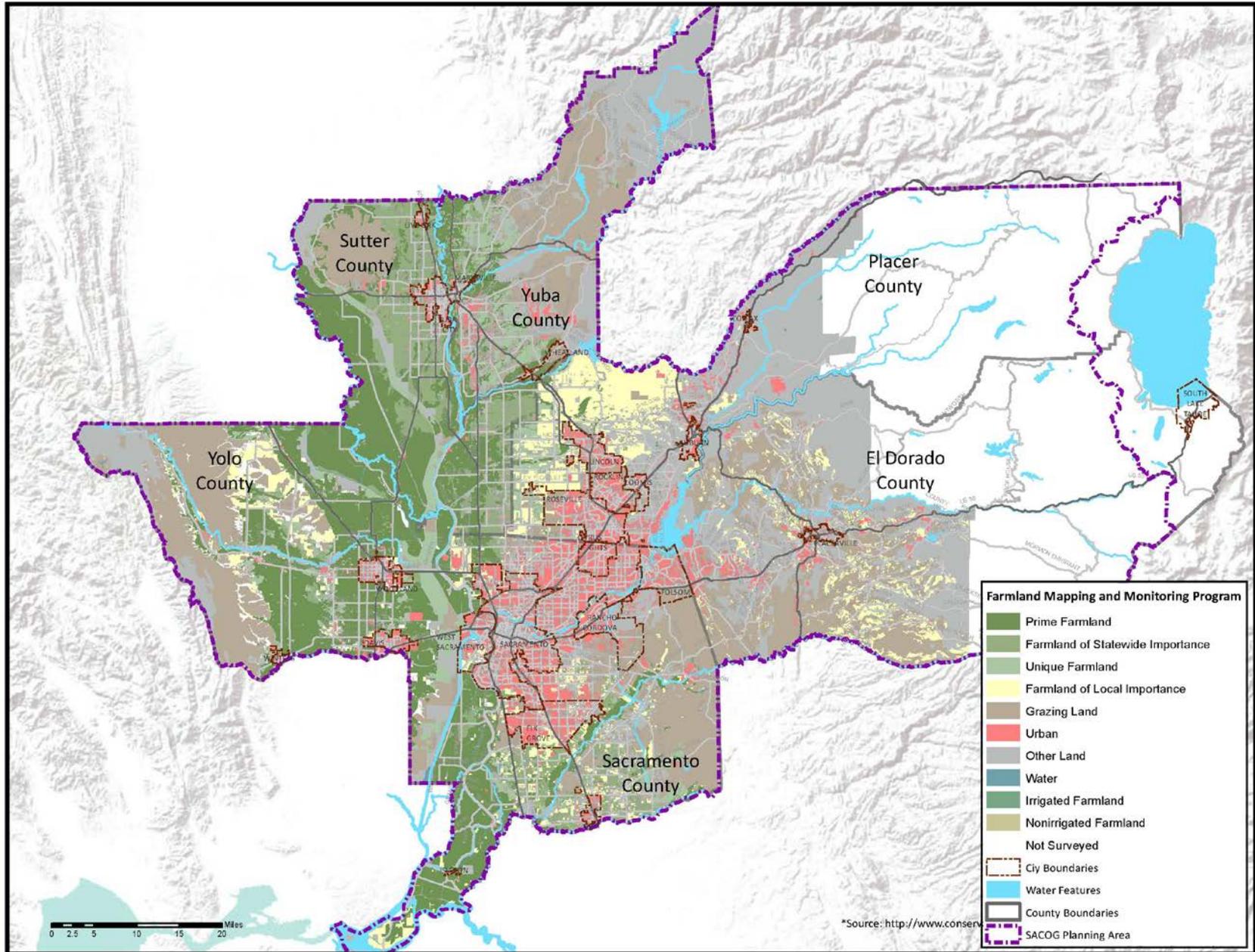
<sup>2</sup>Yuba County does not participate in the Williamson Act program.

Source: California Department of Conservation, 2014

As of 2014, the SACOG region contained a total of 705,666 acres of land contracted under the Williamson Act. Of those acres, 390,376 acres were prime farmland and 315,290 acres were nonprime. About 57 percent of both prime and nonprime lands under contract are located in Yolo County. One quarter of all contract lands are located in Sacramento County, with the remainder in El Dorado, Placer, and Sutter counties. Yuba County does not participate in the program. Figure 4.1 shows the location of Williamson Act lands in the SACOG region.

Though state subventions to backfill lost property tax revenue were eliminated in 2009, the program is still ongoing in the region and remains an important part of their farmland conservation strategies. However, a landowner may cancel or non-renew a Williamson Act contract at any point. As of 2013, 27,057 acres were in non-renewal (California Department of Conservation, 2014).

Figure 4.1 MTP/SCS Plan Area Significant Agricultural Lands



### *Assembly Bill 1265 (AB 1265) of 2011*

AB 1265 (Chapter 90, Statutes of 2011) was approved by the Governor in Summer 2011 and essentially reinstated parts of the Williamson Act, Revenue & Tax Code, and Open Space and Subvention Act that allowed eligible counties to recapture 10 percent of the property tax benefits provided to their owners of Williamson Act lands by decreasing the duration of the Land Conservation Act and FSZ contracts by one and two years, respectively. Senate Bill 1353 (Chapter 322, Statutes of 2014), approved by the Governor on September 15, 2014, eliminates the January 1, 2016 sunset clause and makes the option for participating counties to recapture portions of foregone tax revenue permanent. In the MTP/SCS plan area, Sutter and Yolo counties take advantage of this legislation, but do not offer any new Williamson Act contracts without funding for the subvention program.

### *OPEN SPACE SUBVENTION ACT (OSSA) OF 1972*

OSSA (Gov. Code, § 16140 et seq.) was enacted on January 1, 1972 to provide for the partial replacement of local property tax revenue foregone as a result of participation in the Williamson Act and other enforceable open space restriction programs. Participating local governments receive annual payment on the basis of the quantity (number of acres), quality (soil type and agricultural productivity), and, for Farmland Security Zone contracts, location (proximity to a city) of land enrolled under eligible, enforceable open space restrictions.

### *Z'BERG-NEJEDLY FOREST PRACTICE ACT (FOREST PRACTICE ACT) OF 1973*

The Forest Practice Act (Pub. Resource Code, div. 4, ch. 8) established a nine member Board of Forestry whose mandate is to assure the best economic and environmental practices in timber production in California. The Board requires that a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) prepare a Timber Harvest Plan (THP) before harvesting timber on most non-federal forestland. The goal of the THP is to assure that the continual productivity of timberlands is sustained and enhanced by the timber harvesting that takes place on the site, and that related resources are protected to the extent feasible, including watersheds, fisheries, wildlife, recreation, aesthetics, and employment in the region.

### *Z'BERG-WARREN-KEENE-COLLIER FOREST TAXATION REFORM ACT OF 1976 – TIMBERLAND PRODUCTION ZONES*

Under the Forest Taxation Reform Act (Gov. Code, §§ 51110-51119.5), counties must provide for the zoning of land used for growing and harvesting timber as Timberland Preserve Zones (TPZ). A TPZ is a 10-year restriction on the use of timberland, similar to the Williamson Act for agricultural lands. Land use under a TPZ is restricted to growing and harvesting timber or to compatible uses. In return, taxation of timberland under a TPZ will be based only on such restrictions in use.

### *THE RIGHT TO FARM ACT OF 1981*

The Right to Farm Act (Civ. Code, § 3482.5) is designed to protect commercial agricultural operations from nuisance complaints that may arise when an agricultural operation is conducting business in a “manner consistent with proper and accepted customs.” The code specifies that established operations that have been in business for three or more years that were not nuisances at the time they began shall not be considered a nuisance as a result of new land use.

### *CALIFORNIA TIMBERLAND PRODUCTIVITY ACT (CTPA) OF 1982*

CTPA (Gov. Code, §§ 51100-51104) describes the powers and duties of local government in protecting timberlands. The law is designed to maintain an optimum amount of timberland, ensuring its current and continued availability by establishing Timberland Preserve Zones (TPZ) on all qualifying timberland, which restrict land use to growing and harvesting timber and other compatible uses. The Act discourages premature or unnecessary conversion of timberland to urban or other uses and expansion of urban services into timberland, and encourages investment in timberlands based on reasonable expectation of harvest. The CTPA also provides that timber operations conducted in accordance with California forest practice rules shall not be restricted or prohibited due to land uses in or around the location of the timber operations.

### *DELTA PROTECTION ACT OF 1992– DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION (DPC)*

The Delta Protection Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 29760 et seq.) recognized the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as a natural resource of statewide, national and international significance, containing irreplaceable resources. The Act created the policy to recognize, preserve and protect those resources, designated Primary and Secondary Zones within the legal Delta, and established the DPC. The DPC was charged with creating the Land Use and Resources Management Plan (LURMP) for the Primary Zone, which was adopted in 1995. The LURMP provides direction for local jurisdictions in the Delta region on land use decisions.

The southernmost portions of Sacramento and Yolo counties within the MTP/SCS plan area are located within the Delta Primary Zone. Isleton and a portion of West Sacramento are located within the Delta Secondary Zone. Additionally, the city of Sacramento is located directly adjacent to the Secondary Zone. DPC has the authority to evaluate all plans, projects, and programs adopted by local governments within the Primary Zone for consistency. DPC requires these plans, projects, and programs to direct development within the existing city limits and designate other areas within the Delta for agricultural use. Local jurisdictions with lands in the Primary Zone have amended their general plans to incorporate the management plan (Sacramento County, 2011; Yolo County, 2009).

In 2010, DPC amended the LURMP to reflect changes since adoption, such as newly identified endangered species, effects of climate change, flood control issues, increased recreational use, water quality changes, habitat loss, road and utility construction, and urbanization. The amendment adds specific overview, goals, and policies subsections and a glossary of terms to address components of the Delta system, such as: natural resources, utilities, infrastructure, land use, agriculture, water, recreation, and levees. Regarding agriculture, the LURMP sets goals to support the long-term viability of agriculture in the Delta and discourage the inappropriate development of agricultural lands to urban lands. The LURMP directs new non-agricultural development toward existing towns and encourages growth in farms and other agriculturally-related businesses. Policies aim to enhance the economic viability of the Delta's agriculture through education and legacy programs, land use policies such as parcel size maximization, and acquisition of agricultural conservation easements (Delta Protection Commission, 2010). For a discussion of the consistency of the proposed MTP/SCS with the LURMP, see Chapter 12 – Land Use Planning.

