## 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact Level</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Impact</th>
<th>Less Than Significant with Mitigation</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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))?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

### 3.3.2.1 Environmental Setting

The Project area is predominately located in the Pacific Ocean offshore San Luis Obispo County, not on agricultural or forested lands. The only onshore component of the Project is an extension of an existing cable conduit and would occur within the DCPP facility, which is located within the coastal zone between Montaña de Oro State Park (to the north) and Point San Luis (to the south). The following is provided as background information.
According to San Luis Obispo County’s Agricultural Element of the General Plan (2010), the County contains unique, diverse and valuable agricultural resources and agricultural production. In 1995, cropland and grazing land accounted for approximately 1.2 million acres (55 percent) of the total county area. Agriculture in the County is a multi-million dollar industry. In 2008, the total production value of agriculture products produced in the County was estimated at over $600 million; wine grapes were the number one cash crop, with gross production totaling over $120 million, followed by broccoli with gross production totaling almost $70 million. Other leading agricultural products include strawberries, cattle and calves, vegetable transplants, head lettuce, cut flowers, head lettuce, indoor decorative plants, and carrots (San Luis Obispo County 2010).

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

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

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

3.3.2.2 Regulatory Setting

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

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

Local. The San Luis Obispo County General Plan Agricultural Element (2010) contains goals and policies related to agricultural resources. The Agricultural Element includes detail regarding agricultural zoning and mapping requirements. In addition to
the Agricultural Element, the San Luis Obispo County LCP references the Coastal Act, which requires the protection of "the maximum amount of prime agricultural land."

3.3.2.3 Impact Analysis

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?**

See response below.

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

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

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))?**

See response below.

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

See response below.

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?**

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

3.3.2.4 Mitigation and Residual Impact

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

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