

Chapter 3

Environmental Effects Found Not to Be Significant

This chapter includes a discussion of the environmental effects determined to have a less-than-significant impact or no impact and would not require any mitigation measures. The significance of environmental effects was first considered during the preparation of the Initial Study in June 2015. The Initial Study, which is provided as Appendix B, determined which issue areas would be further evaluated in the EIR and which resources were considered to have a less-than-significant or no impact as a result of the project. The issues that were determined to be less than significant or not significant during the Initial Study are discussed below under Section 3.2, *Effects Found Not Significant as Part of the Initial Study Process*, and presented in detail in Appendix B. During the preparation of the EIR, Land Use and Planning, and Utilities and Service Systems were determined to have less-than-significant effects but were considered to be potentially significant in the Initial Study. This is discussed in Section 3.1, *Effects Found Not Significant as Part of the EIR Process*. There are also subtopics in Chapter 2, *Environmental Effects of the Proposed Project*, with less-than-significant determinations under the broader issue areas of Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Traffic, and Water Supply. For organization purposes these subtopics are discussed in Chapter 2.

3.1 Effects Found Not Significant as Part of the EIR Process

As discussed above, this section addresses Land Use and Planning, and Utilities and Service Systems, which were determined by the Initial Study to require further evaluation in the EIR. Effects determined to be less than significant in the Initial Study are addressed under Section 3.2. Chapter 2 also contains some subtopics with less-than-significant conclusions.

3.1.1 Land Use and Planning

This section discusses existing land uses within the County of San Diego (County) and potential project impacts on land uses and their surroundings. The project's consistency with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations included in the County of San Diego General Plan and associated planning documents is also addressed in this section.

3.1.1.1 Existing Conditions

The unincorporated area of the County encompasses 2.3 million acres. It is bordered by Riverside and Orange Counties to the north, Imperial County to the east, the country of Mexico to the south, and 18 local incorporated jurisdictions and the Pacific Ocean to the west.

The unincorporated area of San Diego is divided into 23 planning areas, with 14 Community Planning Areas (CPAs) and 9 sub-regions. The 23 communities that have community plans in effect are: Alpine, Bonsall, Central Mountain, County Islands, Crest Dehesa, Desert, Fallbrook, Jamul Dulzura, Julian, Lakeside, Mountain Empire, North County Metro, North Mountain, Otay, Pala Pauma,

Pendleton De Luz, Rainbow, Ramona, San Dieguito, Spring Valley, Sweetwater, Valle De Oro, and Valley Center. Each of the community plans includes land use maps, a regional category map, and a mobility element. Sub-regional plans are included in the following community plans: Central Mountain (Cuyamaca, Descanso, and Pine Valley), Desert (Borrego Springs), Mountain Empire (Boulevard, Campo/Lake Morena, Jacumba, Potrero, and Tecate), North County Metro (Hidden Meadows and Twin Oaks), and North Mountain (Greater Warner Springs Area). Specific plans within the County include adopted plans and special projects, such as redevelopment areas or planned developments. There are 20 specific plans in effect in the County, within the Desert, Jamul, Dulzura, Lakeside, Otay, Ramona, San Dieguito, Valle De Oro, and Valley Center areas.

Land use types in the County are typically categorized as Residential (Village Residential, Semi-Rural, Rural-Residential), Commercial (General, Neighborhood, Rural, Village Core Mixed, and Office Professional), Industrial (Limited-Impact, Medium-Impact, High-Impact), Public/Semi-Public Land and Facilities, Circulation/Transportation, Open Space, and Federal, State, or Tribal Lands. The County does not have land use jurisdiction over the federal, state or tribal lands, as well as some activities on other public lands. Additionally, incorporated cities within San Diego County have separate governing bodies with independent land use authority from the County. The incorporated cities are Oceanside, Vista, Carlsbad, San Marcos, Escondido, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Del Mar, Poway, Santee, El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, Coronado and San Diego.

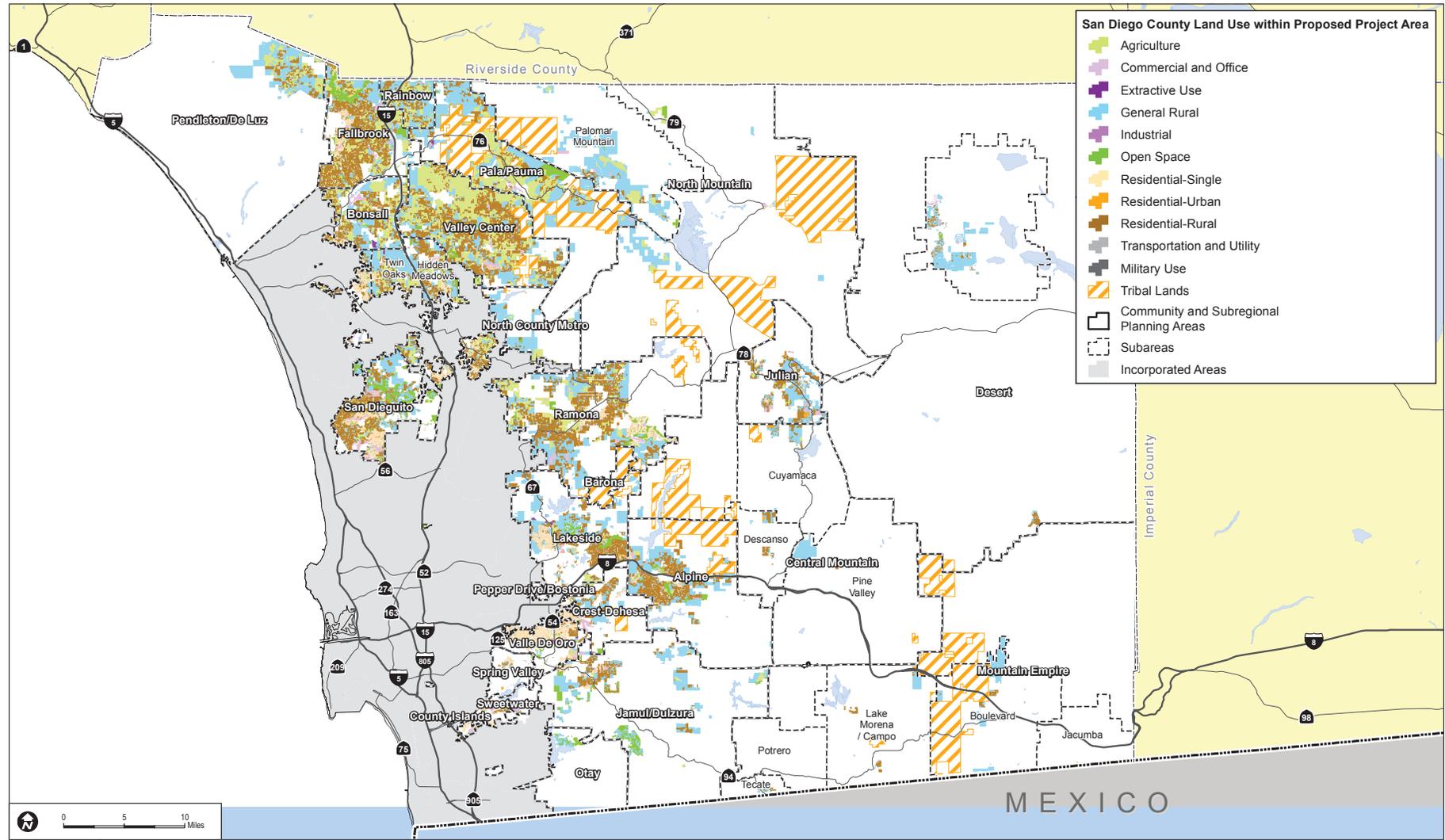
The common characteristics of the land, from topography to public services, work to dictate what development patterns are most appropriate for particular portions of the San Diego region. On average, the unincorporated areas of the County are more highly constrained, with more rugged terrain, more occurrences of sensitive species, and fewer opportunities to provide essential services. Due to these constraints, the unincorporated areas generally have a different ratio of land uses than the incorporated cities. A majority of the land in the unincorporated County is undeveloped, while the majority of land in the incorporated cities is developed. Land uses identified in the existing General Plan for the unincorporated County are shown in Figure 3-1. Within the developed land areas of the unincorporated County, residential and transportation/circulation uses are the predominant land uses. In addition, several large federal, state, and regional parklands encompass much of the unincorporated County, especially the eastern portion.

The most developed communities in the unincorporated County are located along its western boundary and include the CPAs of Spring Valley, Valle de Oro, Lakeside, Ramona, and San Dieguito, as well as the North County Metro Subregion. These areas, located primarily within the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) boundary, have generally been provided with public facilities and services, such as water, sewer, roads, and schools, and therefore have been developed at a more rapid rate. Because public facilities and services are more difficult and costly to construct and provide further to the east, development has been sparse in the backcountry region.

3.1.1.2 Regulatory Setting

Various policies, plans, programs, codes, and ordinances at the state and local level regulate land use development in the County. The following plans are listed with respect to their relationship to land use designations and zoning. Other policies that indirectly affect land use planning, such as traffic, water quality, and air quality, are included in regulatory settings of those respective sections in Chapter 2.

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Source: Dudek, County Equine Ordinance EIR, August 2013.



Figure 3-1
Land Uses in the Unincorporated County
County of San Diego Agriculture Promotion Program

State

California Aeronautics Act

The California Aeronautics Act, established by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)—Division of Aeronautics, requires the preparation of airport land use compatibility plans (ALUCPs), which promote compatibility between airports and the land uses that surround them to the extent that these uses are not already developed with incompatible land uses. They are intended to protect the safety of people, property, and aircraft on the ground and in the air in the vicinity of the airport. They also protect airports from encroachment by new incompatible land uses that could restrict their operations. The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority has adopted ALUCPs for all six rural airports operated by the County (Agua Caliente, Borrego Valley, Fallbrook, Jacumba, Ocotillo, and Ramona).

California Planning and Zoning Law

California Planning and Zoning Law, Sections 65000 through 66499.58, provides the legal framework in which California cities and counties exercise their local land use and planning function. The Planning and Zoning Law requires each city and county to adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan that is used to guide the physical development and represent public policy. Fundamental requirements of a general plan include seven mandated elements (Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety). The content of each of the elements must contain text and descriptions that set forth objectives, principles, standards, policies, and plan proposals; maps and diagrams for visual data analysis; and mitigation measures. Further, each element must be consistent with the others, and policies cannot conflict within the plan.

Local Government Reorganization Act

Under the Local Government Reorganization Act (California Government Code, Section 56000 et seq., titled the Cortese–Knox–Hertberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000), each county has a Local Agency Formation Commission with the authority and responsibility to regulate changes of organization. These changes could include city incorporation, annexation to a city or special district, or a consolidation of cities or special districts. Primary considerations are local agency boundary changes and adopting and updating spheres of influence for local agencies.

