

5.2 Agricultural and Forestry Resources

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY 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. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. **Would the project:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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. 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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. 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 conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

5.2.1 Setting

The substation site is not being used for agriculture or timber harvesting, but a portion of the Fulton No. 1 60kV Power Line east of the substation site is located on a parcel used for cattle grazing. The proposed substation site is zoned for Service Commercial use. Adjacent areas are zoned Estate Residential, Gateway Commercial, and Public Institutional. Areas along the Fulton No. 1 60kV line are Service Commercial, Mixed Used, Village Residential, and Public Institutional. Areas along the 12kV power line are zoned Service Commercial, Gateway Commercial, Medium-High Density Residential, Retail Commercial, Public Institutional, and Mixed Use. See Figure 5.10-1 (Land Use) for all general plan designations in the project area.

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) established the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) in 1982 to assess the location, quantity, and quality of agricultural lands and conversion of these lands to other uses. FMMP data are used in elements of some county and city general plans, in regional studies on agricultural land conversion, and in environmental documents as a way of assessing project-specific impacts on farmland. The FMMP classifies agricultural land as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land.

Prime Farmland has the best combination of physical and chemical features to support ongoing agricultural production; to be designated as Prime Farmland, farmland must have been irrigated in the four years prior to FMMP mapping.

A portion of the Fulton No. 1 60 kV distribution line right of way, currently used for grazing, includes 0.2 miles of Farmland of Local Importance and 0.01 miles of Farmland of Statewide Importance (DOC 2008). None of the work areas for the substation or distribution lines are subject to Williamson Act contracts; the nearest Williamson Act land is approximately 940 feet east of the proposed substation site (DOC 2008, Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department 2013). Distribution line work would occur primarily within the public utility easement area or within public streets.

5.2.2 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

a. *Would the project 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?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED. The proposed substation site is located in an area zoned Service Commercial and is adjacent to areas zoned Estate Residential, Gateway Commercial, and Public Institutional. The area is not currently cultivated, nor is it designated as Farmland. A small section of the rebuilding of the Fulton No. 1 60kV Power Line would occur in an area designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance that is currently used for cattle grazing. **Mitigation Measure LU-1** in Section 5.10 (Land Use) requires communication with affected landowners regarding construction schedule. With the implementation of this measure, impacts to agriculture would be less than significant.

b. *Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

NO IMPACT. The site for the proposed substation is located in an area zoned Service Commercial and is adjacent to areas zoned Estate Residential, Gateway Commercial, and Public Institutional. The distribution line improvement areas are not zoned for agriculture. None of the proposed project area is covered by Williamson Act contracts. Therefore, there would be no impact.

c. *Would the project 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))?*

NO IMPACT. The proposed project does not include any designated forest or timberland. The substation site is designated for Service Commercial use and the distribution lines pass through areas designated for residential and commercial uses. Therefore, there would be no impact.

d. *Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

NO IMPACT. The proposed project area does not include any designated forest or timberland; therefore, there would be no impact.

- e. *Would the project 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 the conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As noted in Section 5.2(a), there is a small agricultural area currently used for grazing directly east of the proposed substation site and surrounding a small portion of the Fulton No. 1 60kV Power Line. However, while some of this area has been designated as farmland by the FMMP, it is not zoned for agricultural use. Any impacts to grazing in this portion of the distribution line would be temporary and would not result in the conversion of FMMP-designated Farmland to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

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