

4.6 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

This section evaluates potential impacts to agriculture and forestry resources from development facilitated by the proposed 2022 RTP/SCS.

4.6.1 Setting

a. Overview of Regional Agriculture and Forestry

Agriculture consisting of crop farming is the largest industry in the SJCOG region and contributes a substantial amount of money to the region's economy. San Joaquin County ranks seventh in agricultural producing counties in the United States and is one of eleven California counties with a billion dollars or more production in crop value.

Agricultural Lands

SJCOG's planning area includes expansive agricultural lands as well as forestry resources. The specific agricultural resources of within the SJCOG region are discussed below. San Joaquin County consistently ranks in the top 10 counties of the State in overall agricultural productivity. Agriculture continues to be the main producing industry in the County. For the 2020 crop year, the County had a total gross production value of \$2,351,958,000, surpassing the gross production value for the prior year by \$304,196,000, an increase of 12.9 percent. The top ten revenue crops that were produced in the County in 2020 included almonds, nursery products, tomatoes, grapes, walnuts, blueberries, hay, and cherries (San Joaquin County 2020).

San Joaquin County is among California's leaders in the production of dairy, grapes, and nuts. In 2018, 742,687 acres of land in the County were classified as "agricultural land", according to the California Department of Conservation. Of this land, more than 391,984 acres were classified as "Prime Farmland". Due to conversion to other/nonagricultural uses, the amount of prime farmland in the County has been declining since the Department started compiling such information in 1998 (California Department of Conservation 2021). Similarly, the amount of land under Williamson Act Contracts has been declining in recent years. The decrease in agricultural land can partially be attributed to the encroachment of urban uses into farming areas, creating land use conflicts and the loss of productive agricultural soil (San Joaquin County 2016).

The urban areas within San Joaquin County are almost exclusively surrounded by agricultural zone districts; these districts range from AG-40 to the east of Stockton, Manteca. AG-40 north of Lodi, and Lathrop. There are two AG-160 zones, one south of Tracy and the other on the eastern border of the County. Thus, the SJCOG region mostly consists of a variety of rural land uses. This rural land contains a high percentage of rich agricultural soils which are in production. These areas are characterized by a wide variety of productive soils, from the deep organic soils of the Delta to the young alluvial soils that cover much of the valley floor. Nearly all the soil types found within the County are suitable for agricultural production. The SJCOG region is noted for their high-quality irrigated crops, including rice, sorghum, corn, and wheat. Cattle ranching is one of the top revenue producers in the SJCOG region and a significant amount of farmland within San Joaquin County is characterized by this land use (San Joaquin County 2020). Agricultural areas in the County also provide benefits such as wildlife habitat, flood control, groundwater recharge, and energy production.

Since 1998, there has been an overall County-wide decrease of agricultural land acreage. However, from 2016 to 2018 there was a net gain of 352 acres of Prime Farmland, a net loss of 455 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, but a net gain of 4,174 acres of Unique Farmland. During the same period, urban and built-up land had a net total increase of 2,211 acres, Farmland of Statewide Importance had a net total decrease of 2,960 acres, and grazing land had a net total decrease of 2,856 acres (California DOC 2019a).

b. Important Farmland

To characterize the environmental baseline for agricultural resources, Important Farmland Maps produced by the California Department of Conservation’s (DOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) were reviewed. Figure 4.6-1 illustrates the intersection of Important Farmland, forest land, and projects listed under the 2022 RTP/SCS in the region. Unless otherwise expressed, the future use of “Important Farmland” specifically includes the following definitions provided by the DOC (DOC 2019b):

Prime Farmland

Land which has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics to produce crops. It has the soil quality, growing season and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed, including water management, according to current farming standards.

Farmland of Statewide Importance

Land that is like Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to hold and store moisture.

Unique Farmland

Land of lesser quality soils is typically used to produce specific high economic value crops. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high quality or high yields of a specific crop when treated and managed according to current farming methods. It is usually irrigated but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Examples of crops include oranges, olives, avocados, rice, grapes and cut flowers.