Regional

San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) adopted “The San Diego Air Basin 2009 Regional Air Quality Strategy Revision” pursuant to California Clean Air Act (CCAA) requirements. It identifies feasible emission control measures to measure progress within San Diego County in attaining the state ozone (O₃) standard. The pollutants addressed in the San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) are volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x), precursors to the photochemical formation of O₃ (the primary component of smog). The RAQS control measures focus on emission sources under the SDAPCD’s authority, specifically stationary emission sources (such as power plants, manufacturing and industrial facilities) and some area-wide sources (such as water heaters, architectural coatings, and consumer products). However, the emission inventories and emission projections in the RAQS reflect the impact of all emission sources and all control measures, including those under the jurisdiction of the California Air Resources

Board (ARB) (on-road and off-road motor vehicles) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (aircraft, ships, and trains). Thus, while legal authority to control various pollution sources is divided among agencies, the SDAPCD is responsible for reflecting federal, state, and local measures in a single plan to achieve state O₃ standards in San Diego County. The RAQS was initially adopted by the SDAPCD in 1992 and has been updated on a triennial basis, in accordance with state requirements. The latest version of the RAQS was adopted by the SDAPCD in 2009.

Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin Plan

The Basin Plan, most recently amended in 2011, sets forth water quality objectives for constituents that could potentially cause a significant impact on the beneficial uses of water. Specifically, the Basin Plan is designed to accomplish the following: (1) designate beneficial uses for surface and ground waters, (2) set the narrative and numerical objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the state's anti-degradation policy, (3) describe mitigation measures to protect the beneficial uses of all waters within the region, and (4) describe surveillance and monitoring activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the Basin Plan. The Basin Plan incorporates by reference all applicable State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) plans and policies.

San Diego Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) outlines the investment of an estimated \$214 billion in local, state, and federal transportation funds expected to come to the region over the next 40 years. The 2050 RTP is the blueprint for a regional transportation system that further enhances quality of life, promotes sustainability, and offers more mobility options for people and goods. The plan outlines projects for transit, rail and bus service, express or managed lanes, highways, local streets, bicycling, and walking to provide an integrated, multimodal transportation system by mid-century. Pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 375, the 2050 RTP also includes the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which details how the region will reduce greenhouse gas emissions to state-mandated levels over time. The 2050 RTP and its SCS seek to guide the San Diego region toward a more sustainable future by integrating land use, housing, and transportation planning to create communities that are more sustainable, walkable, transit-oriented, and compact. The 2050 RTP and SCS were adopted by the SANDAG Board of Directors on October 28, 2011.

Local

County of San Diego General Plan

The County's General Plan underwent a comprehensive update in 2011. The document is based on a set of guiding principles designed to protect the County's unique and diverse natural resources and maintain the character of its rural and semi-rural communities. It reflects an approach to planning that balances the need for adequate infrastructure, housing, and economic vitality, while maintaining and preserving each unique community within the County, agricultural areas, and extensive open space.

The General Plan Land Use Element, Chapter 3, provides maps, goals, and policies that guide planners, the general public, property owners, developers, and decision makers as to how lands are to be conserved and developed in the unincorporated County. The Land Use Element includes a two-

tier framework to guide the location and distribution of land uses, and to establish the range and intensity of allowable land uses for all areas under the County's jurisdiction. The first tier, Regional Categories, establishes a hierarchy for the overall structure and organization of development that differentiates areas by overall character and density. The second tier, Land Use Designations, disaggregates these categories and provides more precise direction regarding the planned density and intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, open space, and public land uses. The Mobility Element, Chapter 4, identifies the general location and extent of existing and proposed major roads, transportation routes, terminals, and other public utilities and facilities. The Conservation and Open Space Element, Chapter 5, addresses the conservation, development, and use of natural resources including water, forests, soils, rivers, mineral deposits, and open space. This element also encourages renewable energy production along with efficient energy use in buildings and infrastructure. The Housing Element, Chapter 6, is a comprehensive assessment of current and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community and region. It sets forth local housing policies and programs to implement those policies. The Safety Element, Chapter 7, establishes policies and programs to protect the community from risks associated with seismic, geologic, flood, and wildfire hazards. Lastly, the Noise Element, Chapter 8, identifies and appraises noise problems within the community and forms the basis for distributing new noise-sensitive land uses.

County of San Diego Community Plans

Except for Pendleton/De Luz and County Islands, each of the planning areas in San Diego County has a community or sub-regional plan that supplements the County's General Plan and focuses on the issues pertaining to the subject planning area. Depending on the issues in the area, the community and sub-regional plans can contain information and policies revolving around land use, housing, circulation, conservation, public facilities and services, recreation, and community character. The policies and programs contained in the community or sub-regional plans enhance the General Plan and are legally required to be consistent with the General Plan goals and policies. Further, they address areas where the General Plan may lack aspects for the particular community or sub-region.

San Diego County Zoning Ordinance

The San Diego County Zoning Ordinance serves as the primary regulatory document for the development of the unincorporated lands in the County. The Zoning Ordinance implements the goals and objectives of the General Plan and corresponds to, and is consistent with the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance contains specific uses and development standards within the land use designations found in the General Plan. Compliance with the Zoning Ordinance is required for all development within the County.

3.1.1.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination of Significance

The proposed project consists of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance related to accessory agricultural uses in unincorporated portions of the County over which the County has land use jurisdiction (see Section 1.4, *Project Description*, for further details). The project would apply primarily to properties that are zoned *Agriculture (A70 and A72)*, *Specific Plan (S88)*, *Holding Area (S90)*, and *General Rural (S92)*; however, other zones with agricultural uses would also be affected.¹

¹ Some of the proposed changes would affect or change the currently permitted agricultural uses within industrial, commercial, and special use zones.

During the scoping process for this project, which considered potentially significant environmental impacts and involved a 30-day public comment period, it was determined that there is no potential impact for the proposed project to physically divide an established community or conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. As such, potential impacts related to the project's potential to physically divide an established community or conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan are not evaluated below and are discussed in the Initial Study prepared for the project, which is provided as Appendix B. No comments were received during the 30-day public comment period that were relevant to land use and planning.

Conflict with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The following significance guideline from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines applies to both the direct and cumulative impact analyses. A significant impact would result if the project would:

- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Analysis

Evaluation of potential conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations was approached in two ways: (1) the individual accessory agriculture uses were considered specifically for potential conflicts, and (2) applicable plans were reviewed for potential issues with consideration of the proposed project. The two reviews are summarized below.

Consistency Review of Accessory Agricultural Uses

Agricultural Homestay

Existing agricultural homestay uses are allowed with a Minor Use Permit in A70, A72, and S92 zones. The proposed project would extend allowance for an agricultural homestay to occur within the RR and S90 zones with a Zoning Verification Permit. An agricultural homestay use would introduce a minor increase of individuals and activity on the property that had previously experienced only agricultural-related activity such as farm owners and workers. This increase in activity would be temporary, as the length of homestays would be limited to no more than 14 days in the proposed zoning amendments. Permanent residents would not be allowed by the agricultural homestay use. Further, these activities would be regulated through restrictions on building size, number of permitted guests, and length of stay and would not constitute a change in land uses or the introduction of a conflicting land use. Agricultural homestays would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation as they would be required to comply with criteria listed in the Zoning Ordinance, which is consistent with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Agricultural Microbreweries, Cideries, and Micro-distilleries (Small and Large)

Agricultural microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries are not currently defined or regulated in the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would introduce small microbrewery, cidery, and micro-distillery facilities as accessories to commercial agriculture operations, with a Zoning Verification Permit for small facilities and an Administrative Permit for large facilities. The

agricultural microbrewery, cidery, and micro-distillery operations would be allowed up to a maximum of 5,000 square feet for lots larger than 4 acres. As a part of implementation, setbacks and a 50-foot height restriction would be checked for conformance with nearby land uses. Further, these accessory uses would occur on lands already utilized for commercial agricultural operations, and its introduction would not constitute a change in land uses or the introduction of a conflicting land use. As such, microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation as they would be required to comply with criteria listed in the Zoning Ordinance, which is consistent with land use plans, policies, and regulations. Criteria listed in the Zoning Ordinance include compliance with the provisions of Section 36.401 et seq. of the San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances relating to Noise Abatement and Control, compliance with the applicable commercial building code, compliance with all applicable requirements of the Department of Environmental Health, and compliance with the emergency travel times specified in the Safety Element, Table S-1.

The proposed project would also allow large microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries as an accessory to a commercial agriculture operation with an Administrative Permit, which would require a discretionary review and an analysis of environmental effects. The review would identify any potential land use issues and any potential impacts associated with implementation and would be addressed through mitigation measures.

Agricultural and Horticultural Retail (Stand)

Existing agricultural and horticultural retail stands are permitted in RR (1-acre minimum), A70, A72, S90, and S92 zones. The proposed project would extend the current allowance of agricultural and horticultural retail to S88 zones. Agricultural and horticultural retail stands would be permitted through compliance with the 10 requirements under Section 6157 of the Zoning Ordinance. Through fulfillment of the requirements, the agricultural and horticultural retail stand would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation. Additionally, while the Zoning Ordinance would allow for agricultural and horticultural retail uses in S88 zones, if a Specific Plan has been adopted for the area, consistency with the Specific Plan would still be required.

Agricultural and Horticultural Retail (Small and Large)

Existing agricultural and horticultural retail stores are neither defined nor regulated in the current Zoning Ordinance. Under the proposed project, agricultural and horticultural retail stores would be allowed through a Zoning Verification Permit for small stores and through an Administrative Permit for large stores, in RR zones (2 acre lot size), A70, A72, S88, S90, and S92 zones. Agricultural and horticultural stores, both small and large, would be required to comply with setbacks and building size restrictions outlined in Section 4810 of the Zoning Ordinance. Further, these accessory uses would occur on lands already utilized for agricultural operations, and their introduction would not constitute a change in land uses or the introduction of a conflicting land use. As such, agricultural and horticultural retail stores (small and large) would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation as they would be required to comply with criteria listed in the Zoning Ordinance, which is consistent with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Agricultural Tourism

Agricultural tourism is currently allowed as an accessory use by-right in RR, A70, A72, S90, and S92 zones. The proposed project would extend agricultural tourism by-right to S88 zones. Agricultural tourism is generally considered a commercial enterprise and an accessory use at a functioning farm,

ranch, or agricultural plant, and its introduction to existing agricultural lands would not constitute a change in land uses or the introduction of a conflicting land use. Agricultural tourism would be required to comply with four requirements outlined in Section 6157 (b) of the Zoning Ordinance, which would ensure agricultural tourism activities are consistent with land use plans, policies, and regulations. Additionally, while the Zoning Ordinance would allow for agricultural tourism uses in S88 zones, if a Specific Plan has been adopted for the area, consistency with the Specific Plan would still be required.

