

1 **3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES**

<b>AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES<sup>1</sup> -</b> Would the Project:	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Natural Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Pub. Resources Code, § 12220, subd. (g)), timberland (as defined by Pub. Resources Code, § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Gov. Code, § 51104, subd. (g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2 **3.2.1 Environmental Setting**

3 **Prime Farmland**

4 The Project site is located along the southeast shoreline of the Carquinez Strait near the  
 5 town of Port Costa, Contra Costa County. The Project is predominantly located within  
 6 the waters of the Strait, with the only onshore components being temporary staging  
 7 areas within the former TXI/Pacific Custom Materials, Inc. (TXI) property, which is an  
 8 industrial area, and the selected contractor's shore base within industrial and  
 9 unrestricted zoned areas away from the Project site. On the shoreline adjacent to the

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<sup>1</sup> In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the State's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

1 Project site two active UPRR rail lines run between the waterline and a steep sloping  
2 hillside.

3 The land north, west, and south of the Project site is part of the Briones Hills Agricultural  
4 Preservation Area (Contra Costa County 2005), which comprises 64 square miles of  
5 open space in both unincorporated and incorporated areas of Contra Costa County.  
6 This area includes both publicly and privately held lands that are designated as  
7 agricultural lands.

8 **3.2.2 Regulatory Setting**

9 Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to this issue area and relevant to the  
10 Project are identified in Tables 1-2 and 3.2-1. Local goals, policies, and/or regulations  
11 applicable to this issue area are listed below.

**Table 3.2-1. Federal and/or State Laws, Regulations, and Policies Potentially  
Applicable to the Project (Agriculture and Forest Resources)**

CA	Williamson Act (Gov. Code §§ 51200-51207)	This Act enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners to restrict specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use, and provides landowners with lower property tax assessments in return. Local government planning departments are responsible for the enrollment of land into Williamson Act contracts. Generally, any commercial agricultural use would be permitted within any agricultural preserve. In addition, local governments may identify compatible uses permitted with a use permit.
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12 The Land Use Element of the Contra Costa County General Plan 1995-2020 contains  
13 policies related to agricultural land use. During project review, proposed uses on the  
14 edges of land use designations are required to be evaluated to ensure compatibility with  
15 adjacent planned uses. Measure C (passed in 1990) established a 65/35 Land  
16 Preservation Standard to limit urban development to no more than 35 percent of the  
17 land in the County. At least 65 percent of all land in the County is required to be  
18 preserved for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks, and other non-urban uses.

19 **3.2.3 Impact Analysis**

20 ***a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide***  
21 ***Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping***  
22 ***and Monitoring Program of the California Natural Resources Agency, to non-***  
23 ***agricultural use?***

24 ***b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act***  
25 ***contract?***

1 **c) *Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location***  
2 ***or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-***  
3 ***agricultural use?***

4 **No Impact.** The Project involves the removal of an MOT, with Project activities confined  
5 to the Carquinez Strait and the industrial shoreline. While the Project area is near the  
6 Briones Hills Agricultural Preservation Area, no aspect of the Project would occur within  
7 this Preservation Area. The Project would not involve any changes to underlying soils or  
8 to the existing environment that could impact Farmland uses. The Project would not  
9 convert Farmland or conflict with existing agricultural zoning use. Consequently, the  
10 Project would have no impact to agricultural resources.

11 **d) *Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest***  
12 ***use?***

13 **No Impact.** No forest lands or timberlands are located in the vicinity of the Project site;  
14 therefore, there would be no impact.

15 **e) *Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location***  
16 ***or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or***  
17 ***conversion of forest land into non-forest use?***

18 **No Impact.** The Project would not alter the existing environment such that farmland or  
19 forest land would be converted to non-agricultural or non-forest uses.

#### 20 **3.2.4 Mitigation Summary**

21 The Project would not result in significant impacts to agriculture and forest resources;  
22 therefore, no mitigation is required.