Williamson Act Lands

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the “Williamson Act”, enables local governments to restrict the use of specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use (DOC 2019c). As of January 1, 2015, 499,654 acres of land are under Williamson Act contract in the SJCOG region with 60,255 acres under the Farmland Security Zone (“FSZ”) (DOC 2016d).

Important Farmland Trends

According to the most recent Farmland Conversion Report prepared by the DOC, Prime Farmland increased by 3,669 net acres, coupled with a Farmland of Statewide Importance decreasing by 455 net acres. Partially offsetting these losses was the addition of 3,772 net acres of irrigated crops on soils mapped as Unique Farmland.

As shown in Table 4.6-1, the SJCOG region experienced a 709-acre net increase in Important Farmland between 2016-2018 (DOC 2019a). Net increases in acreages occurred for Prime Farmland and Unique Farmland, and net decreases for both Farmland of Statewide Importance and Farmland of Local Importance. Total acreages in 2018 for Prime Farmland was 381,984 acres, 82,163 acres for Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 85,694 acres of Unique Farmland, totaling 550,291 acres of Important Farmland (all three categories combined).

Table 4.6-1 Important Agriculture Land Conversion in the SJCOG Region 2016-2018

Land Use Category	Total Acreage Inventoried		2016-2018 Acreage Changes			
	2016	2018	Acres Lost (-)	Acres Gained(+)	Total Acreage Changed	Net Acreage Changed
Prime Farmland	381,632	381,984	1,071	1,858	4,068	352
Farmland of Statewide Importance	82,618	82,163	265	466	1,387	-455
Unique Farmland	81,922	85,694	681	4,174	4,576	3,772
Important Farmland Total¹	546,172	550,291	2,017	6,498	10,031	3,669

¹ Important Farmland represents all Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland.

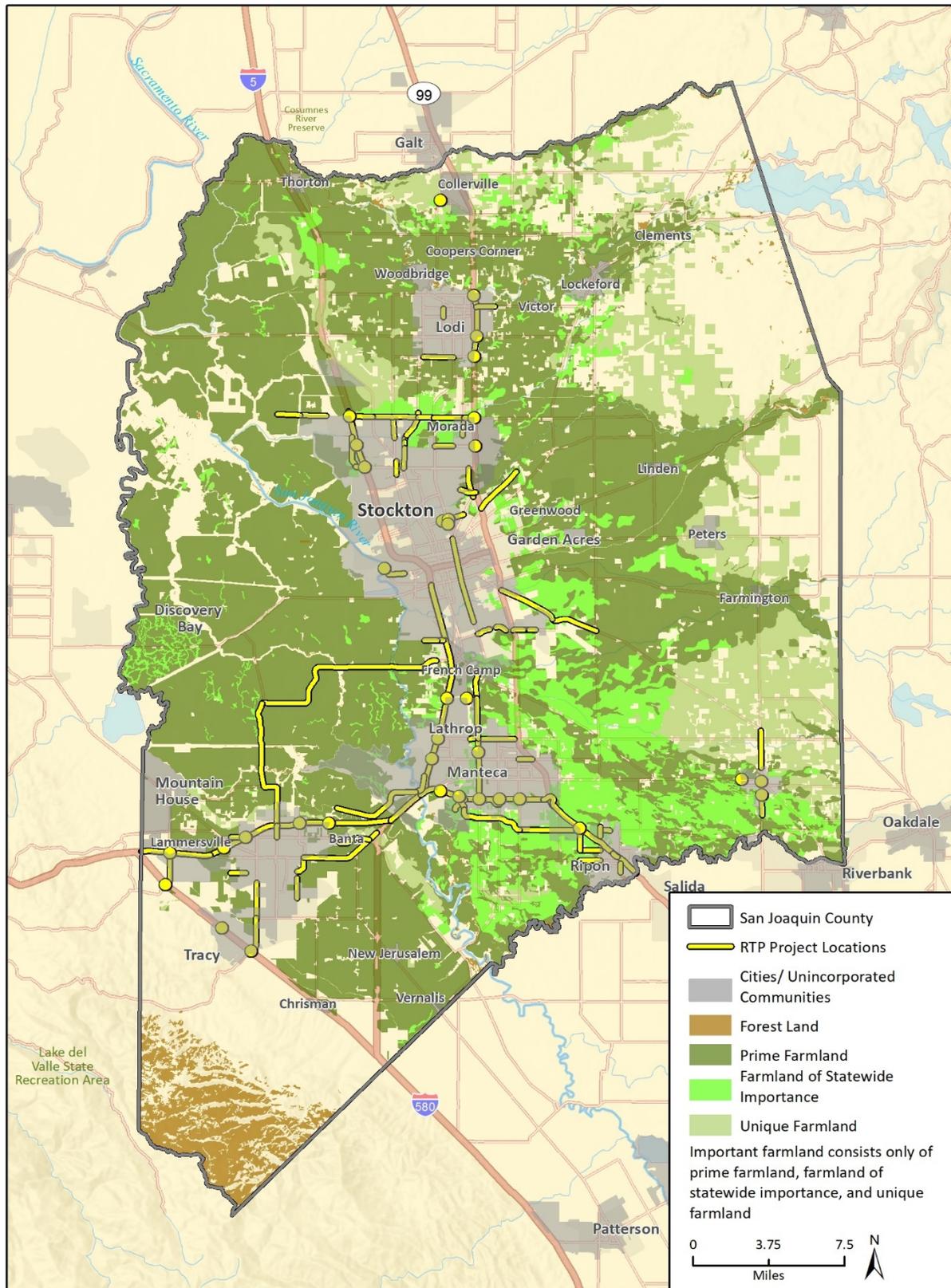
Source: DOC 2019a.