Animal Raising

Animal raising operations currently require a Minor Use Permit if they exceed the allowed number of animals per designator in the Animal Schedule. The proposed project would allow animal raising operations to exceed the allowed number of animals per designator with an Administrative Permit. The housing of additional animals on lands already utilized for agricultural operations would not constitute a change in land uses or the introduction of a conflicting land use. While the proposed project would reduce permitting requirements (from Minor Use Permit to an Administrative Permit), animal raising operations would still be required to go through a discretionary review, which would ensure animal raising operations are consistent with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Aquaponics

Aquaponics are not currently defined or regulated in the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would allow aquaponics under Section 6913 of the proposed Zoning Ordinance under a Specialty Animal Raising project per compliance with six provisions that limit impacts of an aquaponics operation, including setbacks and structural requirements, amount of fish, and odor and noise restrictions, which would make aquaponics operations consistent with land use plans, policies, and regulations. The addition of aquaponics tanks on lands already utilized for agricultural operations would not constitute a change in land uses or the introduction of a conflicting land use.

Fishermen's Markets

Fishermen's markets are not currently defined or regulated in the Zoning Ordinance. Fishermen's markets would be allowed by-right with a Fish Market Certificate on public property, school property with a school use, or within C31, C32, C34, C35, C36, C37, C40, C42, or S88 zones. This temporary use would be added to the Zoning Ordinance to operate in the same manner as, or in conjunction with, a Certified Farmers' Market. Fishermen's markets would be required to meet conditions under Section 6128 of the proposed Zoning Ordinance and would be consistent with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Creamery/Dairy

A creamery/dairy operation is currently not regulated in the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would allow a creamery as an accessory use by-right to a dairy, with a maximum 2,000-square-foot floor area on a lot that is 1 gross acre or less; a 3,000-square-foot floor area where the lot is 1–2 acres; a 4,000-square-foot floor area on a lot that is 2–4 acres. Restrictions on additional floor area would not apply for accessory operations to dairies on lots over 4 acres.

Under the proposed project, future creamery facilities would introduce a new land use type and new facilities on dairy premises, allowing buildings for operation and associated activities, such as a retail sales room that would draw customers to an agricultural land use type within the County

that previously experienced dairy-only related activities. The project would allow dairies to expand creamery operations, introducing more people and subsequently more activity on the land. The addition of creamery/dairy operations on dairy premises would not involve the introduction of a conflicting land use. Creamery facilities would be required to comply with existing setback (Section 4180) requirements, existing commercial building codes, the U.S. Department of Food and Agriculture, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and the County Health and Safety Code, which would moderate potential effects relating to congruent land use within the County and ensure consistency with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Mobile Butchering

Mobile butchering is not currently regulated in the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would add mobile commercial butchering and mobile custom butchering as new uses by-right where the Packing and Processing: Limited or General use is currently allowed. Commercial butchering would also include a Food and Beverage Retail Sales use type. Instead of trucking livestock to processing facilities, mobile slaughter allows the processing trailer to travel to the animals. Therefore, mobile butchering would not involve the placement of any permanent structure as the activity occurs within mobile units that travel from site to site. Mobile butchering would be required to comply with setback, duration, operation, and disposal requirements under Section 6126 of the proposed Zoning Ordinance, which would ensure consistency with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Packing and Processing: General

Packing and Processing: General is currently allowed under a Major Use Permit in A70 and A72 zones. The proposed project would allow Packing and Processing: General as a by-right agricultural use per limitations in Sections 2703 and 2723 of the Zoning Ordinance. These limitations, which are listed in Section 6157 of the Zoning Ordinance, would ensure consistency with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Wineries

A Boutique Winery and a Wholesale Limited Winery are currently allowed by-right (with limitations) and a Small Winery is allowed with an Administrative Permit in A70 and A72 zones, consistent with the Tiered Winery Zoning Ordinance Amendment. The proposed project would extend these uses and restrictions to S92 zones. Wholesale limited, boutique, and small winery uses would be subject to Section 6910 of the County's existing Zoning Ordinance, which allows onsite sales to the public of wine and other goods, including food service. Non-residential structures to produce wine would be permitted up to 1,000 square feet on lots less than 1 acre, up to 1,500 square feet on lots between 1 and 2 acres, up to 2,000 square feet on lots between 2 and 4 acres, and an additional 200 square feet for each acre over 4 acres, not to exceed 5,000 square feet total. While the proposed project would reduce permitting requirements, the addition of wine-making operations on lands already utilized for agricultural operations would not constitute a change in land uses or the introduction of a conflicting land use. Wineries would be required to comply with Section 6910 of the County's existing Zoning Ordinance and the Tiered Winery Zoning Ordinance Amendment, which would ensure winery operations are consistent with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Consistency Review of Applicable Land Use Plans

Applicable land use plans include the County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and all community, regional, and sub-regional plans referenced in Section 3.1.1.2, *Regulatory Setting*. The proposed project was analyzed for inconsistencies with applicable plans, and it was concluded that the proposed project would be consistent with each plan. As stated in Section 1.2, *Project Location*, the proposed project would apply to those unincorporated properties that support agricultural operations. Agricultural operations occur throughout the unincorporated area, with high concentrations in certain areas and in a variety of zones, including some industrial and commercially zoned areas. Future agricultural operations would be subject to specific standards and limitations in their applicable zones, which include consistency with the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and all community or subregional plans.

Planning documents in the unincorporated County include the San Diego County General Plan, related Community Plans, and regional plans such as the Regional Comprehensive Plan, the Regional Transportation Plan, the Congestion Management Plan, and San Diego Basin Plans. Further discussion of how the proposed project would be consistent with these plans as they relate to agricultural uses is provided below.

San Diego County General Plan

The General Plan is a guiding document that includes goals and policies and sets forth land use designations for managing the development of the County. The proposed project is for a Zoning Ordinance Amendment that would promote development of accessory agricultural uses and would be generally consistent with the County's General Plan's goals and policies. The General Plan contains a number of goals and policies that not only support agricultural uses, but also emphasize the value of rural lands, which include agriculture as an integral component. On the other hand, the General Plan also includes a number of policies related to avoidance or minimization of certain issues that might come from new development proposals, including environmental impacts, traffic, safety, and noise. The project would not be in conflict with these policies due to the application of existing regulations that are discussed in this EIR that reduce impacts to the extent feasible. The General Plan supports this conclusion with the following explanation (Page 1-5):

The policies contained within this General Plan were written to be a clear statement of policy but also to allow flexibility when it comes to implementation. Policies cannot be applied independently; rather, implementation of the policies must be balanced with one another and will address details such as how and when the policy is applied and any relevant exceptions. For example, a policy to conserve open space is not a mandate for preservation of 100 percent of the existing undeveloped land in the County. It must be balanced with other policies that allow development and other uses of the land. In this case, implementation of the policy in new developments will be achieved through regulations such as the Resource Protection Ordinance, Biological Mitigation Ordinance, and California Environmental Quality Act, which will guide to what degree open space must be conserved.

Similar to the example in the General Plan, the policies in the General Plan to minimize impacts on environmental issues—such as biological resources, cultural resources, and water supply, reduce wildfire risk, maintain road functions, and limit noise impacts—do not preclude the proposed project from having this potential impact. Rather, these policies must be balanced with the other policies in the General Plan that support agricultural operations. Through the application of existing regulations and the mitigation measures discussed in this EIR, this balance is achieved.

While no inconsistencies with the agricultural operations promoted by the proposed project were found, it was determined that the proposed project may result in increased traffic on certain roads

that necessitates an amendment to the County's General Plan Mobility Element (see Section 2.7.3 and Appendix F). This amendment is included as part of the proposed project to ensure consistency with the General Plan.

Community Plans, Regional, Sub-regional Plans

Community and sub-regional plans assist implementation of the General Plan and are adopted by the Board of Supervisors, and therefore maintain a consistency with the components of the General Plan. The community plans and sub-regional plans of the County were each reviewed with consideration for the proposed project. Various goals and policies from the community plans and sub-regional plans address agricultural uses. The language incorporated into many of these plans establishes agricultural uses as a part of the existing land use and community character. Additional goals and policies seek to sustain the rural character of their respective communities through the preservation of agricultural uses, particularly in conjunction with rural residential land uses. In one limited case, expanded agricultural uses were discouraged. For example, the Borrego Springs Community Plan, which applies to a 70-square-mile, privately owned area surrounded by the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, identified under Issue-LU-2.4 that existing agricultural uses contribute to the current overdraft of the sole-source aquifer that provides water to all uses through the community planning area (County of San Diego 2011). The plan further identifies goals and policies that encourage the conversion of existing agricultural uses to other, less consumptive uses by 2020. Therefore, opportunities for expanding existing and future agricultural operations in this planning area are limited. However, this is not considered a conflict with the proposed project as it is limited to accessory uses and is not proposing new zoning or land use designations for agriculture.

Additionally, similar to the General Plan policies, some community plans contain policies specific to certain issues that might come from new development proposals including environmental impacts such as traffic, safety, and noise. Similar to the General Plan, these policies must be balanced with the other policies of the community plan as well as the General Plan. With the application of existing regulations and the mitigation measures in this EIR, the proposed project would be consistent with these community plans.

County of San Diego Zoning Ordinance

The proposed project is a Zoning Ordinance Amendment that would be adopted by the County Board of Supervisors prior to implementation. The amendments consist of development of accessory agricultural uses and changes to permit requirements that would allow for a more streamlined process, as described in Section 1.4.2 of the Project Description in this document. Further, uses under the proposed Zoning Ordinance would be required to comply with applicable permitting procedures.

The proposed project includes provisions that regulate accessory agricultural uses to ensure they remain scaled and associated with an agricultural use. For example, the proposed project includes language in the agricultural Zoning Ordinance that defines uses, regulates the height and size of structures, number of animals, and quantity of production for microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries. In addition, the proposed project does not involve the development of dwelling units as it relates to density and General Plan land use designations. These provisions would ensure that the potential increase in agricultural uses would not conflict with the rural setting and character of the County's communities.

The proposed project would be consistent with the County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and all community, sub-regional plans, and specific plans. A review of each of the applicable plans revealed that the proposed project is in conformance; no inconsistencies between the proposed project and the goals, policies, and objectives of the respective plans were found. **Therefore, impacts related to conflicts with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation would be less than significant.**

3.1.1.4 Cumulative Impacts Analysis

The geographic scope of cumulative impact analysis for land use and planning is the entire County of San Diego, both incorporated and unincorporated areas, jurisdictions, and special districts within and adjacent to County lands.