*THE CORTESE-KNOX-HERTZBERG LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION ACT (CORTESE-KNOX-HERTZBERG ACT) OF 2000*

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (Gov. Code, § 56000 et seq.) established procedures for local government changes of organization, including city incorporations, annexations to a city or special district, and city and special district consolidations. This act requires that development or use of land for other than open space shall be guided away from existing prime agricultural lands in open space use toward areas containing nonprime agricultural lands, unless that action would not promote the planned, orderly, efficient development of an area.

*OAK WOODLANDS CONSERVATION ACT OF 2004 – SENATE BILL 1334 (SB 1334)*

SB 1334 provides funding for the conservation and protection of California’s oak woodlands. It requires counties, in determining whether CEQA requires an environmental impact report, negative declaration, or mitigated negative declaration, to determine whether a project in its jurisdiction that may result in a conversion of oak woodlands poses a significant effect on the environment. If a potentially significant effect is identified, the Act requires implementation of one or more specified mitigation alternatives to mitigate the conversion of oak woodlands. By imposing new duties on local governments with respect to oak woodlands mitigation, the bill imposes a state-mandated local program.

*CALIFORNIA FOREST LEGACY ACT OF 2007*

Similar to the Federal Forest Legacy Program, the California Forest Legacy Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 12220(G)) is a program of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to promote conservation easements in environmentally-sensitive forest areas. Money to fund the Program is obtained from gifts, donations, federal grants and loans, other appropriate funding sources, and from the sale of bonds pursuant to Proposition 12, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act (The Villaraigosa-Kelley Act) of 2000 (Pub. Resources Code, div. 5, ch. 1.692).

This act defines “forest land” as “land that can support ten-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits” (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2012).

*SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA REFORM ACT OF 2009 (DELTA REFORM ACT)*

In November 2009, the Delta Reform Act (Wat. Code, § 10610 et seq.), also known as Sen. Bill No. 1 (Stats. 2009, 7th Ex. Sess., ch. 5) (SB X7-1), was enacted as one of several bills passed at that time related to water supply reliability, ecosystem health, and the Delta. The Delta Reform Act created the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC). The DSC is made up of seven members that are advised by a 10-member board of scientists. The DSC adopted the Delta Plan – a comprehensive, long-term management plan for the Delta– in May 2013. The Plan creates new rules and recommendations to address the Council’s coequal goals for the Delta of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. According to the Delta Reform Act and the Delta Plan, the coequal goals are to be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an

evolving place. The DSC regulates covered actions, as statutorily defined, to address the coequal goals (for more information on what constitutes a covered action, see Chapter 12 – Land Use Planning). The coequal goals pertaining to agriculture include: 1) maintain Delta agriculture as a primary land use, a food source, a key economic sector, and a way of life; and 2) sustain a vital Delta economy that includes a mix of agriculture, tourism, recreation, related industries and business, and vital components of state and regional infrastructure.

#### *CALIFORNIA FARMLAND CONSERVANCY PROGRAM ACT OF 2010 – SENATE BILL 1142 (SB 1142)*

The California Farmland Conservancy Program Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 10200 et seq.), also known as SB 1142 (Stats. 2010, ch. 323), established the California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP), which provides grants for agricultural conservation easements. An agricultural conservation easement aims to maintain agricultural land in active production by preventing development on the subject parcel and prohibiting practices that would damage or interfere with the agricultural use of the land. Because the easement is a restriction on the deed of the property, the easement remains in effect even when the land changes ownership. While other benefits may accrue because the land is not developed (scenic and habitat values, for example), the primary use of the land is agricultural. Easements funded by the CFCP must be of a size and nature suitable for viable commercial agriculture.

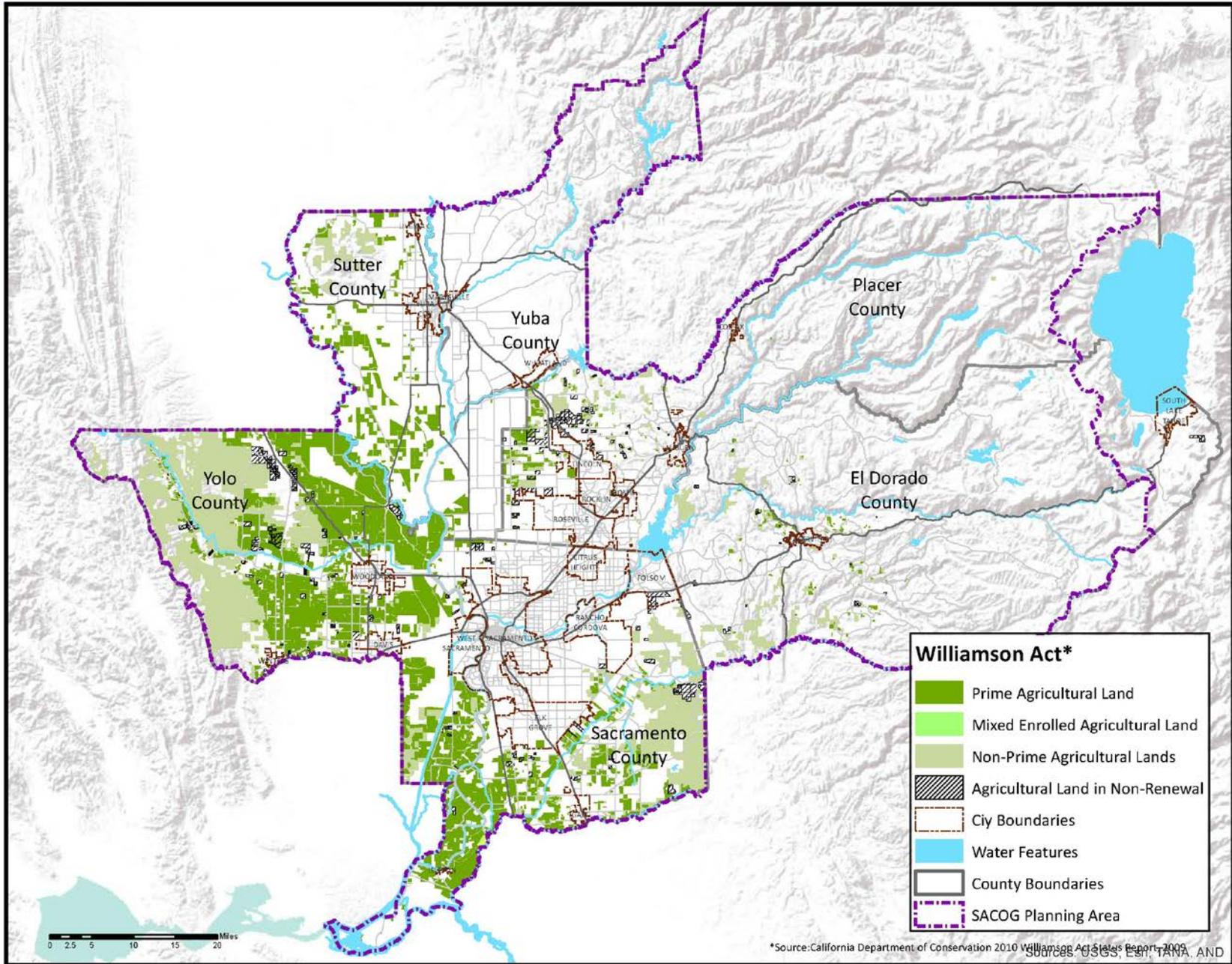
#### *THE FARM AND RANCH LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM*

The Farm and Ranch Land Program provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and rangeland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partners with state, tribal, or local governments and nongovernmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value of the conservation easement. To qualify, farmland must be part of a pending offer from a state, tribe, or local farmland protection program; be privately owned; have a conservation plan for highly erodible land; be large enough to sustain agricultural production; be accessible to markets for what the land produces; have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services; and have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service manages the program.

#### *SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL LANDS CONSERVATION PROGRAM (SALCP)*

The SALCP is a component of the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC), developed and implemented under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) within the California Budget Act of 2014. The goal of the AHSC is to “reduce greenhouse gas emissions through projects that implement land use, housing, transportation, and agricultural land preservation practices to support infill and compact development...” (Strategic Growth Council, 2014). It defines eligible projects to include “the acquisition of easements or other approaches or tools that protect agricultural lands that are under pressure of being converted to nonagricultural uses, particularly those adjacent to areas most at risk of urban or suburban sprawl...” (Strategic Growth Council, 2014).

Figure 4.2 - MTP/SCS Plan Area Williamson Act Lands



Within the AHSC, the SALCP aims to prevent increases in GHG emissions by “limiting opportunities for expansive, vehicle dependent forms of development in favor of more focused, compact, and transit oriented development within discrete growth boundaries.” In the future, SALCP will also fund programs that promote on-farm conservation strategies that reduce GHG emissions. Furthermore, the SALCP intends to leverage past and current agricultural land conservation programs, such as the California Farmland Conservancy Program, the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the Williamson Act, Revenue and Taxation Code sections 421-430.5, and Public Resources Code Division 9.

Guidelines for the SALCP grant program were approved by the Strategic Growth Council in January 2015 and its first round of applications were accepted in Spring 2015. The guidelines divided project applications into two categories—Agricultural Land Strategy Grants and Agricultural Conservation Easements.

#### *DELTA VISION BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE*

California Executive Order S-17-06 created the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force and directed the task force to develop a vision statement for sustainable management of the Delta and a strategic plan for the long-term restoration and maintenance of identified functions and values that are determined to be important to the environmental quality of the Delta and the economic and social well-being of the people of California. The Blue Ribbon Task Force released the Delta Vision Strategic Plan in October 2008, a document that describes specific steps and policies to realize the Delta Vision. It outlined the following goal for agriculture: recognize and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, and agricultural values of the California Delta as an evolving place, an action critical to achieving the co-equal goals.