Forest Lands and Oak Woodlands

Within the SJCOG region, there is approximately 22,990.44 acres of forest land, located primarily in the southwest area of the region and smaller areas scattered throughout the SJCOG region. Forest land is defined in PRC Section 12220(g) is “land that can support 10-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.”

Oak woodland is defined as a habitat with over 10 percent of the canopy cover comprised of native oak trees. There are 20,000 acres of oak woodland in the SJCOG region. As shown in Figure 4.6-1 these areas are located in the southwest and northeast portions of the SJCOG region. See Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, for more discussion of forest lands found in the region. There are no Timber Harvesting Plans or Timberland Production Zones within the region. However, there is a blue oak habitat in the SJCOG region, which is considered Forest land as defined above. See Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, for more discussion of oak woodlands found in the SJCOG region.

Figure 4.6-1 Important Farmland and Forest Land in the SJCOG Region



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 Additional data provided by CWHR, 2021 and FMMP, 2018.

4.6.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal, Laws, Regulations, and Policies

Federal Farmland Protection Act (FPPA)

The FPPA is intended to minimize the impact Federal programs have on the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. It assures that to the extent possible federal programs are administered to be compatible with state, local units of government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland. Projects are subject to FPPA requirements if they may irreversibly convert farmland (directly or indirectly) to nonagricultural use and are completed by a federal agency or with assistance from a Federal agency.

Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program

The Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP) is a voluntary easement purchase program that helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture. Pursuant to sections 1539 to 1549 of the FPPA of 1981, the Secretary of Agriculture is directed to establish and carry out a program to “minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses, and to the extent practicable, will be compatible with state, unit of local government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland.” (7 USC 4201-4209 & 7 USC 658). The program provides matching funds to state, tribal, or local governments and nongovernmental organizations with existing farmland protection programs to purchase conservation easements or other interests in land. The FRPP was re-authorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill). The NRCS manages the program. Technical Committee, awards funds to qualified entities to conduct their farmland protection programs. Although a minimum of 30 years is required for conservation easements, priority is given to applications with perpetual easements.

Federal Forest Legacy Program

The Federal Forest Legacy Program was a part of the 1990 Farm Bill. Its purpose is to identify and protect environmentally important forestlands that are threatened by present or future conversion to non-forest uses. The program provides conservation easements and gives priority to lands that can be effectively protected and managed, as well as lands that have significant scenic, recreational, timber, riparian, fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, and other cultural or environmental values. Properties that are “working forests,” whereby the forestland is managed for the production of forest products, are also eligible under this program. Involvement in this program by private landowners is voluntary.