Conflict with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations

A cumulative impact would result if the proposed project, in combination with reasonably foreseeable future projects, would conflict with existing land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. The proposed project would allow for the expansion of agricultural uses as accessory to agricultural land uses. Future projects promoted by the proposed project would be subject to existing land use plans, policies, and regulations prior to implementation. Cumulative projects in other jurisdictions would be required to comply with applicable land use plans or go through extensive planning and environmental review before they could be approved. As described, proposed uses promoted by the proposed project would comply with all applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations and would not cause conflicts with such plans. Further, the development of accessory agriculture use promoted by the proposed project would be supported by the community plan and sub-regional plan policies that seek to encourage agricultural ventures in their communities. **Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact related to conflicts with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation.**

3.1.1.5 Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation

The proposed project would not result in significant land use impacts or conflicts related to the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

3.1.1.6 Mitigation Measures

The proposed project would not result in significant land use impacts, and no additional mitigation is required.

3.1.1.7 Conclusion

Adoption of the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

3.1.2 Utilities and Service Systems

This section discusses existing utilities and service systems within the County, including wastewater treatment and solid waste, and the potential impacts of the proposed project. Section 2.5, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, evaluates potential impacts on the capacity of existing or planned stormwater

drainage systems. Section 2.8, *Water Supply and Groundwater*, evaluates potential impacts on water supply related to existing entitlements. This section will focus on wastewater treatment and solid waste disposal (solid waste disposal was determined to be less than significant in the Initial Study but this section contains additional discussion to supplement that determination). One comment letter was received during the 30-day public comment period that is relevant to utilities and service systems. The Cleveland National Forest indicated that utilities and service systems are of particular concern due to the increased water demand related to zone changes. Discussion of issues related to water supply are provided in Section 2.8, *Water Supply and Groundwater*.

3.1.2.1 Existing Conditions

Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater districts are generally responsible for providing collection, transmission, and disposal of sewage. According to the San Diego County General Plan Update EIR (August 2011), there are 25 wastewater districts that serve the unincorporated areas of the County, with the majority affiliated with the City of San Diego Metropolitan Wastewater Department (SDMWD). SDMWD has a service area of 450 square miles, stretching from the City of Del Mar to the north, the communities of Alpine and Lakeside to the east, and the U.S./Mexico international border to the south. SDMWD provides regional wastewater treatment and disposal services for the City of San Diego and 15 other cities and sanitation districts.

Also within the unincorporated communities of the County, wastewater treatment services are provided by the County's Department of Public Works (DPW), which maintains a large network of sewage pipes and pump stations. The San Diego County Sanitation District, a division of DPW, provides sewer service to approximately 35,000 customers within the unincorporated area. It owns and operates approximately 432 miles of pipeline, 8,200 manholes, 10 lift stations/pressurized mains, and 3 wastewater treatment plants. Typically these agencies are also responsible for maintaining sewer lines, pump stations, force mains, and several treatment plants for the unincorporated areas. From the time wastewater enters any of the treatment facilities, it (influent) undergoes physical, biological, and chemical treatment for many hours before the treatment process is complete. Treated wastewater is either discharged via controlled irrigation or percolation processes, or reclamation processes, or discharged via a permitted discharge facility.

Areas within the unincorporated areas not serviced by wastewater districts typically utilize septic systems for wastewater disposal. The most common type of septic system found in the County involves a septic tank connected to leach lines. According to the San Diego County General Plan Update EIR (August 2011), approximately 80,000 septic systems exist throughout the unincorporated County.

Solid Waste

There are six permitted active landfills within the County with remaining capacity (CalRecycle 2016a). Allied Waste Industries, Inc. is responsible for managing some of the County's active landfills and other solid waste generated by residents and businesses in the County, including the Sycamore Landfill in Santee, the Otay Landfill in Chula Vista, and the Borrego Landfill in Borrego Springs. The Las Pulgas and San Onofre landfills located on Camp Pendleton are owned and operated by the U.S. Marine Corps and are not available for public disposal. The Miramar Landfill is the City of San Diego's only active landfill and is owned by the City. In order to accommodate the

waste management shortfall facing San Diego County in the future, the Gregory Canyon Landfill is currently planned to be located in San Diego's North County, approximately 2 miles southwest of the community of Pala. The County's Department of Public Works oversees inactive landfills.

All solid waste facilities, including landfills, require solid waste facility permits to operate. In the County, the San Diego Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Integrated Waste Management Board under the authority of the California Public Resources Code (Sections 44001–44018) and California Code of Regulations, Title 27 (Section 21440 et seq.).

3.1.2.2 Regulatory Setting

Various policies, plans, programs, codes, and ordinances at the state and local level regulate wastewater treatment and solid waste disposal in the County.

State

California Integrated Waste Management Act (Assembly Bill 939)

Assembly Bill (AB) 939, the Integrated Waste Management Act (IWMA), established an integrated waste management hierarchy to guide the California Integrated Waste Management Board (now the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, or CalRecycle) and local agencies in the implementation of programs geared at source reduction, recycling, and composting, and environmentally safe transformation and land disposal. AB 939 also included waste diversion mandates that require all cities and counties to divert 50 percent of all solid waste through source reduction, recycling, and composting activities. The IWMA also requires that each county provide capacity for solid waste generated within its jurisdiction that cannot be reduced or recycled.

The IWMA was enacted by the California Legislature in 1989 with the goal of reducing dependence on landfills for the disposal of solid waste, and to ensure an effective and coordinated system for the safe management of all solid waste generated within the state. The IWMA established a hierarchy of preferred waste management practices that include: source reduction; reuse of resources, recycling, and composting; and environmentally safe disposal by transformation or landfill. It addresses all aspects related to solid waste regulation including the details regarding the lead enforcement agency's requirements and responsibilities, the permit process including inspections and denials of permits, enforcement, and site clean-up and maintenance. It requires the County to prepare a Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP) that is reviewed at least once every 5 years to assure that waste management practices remain consistent with the practices defined in the Public Resources Code. Each city and the county is responsible for maintaining its Source Reduction and Recycling, Household Hazardous Waste, and Non-Disposal Facility Elements.

Local

The County of San Diego General Plan

Land uses in the County are supported by a diversity of public utilities and services. Among these are water supply, wastewater collection and treatment, and solid waste management. The County of San Diego General Plan, Land Use Element, Community Services and Infrastructure section contains policies and objectives related to utilities and service systems.

County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health

The County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is the primary agency charged with regulating the design, construction, and maintenance of septic tanks, leach lines, seepage pits, and alternative onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) throughout the County through a delegation of authority from the RWQCB. The County DEH regulates these facilities through a Septic Tank Permit Process. Any development proposing to use an OWTS must first demonstrate that the site can meet minimum design criteria with respect to soil type and groundwater separation. The size of the OWTS is a function of the soil permeability and peak daily sewage flow based on percolation testing and occupancy. As a result of the passage of AB 885, the County DEH works with the SWRCB to develop statewide performance and design standards for conventional and alternative OWTS.

County of San Diego DEH Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency

The County of San Diego DEH Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) is certified by the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery to enforce state solid waste laws and regulations in the County. The LEA has the primary responsibility for ensuring the proper operation, permitting, and closure of solid waste facilities, operations, and disposal sites. The LEA also has responsibilities for ensuring the review and approval of post-closure land use activities at closed solid waste disposal sites, and works to protect public health, safety, and the well-being of communities in the County and environment from the impacts of solid waste management, recycling, and disposal.

County of San Diego Uniform Sewer Ordinance

The County sanitation and sewer maintenance districts operate under the County Uniform Sewer Ordinance (USO), which sets rules and regulations for operation and maintenance of sewage collection and treatment systems. Classes of sewer service are categorized by land use type. Provisions for annexation are addressed, along with procedures for obtaining new or modified sewer service. Wastewater discharge permits are issued to each customer, with approximately 90 percent of permits issued to residential uses and 10 percent to commercial uses. Violations of the USO are subject to misdemeanor charges.

San Diego County Health and Sanitation Ordinance. County of San Diego Code of Regulatory Ordinances, Title 6, Division 8, Chapter 1, Sections 68.101–68.123

Title 6 of the County of San Diego Code of Regulatory Ordinances specifies conditions and procedures for connection and use of sewage facilities by sanitation district customers. The code incorporated many, but not all, provisions of the USO.

County of San Diego Fee Ordinances

Each sanitation district has a fee structure that is adopted by separate ordinance. The ordinance includes annual sewer service fees, connection capacity fees (i.e., system buy-in charge), and annexation fees. Annual sewer service fees are collected on the County tax rolls, which are paid either once or twice per year. Annexation and capacity fees are collected at the time an application is submitted or when a wastewater discharge permit is issued.

San Diego County Board of Supervisors Policies

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors provides multiple policies related to cleaning and repair of sewer laterals (F-16), establishment of assessment districts to provide public infrastructure and facilities improvements for sanitary sewers (Policy I-25), sewer extensions and connections in areas not annexed to a sanitation district (Policy I-36), sewer extensions in areas not annexed to a sanitation district (Policy I-48), small wastewater treatment facilities (Policy I-78), expenditures and use of revenue for replacement and expansion of liquid waste facilities (Policy I-99), and others.

Non-Exclusive Solid Waste Management Agreement

The Non-Exclusive Solid Waste Management Agreement was created to allow the County to participate in the solid waste collection market to ensure orderly operation and to minimize the potential for adverse effects on the local environment. The agreement requires local agencies to make adequate provisions for solid waste handling. The County Board of Supervisors has determined that the agreement will be awarded to qualified companies for the collection and subsequent transfer, transportation, recycling, processing, and disposal of solid waste. The Solid Waste Agreement allows the County to regulate waste collection in a market-driven business.

County of San Diego Integrated Waste Management Plan

The Board of Supervisors adopted the County of San Diego IWMP on September 17, 1996. The IWMP discusses the need for a reduction in solid waste and includes a Source Reduction and Recycling Element, Household Hazardous Waste Element, Non-Disposal Facility Element, Countywide Siting Element, and the Countywide Summary Plan. The Countywide Siting Element of the 1996 IWMP was updated in 2005, as required by the IWMA. It provides a description of the facilities and strategies that will provide adequate capacity for the disposal of solid waste within the County over the next 15 years, including alternatives such as additional waste diversion programs and waste export. The Countywide Siting Element presents a strategy to assist local governments and private industry in planning for integrated waste management and the siting of solid waste disposal facilities. The goals and policies listed in the Countywide Siting Element are intended to assist all jurisdictions to plan and implement a solid waste management program.