### **4.3.3 Local Regulations**

#### *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 plans of each city and county contain goals and policies concerning topics that are mandated by state law (i.e., land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety) or which the jurisdiction has chosen to include (e.g., natural resources, parks and recreation, agricultural). The land use diagram generally illustrates designations that provide general locations for where policies will be implemented by land use type (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, public, open space), including those pertaining to agricultural resources.

In general, local planning policies related to agriculture and forestry resources are established to conserve and preserve agricultural land; protect natural resources; enhance Delta agriculture; and support, sustain, reinvent, and diversify the agricultural economy. In addition to these general policies, jurisdictions may have more specific policies regarding agricultural lands in the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, Williamson Act lands, local preference, and/or agribusiness.

Within the six counties comprising the MTP/SCS plan area, most agriculture and forestry resources are located within unincorporated county areas. Policies related to agriculture and forestry are established in the following elements of the general plan: Agriculture and Forestry (El Dorado

County), Agricultural and Forestry Resources (Placer County), Agricultural (Sacramento County), Agricultural Resources (Sutter County), and Agriculture and Economic Development (Yolo County). Alternatively, Yuba County includes these policies in the Farmland and Forests Section of the Natural Resources Element.

## *ZONING*

The city or county zoning code or ordinance is the set of detailed requirements that implement the general plan policies at the level of the individual parcel. The zoning code establishes separate districts or zones (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, public, open space), presents standards for development in different districts, and identifies which uses are allowed in the various zoning districts in order to ensure neighboring land uses are compatible with one another. 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.

The zoning code usually establishes specific districts for agriculture and/or forestry resources in order to protect farmland and farming activities from incompatible nonfarm uses and vice versa. Agricultural zoning can specify many factors, such as the farm uses allowed, minimum farm size, the number of nonfarm dwellings allowed, or the size of a buffer separating farm and nonfarm properties. All six counties in the MTP/SCS plan area have agricultural zoning districts, including:

- **El Dorado County:** Agricultural, Select Agricultural, Planned Agricultural (e.g., 20/30/40-acre), Exclusive Agricultural, Agricultural Preserve, Timberland Preserve
- **Placer County:** Agricultural Exclusive, Farm, Forestry, and Timberland Production;
- **Sacramento County:** Permanent Agriculture (e.g., 20/40/80/160-acre) and Interim Agricultural (e.g., 10/20/40-acre);
- **Sutter County:** Upland Agricultural, Agriculture Preserve, Exclusive Agricultural, General Agricultural, and Agricultural Combining;
- **Yolo County:** Agricultural Intensive, Agricultural Extensive, Agricultural Overlay, and Delta Protection Overlay; and
- **Yuba County:** Exclusive Agricultural.

Additionally, some counties include agricultural residential designations, with various minimum parcel requirements, as well as agricultural commercial or industrial processing zones.

## *COMMUNITY AND SPECIFIC PLANS*

A city or county may also provide land use planning by 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. Like the general plan, a specific or community plan may include a designated land use for the preservation of agriculture or forestry resources.

## *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.

## *OAK WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLANS*

As discussed above under State Regulations, Senate Bill 1334 of 2004, the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, requires all counties in California to adopt oak woodland management plans and ordinances that require a discretionary permit for oak woodland conversions. It also requires all counties to set minimum mitigation standards. Five of the six counties within the MTP/SCS plan area have adopted Oak Woodland Management Plans. Additionally, Sacramento County addresses the protection of oak woodlands in the Conservation Element of the 2011 General Plan.

## *RURAL-URBAN CONNECTIONS STRATEGY (RUCS)*

RUCS was launched at the conclusion of the 2008 MTP in an effort to provide policy and technical approaches to addressing or avoiding impacts to rural resources in the Sacramento region. The RUCS program is an economic and environmental sustainability strategy for rural areas and thus an integral piece of a regional strategy for the region's economic and environmental sustainability and viability. The program has focused analysis and research on four main study areas:

- Land Use and Conservation: policies and plans that shape rural areas,
- The Infrastructure of Agriculture: challenges to the production process,
- Economic Opportunities: new ways to grow revenue, and
- Regulations: navigating Federal and State environmental guidelines.

RUCS has developed or is currently developing several tools and supporting data to support policy discussion and understanding about the influence of the rural and urban economies on each other. One example is the Geographic Information System (GIS)-based tool that the RUCS team created using information about crop data, pesticide use, and economic data to assess agricultural production in the region. This tool provides the capacity to evaluate both urban and rural land use changes when combined with the land use model. These efforts are intended to broaden the region's understanding of how land use and transportation investments affect rural areas.

The RUCS program is ongoing, with the ultimate goal of bridging the urban and rural planning needs in the region. In addition to continuing to gather and assess information on agricultural production in the region, RUCS is preparing to conduct two specific studies over the next fiscal year (June 2015 to July 2016): the Food System Multipliers for Specialty Crops in the Sacramento Region study and the Delta Protection Commission Case Study.

The Food System Multipliers study is funded by a grant from the California Department of Food and Agriculture for the purpose of gathering detailed primary data on specialty crops from local growers, processors and distributors. This data, including revenue, input purchases, taxes, job creation and regulatory costs, will be used to model the direct, indirect, and induced multipliers of

the various components of the regional agricultural cluster. The results of the study will better quantify the full contribution of this important economic driver.

The Delta Case Study is funded by the DPC for the purpose of conducting a food hub feasibility analysis for the portions of Sacramento and Yolo counties in the legal Delta. The study will apply existing RUCS tools for analyzing data on the costs of inputs and operations for agricultural producers and the market prices for food products in order to determine the economic practicality of farmers growing products for the food hub. The results of the study will reveal the potential for Delta farmers to take advantage of the burgeoning market for locally-grown food by expanding or creating new agricultural infrastructure.

## 4.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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### 4.4.1 Methods and Assumptions

The footprints of new land use and transportation projects anticipated in the proposed MTP/SCS were overlaid with various farmland and forestry data. Transportation projects were analyzed by calculating a 100-foot buffer area around the center line of the proposed projects and measuring the area overlapping various farmland and forestry data. Although only road widenings, new roads, new or expanded interchanges, and new rail transit infrastructure were spatially analyzed this way, the analysis is very conservative because many transportation projects, such as road widenings will not use the entire buffer area. Class II (bike lanes) and Class III (bike routes) bicycle projects are included in the roadway buffer analysis because such projects are part of the roadway right-of-way. A buffer analysis was not performed for Class I (separate, multi-use trails) projects. Because Class I trails are much narrower than roadways, performing a buffer analysis is difficult, as even small shifts in alignment can result in varying outcomes. However, a majority of new Class I trails in the proposed MTP/SCS run parallel to new, expanded, or existing roadways or along waterways and levees. Class I trails that run parallel to new or expanded roadways would be captured by the 100-foot buffer around new or expanded roadway and light rail projects that was used to calculate potential impacts on agricultural lands. Additionally, because the 100-foot buffer assumption is conservative, and will result in a greater estimate of impacted acreage than is likely to occur, the amount of agricultural lands impacted by Class I trails that are not otherwise captured by the 100-foot buffer for new or expanded roadway and light rail projects is covered by the analysis.

For each impact, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS is assessed on three levels: regional, Community Type (i.e., Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, Rural Residential Communities, and Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS), and transit priority areas (TPAs; areas of the region that are within one-half mile of a major transit stop or high-quality transit corridor.) For a full description of Community Types and TPAs in the region, see Chapter 2 – Project Description. For each of the three levels of analysis (regional, Community Type, and TPAs), impacts are assessed in terms of both the proposed land use pattern and transportation network. By 2036, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will result in a land use pattern and transportation network that is different from existing conditions. Unless otherwise stated, “existing conditions” in the proposed MTP/SCS refers to conditions in the baseline of 2012. The proposed MTP/SCS uses 2012 because it is the most recent year for which comprehensive land use, demographic, traffic count, and VMT data are available for the SACOG region. Chapter 1 – Introduction includes a more detailed discussion of the baseline for the proposed MTP/SCS.

For descriptions of the agriculture and forestry environment, 2012 was also used as the baseline in most instances, but to the extent more recent data was available, it is provided. Five data sources were used to analyze the agriculture and forestry environment: the FMMP, the California Department of Conservation's Williamson Act, general plans (from all six counties), zoning codes (from all six counties), and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program. In addition, the acreages for agricultural land identified in this chapter were confirmed with staff from all six counties. Using this combination of multiple data sources plus individual county review is more accurate than solely relying on FMMP data, which does not capture information about farms that are less than 10 acres in size or that have been newly put into production during last 20 years.

First, the FMMP data were used to analyze impacts to agricultural resources. These data classify agricultural resources into a number of categories. For purposes of this analysis Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance were considered. FMMP data are updated every two years and use a minimum mapping unit of 10 acres. The most recent complete and regionally consistent set of data published by the FMMP is for the years 2010-2012. Because these data do not account for planned uses and the data are from 2010-2012, it is likely there is some amount of recent development that is currently constructed or under construction that is being analyzed for impacts to farmland, though farmland is no longer the current existing use.

Second, the California Department of Conservation's Williamson Act data were used to analyze agriculture impacts. These data include any lands that are currently enrolled under a California Land Conservation Act contract in 2014. This analysis does not include lands that are in a non-renewal status.

Third, general plan data from all six counties were used to analyze lands designated for agriculture and forest uses. These data were collected in 2012 and reflects the currently adopted general plans in El Dorado (2004), Placer (2013), Sacramento (2011), Sutter (2011), Yolo (2009), and Yuba (2011).

Fourth, zoning data from all six counties were collected in 2012 and used in this analysis to measure impacts to agriculture and forest zoned uses.

Lastly, land cover data from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program were used to analyze forest lands. These data are produced using remote sensing and aerial imagery to create a dataset that includes tree size and tree canopy with a minimum map unit of 2.5 acres. Because the Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring data are remote sensing data created to estimate all tree canopy, in some cases, particularly in urban areas, it is likely these are not actual "forest" areas. No screening for tree canopy density was done in this analysis; however, the data were geographically screened so that only forests that actually exist today were used. These areas include the Rural Residential Communities and the Lands Not Identified for Development in El Dorado County, Placer County, and Yuba County.