Timberland Production Zones

The Z’berg-Warren-Keene-Collier Forest Taxation Reform Act of 1976 requires counties to enable 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 relationship between the Williamson Act and agricultural land, Timberland Preserve Zones are limited to growing and harvesting timber and other similar uses.

b. State Laws, Regulations, and Policies

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The DOC, under the Division of Land Resource Protection, developed the FMMP to monitor the conversion of the state's farmland to and from agricultural use. Data is collected at the county level to produce a series of maps identifying eight land use classifications using a minimum mapping unit of 10 acres. The program also produces a biannual report on the amount of land converted from agricultural to non-agricultural use. The program maintains an inventory of state agricultural land and updates the "Important Farmland Series Maps" every two years (DOC 2019b).

Williamson Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, Sections 51200 et seq. of the California Government Code, commonly referred to as the "Williamson Act", enables local governments to restrict the use of specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. Landowners enter contracts with participating cities and counties and agree to restrict their land to agriculture or open space use for a minimum of ten years. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market (speculative) value. Local governments receive an annual subvention of forgone property tax revenues from the state via the Open Space Subvention Act of 1971 (DOC 2019c).

The Right to Farm Act of 1981

The Right to Farm Act of 1981 (Civ. Code, § 3482.5) is meant to protect commercial agricultural operations from nuisance complaints that may occur when agricultural operations are conducting business in a "manner consistent with proper and accepted customs." The code states operations that have been in business for three or more years and not nuisances upon commencement of operation shall not be considered a nuisance because of new land use.

California Farmland Conservancy Program Act

The California Farmland Conservancy Program Act of 2010 formed the California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP) and provides grants for agricultural conservation easements. Agricultural conservation easements are created to support agriculture and prevent development on the subject parcels. Easements funded by the CFCP must be suitable for commercial agriculture.

Open Space Subvention Act

The Open Space Subvention Act (OSSA) of 1972 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. There have been no subvention payments since Fiscal Year 2010.

California Timberland Productivity Act of 1982

The California Timberland Productivity Act (CTPA) of 1982 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 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.

c. Regional and Local Laws, Regulations, and Policies

Land Conservation Trusts

A land trust works to preserve land or conservation easement acquisition. A land conservation trust is another type of organization devoted to protecting open space, agricultural lands, wildlife habitats, and natural resource lands. There are approximately 80 established trusts in California. Local and regional land trusts, organized as charitable organizations under federal tax laws, are directly involved in conserving land for its natural, recreational, scenic, historical, and productive values. 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. There is currently one land trust located in the SJCOG region: the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust. In part, the Trust was established to promote educational, recreational, and agricultural uses of the San Joaquin River.

San Joaquin County General Plan 2035

According to the 2035 County of San Joaquin General Plan, agriculture will remain the mainstay of the County's economy, while agriculturally related industries and non-agricultural industries will play an increasingly larger role in the local economy. Many of the planning principles and policies in the General Plan protect existing agricultural lands and industries while providing support for advancement and diversification of agriculturally related enterprises (San Joaquin County 2016).

City of Escalon General Plan

The City of Escalon's General Plan policy regarding farmland is to maximize the amount of farmland, open space, and wildlife habitat preservation on lands outside of the City by establishing a greenbelt, including land not designated for future annexation (City of Escalon 2019).

City of Lathrop General Plan

The City of Lathrop contains three sub-plan areas. Outside of these areas, exclusive agricultural zoning will be continued. Furthermore, the protection of agricultural lands outside of the sub-plan areas shall be reinforced by City policies to not permit the extension of public utilities to such lands (City of Lathrop 2004).

City of Lodi General Plan

Within the City of Lodi's General Plan, conservation of open space is identified as important to the City itself and surrounding community. Multiple policies are identified in this General Plan to prevent excessive agricultural land conversion, including prioritizing infill development within the

existing City limits, compact development in new growth areas, and the continuation of most agricultural activities in the Planning Area (City of Lodi 2010).

City of Manteca General Plan

The City of Manteca’s General Plan stated goal is promoting the continuation of agricultural uses within the planning area and to discourage the premature conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, while providing for future urban development in Manteca (City of Manteca 2003).