3.1.2.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination of Significance

The proposed project consists of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance related to accessory agricultural uses in unincorporated portions of the County over which the County has land use jurisdiction (see Section 1.4, *Project Description*, for further details). During the scoping process for this project, which considered potentially significant environmental impacts and involved a 30-day public comment period, it was determined that there is no potential impact for the proposed project related to the exceedance of wastewater treatment requirements of the RWQCB; the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; or a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments. As such, potential impacts related to these issues are not evaluated below and are discussed in the Initial Study prepared for the project, which is provided as Appendix B. The discussion of sufficient water supplies is provided in Section 2.8, *Water Supply and Groundwater*. The discussion of landfill permitting capacity and compliance with regulations related to solid waste is provided below to supplement the less-than-significant conclusion in the Initial Study.

Require New Water or Wastewater Treatment Facilities

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The following significance guideline from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines applies to both the direct and cumulative impact analyses. A significant impact would result if the project would:

- Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Analysis

Many agricultural properties within the County have onsite wastewater systems (typically referred to as septic systems). Most future accessory agricultural operations in the project area would rely upon onsite wastewater systems for wastewater treatment because the agricultural zones primarily occur in areas without urban services, such as sewers. Septic system and discharged wastewater requirements would be regulated by the RWQCB's applicable standards, including the Regional Basin Plan and the California Water Code. Under the California Water Code, the San Diego County DEH has authority to issue certain On-Site Wastewater Systems permits. This would require the proposed project to demonstrate that soils are capable of adequately supporting the continued use of septic tanks according to the local authority, as applicable for accessory agricultural uses encouraged by the proposed project. Further, individual projects on septic tanks would be required to comply with the San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances, Title 6, Division 8, Chapter 3, *Septic Tanks and Seepage Pits*. The proposed project would be required to comply with wastewater treatment requirements of the RWQCB as determined by the authorized, local public agency, and no significant impacts would result.

Any new operations that would generate higher levels of wastewater, potentially high water users, such as microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries, or wineries, would need to determine if a new sewer connection would be required. Most new construction would be subject to an Administrative Permit or other discretionary review, which includes review to determine if an individual project has adequate wastewater treatment options. Further, if connections are not available because a treatment plant has no capacity, no building permit would be issued until adequate wastewater disposal capacity is demonstrated. Future accessory uses promoted by the proposed project would be subject to existing requirements and regulations related to wastewater treatment prior to implementation, and impacts would be less than significant. Most other accessory agricultural uses, such as the addition of animals where animals already exist, agricultural stores and processing, fishermen's markets, aquaponics, or mobile butchering, would involve only a small increase in wastewater, which would not require the addition of new wastewater treatment facilities and which can readily be accommodated by the existing treatment system.

Within the unincorporated communities of the County, wastewater treatment services are provided by the County's Department of Public Works, as well as other wastewater agencies as described in the County General Plan. Typically these agencies are also responsible for maintaining sewer lines, pump stations, force mains, and several treatment plants for the unincorporated areas. From the time wastewater enters any of the treatment facilities, it (influent) undergoes physical, biological, and chemical treatment for many hours before the treatment process is complete. Treated water is discharged via controlled irrigation or percolation processes, or reclamation processes, or discharged via a permitted discharge facility.

Some future accessory agricultural operations may be located within the service area of a sewer service provider, and some of that wastewater could be generated in areas with treatment plants that are operating at capacity. However, the number of future operations in areas that have existing sewer service that could expand under the proposed project and increase the amount of wastewater that is generated is small, and therefore the increase from existing levels of wastewater generation is expected to be small and not considerable. Future operations that would generate wastewater in excess of existing capacity may need a new sewer connection and would be required to receive approval from the water district prior to implementation. The required approval would satisfy requirements for adequacy of wastewater service for the proposed agricultural activity prior to project approval. Therefore, the project would not interfere with any wastewater treatment's existing commitments or require the construction of new treatment facilities. **Therefore, it is concluded that the impacts from the project related to expansion of wastewater treatment facilities would be less than significant.**

Served by a Landfill with Sufficient Permitted Capacity and Compliance with Solid Waste Statutes and Regulations

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

The following significance guidelines from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines applies to both the direct and cumulative impact analyses. A significant impact would result if the project would not:

- Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.
- Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Analysis

Solid waste may involve the disposal of materials used for construction, removal of demolished structures, or the clearing of vegetation. If construction activities require disposal of materials in a landfill, the amount would likely be small, as the uses would not involve construction of large structures, and there are available solid waste disposal facilities throughout the County. Further, any removal of potentially hazardous materials on site during construction (i.e., removal of structures built before that may contain lead-based paint and asbestos-containing materials) would be conducted in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws that regulate the transportation and disposal of hazardous materials, as described in Section 2.4, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*.

The proposed project would provide increased opportunities for agricultural ventures and tourism that are accessory to existing agricultural operations. Thus, the proposed project would promote and encourage additional land use activities on active agricultural land throughout unincorporated San Diego County for microbreweries, cheese-making and dairy operations, onsite food production, mobile butchering, packing and processing, onsite retail horticulture sales, animal raising, roadside sales of agricultural products, agricultural tourism, and agricultural homestays. As the promotion of accessory agricultural uses by the proposed project is primarily to support existing agricultural operations, it could result in some expansion of agricultural operations. As such, there could be some corresponding increase in employment, the use of new supplies and materials, and a corresponding amount of new wastes associated with additional agricultural operations. Of all the accessory agricultural uses promoted by the proposed project, the ones that are most likely to

involve larger quantities of solid waste materials are microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries due to their potential for their operations to be larger in scale. Large operations would be allowed to produce 8,000 barrels or 248,000 gallons per year, and events that produce additional solid waste may be permitted as specified in the Administrative Permit. However, the anticipated solid waste would be common to rural residential and agricultural properties and not of a quantity to pose a substantial burden on the existing permitted capacity of any landfill within the County. The disposal rate for agriculture and fisheries in California is 0.9 ton/employee/year (CalRecycle 2016b). In February 2016, farming employment in the County totaled 8,800 jobs, which is 0.6 percent of total employment across all industries (CA EDD 2016). An estimated 7,920 tons of agricultural waste would be generated per year according to available waste disposal rates and agricultural employment totals. Available data for total remaining capacity for all landfills in the County, including Las Pulgas, San Onofre, Gregory Canyon (proposed), and Campo (proposed), is 188,369,512 tons (County of San Diego 2011n). Annual agricultural waste generation would comprise 0.004 percent of total remaining capacity. Additionally, part of the waste associated with additional agricultural operations would likely be reduced on site through processes such as composting, recycling, and diversion into animal feed.

As stated previously, there are six permitted active landfills in San Diego County with remaining capacity. The County DEH LEA issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Integrated Waste Management Board under the authority of the Public Resources Code (Sections 44001-44018) and California Code of Regulations Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4 (Section 214404 et seq.), which serve as implementation programs to assist with capacity issues relating to solid waste disposal. Therefore, the project would be served by a permitted landfill with sufficient capacity to accommodate the waste disposal needs. Further, development under the project would generate solid waste, which would be disposed of at a permitted landfill with sufficient capacity to accommodate anticipated waste disposal needs. Therefore, the project would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Additionally, many of the agricultural wastes (such as leftover food, animal waste, cleared vegetation) can be recycled or composted for re-use as natural fertilizer. Further, uses such as aquaponics are not likely to involve the generation of a substantial amount of waste because an aquaponics system is symbiotic. **Therefore, it is concluded that the impacts from the project related to a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate a project's solid waste disposal needs and compliance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste would be less than significant.**

3.1.2.4 Cumulative Impacts Analysis

The geographic scope of cumulative impact analysis for utilities and service systems is the entire County of San Diego, both incorporated and unincorporated areas, jurisdictions, and special districts within and adjacent to County lands.

Require New Water or Wastewater Treatment Facilities

A cumulative impact would result if the proposed project, in combination with reasonably foreseeable future projects, would result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. The proposed project would allow for the expansion of agricultural uses as accessory to agricultural land uses. Future accessory uses promoted by the proposed project would be regulated by the RWQCB's applicable standards, including the Regional Basin Plan and the

California Water Code. Under the California Water Code, the San Diego County DEH has authority to issue certain On-Site Wastewater Systems permits. Cumulative projects in other jurisdictions would also be required to comply with the same applicable standards or go through extensive planning and environmental review before they could be approved. Future development resulting in the generation of wastewater in excess of existing capacity may need a new sewer connection and would be required to receive approval from the water district prior to implementation. The required approval would satisfy requirements for adequacy of wastewater service for the proposed agricultural activity prior to project approval.

As described, future accessory agriculture uses promoted by the proposed project would comply with all applicable standards, permitting requirements and regulations and would not interfere with any wastewater treatment's existing commitments or require the construction of new treatment facilities. **Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact related to new water or wastewater treatment facilities.**

Served by a Landfill with Sufficient Permitted Capacity and Compliance with Solid Waste Statutes and Regulations

A cumulative impact may result if the proposed project, in combination with reasonably foreseeable future projects, would not be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs or would not comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Because there is a finite amount of permitted landfill capacity for the region and there is no time limitation in the proposed project, uses that are promoted by the proposed project have potential to exceed the existing landfill capacity. A cumulative landfill capacity issues is currently acknowledged for the region. The next step is to determine if the proposed project would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to this issue.

The proposed project would allow for the expansion of agricultural uses as accessory to agricultural land uses. Annual agricultural waste generation is estimated to comprise 0.004 percent of total remaining capacity, and the project's cumulative contribution to total remaining capacity in the County would be minimal. Future accessory agricultural uses promoted by the proposed project would generate solid waste that is common to rural residential and agricultural properties and not of a quantity to pose a substantial burden on the existing permitted capacity of any landfill within the County. Further, many agricultural wastes do not require disposal off site. There are numerous other more substantial drivers of the region's need for additional landfill capacity. Additionally, the proposed project would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste, and cumulative projects in other jurisdictions would be required to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. **Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact related to solid waste and landfill capacity.**

3.1.2.5 Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation

The proposed project would not result in wastewater treatment or solid waste impacts or conflicts with statutes or regulations related to solid waste with implementation of the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

3.1.2.6 Mitigation Measures

The proposed project would not result in significant utilities and service systems impacts, and no mitigation is required.

3.1.2.7 Conclusion

The proposed project would not involve any uses that would generate significant amounts of wastewater or require the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities. The addition of accessory agricultural uses to lands already used for agriculture are not anticipated to generate any large amount of solid waste nor place any burden on the existing permitted capacity of any landfill within the County. Therefore, adoption of the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to wastewater treatment or solid waste.