#### **4.4.2 Criteria for Determining Significance**

For the purposes of this EIR, SACOG has determined that adoption and/or implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS (including adoption of the MTP policies, adoption of the SCS, and adoption of the transportation project list and financing plan) would result in significant impacts under CEQA, if any of the following would occur:

1. 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 Department of Conservation, to non-agricultural use.
2. Conflict with existing zoning or general plan land use designations for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.
3. Conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Pub. Resources Code, § 12220(G)), timberland (as defined by Pub. Resources Code, § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Gov. Code, § 51104(G)).
4. Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.
5. Result in the loss of “Forest Land” as defined in the California Forest Legacy Act of 2007 (Pub. Resources Code, § 12220(G)) or conversion of Forest Land into nonforest use.
6. Result in construction impacts that would convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance to non-agricultural uses; conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning or land use designations for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use; or result in the loss of Forest Land or conversion of Forest Land into non-forest use.

#### **4.4.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

*IMPACT AG-1: CONVERT PRIME FARMLAND, UNIQUE FARMLAND, OR FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE, AS SHOWN ON THE MAPS PREPARED PURSUANT TO THE FARMLAND MAPPING AND MONITORING PROGRAM (FMMP) OF THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION, TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE.*

#### **Regional Impacts**

As of 2012, the SACOG region contained 553,976 acres of prime farmland, 127,000 acres of unique farmland, and 181,164 acres of farmland of statewide importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) of the California Department of Conservation (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1 above). For this analysis, any acre of prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance that overlaps with the proposed MTP/SCS land use footprint and transportation projects is considered a potentially significant impact. The potential overlap of the proposed MTP/SCS land use and transportation projects with FMMP designated farmland is shown below in Table 4.4.

By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. The land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 1,722 acres of prime farmland, 588 acres of unique farmland, and 1,905 acres of farmland of

statewide importance for a total potential impact of 4,214 acres. Transportation projects were analyzed by calculating a 100-foot buffer area around the center line of the proposed projects and measuring the area overlapping Important Farmland. This analysis indicated that 744 acres of prime farmland, 158 acres of unique farmland, and 338 acres of farmland of statewide importance could potentially be impacted by proposed MTP/SCS transportation projects, for a total impact of 1,240 acres.

Together, land use changes and transportation projects have the potential to impact 2,466 acres of prime farmland, 746 acres of unique farmland, and 2,243 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a combined potential impact to 5,454 acres of FMMP designated farmland. The 5,454 acres of FMMP designated farmland that may be impacted represents approximately 11 percent of the total 47,563 acres of new development land anticipated under the proposed MTP/SCS. In total, this area represents approximately 0.3 percent of all FMMP designated farmland in the region.

While these impacts appear relatively small from a regional perspective, due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland related to the land use changes and transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS at the regional level are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

**Table 4.4  
Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Farmland**

Community Type	Acres of Impact			
	Prime Farmland	Unique Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Total Acres of Impact
<i>Land Use Growth Footprint</i>				
Center and Corridor Communities	266	74	37	377
Established Communities	548	68	420	1,037
Developing Communities	907	422	1,411	2,740
Rural Residential Communities	0	23	37	60
Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS	0	0	0	0
<i>Transportation Projects</i>				
Center and Corridor Communities	48	0	7	55
Established Communities	46	7	27	80
Developing Communities	120	41	157	318
Rural Residential Communities	0	0	12	13
Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS	530	110	135	775
<i>Regional Totals</i>				
<b>Land Use Growth Footprint Total</b>	<b>1,722</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>1,905</b>	<b>4,214</b>
<b>Transportation Projects Total</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>1,240</b>
<b>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</b>	<b>2,466</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>2,243</b>	<b>5,454</b>

*Note: Numbers may not total due to rounding.*

*Source: SACOG, MTP/SCS Preferred Scenario Land Use Forecast, April 2015; California Department of Conservation, 2012*

## Localized Impacts

### *Center and Corridor Communities*

Within Center and Corridor Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 266 acres of prime farmland, 74 acres of unique farmland, and 37 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 377 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities have the potential to impact 48 acres of prime farmland, zero acres of unique farmland, and seven acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 55 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

### *Established Communities*

Within Established Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 548 acres of prime farmland, 68 acres of unique farmland, and 420 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 1,037 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 46 acres of prime farmland, seven acres of unique farmland, and 27 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 80 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

### *Developing Communities*

Within Developing Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 907 acres of prime farmland, 422 acres of unique farmland, and 1,411 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 2,740 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 120 acres of prime farmland, 41 acres of unique farmland, and 157 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 318 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

#### *Rural Residential Communities*

Within Rural Residential Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact zero acres of prime farmland, 23 acres of unique farmland, and 37 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 60 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact less than one acre of prime farmland, less than one acre of unique farmland and 12 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 13 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

#### *Lands Not Identified for Development in the Proposed MTP/SCS*

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, may occur in this Community Type within the MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2036. Because the growth in these areas will support agricultural uses, such development will not result in the conversion of FMMP designated lands to other uses.

Therefore, the impacts on FMMP designated farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-1. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 530 acres of prime farmland, 110 acres of

unique farmland, and 135 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 775 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

### Transit Priority Area Impacts

Impacts to prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide importance, as defined by the FMMP, within Transit Priority Areas are described in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5  
Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Farmland in Transit Priority Areas**

Transit Priority Area	Acres of Impact			
	Prime Farmland	Unique Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Total Farmland
<i>Land Use Growth Footprint</i>				
Placer County TPAs	0	0	0	0
Sacramento County TPAs	253	65	62	381
Yolo County TPAs	0	0	45	45
<i>Transportation Projects</i>				
Placer County TPAs	0	0	0	0
Sacramento County TPAs	42	0	8	50
Yolo County TPAs	25	0	-	25
<i>Regional Totals</i>				
<b>Land Use Growth Footprint Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>426</b>
<b>Transportation Projects Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>501</b>

*Note: Numbers may not total due to rounding.*

*Source: SACOG, MTP/SCS Preferred Scenario Land Use Forecast, April 2015, California Department of Conservation, 2012*

#### *Placer County Transit Priority Areas*

The land use growth footprint does not overlap with farmlands in the Placer County TPAs.

Because development related to land use in Placer County TPAs will not impact any farmland, the impacts on FMMP designated farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-1. No mitigation is required.

The new transportation project buffer area does not overlap with farmlands in the Placer County TPAs.

Because development related to transportation improvements in Placer County TPAs will not impact any farmland, the impacts on FMMP designated farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-1. No mitigation is required.

#### *Sacramento County Transit Priority Areas*

Within Sacramento County TPAs, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 253 acres of prime farmland, 65 acres of unique farmland, and 62 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 381 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 42 acres of prime farmland, zero acres of unique farmland, and eight acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 50 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

#### *Yolo County Transit Priority Areas*

Within Yolo County's TPAs, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact zero acres of prime farmland, zero acres of unique farmland, and 45 acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 45 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 25 acres of prime farmland, zero acres of unique farmland, and zero acres of farmland of statewide importance for a total potential impact of 25 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

#### ***MITIGATION MEASURES***

As part of planning, design, and engineering for projects that result from the proposed MTP/SCS, the implementing agency shall ensure that FMMP designated farmland is treated in accordance with

applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following mitigation measure(s) at a project-level would reduce the impacts FMMP farmland, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures should do so (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081).

### **Mitigation Measure AG-1: Mitigate for loss of farmland.**

The implementing agency shall require project proponents to mitigate for loss of farmland by providing permanent protection of in-kind farmland at a 1:1 ratio, in the form of easements, fees, or elimination of development rights/potential.

#### *SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION*

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts this mitigation measure, Impact AG-1 would be reduced, but not to a less than significant level, because of site-specific conditions resulting in the net loss of agricultural land. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-1 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review. The CEQA streamlining provisions of SB 375 are not available for projects that result in these impacts (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155.1, 21155.2, and 21159.28).

#### *IMPACT AG-2: CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS FOR AGRICULTURAL USE, OR WITH A WILLIAMSON ACT CONTRACT.*

### **Regional Impacts**

As of 2012, the SACOG region contained 1,979,033 acres of land zoned for agricultural uses, 2,082,676 acres of land designated for agriculture in local general plans, and 705,666 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts (see Table 4.3 above). These categories are not mutually exclusive. That is, lands classified in one category can also be classified in one or both of the other categories. For this analysis, any acre of an existing zoning or general plan land use designation for agricultural use, or with a Williamson Act Contract that overlaps with the proposed MTP/SCS is considered a potentially significant impact. The potential overlap of the proposed MTP/SCS land use and transportation projects with these lands is shown in Table 4.6 below.

By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. The land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 5,309 acres of agricultural zoning, 1,056 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 697 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts. Transportation projects were analyzed by calculating a 100-foot buffer area around the center line of the proposed projects and measuring the area overlapping agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, and farmland under active Williamson Act contracts. This analysis indicated that 1,781 acres of agricultural zoning, 2,668

acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 296 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts could potentially be impacted by proposed MTP/SCS transportation projects.

**Table 4.6  
Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with Agricultural Zoning, Agricultural General Plan Designations, and Williamson Act Lands**

Community Type	Acres of Impact		
	Zoning	General Plans	Williamson Act Lands <sup>1</sup>
<i>Land Use Growth Footprint</i>			
Center and Corridor Communities	455	22	-
Established Communities	441	20	28
Developing Communities	3,797	979	605
Rural Residential Communities	616	35	64
Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS	0	0	0
<i>Transportation Projects</i>			
Center and Corridor Communities	54	67	-
Established Communities	96	119	7
Developing Communities	438	993	80
Rural Residential Communities	35	114	6
Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS	1,158	1,375	203
<i>Regional Totals</i>			
<b>Land Use Growth Footprint Total</b>	<b>5,309</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>697</b>
<b>Transportation Projects Total</b>	<b>1,781</b>	<b>2,668</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</b>	<b>7,090</b>	<b>3,724</b>	<b>993</b>

<sup>1</sup> Williamson Act lands does not include lands that are currently in non-renewal.

