

2.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
AGRICULTURE RESOURCES				
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland.				
Would the proposed project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SETTING

PROPOSED PROJECT

Project Area Setting

The proposed project is almost entirely located within an area largely created by landfill from past industrial land uses and debris fill associated with the 1906 earthquake and Bay reclamation. Agricultural use is not characteristic of the area; the project area is largely developed and devoted primarily to maritime and industrial uses.

Agency Agricultural Designations

The project area is not within a California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring survey area. In addition, the project site is not subject to the Williamson Act or the California Conservation Act of 1965, which provides a reduction in property taxes in return for agreeing to protect open space or agricultural values.

ALTERNATIVE 1

The project setting for Alternative 1 is the same as under the proposed project.

ALTERNATIVE 2

The project setting for Alternative 2 is the same as under the proposed project.

ALTERNATIVE 3

The project setting for Alternative 3 is the same as under the proposed project.

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The setting for the No Project Alternative is the same as current conditions since construction of a 2.5 mile cable project would not occur.

REGULATORY CONTEXT

California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) was established in 1982 in response to a critical need for assessing the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural lands and conversion of these lands over time. FMMP is a non-regulatory program and provides a consistent and impartial analysis of agricultural land use and land use changes throughout California (California Department of Conservation, 2004a).

Williamson Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. Local governments receive an annual subvention of forgone property tax revenues from the state via the Open Space Subvention Act of 1971 (California Department of Conservation, 2004b).

IMPACTS DISCUSSION OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

METODOLOGY AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The methodology to determine impacts considered existing or proposed land use plans and policies in the project area, which were reviewed to determine potential impacts to agricultural resources. To determine the level of significance of the impacts anticipated from the proposed project, the project's effects were evaluated as provided under the revised CEQA guidelines. These guidelines are summarized in the checklist provided at the beginning of this section.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The project area is in an area characterized by maritime and industrial uses. The project area is not located on or near lands that are considered farmland by state, regional, or local agencies. Therefore, construction and operation of the proposed cable transmission line would not result in uses inconsistent or detrimental to existing or future agricultural activities in the area nor would it promote or accelerate the conversion of existing agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses.

ALTERNATIVE 1

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 1 would not result in uses inconsistent or detrimental to existing or future agricultural activities in the area nor would it promote or accelerate the conversion of existing agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would not result in uses inconsistent or detrimental to existing or future agricultural activities in the area nor would it promote or accelerate the conversion of existing agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 3 would not result in uses inconsistent or detrimental to existing or future agricultural activities in the area nor would it promote or accelerate the conversion of existing agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses.

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No Project Alternative would avoid all potential impacts to existing or future agricultural activities impacts associated with the proposed project.

CHECKLIST IMPACT CONCLUSIONS

- a) The proposed project and alternatives are located almost exclusively within paved City streets. The project area is not located on prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance. Therefore, the proposed project and the proposed project alternatives would not result in the conversion of any of these lands to non-agricultural use.
- b) The project area is not located on land zoned for agricultural use or any Williamson Act contract parcels; therefore, no conflict is present.
- c) Because no agricultural land or uses are within the proximity of the project area, the proposed project and the proposed project alternatives would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

REFERENCES – Agricultural Resources

California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, <http://www.consrv.ca.gov/DLRP/fmmp/>, accessed June 16, 2004a.

California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Williamson Act Program, <http://www.consrv.ca.gov/DLRP/lca/>, accessed June 16, 2004b.