City of Ripon General Plan

Policy D1 of the City of Ripon’s General plan discourages the premature conversion of agricultural lands to reduce the intrusion of urban development into agricultural areas. Strategies include deterring development of properties subject to Williamson Act contracts for which a notice of non-renewal has not been filed (City of Ripon 2006).

City of Stockton General Plan

The City of Stockton’s General Plan states the need for local agricultural lands provide needed buffers between Stockton and neighboring cities, plus some of the most important scenic vistas in the Planning Area. Accordingly, the City has adopted a Right to Farm ordinance to protect local agricultural lands, which limits the circumstances under which an agricultural operation may be considered a nuisance and establishes notification requirements for agricultural neighbors of this protection (City of Stockton 2018).

City of Tracy General Plan

The City of Tracy’s General Plan’s Open Space and Conservation Element provides a regulatory framework for the City to maintain its identity through the preservation of agricultural lands and the creation of new park and open space lands (City of Tracy 2011).

4.6.3 Impact Analysis

a. Methodology and Significance Thresholds

Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines identifies criteria for determining whether the proposed 2022 RTP/SCS would have a significant impact on agricultural or forestry resources, namely an analysis of whether or not the 2022 RTP/SCS would

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 Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use;
2. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
3. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timber Production;
4. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or
5. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.

The analysis assesses the impacts to agricultural, timber, and forest resources that could result from implementation of the 2022 RTP/SCS. Impacts are assessed in terms of changes to both land use and transportation infrastructure using County-provided data and SJCOG forecasts related to projected population, housing, and employment growth. The methodology for determining the significance of these impacts applies the significance criteria above to the future land use pattern and transportation network. The development of new transportation facilities may affect agricultural, timber and forest resources, through both direct and indirect effects, including traversing agricultural, timberland, and forest lands.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following section discusses potential impacts and mitigation measures that may be associated with projects contained within the 2022 RTP/SCS. Section 4.6.3(c) summarizes the impacts associated with capital improvement projects proposed in the 2022 RTP/SCS. Due to the programmatic nature of the 2022 RTP/SCS, a precise, project-level analysis of the specific impacts associated with individual transportation and land use projects is not possible at this time. In general, however, implementation of proposed transportation improvements and future projects under the land use scenario envisioned by the 2022 RTP/SCS could result in the impacts as described in the following section.

Threshold 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 Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use
Threshold 2:	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract
Threshold 5:	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use

IMPACT AG-1 PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS AND LAND USE PATTERNS ENVISIONED BY THE 2022 RTP/SCS COULD RESULT IN THE CONVERSION OF IMPORTANT FARMLAND TO NONAGRICULTURAL USE, AND/OR CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING FOR AGRICULTURE. THIS WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACT.

As discussed in Section 4.2.1, the SJCOG region contains approximately 381,984 acres of Prime Farmland, 82,163 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 85,694 acres of Unique Farmland (DOC 2018). The 2022 RTP/SCS land use pattern primarily consists of projects in developed areas, such as infrastructure maintenance, public transit operations, and improvements to existing roads. However, transportation improvement projects in the 2022 RTP/SCS adjacent to agricultural areas (Figure 4.6-1), particularly those requiring new rights-of-way, could also have indirect impacts on agricultural productivity. Although the incorporated cities in the SJCOG region are urbanized, many cities border agriculture, including FMMP-designated Important Farmland.

Conversely, the 2022 RTP/SCS envisions growth in areas already served by transit, redirecting housing growth towards more compact unit types, and a mix of uses and neighborhood design to enable an increase walkability and bike trips. transportation corridors, which are generally located in urbanized areas of cities and unincorporated communities. Such land use development within urbanized areas would not be expected to result in agricultural resource impacts since they would be located within existing urban areas. However, implementation of the 2022 RTP/SCS may impact lands that are currently agricultural but located near areas converted to urban uses; increased development pressure as nearby land values increase, new routes to previously inaccessible areas,

and nuisances from urban development spread to agricultural lands may contribute to a loss of agricultural land. It is important to note that for federally funded projects, implementing and local agencies are required to follow the rules and regulations of the Farmland Protection Policy Act including determining the impact by completing the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating form (AD-1006), if required.