3.1.3 Energy

3.1.3.1 Existing Conditions

Current energy consumption associated with accessory uses to agricultural operations is limited to those locations in the unincorporated parts of the County in which such uses have been permitted, either by-right based on the allowed uses, or through variance or conditional use processes. Energy consumption occurs as electricity needed for lighting and equipment operation, fuel use for onsite and offsite vehicle trips, and natural gas for heating purposes. The amount of energy consumed by accessory uses to agricultural operations in the County at present is unknown given the diffuse nature of these uses.

3.1.3.2 Regulatory Setting

Federal

Energy Policy Act of 2005

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 was intended to establish a comprehensive, long-term energy policy and is implemented by the U.S. Department of Energy. The act addresses energy production in the U.S., including oil, gas, coal, and alternative forms of energy and energy efficiency and tax incentives. Energy efficiency and tax incentive programs include credits for the construction of new energy efficient homes, production or purchase of energy efficient appliances, and loan guarantees for entities that develop or use innovative technologies that avoid the production of greenhouse gases.

State

California Environmental Quality Act, Appendix F, *Energy Conservation*

State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix F, *Energy Conservation*, requires EIRs to include a discussion of potential energy impacts and energy conservation measures. Appendix F places “particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy,” and that significant energy impacts should be “considered in an EIR to the extent relevant and applicable to the project.”

Senate Bill (SB) 1389, Chapter 568, Statutes of 2002

The California Energy Commission (CEC) is responsible for, among other things, forecasting future energy needs for the state and developing renewable energy resources and alternative renewable energy technologies for buildings, industry, and transportation. SB 1389 (Chapter 568, Statutes of 2002) requires the CEC to prepare a biennial integrated energy policy report assessing major energy trends and issues facing the state's electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuel sectors. The report is also intended to provide policy recommendations to conserve resources, protect the environment, and ensure reliable, secure, and diverse energy supplies. The *2015 Integrated Energy Policy Report*, the most recent report required under SB 1389, was released to the public in February 2016.

Assembly Bill 2076, Reducing Dependence on Petroleum

The CEC and Air Resources Board (ARB) are directed by Assembly Bill (AB) 2076 (passed in 2000) to develop and adopt recommendations for reducing dependence on petroleum. A performance-based goal is to reduce petroleum demand to 15 percent less than 2003 demand by 2020.

California Green Building Standards Code and Title 24

In January 2010, the California Building Standards Commission adopted the statewide mandatory Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen [California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11]). CALGreen applies to the planning, design, operation, construction, use, and occupancy of every newly constructed building or structure.

CALGreen requires the installation of energy- and water-efficient indoor infrastructure for all new projects beginning after January 1, 2011. The CALGreen Code requires residential and nonresidential water efficiency and conservation measures for new buildings and structures that will reduce the overall potable water use in the building by 20 percent. The 20 percent water savings can be achieved by: (1) installing plumbing fixtures and fittings that meet the 20 percent reduced flow rate specified in the CALGreen Code, or (2) demonstrating a 20 percent reduction in water use from the building "water use baseline."

CALGreen also requires that newly constructed buildings develop a waste management plan and divert at least 50 percent of the construction materials generated during project construction (CALGreen Sections 4.408 and 5.408).

The California Energy Commission recently adopted changes to the 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6 (also known as the California Energy Code) and associated administrative regulations in CALGreen Part 11. The 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards are 25 percent more efficient than previous standards for residential construction. Part 11 also establishes voluntary standards that became mandatory in the 2010 edition of the code, including planning and design for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants. The standards offer builders better windows, insulation, lighting, ventilation systems, and other features that reduce energy consumption in homes and businesses.

Local

County of San Diego 2015–2020 Strategic Energy Plan

The County of San Diego has two distinct components related to energy and sustainability: the County Operations Energy Strategy and the County Community Energy Strategy. The main objectives of the County Operations Energy Strategy are to ensure sustainability practices are assimilated into the organization and to minimize utility (water and energy) consumption/costs. *Operations* specifically applies to County-owned facilities, leased facilities, and County-owned vehicles. The main objectives of the County Community Energy Strategy are to encourage residents through outreach and education to reduce energy and water consumption, and minimize greenhouse gas emissions for healthier and more sustainable communities. *Community* specifically applies to regional program development and management with specific emphasis on the unincorporated area where the County has land use jurisdiction and for coordination with federal, state, and local entities.

Local Electricity and Natural Gas

San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) is a regulated public utility that provides electric service to 3.4 million customers within a 4,100-square-mile service area that encompasses 25 cities throughout San Diego and southern Orange counties. SDG&E's Long Term Resource Plan sets forth a strategy of mixed resources to ensure long-term, reliable, and affordable power in the region, as established by the California Public Utilities Commission, which regulates energy issues related to supply, delivery, rates, and tariffs for all SDG&E customers in the County.

3.1.3.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination of Significance

The proposed project consists of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance related to accessory agricultural uses in unincorporated portions of the County over which the County has land use jurisdiction (see Section 1.4, *Project Description*, for further details). Specifically, the proposed project applies to properties where active agriculture exists within the County or properties where agricultural uses are allowed. During the scoping process for this project, which considered potentially significant environmental impacts and involved a 30-day public comment period, thresholds related to energy were not considered and are thus evaluated below. No comments were received during the 30-day public comment period that are relevant to energy resources.

Energy Supply and Demand

Guidelines for the Determination of Significance

In addition to providing analysis based on the questions contained within Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the State CEQA Guidelines require an EIR to discuss energy conservation measures, if relevant. Appendix F to the State CEQA Guidelines addresses energy conservation goals, notes that potentially significant energy implications of a project should be considered in an EIR, and contains general examples of mitigation measures for a project's potentially significant energy impacts. The following significance guidelines from the State CEQA Guidelines apply to both the direct and cumulative impact analyses. A significant impact would result if the project would:

- Result in the wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy; or

- Result in a substantial increase in demand or transmission service, resulting in the need for new or expanded sources of energy supply or new or expanded energy delivery systems or infrastructure.

In addition, Appendix F of the State CEQA Guidelines states that the means of achieving the goal of energy conservation include the following:

- Decreasing overall per capita energy consumption;
- Decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas and oil; and
- Increasing reliance on renewable energy sources.

Assumptions and Methodology

The energy analysis for the project evaluates the following sources of energy consumption associated with the project.

- Short-term construction—gasoline and diesel consumed by vehicles and offroad construction equipment.
- Operational on-road vehicles—BTUs associated with gasoline and diesel consumed by personal automobiles and service trucks.
- Operational power, heating, and cooking—electricity and natural gas consumed by occupants.

Construction-related energy use (i.e., fuel consumption) was calculated by converting GHG emissions predicted by CalEEMod using the rate of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions emitted per gallon of combusted gasoline (19.4 pounds/gallon) and diesel (22.5 pounds/gallon). The estimated fuel consumption was converted to BTU assuming an energy intensity of 124,340 BTU per gallon of gasoline and 138,490 per gallon of diesel. Materials manufacturing would also consume energy, although information on the intensity and quantity of fuel used during manufacturing is currently unknown and beyond the scope of project-level environmental analyses. An analysis of energy associated with materials manufacturing is considered speculative and is not presented herein. This analysis focuses on energy associated with physical construction of the project (i.e., fuel consumed by heavy-duty equipment and vehicles). (Appendix D.)

Energy consumed by motor vehicle trips was quantified using the CO₂ estimates developed by the air quality and greenhouse gas analysis (see Section 2.1, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases*) and are included in Appendix D. On-road energy use was calculated by converting GHG emissions predicted by CalEEMod using the rate of CO₂ emissions emitted per gallon of combusted gasoline (19.4 pounds/gallon), assuming that most of the visitation for project uses would be light duty vehicles. The estimated fuel consumption was converted to BTU assuming an energy intensity of 124,340 per gallon of gasoline. (Appendix D.)

Operational electricity and natural gas consumption was drawn from the CalEEMod modeling performed to support the air quality and greenhouse gas analysis (see Section 2.1, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases*). CalEEMod outputs for natural gas consumption are provided in BTU; outputs for electricity consumption, which are provided in kilowatt-hours (kWh), were converted to BTU assuming an energy intensity of 3,414 BTU per kWh.

Analysis

The analysis includes a discussion of the representative project that would consume the greatest amount of energy, which was assumed to be a winery. Moreover, as discussed in Section 2.1, a theoretical full buildout scenario for microbreweries/cideries/micro-distilleries, wineries, and creameries/dairies was included to assess the potential impacts of full buildout of the proposed project. As discussed above, it is assumed that 8 new breweries, 83 new wineries, and 1 new creamery/dairy may be developed with the permitting revisions. Construction and operational energy requirements associated with the theoretical buildout scenario are shown in Table 3-1. Over 400,000 million British Thermal Units (MMBTU) would be consumed during the construction period, primarily as diesel fuel for construction vehicles and equipment. The annual operational energy use of the largest representative project, a winery, would be approximately 13,682 MMBTU, which would occur primarily as gasoline for motor vehicles, with additional energy consumption stemming from electricity and natural gas demands of the breweries, wineries, and creamery. The annual operational energy use of the theoretical buildout scenario would be approximately 1.2 million MMBTU, which would occur primarily as gasoline for motor vehicles, with additional energy consumption stemming from electricity and natural gas demands of the breweries, wineries, and creamery.

Privately operated fuel stations would provide fuel needed to power construction vehicles and equipment as well as vehicles associated with the theoretical buildout scenario. Based on the wide availability of gasoline and diesel, it is anticipated that existing fueling stations would be capable of meeting the demand associated with project construction and operation, and the project would have a negligible effect on regional fuel supplies.

SDG&E would provide electricity and natural gas service to the uses assumed under the theoretical buildout scenario. Given that SDG&E has in place a 20-year Resource Plan and regularly updates its modeling of projected demand in its service area, implementation of the proposed project is expected to have a negligible effect on regional energy supplies during peak and base periods. Furthermore, the project is not expected to require infrastructure for additional capacity.

Any facilities that would be constructed as a result of project implementation would be subject to the applicable building standards effective at the time they are approved, such as Title 24 of the California Building Standards Code. Compliance with these provisions would ensure that wasteful and inefficient energy use would not occur. **Impacts related to energy supply and demand would be less than significant.**

3.1.3.4 Cumulative Impacts Analysis

Fuel used by vehicles and equipment during project construction and operation would rely upon privately operated fuel stations. Based on the wide availability of fuel sources and the increasing fuel economy of vehicles, the project would not result in cumulatively considerable effects related to vehicle fuels.

As discussed above, electricity and natural gas service would be provided by SDG&E, which has long-term planning in place to account for growth in energy demand due to new energy consumption. **As such, impacts related to electricity and natural gas service would not be cumulatively considerable.**

3.1.3.5 Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation

Project impacts related to energy would be less than significant.

3.1.3.6 Mitigation Measures

Because project impacts related to energy would be less than significant, no mitigation measures are required.