Source: SACOG, MTP/SCS Preferred Scenario Land Use Forecast, April 2015; El Dorado County General Plan GIS data 2012; Placer County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Sacramento County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Sutter County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Yolo County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Yuba County General Plan GIS data, 2012; El Dorado County Zoning GIS data, 2010; Placer County Zoning GIS data, 2015; Sacramento County Zoning GIS data, 2015; Sutter County Zoning GIS data, 2015; Yolo County Zoning GIS data, 2014; Yuba County Zoning GIS data, 2013; California Department of Conservation, 2014 (Yolo County data is from 2011).

Together, land use changes and transportation projects have the potential to impact 7,090 acres of agricultural zoning, 3,724 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 993 acres of Williamson Act contracted lands. As a total of all agricultural land within the region, agricultural land that has the potential to be impacted by the land use changes and transportation projects associated with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS includes approximately 0.4 percent of land with an agricultural zoning, 0.2 percent of land designated as agricultural in an applicable general plan, and 0.1 percent of land currently under a Williamson Act contract.

While these impacts appear relatively small from a regional perspective, due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes and transportation projects from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

## Localized Impacts

### *Center and Corridor Communities*

Within Center and Corridor Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 455 acres of agricultural zoning, 22 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and no Williamson Act lands.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Transportation projects within Center and Corridor Communities implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 54 acres of agricultural zoning, 67 acres of general plan designations, and no Williamson Act lands.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

### *Established Communities*

Within Established Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 441 acres of agricultural zoning, 20 acres of general plan designations and 28 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Transportation projects within Established Communities implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 96 acres of agricultural zoning, 119 acres of general plan designations, and seven acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

### *Developing Communities*

Within Developing Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 3,797 acres of agricultural zoning, 979 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 605 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Transportation projects within Developing Communities implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 438 acres of agricultural zoning, 993 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 80 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

#### *Rural Residential Communities*

Within Rural Residential Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 616 acres of agricultural zoning, 35 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 64 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Transportation projects within Rural Residential Communities implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 35 acres of agricultural zoning, 114 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and six acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

#### *Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS*

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, will occur in this Community Type within the proposed MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2036. Because the growth in these areas will support agricultural uses, such development will not result in the conversion of zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands to other uses.

Because development related to land use in Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS will not impact any farmland, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated lands or Williamson Act lands related to the land use impacts from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands

Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-2. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. Transportation projects within Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 1,158 acres of agricultural zoning, 1,375 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 203 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS on Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

### Transit Priority Area Impacts

Impacts to agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, and farmland under active Williamson Act contract in TPAs are shown below in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.7**  
**Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with Agricultural Zoning, Agricultural General Plan Designations, and Williamson Act Lands**

Community Type	Acres of Impact		
	Zoning	General Plans	Williamson Act
<i>Land Use Growth Footprint</i>			
Placer County TPAs	0	0	0
Sacramento County TPAs	329	79	0
Yolo County TPAs	113	22	0
<i>Transportation Projects</i>			
Placer County TPAs	0	0	0
Sacramento County TPAs	57	55	0
Yolo County TPAs	19	19	0
<i>Regional Totals</i>			
<b>Land Use Growth Footprint Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Transportation Projects Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>1</sup> Williamson Act lands does not include lands that are currently in non-renewal (California Department of Conservation, 2014; Yolo County data is from 2011).

Source: SACOG, MTP/SCS Preferred Scenario Land Use Forecast, April 2015; El Dorado County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Placer County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Sacramento County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Sutter County General Plan GIS data, 2012, Yolo County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Yuba County General Plan GIS data, 2012; El Dorado County Zoning GIS data, 2010; Placer County Zoning GIS data, 2015; Sacramento County Zoning GIS data, 2015; Sutter County Zoning GIS data, 2015, Yolo County Zoning GIS data, 2014; Yuba County Zoning GIS data, 2013

#### *Placer County Transit Priority Areas*

The land use growth footprint does not overlap with agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, or farmland under active Williamson Act contracts in the Placer County TPAs.

Because development related to land use in Placer County TPAs will not impact any farmland, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-2. No mitigation is required.

The new transportation project 100-foot buffer does not overlap with agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, or farmland under active Williamson Act contracts in the Placer County TPAs.

Because development related to transportation improvements in Placer County TPAs will not impact any farmland, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for impact AG-2. No mitigation is required.

#### *Sacramento County Transit Priority Areas*

Within the Sacramento County TPAs, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 329 acres of agricultural zoning and 79 acres of agricultural general plan designations.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Transportation projects within the Sacramento County TPAs implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 57 acres of agricultural zoning and 55 acres of agricultural general plan designations.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

#### *Yolo County Transit Priority Areas*

Within the Yolo County TPAs, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 113 acres of agricultural zoning and 22 acres of agricultural general plan designations.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Transportation projects within the Yolo County TPAs implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 19 acres of agricultural zoning and 19 acres of agricultural general plan designations.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

#### *MITIGATION MEASURES*

As part of planning, design, and engineering for projects that result from the proposed MTP/SCS, the implementing agency shall ensure that zoned, general plan designated, or Williamson Act farmland is treated in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measures at a project-level would reduce the impacts to zoned, general plan designated, or Williamson Act, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures should do so (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081).

#### **Mitigation Measure AG-2: Implement Mitigation Measure AG-1.**

**Mitigation Measure AG-3: Design proposed projects to minimize, to the greatest extent feasible, conflicts and inconsistencies with land protected by agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract and the terms of the applicable zoning and contract.**

Implementing agencies shall require project proponents to:

- Relocate project or corridor realignment, where feasible, to avoid farmland, especially Prime Farmland;
- Minimize severance and fragmentation of agricultural land by constructing underpasses and overpasses at reasonable intervals to provide property access;
- Include berms, buffer zones, setbacks, and fencing to reduce use conflicts between new development and farming uses and to protect the functions of farmland; and
- Implement other feasible conservation tools available from the California Department of Conservation's Division of Land Resource Protection.

#### *SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION*

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts these mitigation measures, Impact AG-2 would be reduced, but not to a less than significant level, because of site-specific conditions resulting in the net loss of agricultural land. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-2 remains significant and

unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review. The CEQA streamlining provisions of SB 375 are not available for projects that result in these impacts (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155.1, 21155.2, and 21159.28).

*IMPACT AG-3: CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR LAND USE DESIGNATION FOR, OR CAUSE REZONING OF, FOREST LAND, TIMBERLAND, OR TIMBERLAND ZONED TIMBERLAND PRODUCTION.*

## Regional Impacts

As of 2012, the SACOG region contained 867,681 acres of land zoned or designated for forest land or timber production.

Only three of the six county general plans within the MTP/SCS plan area establish designations that include forests or timberland for production, though each county does so using a different approach (for more information on forest land as a natural resource and habitat, see Chapter 6 – Biological Resources). Only Placer County establishes generalized designations specifically for “Forestry” and “Timberland”, which is further divided into separate designations by minimum parcel acreage (Placer County, 2013). Additionally, Placer County has several community plans including similar designations to those of the general plan. When combined, these designations cover 591,337 acres of land within the county.

El Dorado County includes forest land in the “Natural Resources” designation, along with “mineral resources, important watershed, lakes and ponds, river corridors, grazing lands, and areas where the encroachment of development would compromise these natural resource values” (El Dorado County, 2004). This designation covers 637,078 acres of land within the county. Similarly, Yuba County includes agriculture and forest land in the “Natural Resources” designation, created to “conserve and provide natural habitat, watersheds, scenic resources, cultural resources, recreational amenities, agricultural and forest resources, wetlands, woodlands, minerals, and other resources for sustainable use, enjoyment, extraction, and processing” (Yuba County, 2011). This designation covers 292,771 acres of land within the county. Sacramento, Sutter, and Yolo Counties do not reference forests or timberland in their general plans.

For this analysis, any acre of an existing zoning or land use designation for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned timberland production that overlaps with the proposed MTP/SCS is considered a potentially significant impact. The potential overlap of the proposed MTP/SCS land use and transportation projects with these lands is shown below in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8  
Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with Timberland/ Forest Zoning and General Plan Designations**

Community Type	Acres of Impact	
	Regional Zoning	General Plan Designation
<i>Land Use Growth Footprint</i>		
Center and Corridor Communities	0	0
Established Communities	112	0
Developing Communities	0	103
Rural Residential Communities	34	29
Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS	0	0
<i>Transportation Projects</i>		
Center and Corridor Communities	0	0
Established Communities	0	0
Developing Communities	0	0
Rural Residential Communities	0	0
Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS	0	0
<i>Regional Totals</i>		
<b>Land Use Growth Footprint Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Transportation Projects Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>132</b>

*Note: Sacramento, Sutter, and Yolo Counties do not have forest or timberland general plan designations. Source: SACOG, MTP/SCS Preferred Scenario Land Use Forecast, April 2015; El Dorado County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Placer County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Sacramento County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Sutter County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Yolo County General Plan GIS data, 2012; Yuba County General Plan GIS data, 2012; El Dorado County Zoning GIS data, 2010; Placer County Zoning GIS data, 2015; Sacramento County Zoning GIS data, 2015; Sutter County Zoning GIS data, 2015; Yolo County Zoning GIS data, 2014; Yuba County Zoning GIS data, 2013.*

By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. The land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 146 acres of timberland zoning (or approximately 0.02 percent of all timberland zoned land in the region) and 132 acres of general plan designated land (or approximately 0.01 percent of the total land designated for timberland in applicable general plans). While these impacts appear relatively small from a regional perspective, due to the importance of the region’s timberland resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland are considered potentially significant.

Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-3. Mitigation Measure AG-4 is described below.

Transportation projects were analyzed by calculating a 100-foot buffer area around the center line of the proposed projects and measuring the area overlapping timberland zoning and general plan designations. This analysis indicated that no general plan or zoning designated land would be impacted by transportation improvements.