Transportation improvement projects that involve roadway widening have the potential to affect narrow segments of agricultural land located immediately along the existing right-of-way of proposed improvements. In addition, improving, expanding, and extending existing roadways, along with the installation of roadway improvements, could remove some barriers to development taking place on the urban edge as the region's connectivity and access improves from these projects.

In developing the 2022 RTP/SCS forecasted development pattern and transportation system, SJCOG relied on the policies of local governments to develop urbanization assumptions based on the most recent information available. The general plans and related environmental documentation for each local jurisdiction identify potential impacts to agricultural resources that could occur because of Plan implementation. As such, the 2022 RTP/SCS was developed consistent with the applicable general plans. However, new or different impacts not identified in previous environmental documentation may occur as a result of the 2022 RTP/SCS.

A determination of the impacts to Important Farmland, agricultural zoning, and conflicts with Williamson Act contracts would be made on a case-by-case basis as individual projects are implemented. Many individual projects would likely not create significant impacts, particularly those that involve only minor widening along existing rights-of-way or would be located in urbanized areas zoned for development. Nevertheless, as the actual magnitude of impacts from individual projects cannot be determined at this time, and because of the potential increase in the average annual conversion rate of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses over the next 25 years, this is a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

For transportation projects under their jurisdiction, SJCOG shall implement, and transportation project sponsor agencies can and should implement, the following mitigation measures for applicable transportation projects that would result in impacts to Important Farmland, and where feasible and necessary based on site-specific considerations. San Joaquin County and incorporated cities in the County should implement these measures, where relevant to land use projects implementing the 2022 RTP/SCS. Project specific environmental documents may adjust these mitigation measures as necessary to respond to site specific conditions.

AG-1 Impact Avoidance and Minimization

Project sponsors shall implement measures, where feasible and necessary based on project-and site-specific considerations that include but are not limited to those identified below.

- Require project relocation or corridor realignment, where feasible, to avoid Important Farmland;
- Manage project construction to minimize the introduction of invasive species or weeds that may affect agricultural production on agricultural land adjacent to project sites. Managing project construction may include washing construction equipment before bringing equipment on-site, using certified weed-free straw bales for construction Best Management Practices (BMPs), and other similar measures.

- Provide buffers, berms, setbacks, fencing, or other project design measures to protect surrounding agriculture, and to reduce conflict with farming that could result from implementation of transportation improvements and/or development included as a part of the RTP/SCS;
- Achieve compensatory mitigation in advance of impacts through purchase or creation of mitigation credits or the implementation of mitigation projects through Regional Advance Mitigation Planning, as deemed appropriate by permitting agencies; and/or
- Require acquisition of conservation easements on land in the same jurisdiction, if feasible, and at least equal in quality and size to converted Important Farmland, to offset the loss of Important Farmland.

IMPLEMENTATION AGENCIES AND TIMING

Implementing agencies for transportation projects are SJCOG and transportation project sponsor agencies. Implementing agencies for land use projects are San Joaquin County and incorporated cities within the SJCOG region. This mitigation measure shall, or can and should, be applied during permitting and environmental review and implemented during construction where appropriate.

Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure AG-1 would require avoidance or compensation for Important Farmland impacts by specific projects included in the 2022 RTP/SCS, thereby reducing the impact of conversion of Important Farmland to non-agriculture use and conflicts with agricultural zoning and Williamson Act contracts. However, the mitigation would not ensure that the future land use development pattern and transportation projects could feasibly relocate or realign to avoid conversion of Farmland, lands zoned for agriculture, and lands under Williamson Act contract to a less than significant level. As a result, the aforementioned mitigation would reduce impacts, but impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

Threshold 3: Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220[g]); timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526); or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104[g])

Threshold 4: Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use

Impact AG-2 THE PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS AND LAND USE PATTERNS ENVISIONED BY THE 2022 RTP/SCS WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING FOR FOREST LAND, TIMBERLAND, OR TIMBERLAND PRODUCTION, NOR CONVERT FOREST LAND TO NON-FOREST USES. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Forest lands are generally located in the southwestern area of the SJCOG region, as shown in Figure 4.6-1. Due to existing state and federal protections for these areas, the rate of forest land loss due to urbanization would be low. The 2022 RTP/SCS and county and city policies focus development in areas that do not include forest land, as defined by statutes. Land use strategies contained within the 2022 RTP/SCS encourage growth in developed areas rather than a more dispersed land use pattern that could result in conversion of forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production zones. As such, the 2022 RTP/SCS would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland, or timber production, nor convert forest land to non-forest use.

