

1 **3.3.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources**

II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. 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. Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2 This section briefly discusses existing agricultural conditions that occur in the Project
 3 area, identifies significance criteria, and assesses potential Project-related impacts.

4 **3.3.2.1 Environmental Setting**

5 The Project area is predominately located in the Pacific Ocean offshore San Luis
 6 Obispo County, not on agricultural or forested lands. The only onshore component of
 7 the Project is an extension of an existing cable conduit and would occur within the
 8 DCCP facility, which is located within the coastal zone between Montaña de Oro State
 9 Park (to the north) and Point San Luis (to the south). The following is provided as
 10 background information.

1 According to San Luis Obispo County’s Agricultural Element of the General Plan (2010),
2 the County contains unique, diverse and valuable agricultural resources and agricultural
3 production. In 1995, cropland and grazing land accounted for approximately 1.2 million
4 acres (55 percent) of the total county area. Agriculture in the County is a multi-million
5 dollar industry. In 2008, the total production value of agriculture products produced in
6 the County was estimated at over \$600 million; wine grapes were the number one cash
7 crop, with gross production totaling over \$120 million, followed by broccoli with gross
8 production totaling almost \$70 million. Other leading agricultural products include
9 strawberries, cattle and calves, vegetable transplants, head lettuce, cut flowers, head
10 lettuce, indoor decorative plants, and carrots (San Luis Obispo County 2010).

11 According to the San Luis Obispo County LCP Policy Document of the County Land
12 Use Element (2007), the coastal zone between Point San Luis and Montaña de Oro
13 State Park consists of a marine terrace and the lower slopes of the Irish Hills. Currently,
14 the land is leased to two ranchers and farmed for sudan grass hay. Also, the fields
15 (paddocks) are separated by fencing (especially on the north ranch).

16 No changes to agricultural uses adjacent to the DCPD are proposed. The nearest
17 agricultural field to the onshore element of the Project is approximately 1.2 km (0.8 mi)
18 to the north. Although not currently active, the field adjacent to the DCPD facility to the
19 northeast is considered Unique Farmland and is located approximately 0.4 km (0.3 mi)
20 from the DCPD intake cove. No other Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide
21 Importance is located in the Project area. Grazing occurs adjacent to the DCPD facility
22 approximately 0.4 km (0.3 mile) from the proposed onshore component of the Project.

23 According to the San Luis Obispo County LCP, no forestry uses occur within the coastal
24 zone between Montaña de Oro State Park and Point San Luis. The nearest forest
25 component to the Project area is approximately 8.0 km (5.0 mi) to the north located at
26 the Los Osos Oaks Preserve.

27 3.3.2.2 Regulatory Setting

28 **Federal.** There are no federal regulations that pertain to agricultural resources relevant
29 to this Project.

30 **State.** The **California Land Conservation Act of 1965**, commonly referred to as the
31 **Williamson Act**, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private
32 landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or
33 related open space use, and provides landowners with lower property tax assessments.
34 Local government planning departments are responsible for the enrollment of land into
35 Williamson Act contracts. Generally, any commercial agricultural use will be permitted
36 within any agricultural preserve. In addition, local governments may identify compatible
37 uses permitted with a use permit.

38 **Local.** The **San Luis Obispo County General Plan Agricultural Element (2010)**
39 contains goals and policies related to agricultural resources. The Agricultural Element
40 includes detail regarding agricultural zoning and mapping requirements. In addition to

1 the Agricultural Element, the San Luis Obispo County LCP references the Coastal Act,
2 which requires the protection of "the maximum amount of prime agricultural land."

3 3.3.2.3 Impact Analysis

4 **a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide**
5 **Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the**
6 **Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources**
7 **Agency, to non-agricultural use?**

8 See response below.

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

11 The Project is not located within lands designated for or currently being used for
12 agricultural purposes. The nearest lands designated as important farmland are adjacent
13 to the DCP facility approximately 0.4 km (0.3 mi) from the intake cove. The Project
14 would not include the conversion of any farmlands, nor would it conflict with any existing
15 agricultural lands or Williamson Act contracts. As such, no impacts to agricultural land
16 uses would result.

17 **c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as**
18 **defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined**
19 **by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland**
20 **Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?**

21 See response below.

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

24 See response below.

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

28 The Project is not located within or adjacent to any forested lands. The Project would
29 not require the conversion of any forested lands to non-forested uses, nor would any
30 other changes be required that could result in conversions of existing agricultural uses.
31 No impacts to forest lands or agriculture would result.

32 3.3.2.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

33 **Mitigation.** The Project would have no impacts on agriculture or forest resources and
34 no mitigation measures are required.

35 **Residual Impacts.** No impacts have been identified and no residual impacts would
36 result.