3.1.3.7 Conclusion

Project impacts related to energy would be less than significant.

3.2 Effects Found Not Significant During Initial Study

This section of the EIR provides discussions of effects that, through the course of analyzing the environmental effects associated with the proposed project, were identified as not significant or less than significant during the initial study process. The following environmental areas were found to be not significant during the initial study analysis: Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Geology and Soils, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, and Recreation. Impact discussions related to individual thresholds determined to be less than significant during the initial study process for those EIR sections provided in Chapter 2, including Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation and Traffic, and Water Supply, are not evaluated below and are discussed in the Initial Study only, which is provided as Appendix B. One comment was received during the 30-day public review period that is relevant to aesthetics. The Cleveland National Forest indicated concern with aesthetic impacts for the agency. As discussed under Section 3.2.1, *Aesthetics*, the proposed project would encourage accessory agricultural operations in areas where agricultural use currently exists. Future development would be required to comply with all applicable size, height, and setback limitations for any new structure on the subject properties, and most structures would be similar to other agricultural buildings and structures that already occur in those areas. Additionally, uses that involve larger structures such as microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries, and wineries would be subject to a discretionary permit, which could allow for further consideration of aesthetic impacts under CEQA, as well as design of the project as part of the permit findings. No comments were provided during the 30-day public review period that were relevant to agriculture, geology, minerals, population and housing, public services, and recreation.

3.2.1 Aesthetics

The proposed project would amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for more opportunities for agricultural ventures throughout the County. Visual character in the County is characterized by diverse natural vistas and scenic environments that range from the ocean to the desert. Trees and rock outcroppings are also located throughout the County. The existing visual character and quality of lands throughout the unincorporated areas of the County and within the project boundaries vary. Viewsheds of scenic highways are considered to be areas that are visible from the vehicular right-of-way. The project would include agricultural program expansions near state scenic highways near land that is adjacent to viewsheds within the County.

The proposed project would apply to those unincorporated properties that support agricultural operations, including lands used or zoned for agricultural uses. No urban, residential, or forested lands would be converted by the project to agricultural uses. Agricultural operations occur throughout the unincorporated area, with high concentrations in certain areas and in a variety of zones, including some industrial and commercially zoned areas. Agricultural uses are an established part of the visual setting for many parts of the County, including the more rural areas zoned for agricultural uses. The agricultural expansions under the project would be compatible with the existing visual character and quality of scenic environments because the proposed project would promote accessory uses to agricultural operations throughout the unincorporated County, and any new project would require compliance with all applicable size, height, and setback limitations for any new structure on the subject properties. Future development under the proposed project consists of agricultural uses and would be limited in size and in the level of activity so as to be compatible in scale and character with other agricultural uses. Furthermore, if a future proposed accessory agricultural operation involves substantial landform modification, a discretionary Grading Permit would likely be required and would require further environmental review. Uses that involve larger structures such as microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries, and wineries would be subject to a discretionary permit, which could allow for further consideration of aesthetic impacts under CEQA as well as design of the project as part of the permit findings. There is no indication the potential aesthetic change from the accessory uses promoted by the proposed project would be any different than for any other residential, agriculture, or accessory structures customarily found in agricultural zones. Therefore, potential impacts are concluded to be less than significant.

Future accessory agriculture uses promoted under the proposed project may include the introduction of new light sources. All projects would be subject to the provisions of the County's Zoning Ordinance Outdoor Lighting Regulations (Section 6300) and the County's Code of Regulatory Ordinances Sections 59.101-59.115, Light Pollution Code (LPC), in order to minimize impacts of new light pollution on nighttime views. The LPC, also known as the Dark Sky Ordinance, regulates projects involving outdoor light fixtures within a 15-mile radius of Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories. As such, projects implemented under the proposed project would be required to be compliant with applicable regulations prior to approval and would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

The proposed project would not result in cumulative impacts on aesthetics because each future development in the project area would be subject to the size, height, and setback limitations applicable to all other properties located in their applicable zones, and the impact would be no greater than for any other accessory structure customarily found in agricultural zones. A discretionary Grading Permit would be required and would require further environmental review if a future proposed accessory agricultural operation involves substantial landform modification. Further, areas that are more remote and more aesthetically sensitive to change generally have lower densities and larger lot sizes. As a result, new development is more distributed and is less likely to have a combined negative effect on a specific area or viewshed.

Therefore, the project would not result in any adverse project- or cumulative-level effects on a scenic vista or scenic resources, or on the visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings, or create a significant new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views.

3.2.2 Agricultural and Forestry Resources

Adoption of the proposed project would revise permitting requirements for uses currently allowed in agricultural areas and introduce a permitting process for uses not currently addressed or included in the zoning code. Such revisions would promote the development of uses that are accessory to agricultural uses, such as microbreweries, cheese-making and dairy operations, onsite food production, mobile butchering, packing and processing, onsite retail horticulture sales, animal raising, roadside sales of agricultural products, agricultural tourism, and agricultural homestays. Project uses such as microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries, and creameries would include requirements that a percentage of their ingredients be grown either on site or within the County, which will further promote local agricultural uses.

The proposed project would encourage property owners in the County to maintain agricultural lands in production and support farming. Existing agricultural land would be further utilized for crop or animal production to support the proposed accessory agricultural operations, such as microbreweries, cideries, and micro-distilleries, wineries, animal keeping, agricultural product sales, and other agriculturally supported operations. Therefore, no conversion of existing agriculture land to a non-agricultural use would occur, and impacts would be less than significant. Additionally, the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance or Farmland of Local Importance (see Figure 3-2) to a non-agricultural use would not occur as a result of the project.

The project would expand agricultural uses in existing agricultural zones. The project would not conflict with zoning for agricultural use and would maintain compatibility and consistency with currently zoned agricultural uses. Additionally, projects implemented in accordance with the proposed project within the County may be subject to, or adjacent to, land that is included as a part of a Williamson Act contract, in which case the proposed project would be required to be consistent with the contract. Williamson Act contracts are recorded on the land and enforced by the County (through its Building and Discretionary Permit process) and the California Department of Conservation (see Figure 3-3). Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. Additionally, implementation of the proposed project would not be in land zoned as forest land or timberland. Further, no land zoned as forest land or timberland exists within the proposed project boundaries; therefore the project would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land or timberland. **The project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural land, forest land, or timberland or convert agricultural or forestry resources to non-agricultural or non-forest uses.**

3.2.3 Geology and Soils

Geologic hazards are related to the type of materials that make up the earth and the movement and processes that occur through time. The topographic conditions, landforms, and geological formations vary greatly across the project area. Significant impacts would occur if the proposed project exposes people or structures to geologic hazards or produces unstable geological conditions. Adverse impacts can result from strong seismic shaking, landslides, mudslides, and ground failure including liquefaction, landslides, lateral spreading, and subsidence. Future projects under the proposed project would require construction of structures that may be located on soils subject to liquefaction, landslides, soil erosion, and/or expansive soils.

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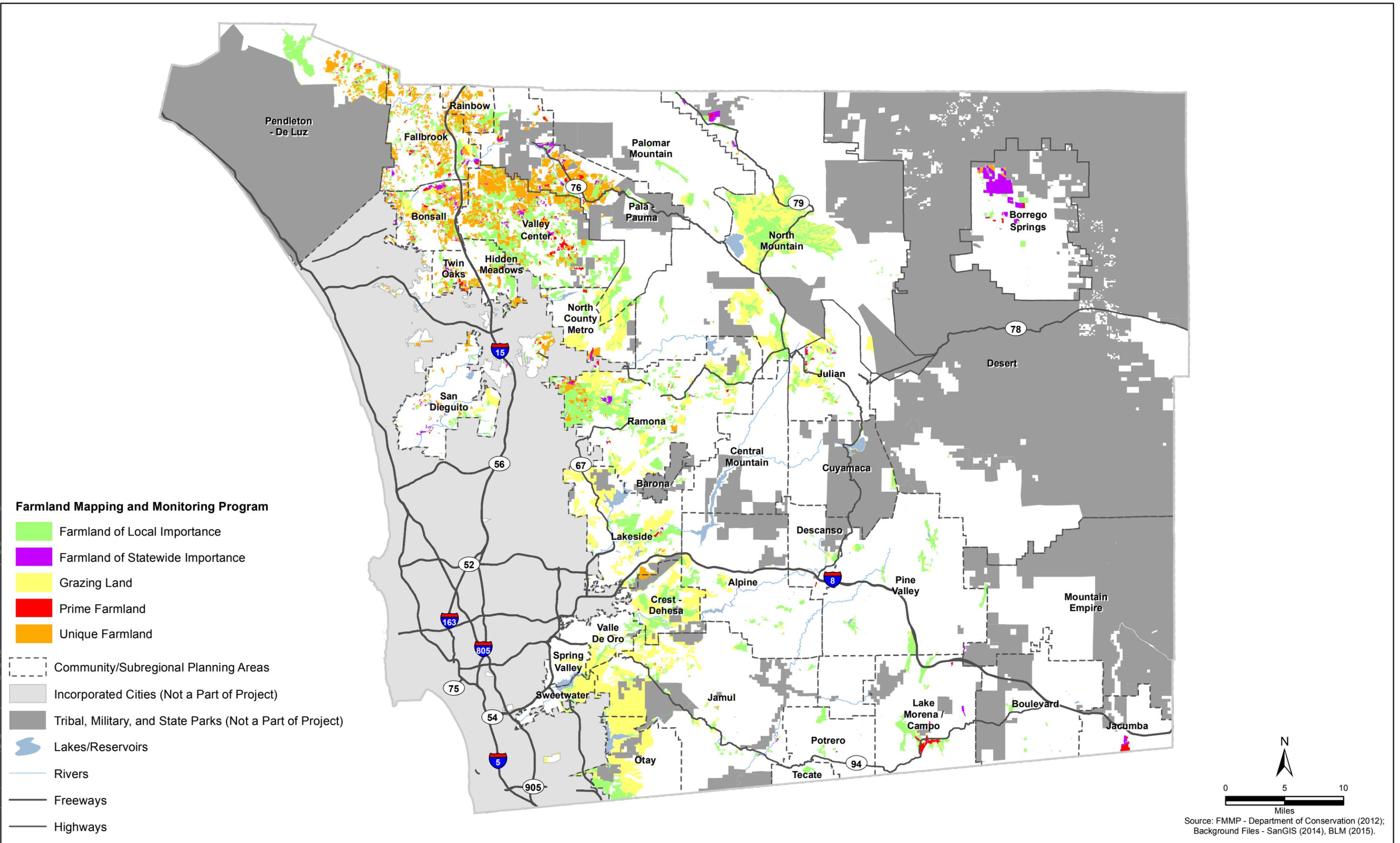