Because land use strategies contained within the 2022 RTP/SCS would help to encourage growth in developed areas, and because the forest lands and timber areas are outside the identified land use development areas in the SJCOG region, impacts on conversion of forest land or conflicts with land zoned for forest land, timberland, or timberland production would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

c. Specific RTP/SCS Projects That May Result in Impacts

Table 4.6-2 identifies examples of transportation projects with the potential to cause or contribute to direct or indirect impacts to agricultural resources such as those discussed above. These projects are representative and were selected based on their potential scope and likelihood of disturbing agricultural lands. Additional specific analysis would be required as individual projects are implemented to determine the project specific magnitude of impact. Mitigation discussed above would apply to these specific projects.

Table 4.6-2 2022 RTP/SCS Projects That May Result in Agriculture Impacts

Project Jurisdiction and Location	Improvement
Caltrans	
SR-120	Widen 4 to 6 lanes
SR-99/120 Connector Project Phase 1B	Widen the northbound SR 99 to westbound SR 120 connector ramp from one-lane to two-lanes; Add an auxiliary lane in the existing median of westbound SR 120 from Main Street to SR 99; Convert the existing 99/120 separation structure to two lanes and construct a new separation structure to service the eastbound 120 to northbound 99 connector ramp
SR 99/120 Connector Project Phase 1C	Add braided off ramps from SR 99 and SR 120 to Austin Road; Add loop on ramp from Austin Road to northbound SR 99 and to westbound SR 120; Add auxiliary lane in each direction on SR 99 from SR 120 to approximately 1.9 mile south of Austin Road and relocate the frontage road
Escalon BNSF grade separation	Construct a grade separation in Escalon at the BNSF Railroad
City of Lathrop	
Golden Valley Parkway	Construct new roadway parallel to I-5, 2 lanes from Brookhurst Boulevard to Stewart Road
Golden Valley Parkway	Construct new roadway parallel to I-5, 4 lanes from Stewart Road to Paradise Road
Golden Valley Parkway	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes, from Brookhurst Boulevard to Stewart Road
Roth Road Grade Separation (Easterly)	Construct 4 lane grade separation between Roth Road and Railroad
City of Lodi	
Harney Lane	Widen from 2/3 lane collector to 4 lanes divided arterial
Victor Road (SR-12)	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes. Add center dual left turn lane, turn pockets at intersections and median separation with landscape
Ham Lane	Widen 2/3 lanes to 4 lanes
City of Manteca	
SR-120 at Airport Way	Widen existing roadway from 2 to 4 lanes
Airport Way	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes from SR-120 to Yosemite Avenue
Airport Way	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes from Lathrop Road to Roth Road