Because development related to transportation improvements will not impact any forest land, impacts related to the land use changes and transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS are considered less than significant (LS) for impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

## **Localized Impacts**

### *Center and Corridor Communities*

The land use growth footprint does not overlap with zoned or designated forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Zoning in Center and Corridor Communities. Therefore, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

The new transportation project 100-foot buffer does not overlap with zoned or designated forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Zoning in Center and Corridor Communities. Therefore, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

### *Established Communities*

The land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 112 acres zoned forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Zoning in Established Communities.

Due to the importance of the region's timberland resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-3. Mitigation Measure AG-4 is described below.

The new transportation project 100-foot buffer does not overlap with zoned or designated forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Zoning in Established Communities. Therefore the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

### *Developing Communities*

The land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 103 acres of designated forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Zoning in Developing Communities.

While these impacts appear relatively small from a regional perspective, due to the importance of the region's timberland resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

The new transportation project 100-foot buffer does not overlap with zoned or designated forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Zoning in Developing Communities. Therefore, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

#### *Rural Residential Communities*

Within Rural Residential Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 34 acres of timberland zoning and 29 acres of general plan designated land.

Due to the importance of the region's timberland resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-3. Mitigation Measure AG-4 is described below.

The new transportation project 100-foot buffer does not overlap with zoned or designated forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Zoning in Developing Communities. Therefore, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

#### *Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS*

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, will occur in this Community Type within the proposed MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2036. Because the growth in these areas will support forestry uses, such development will not result in the conversion of zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland to other uses. Therefore, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. The new transportation project 100-foot buffer does not overlap with zoned or designated forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production Zoning in Lands Not Identified for Development. Therefore, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

### **Transit Priority Area Impacts**

#### *Placer County, Sacramento County, and Yolo County Transit Priority Areas*

The TPAs do not contain any timberland zoning or related general plan designations. Therefore, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to the land use changes

and transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

#### *MITIGATION MEASURES*

As part of planning, design, and engineering for projects that result from the proposed MTP/SCS, the implementing agency shall ensure that zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland are treated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measure at a project-level would reduce the impacts to zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures should do so (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081).

#### **Mitigation Measure AG-4: Mitigate for loss of forest land or timberland.**

The implementing agency shall require project proponents to mitigate for loss of forest land or timberland by providing permanent protection of in-kind land at a 1:1 ratio, in the form of easements or fees and elimination of development rights/potential.

#### *SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION*

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland are considered significant and unavoidable. If the implementing agency adopts this mitigation measure, Impact AG-3 would be reduced, but not to a less than significant level, because of site-specific conditions resulting in the net loss of forest land or timberland. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-3 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review. The CEQA streamlining provisions of SB 375 are not available for projects that result in these impacts (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155.1, 21155.2, and 21159.28).

*IMPACT AG-4: INVOLVE OTHER CHANGES IN THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT, WHICH, DUE TO THEIR LOCATION OR NATURE, COULD RESULT IN CONVERSION OF FARMLAND TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE.*

#### **Regional Impacts**

A summary of land use and transportation changes for the MTP/SCS plan area, including detail by Community Type and TPA, is provided in Chapter 2 – Project Description.

The projected population and housing unit growth indicate that implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will result in more compact development than existing conditions. By developing more compactly, the proposed MTP/SCS directs more growth to areas that are already urbanized and prevents undeveloped land from being converted to urban uses. Keeping growth contained to areas that are already developed limits the amount of growth that takes place at the urban edge, adjacent to agricultural areas.

However, as discussed in Impact AG-1 and AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will result in the conversion of 5,454 acres of farmland, 7,090 acres of zoned agricultural land, 3,724 acres of general plan designated agricultural land, and 993 acres of land under Williamson Act contracts. Lands that remain agricultural lands, but are located near to lands that will be converted to urban uses, may feel pressure to develop, as nearby land values increase or as nuisances from urban development spread to agricultural lands.

While much of the transportation infrastructure in the proposed MTP/SCS will serve urban uses in urbanized areas of the region, it is likely that implementation of transportation improvements at the urban edge could increase urban traffic patterns on roads that serve urban development and agricultural lands. Frequently, the increased traffic volumes are caused by spillover from congested roads near the exterior of urbanized areas. Increased urban traffic on transitional roads can lead to increased conflict between uses, which could result in the conversion of additional agricultural lands in order to reduce such conflicts.

As discussed above, the proposed MTP/SCS will result in more compact development than existing conditions. The MTP/SCS is designed to improve transportation options and increase capacity within urbanized areas. Owners of agricultural lands nearest to these urbanized areas may feel pressure to develop as transportation improvements within proximity of these lands are rehabilitated or further developed. Such pressure will also increase as land uses surrounding these properties continue to urbanize. Therefore, impacts on farmland related to the land use changes and transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS at the regional level are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

## **Localized Impacts**

### *Center and Corridor Communities*

Center and Corridor Communities are already urbanized and are typically surrounded by other urban land uses like Established Communities or Developing Communities. As discussed in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will likely result in the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses, but that amount is anticipated to be less than 8 percent of the total amount of agricultural land impacted by development in all Community Types. Most of the development that could impact agricultural lands occurs in Yolo County around the City of Davis. Because Yolo County has such strict land use policies that allocate growth to incorporated cities or developed unincorporated communities, future development in Center and Corridor Communities will abut agricultural lands. However, because Yolo County restricts urban development to cities and/or their spheres of influence and to existing unincorporated communities, such growth is unlikely to have spillover effects that would cause any additional conversion of farmland. Similarly, because Center and Corridor communities elsewhere in the region are surrounded by urban uses, development in those areas would be unlikely to result in the conversion of additional farmland to urban uses.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

On the transportation side, Center and Corridor Communities will see a variety of transportation improvements by 2036, including new HOV lanes, auxiliary lanes, roadway widenings, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, transit facilities, increased transit service, and roadway maintenance and rehabilitation projects. These transportation projects will primarily serve urban uses. As with the land use discussion above, transportation projects around the City of Davis in Yolo County will likely result in the conversion of agricultural lands to transportation uses. However, such projects will serve existing and future urban developments and will not likely have impacts that would result in the conversion of additional agricultural lands to transportation uses.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

#### *Established Communities*

Like Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities already have a significant amount of urban development, but these areas are generally not as dense as Center and Corridor Communities. New development will primarily occur through building out existing subdivisions and filling in empty lots. For the most part, these areas are located in the interior portions of incorporated cities or unincorporated communities. However, as stated in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will likely result in the conversion of farmland to urban uses in Established Communities. Lands that remain agricultural lands, but are located near lands that will be converted to urban uses, may feel pressure to develop, as nearby land values increase or as nuisances from urban development spread to agricultural lands.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

On the transportation side, Established Communities will experience transportation improvements similar to those found in Center and Corridor Communities. Transportation improvements may include new HOV lanes, auxiliary lanes, roadway widenings, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, transit facilities, increased transit service, and roadway maintenance and rehabilitation projects. These projects will serve existing and new development in Established Communities.

It is likely that implementation of transportation improvements in Established Communities could increase urban traffic patterns on roads that serve urban development and agricultural lands. Frequently, the increased traffic volumes are caused by spillover from congested roads near the exterior of urbanized areas. Increased urban traffic on transitional roads can lead to increased conflict between uses, which could result in the conversion of additional agricultural lands in order to reduce such conflicts.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

### *Developing Communities*

Developing Communities are communities that are just starting to develop or will begin to develop during the planning period and are often located at or near the edge of the existing urbanized area of the region. In many cases, the current zoning in these areas is agriculture and they have been proposed to rezone for residential, commercial, or industrial development. As stated in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG -2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will likely result in the conversion of farmland to urban uses in Developing Communities. Lands that remain agricultural lands, but are located near to lands that will be converted to urban uses, may be subject to development pressures, as nearby land values increase or as nuisances from urban development spread to agricultural lands.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

On the transportation side, Developing Communities experience more road widening projects and newly constructed road projects to serve the new residential and employment developments. These areas will see road maintenance and rehabilitation projects, but because these areas have less transportation infrastructure to begin with, these projects will not be as prevalent as in Center and Corridor Communities and Established Communities. Developing Communities generally are not served by transit today, but new transit service will be added incrementally to align with the completion of new housing and employment centers. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure will be similarly phased in over the life of the proposed MTP/SCS.

It is likely that implementation of transportation improvements in Developing Communities could increase urban traffic patterns on roads that serve urban development and agricultural lands. Frequently, the increased traffic volumes are caused by spillover from congested roads near the exterior of urbanized areas. Increased urban traffic on transitional roads can lead to increased conflict between uses, which could result in the conversion of additional agricultural lands in order to reduce such conflicts.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

### *Rural Residential Communities*

Rural Residential Communities are predominantly residential with some small-scale hobby or commercial farming. The predominant form of development anticipated by the proposed MTP/SCS in these areas will be incremental development on large parcels, typically one unit or parcel at a time. New development in these areas will be largely isolated from urban areas. As stated in Impact AG-1 and AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in this Community Type will likely result in the conversion of farmland to urban uses. Because Rural Residential Communities have a total land area of 2,433,470 acres, it is unlikely that the conversion of such a small amount of acreage will result in development pressures that would convert additional agricultural land to urban uses. This Community Type already coexists with agricultural uses. Conflicts that already exist between uses are likely to continue with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS, but because the increment of growth is so small, it is unlikely to exacerbate these existing nuisances in such a way as to cause additional conversion of farmland.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

Transportation infrastructure in Rural Residential Communities consists primarily of roads serving automobile traffic with very limited transit service in a few places in the region. Implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will result in the construction of roadway improvements including road maintenance and rehabilitation, roadway widenings, newly constructed roadways, and freeway improvements. There may also be limited improvements to transit service.