Figure 3-2
Important Farmland
County of San Diego Agriculture Promotion Program

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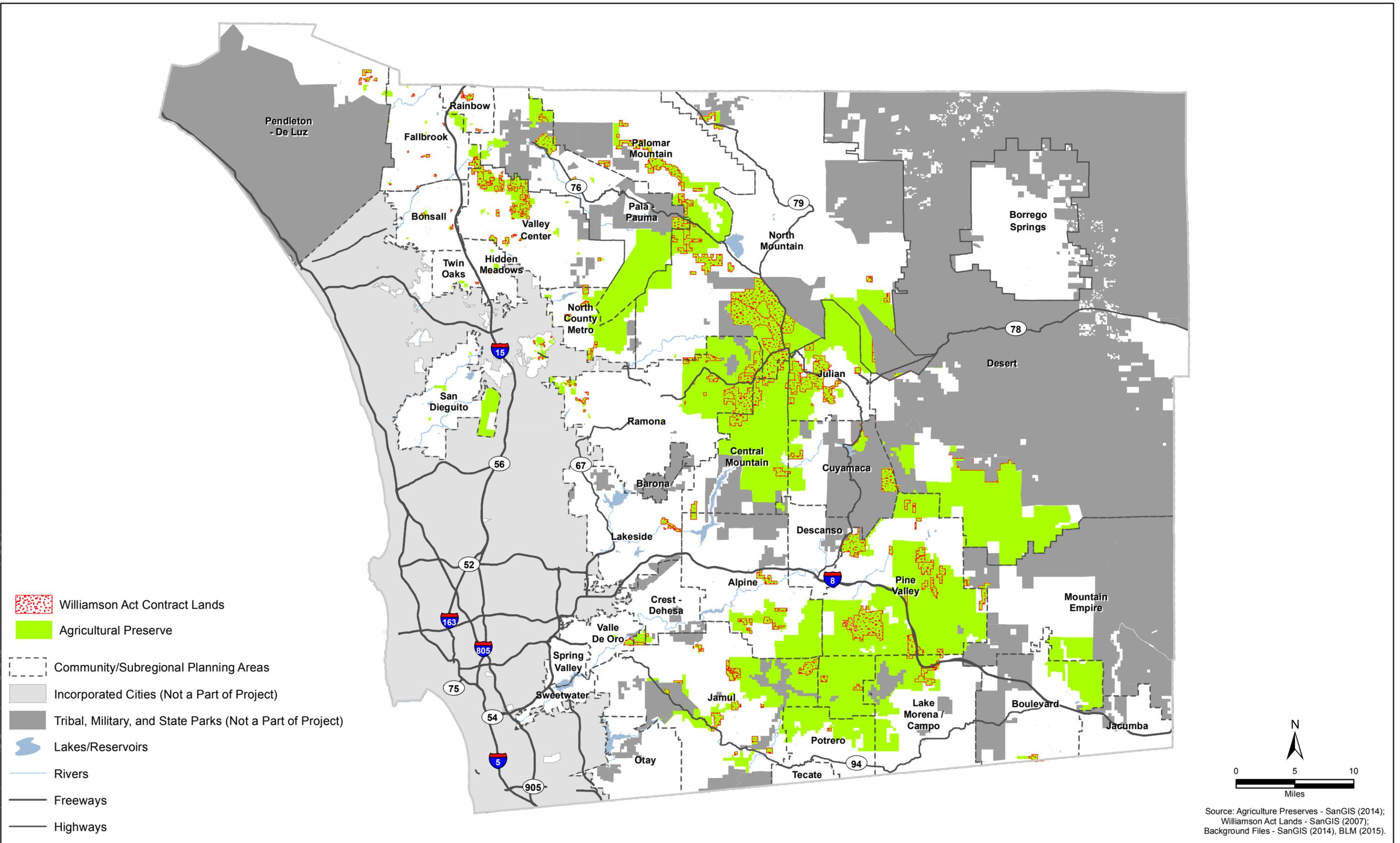


Figure 3-3
Agricultural Preserves and Williamson Act Contract Lands
County of San Diego Agriculture Promotion Program

The San Diego County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan mapped the liquefaction hazards in the County, which are mostly related to areas with loose sandy soils. Primary areas for potential liquefaction hazard include the lower San Dieguito, Sweetwater, and San Luis Rey River Valleys; Jacumba; Borrego Valley near the Borrego Sink; and parts of the Ramona CPA (County of San Diego 2011). The proposed project may result in development within or near a fault-rupture hazard zone as identified by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, Special Publication 42 (SP 42), revised text in 1997 and maps in 2012, Fault-Rupture Hazards Zones in California, or within an area with substantial evidence of a known fault. Additionally, many of the faults in the County are classified as potentially active. Structures built under the proposed project would be required to comply with the California Building Code, which includes considerations for seismic events through engineering requirements prior to issuance of a building permit. Additionally, future developments under the project would be required to comply with the Guidelines for Evaluating and Mitigating Seismic Hazards in California (SP 117A). As stated in the guidelines, the program and actions mandated by the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act require that cities and counties, or other local permitting authority, must regulate certain development "projects" within seismic hazard zones delineated by the State Geologist. They must withhold the development permits for a site within a zone until the geologic and soil conditions of the project site are investigated and appropriate mitigation measures, if any, are incorporated into development plans. Also, buildings within San Diego County must conform to Seismic Design Category D and E requirements. Therefore, as the California Building Code requirements would account for strong seismic shaking, landslides, mudslides, and ground failure including liquefaction, landslides, lateral spreading, and subsidence, the project does not have the potential to expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects. Further, all new projects would be required to comply with improvement requirements identified in the 1997 Uniform Building Code, Division III – Design Standard for Design of Slab-On-Ground Foundations to Resist the Effects of Expansive Soils and Compressible Soils, which would ensure structure safety.

With respect to soils capable of supporting the use of septic tanks, developments under the proposed project may or may not need to rely on public sewer for the disposal of wastewater. Septic system requirements would be regulated by the RWQCB's applicable standards, including the Regional Basin Plan and the California Water Code. Under the California Water Code, the County DEH has authority to issue certain On-Site Wastewater Systems permits. This would require the project to demonstrate that soils are capable of adequately supporting the proposed use of septic tanks, or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Further, projects would be required to comply with the San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances, Title 6, Division. 8, Chapter 3, Septic Tanks and Seepage Pits, which is implemented and enforced by the County Department of Environmental Health during applications for land development. Therefore, the use of septic tanks, if required on agricultural project sites, would not create substantial risks to life or property.

There would be no potentially significant impact from the exposure of people or structures to potential adverse effects from seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or use of septic tanks, as a result of the proposed project.

3.2.4 Mineral Resources

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project results in a loss of a known or locally important mineral resource. Future development under the project may be located on land classified as having mineral resources. The proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments related to the proposed

project would allow development that would not result in future inaccessibility for recovery of mineral resources in the County. Adoption of the proposed project would revise permitting requirements for uses currently allowed in agricultural areas and introduce a permitting process for uses not currently addressed or included in the zoning code. Such revisions would promote the development of uses that are accessory to agricultural uses, such as microbreweries, cheese-making and dairy operations, onsite food production, mobile butchering, packing and processing, onsite retail horticulture sales, animal raising, roadside sales of agricultural products, agricultural tourism, and agricultural homestays. Existing agricultural land would be further utilized for crop or animal production to support the proposed accessory agricultural operations, and no conversion of existing agriculture land to a non-agricultural use would occur. As such, existing operations located on land classified as having mineral resources would remain accessible for recovery of mineral resources. Additionally, some developments would be subject to Sections 2820–2825 of the County’s Zoning Ordinance, which preserve areas with valuable mineral deposits and define the screening process for the potential loss of availability of mineral resources. **Therefore, no potentially significant loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value to the region and residents of the state would occur, and impacts would be less than significant.**

3.2.5 Population and Housing

Planning for residential needs is conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process for the General Plan for the County of San Diego. The General Plan, and especially the Housing Element, together with individual Community Plans, provides goals, policies, and programs to accommodate housing needs throughout the County. The project area involves the unincorporated area of the County zoned for agriculture. The project would apply primarily to properties that are zoned *Agriculture (A70 and A72)*, *Specific Plan (S88)*, *Holding Area (S90)*, and *General Rural (S92)*; however, other zones with agricultural uses would also be affected.² A range of uses on these lands include agricultural activities as well as residential, parks, and public facilities.

A significant impact could occur if the proposed project includes substantial population growth. The project would support agricultural development and may introduce new or expanded infrastructure in agricultural areas. The project is not expected to facilitate substantial population growth through the development of new housing, as no new housing is proposed as a part of the project. Any increase in jobs, temporary or permanent, related to accessory agricultural uses would not result in substantial population growth. Temporary construction jobs and additional new permanent jobs, such as clerks to operate agricultural stands and stores, operators to run microbrewery/cidery/micro-distillery operations, or wineries, are expected to draw from the local population. Any increase in population would be negligible or short-term (i.e., agricultural homestays). **The project does not propose regulatory changes that would encourage population growth, displace a substantial number of housing units, alter the residential uses associated with current agricultural operations, or replace residents with new agricultural uses.**

² Some of the proposed changes would affect or change the currently permitted agricultural uses within industrial, commercial, and special use zones.

3.2.6 Public Services

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project resulted in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or a need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, that could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities. The proposed project involves the promotion of additional accessory agricultural uses on agricultural lands and is not expected to facilitate substantial population growth through the development of new permanent housing or employment growth; thus, the project would not result in the need for additional public services or new facilities to support the project. Expansion of agricultural uses under the project would not result in the need for significantly altered fire protection services, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities and would not require the construction of new or physically altered governmental facilities for fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities. **Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.**

3.2.7 Recreation

Recreational opportunities are provided by parks and open space while maintaining and preserving valuable cultural and natural resources. The County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation aids in the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of life for both residents and visitors. The Department of Parks and Recreation achieves this through a comprehensive program of acquisition, development, and maintenance of recreation facilities including local and regional parks, fishing lakes, community centers, trails, special use facilities, and open space preserves. In addition, a system of regional and local trails further enhances public recreational opportunities and experiences throughout the San Diego region. County of San Diego staff, volunteers, and service contractors operate and maintain these facilities, which cover more than 40,000 acres. The County also offers one of the most diverse trail systems in the nation, including 400 miles of dedicated equestrian trails.

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project increases the use of parks or other recreational facilities or requires the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Recreational areas available for public use throughout the County include parks, open space preserves, and reserves. The proposed project does not propose any residential or other use, included but not limited to a residential subdivision, mobile home park, or construction for single-family residences that may increase the demand for use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities in the vicinity. **Therefore, the proposed project would not have an adverse physical effect on the environment in terms of recreational resources, and impacts would be less than significant.**