Project Jurisdiction and Location	Improvement
Raymus Expressway	Construct new 2 lane expressway from ST-120 to Woodward Avenue
Atherton Drive	Construct new 4 lane roadway from Woodward Avenue to McKinley Avenue
Raymus Expressway	Construct new 2 lane expressway from Woodward Avenue to Main Street
Airport Way	Widen from 4 to 6 lanes from SR 120 to Lathrop Road
City of Ripon	
Jack Tone Road, Phase 1	Widen from 2 to 6 lanes from Santos Road to South Clinton Avenue
Garrison Road Gap Closure	Construct 2 lane extension of Garrison Road
W. Ripon Road	Widen from 2 to 6 lanes from Jack Tone Road to Olive Expressway
Canal Boulevard Extension	Construct 4 lane extension of Canal Boulevard from Jack Tone Road to Olive Expressway
Olive Expressway	Construct 6 lane Olive Expressway
City of Stockton	
Morada Lane	Widen from 3 to 6 lanes from West Lane to UPRR
Arch Road	Widen from 2 to 6 lanes from Fite Court to Frontier Way
Arch Road	Widen from 2 to 6 lanes from Frontier Way to SR-99
Maranatha Drive	Construction of new 4 lane road from Wilson Way to March Lane
Maranatha Drive	Construction of new 4 lane road from March Lane to Hammer Lane
Lower Sacramento Road	Widen from 2 to 6 lanes from Marlette Road to Pixley Slough
French Camp Road	Widen from 2 to 6 lanes from Wolfe Road to Manthey Road
March Lane Extension	Construction of new 8 lane road from Holman Road to SR 99
City of Tracy	
I-205/Lammers Road/Eleventh Street	Construct interchange I-205 at Eleventh Street, realign and widen Eleventh Street to 6-lanes north of Grant Line to Byron Road. Construct auxiliary lane Hansen to Eleventh, in westbound I-205 Eleventh Street to Grant Line Road.
I-580 at Lammers Road	Construction of new interchange
Corral Hollow Road	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes from Parkside Drive to Linne Road
Schulte Road	Extend 4 lane roadway from Faith Lane to Lammers Road
Grant Line Road	Widen from 5 to 6 lanes from Naglee Road to Lammers Road
Corral Hollow Road Widening	Widen 2 to 4 lanes including ROW and construction of two bridges from Linne Road to I-580
MacArthur Drive	Extend 4 lane roadway on new alignment and construct railroad grade separation from Mt. Diablo Road to Eleventh Street
Tracy Boulevard	Widen from 4 lane minor arterial to 4 lane major arterial from I-205 to Eleventh Street
San Joaquin County	
Tracy Boulevard (Tracy to Unincorporated County)	Passing lanes and channelization from I-205 to Howard Road
Roth Road (Unincorporated County)	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes with shoulders from UPRR to Airport Way
Airport Way (Unincorporated County)	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes from Roth Road to French Camp Road
Escalon Bellota Road	Widen from 2 to 4 lanes with shoulders from Escalon City limits to Mariposa Road

Project Jurisdiction and Location	Improvement
SJRRC	
Rail Project SJ07-6001	Construct double main track, panelized turnouts, relocate/renew siding turnout, and realign existing trackage.
Rail Project SJ11-6001	In Stockton, construct track connections and grade separate the BNSF Stockton Subdivision and UPRR Fresno Subdivision diamond crossing
Rail Project SJ07-6009	Realignment of tracking
Rail Project SJ14-6002	Connection from UPRR Fresno Sub to UPRR Oakland Sub

4.6.4 Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impact analysis area for agriculture and forestry resources consists of the SJCOG region and adjoining counties. Information regarding these adjoining counties can be found in Section 3.1 – *Environmental Setting*, Table 3-1. Future development in this region that could impact farmland or forestry is considered in the analysis. This cumulative extent is used to evaluate potential loss/conversion of farmland and forest land within the context of regional diminishment of these resources.

Future development within the cumulative impact analysis area would convert agricultural land to non-agricultural uses and may result in conflicts with agricultural zoning and Williamson Act contracts. In addition, future development adjacent to agricultural land has the potential to result in a loss of farmland due to land use conflicts, which adds to the cumulative conversion of agricultural lands, including areas designated as Important Farmland by the FMMP. Cumulative impacts to agricultural resources would be significant.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure AG-1 would reduce the contribution of the proposed 2022 RTP/SCS to cumulative agricultural land impacts. However, the mitigation would not ensure that the future land use development pattern and transportation projects could feasibly relocate or realign to avoid impacts, and impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. The contribution of the proposed 2022 RTP/SCS to cumulative impacts to agricultural and Williamson Act lands would therefore remain cumulatively considerable post-mitigation.

In the cumulative impact analysis area, forestland and timber resources are primarily located in Stanislaus County, specifically the Stanislaus National Forest. National forests and national parks are protected by federal law and greatly restrict any type of urban development that can occur in these areas. Thus, future development within the cumulative impact analysis area would not convert forestland to non-forest uses and thus would not result in conflicts with forest zoning. Cumulative impacts to forestland and timber resources would therefore be less than significant. The contribution of the proposed 2022 RTP/SCS to cumulative impacts to forestland and timber resources would not be cumulatively considerable.