Rural residential developments and agricultural lands already coexist on existing roadway infrastructure. As noted in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will likely result in the conversion of farmland to transportation uses. However, the amount of land converted is expected to be small and would be unlikely to cause conflict or development pressure that would result in the conversion of additional farmland.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

#### *Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS*

The land use forecast does not overlap with farmlands, agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, or farmland under active Williamson Act contracts in Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS. Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, may occur in this Community Type within the MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2036. Conflicts that already exist between uses are likely to continue with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS, but because the increment of growth is so small, it is unlikely to exacerbate these existing nuisances in such a way as to cause additional conversion of farmland.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. As noted in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will likely result in the conversion of farmland to transportation uses. It is likely that implementation of transportation improvements in Lands Not Identified for Development could increase urban traffic patterns on roads that serve agricultural lands. Frequently, the increased traffic volumes are caused by spillover from congested roads near the exterior of urbanized areas. Increased urban traffic on transitional roads can lead to increased conflict between uses, which could result in the conversion of additional agricultural lands in order to reduce such conflicts.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

## Transit Priority Area Impacts

### *Placer County Transit Priority Areas*

The land use forecast does not overlap with farmlands, agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, or farmland under active Williamson Act contracts in the Placer County TPAs.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

The new transportation project 100-foot buffer does not overlap with farmlands, agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, or farmland under active Williamson Act contracts in the Placer County TPAs. In addition, the Placer County TPAs are surrounded by other urban uses. Transportation infrastructure improvements would be unlikely to result in the conversion of additional farmland to urban uses. Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

### *Sacramento County Transit Priority Areas*

The Sacramento County TPAs are already urbanized and are typically surrounded by other urban land uses like Established or Developing Communities. As discussed in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will likely result in the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses. Because the Sacramento County TPAs are surrounded by urban uses, development in those areas would be unlikely to result in the conversion of additional farmland to urban uses. Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

On the transportation side, the Sacramento County TPAs will see a variety of transportation improvements by 2036, including new HOV lanes, auxiliary lanes, roadway widenings, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, transit facilities, increased transit service, and roadway maintenance and rehabilitation projects. These transportation projects will primarily serve urban uses. Transportation projects will likely result in the conversion of agricultural lands to transportation uses. However, such projects will serve existing and future urban developments and will not likely have impact that would result in the conversion of additional agricultural lands to transportation uses. Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

### *Yolo County Transit Priority Areas*

The Yolo County TPAs are already urbanized and are typically surrounded by other urban land uses like Established or Developing Communities. As discussed in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will likely result in the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses. Most of the development that could impact agricultural lands occurs around the City of Davis. Because Yolo County has such strict land use policies that allocate growth to incorporated cities or developed unincorporated communities, future development in the Yolo County TPAs will abut agricultural lands. However, because Yolo County restricts urban development to cities and/or their spheres of influence and to existing unincorporated communities, such growth is unlikely to have spillover effects that would cause any additional conversion of farmland. Therefore, the

impacts on farmland related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

On the transportation side, the Yolo County TPAs will see a variety of transportation improvements by 2036, including new HOV lanes, auxiliary lanes, roadway widenings, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, transit facilities, increased transit service, and roadway maintenance and rehabilitation projects. These transportation projects will primarily serve urban uses. Transportation projects around the City of Davis in Yolo County will likely result in the conversion of agricultural lands to transportation uses. However, such projects will serve existing and future urban developments and will not likely have impact that would result in the conversion of additional agricultural lands to transportation uses. Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

### *MITIGATION MEASURES*

As part of planning, design, and engineering for projects that result from the proposed MTP/SCS, the implementing agency shall ensure that farmland conversion is consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measures at a project-level would reduce the potential conversion of farmland to nonfarm uses, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures should do so (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081).

#### **Mitigation Measure AG-5: Minimize conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.**

Implementing agencies shall require project proponents to:

- Design proposed projects to minimize, to the greatest extent feasible, the loss of the highest valued agricultural land.
- Redesign project features to minimize fragmenting or isolating Farmland. Where a project involves acquiring land or easements, ensure that the remaining nonproject area is of a size sufficient to allow economically viable farming operations. The project proponents shall be responsible for acquiring easements, making lot line adjustments, and merging affected land parcels into units suitable for continued commercial agricultural management.
- Reconnect utilities or infrastructure that serve agricultural uses if these are disturbed by project construction. If a project temporarily or permanently cuts off roadway access or removes utility lines, irrigation features, or other infrastructure, the project proponents shall be responsible for restoring access as necessary to ensure that economically viable farming operations are not interrupted.
- Manage project operations to minimize the introduction of invasive species or weeds that may affect agricultural production on adjacent agricultural land. Where a project has the potential to introduce sensitive species or habitats or have other spill-over effects on nearby agricultural lands, the project proponents shall be responsible for acquiring easements on nearby agricultural land and/or financially compensating for indirect effects on nearby agricultural land. Easements (e.g., flowage easements) shall be required for temporary or

intermittent interruption in farming activities (e.g., because of seasonal flooding or groundwater seepage). Acquisition or compensation would be required for permanent or significant loss of economically viable operations.

**Mitigation Measure AG-6: Inventory innovative ideas and best practices from the RUCS toolkit, USEPA, and USDA Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities publication, and other sources and implement a locally appropriate strategy to manage growth issues at the rural-urban interface to support the long-term viability of agriculture in the SACOG region.**

The implementing agency shall avoid or minimize general pressure to convert agriculture land at the urban edge to non-agricultural uses by adopting regulations that enforce the innovations and best practices identified to minimize conversion pressures on farmland. Examples of this might include but are not limited to:

- **Agriculture Buffers:** Buffers, generally imposed on new development, can assist in reducing urban land use conflicts with farming operations.
- **Right-to-Farm Ordinances:** These ordinances require project applicants to agree to provide real estate disclosures explaining farmers' rights to purchasers or lessees as a condition of project approval for projects located in active farming areas. The intent of such an ordinance is to protect farmers from nuisance complaints and enforcement actions.
- **Infill and Redevelopment Policies:** These policies, which are supportive of infill and redevelopment and consistent with the policy objectives of the proposed MTP/SCS and SB 375, would direct population growth to urban communities, or in established rural communities, thereby reducing pressure to convert agricultural land to development.

#### *SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION*

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on farmland are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts this mitigation measure, Impact AG-4 would be reduced, but not necessarily to a less than significant level, because of because of site-specific conditions resulting in the net loss of farmland. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require implementing agencies to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of a lead agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-4 remains significant and unavoidable (SU). The CEQA streamlining provisions of SB 375 are not available for projects that result in these impacts (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155.1, 21155.2, and 21159.28).

*IMPACT AG-5: RESULT IN THE LOSS OF "FOREST LAND" AS DEFINED IN THE CALIFORNIA FOREST LEGACY ACT OF 2007 (PUB. RESOURCES CODE, § 12220(G)) OR CONVERSION OF FOREST LAND TO NONFOREST USE.*

#### **Regional Impacts**

California's vegetation is mapped by the California Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program. According to data provided for 2012, there are 912,701 acres of conifer forests, 585,567 acres of hardwood forests, and 374,442 acres of mixed conifer/hardwood forests in the proposed MTP/SCS plan area. The California Forest Legacy Act of 2007 defines "forest land" as "land that can support ten-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that

allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.” For purposes of analysis, it is assumed that lands mapped as conifer forest, hardwood, or mixed forest by the California Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program fall under the definition of “forest land.”

The overlap between land use and transportation projects anticipated in the proposed MTP/SCS with the region’s forest land is shown in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9  
Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with State-Designated Forest Land**

Community Type	Acres of Impact			
	Conifer Forest	Hardwood Forest	Mixed Forest	Total Forest Overlap
<i>Land Use Growth Footprint</i>				
Center and Corridor Communities	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>
Established Communities	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>
Developing Communities	0	2,073	112	2,186
Rural Residential Communities	778	627	1,319	2,725
Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS	0	0	0	0
<i>Transportation Projects</i>				
Center and Corridor Communities	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>
Established Communities	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>
Developing Communities	3	157	7	167
Rural Residential Communities	10	44	47	101
Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS	-	224	1	225
<i>Regional Totals</i>				
<b>Land Use Growth Footprint Total</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>2,700</b>	<b>1,432</b>	<b>4,910</b>
<b>Transportation Projects Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>493</b>
<b>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>3,126</b>	<b>1,487</b>	<b>5,404</b>

*Note: This analysis includes all overlapping and non-overlapping vegetation cover in conifer, hardwood, and mixed forests. Numbers may not total due to rounding.*

<sup>1</sup> *Because the Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring data are remote sensing data created to estimate all tree canopy, in some cases, particularly in urban areas, it is likely these are not actual "forest" areas. No screening for tree canopy density was done in this analysis; however, the data were geographically screened so that only forests that actually exist today were used. Therefore, tree canopy in Center and Corridor and Established Communities were not analyzed as forested areas.*

*Source: SACOG, MTP/SCS Preferred Scenario Land Use Forecast, April 2015; CAL FIRE, California Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2015*

By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. The land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 778 acres of conifer forest, 2,700 acres of hardwood forest, and 1,432 acres of mixed forest, for a total forest overlap of 4,910 acres. Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 13 acres of conifer forest, 426 acres of hardwood forest, and 55 acres of mixed forest for a total potential impact of 493 acres.

Together, land use changes and transportation projects have the potential to impact 791 acres of conifer forest, 3,126 acres of hardwood forest, and 1,487 acres of mixed forest for a total of 5,404 acres. As a total of all state-designated forest land within the region, forest land that has the potential to be impacted by the land use changes and transportation projects associated with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS includes approximately 0.1 percent of conifer forest, 0.5 percent of hardwood forest, and 0.4 percent of mixed forest.

While these impacts appear relatively small from a regional perspective, due to the importance of the region's forestry resources, any impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes and transportation improvements at the regional level are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

### **Localized Impacts**

#### *Center and Corridor Communities and Established Communities*

Because there were no forest lands identified in Center and Corridor Communities and Established Communities, forest lands are not impacted by implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Therefore, the impacts on forest land related to the land use changes and transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities and Established Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-5. No mitigation is required.

#### *Developing Communities*

Within Developing Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 2,073 acres of hardwood forest and 112 acres of mixed forest, for a total impact of 2,186 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact three acres of conifer forest, 157 acres of hardwood forest, and seven acres of mixed forest for a total potential impact of 167 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

#### *Rural Residential Communities*

Within Rural Residential Communities, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 778 acres of conifer forest, 627 acres of hardwood forest, and 1,319 acres of mixed forest for a total impact of 2,725 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 10 acres of conifer forest, 44 acres of hardwood forest, and 47 acres of mixed forest for a total potential impact of 101 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

#### *Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS*

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, will occur in this Community Type within the proposed MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2036. Thus, the land use growth footprint of the proposed MTP/SCS does not overlap with any hardwood or mixed forest.

Therefore, the impacts on forest land related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-5. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. Transportation projects implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 224 acres of hardwood forest and one acre of mixed forest for a total potential impact of 225 acres.

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

### **Transit Priority Area Impacts**

#### *Placer County, Sacramento County, and Yolo County Transit Priority Areas*

The land use growth footprint and new transportation project 100 foot buffer do not overlap forest land in the TPAs. Therefore, the impacts on forest land related to the land use changes and transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the TPAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-5. No mitigation is required.

#### **MITIGATION MEASURES**

As part of planning, design, and engineering for projects that result from the proposed MTP/SCS, the implementing agency shall ensure that forest land is treated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. SACOG does not have authority to require the

implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measure at a project-level would reduce the impacts to forest land, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures should do so (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081).

### **Mitigation Measure AG-7: Implement Mitigation Measure AG-4.**

#### *SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION*

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on forest land are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts this mitigation measure, Impact AG-5 would be reduced but not to a less than significant level, because of site-specific conditions resulting in the net loss of forest land. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-5 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review. The CEQA streamlining provisions of SB 375 are not available for projects that result in these impacts (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155.1, 21155.2, and 21159.28).

*IMPACT AG-6: RESULT IN CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS THAT WOULD CONVERT PRIME FARMLAND, UNIQUE FARMLAND, OR FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE; CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR LAND USE DESIGNATION FOR AGRICULTURAL USE OR A WILLIAMSON ACT CONTRACT; CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR LAND USE DESIGNATIONS FOR, OR CAUSE REZONING OF, FOREST LAND, TIMBERLAND, OR TIMBERLAND ZONED TIMBERLAND PRODUCTION; INVOLVE OTHER CHANGES IN THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT WHICH, DUE TO THEIR LOCATION OR NATURE, COULD RESULT IN CONVERSION OF FARMLAND TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE; OR RESULT IN THE LOSS OF FOREST LAND OR CONVERSION OF FOREST LAND INTO NON-FOREST USE.*

### **Regional Impacts**

By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. However, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS will still result in the conversion of agricultural land, forest land, and timberland to other uses. The land use growth footprint will convert 4,214 acres of farmland (prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide importance); 5,309 acres of zoned agricultural land; 1,056 acres of general plan designated agricultural land; 697 acres of Williamson Act lands; 4,910 acres of state-designated forest land; 146 acres of zoned forest land; and 132 acres of general plan designated timberland or forest land.

Improvements to the transportation system will convert 1,240 acres of farmland (prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide importance); 1,781 acres of zoned agricultural land; 2,668 acres of general plan designated agricultural land; 296 acres of Williamson Act lands; 493 acres of state-designated forest land; and zero acres of general plan designated timberland or forest land.

There will be construction impacts to agricultural land, forest land, and timberland during both the construction process and the conversion of undeveloped land related to the land use developments and transportation projects in the proposed MTP/SCS. Construction of new developments will include impacts from grading, paving, clearing, landscaping, staging, access routing, excavation,

earthmoving, and other related construction activities. These activities could temporarily impact agricultural lands and forestry resources by using agricultural land and forestry resources for other uses or causing conflict between uses. These impacts could adversely affect aesthetics, air quality, cultural resources, geology, land use, noise, transportation, utilities, and other related resources and infrastructure. Some construction activities associated with land use changes and transportation projects related to implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS may also occur concurrently, which increases the likelihood of impacts.

However, construction of any new public service facilities will be subject to many federal, state, and local laws. At the regional level, the construction of such projects will not conflict with agricultural and forestry activities, as these projects will be spread out over the 25 year life of the proposed MTP/SCS and occur at varied locations throughout the MTP/SCS plan area. There may be localized construction impacts, which, where applicable, are discussed below in the localized analysis. Construction-related impacts are typically short-term and can be mitigated through actions of the implementing agency. Any permanent conflicts with or conversions of agricultural lands and forestry resources are considered part of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and are analyzed under Impacts AG-1 through AG-5. This EIR discusses and addresses construction impacts by impact type in the following chapters:

- Chapter 3 – Aesthetics: impacts AES-4a, AES 4b, and AES 4c and mitigation measures AES-7, AES-8, AES-11, AES-12, and AES-13;
- Chapter 5 – Air Quality: impacts AIR-2, AIR-3, and AIR-4b and mitigation measures AIR-1, AIR-2, AIR-3, and AIR-4;
- Chapter 6 – Biological Resources: impacts BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, and BIO-4 and mitigation measures BIO-1a, BIO-1b, BIO-1c, BIO-1d, BIO-1e, BIO-2, and BIO-3;
- Chapter 7 – Cultural Resources: impacts CR-1, CR-2, CR-3, CR-4, and CR-5 and mitigation measures CR-1, CR-2, CR-3, CR-4, and CR-5;
- Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change: impacts ENE-4 and ENE-9;
- Chapter 9 – Geology, Soils, and Seismicity: impacts GEO-6 and GEO-9 and mitigation measure GEO-1;
- Chapter 10 – Hazards and Hazardous Materials: impact HAZ-9;
- Chapter 11 – Hydrology and Water Quality: impact HYD-8 and mitigation measures HYD-1;
- Chapter 13 – Noise and Vibration: impact NOI-3 and mitigation measure NOI-3;
- Chapter 15 – Public Services: impact PS-2;
- Chapter 16 – Transportation and Traffic: impact TRN-9 and mitigation measure TRN-3; and
- Chapter 17 – Utilities and Service Systems: impact USS-4.

However, due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any net loss of agricultural and forestry resources are considered potentially significant. Therefore, construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to the land use changes and transportation

improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS at the regional level are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

## Localized Impacts

### *Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, and Rural Residential Communities*

The construction of new developments in Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, and Rural Residential Communities could result in construction-related impacts that would temporarily conflict with or cause conversion of agricultural and forest lands. Construction of new developments will include impacts from grading, paving, clearing, landscaping, staging, access routing, excavation, earthmoving, and other related construction activities. These activities could temporarily impact agricultural lands and forestry resources by using agricultural land and forestry resources for other uses or causing conflict between uses. Any permanent conflicts with or conversions of agricultural lands and forestry resources are considered part of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and are analyzed under Impacts AG-1 through AG-5. Additionally, construction impacts are regulated by various federal, state, and local regulations, and addressed and mitigated in the chapters identified above.

However, due to the importance of the region's agricultural resource, any impacts on agricultural and forestry resources are considered potentially significant. Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to the land use changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, and Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

The construction of new transportation projects could result in construction-related impacts that would temporarily conflict with or cause conversion of agricultural and forest lands. Construction of new transportation infrastructure will include impacts from grading, paving, clearing, landscaping, staging, access routing, excavation, earthmoving, and other related construction activities. These activities could temporarily impact agricultural lands and forestry resources by using agricultural land and forestry resources for other uses or causing conflict between uses. Any permanent conflicts with or conversions of agricultural lands and forestry resources are considered part of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and are analyzed under Impacts AG-1 through AG-5. Additionally, construction impacts are regulated by various federal, state, and local regulations, and addressed and mitigated in the chapters identified above.

However, due to the importance of the region's agricultural resource, any impacts on agricultural and forestry resources are considered potentially significant. Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, and Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

### *Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS*

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, may occur in this Community Type within the MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2036. Since the MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in

Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS, there is no potential to result in land-use-related construction impacts that would convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance; conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning or land use designations for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location of nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use; or result in the loss of Forest Land or conversion of Forest Land into non-forest use.

Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to the land uses changes from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-6. No mitigation is required.

The proposed MTP/SCS will make a limited number of transportation investments in this Community Type by 2036, including road maintenance, road widenings and safety enhancements, and other roadway improvements. The construction of new transportation projects in Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS could result in construction-related impacts that would temporarily conflict with or cause conversion of agricultural and forest lands. Construction of new transportation infrastructure will include impacts from grading, paving, clearing, landscaping, staging, access routing, excavation, earthmoving, and other related construction activities. These activities could temporarily impact agricultural lands and forestry resources by using agricultural land and forestry resources for other uses or causing conflict between uses. Any permanent conflicts with or conversions of agricultural lands and forestry resources are considered part of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and are analyzed under Impacts AG-1 through AG-5. Additionally, construction impacts are regulated by various federal, state, and local regulations, and addressed and mitigated in the chapters identified above.

However, due to the importance of the region's agricultural resource, any impacts on agricultural and forestry resources are considered potentially significant. Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

## **Transit Priority Area Impacts**

### *Placer County, Sacramento County, and Yolo County TPAs*

The Transit Priority Area impacts associated with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS are the same in each of the TPAs as described in the localized impact discussion above. Land use and transportation projects in all of the TPAs have the potential to result in construction impacts that would convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance; conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning or land use designations for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location of nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use; or result in the loss of Forest Land or conversion of Forest Land into non-forest use.

Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to the land use changes and transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in TPAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

#### *MITIGATION MEASURES*

As part of planning, design, and engineering for projects that result from the proposed MTP/SCS, the implementing agency shall ensure that agricultural land, forest land, and timberland are treated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measure at a project-level would reduce the impacts to agricultural land, forest land, and timberland, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures should do so (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081).

#### **Mitigation Measure AG-8: Minimize construction-related impacts to agricultural and forestry resources.**

The implementing agency shall require project proponents to:

- restrict construction activities to permitted hours in accordance with local jurisdiction regulations;
- locate materials and stationary equipment (e.g., generators, compressors, rock crushers, cement mixers) as far from conflicting uses as possible;
- locate materials and stationary equipment in such a way as to prevent conflict with agricultural and forestry resources; and
- minimize conflict between construction vehicles and agricultural operations on roads that facilitate agricultural operations.

#### *SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION*

Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on agricultural and forestry resources are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts these mitigation measures, Impact AG-6 would be reduced, but not to a less than significant level, because of site-specific conditions resulting in the net loss of agricultural and forest land. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-6 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review. The CEQA streamlining provisions of SB 375 are not available for projects that result in these impacts (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155.1, 21155.2, and 21159.28).