Protecting California’s Farmland

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Clovis, Fresno County

2016
Brentwood, Contra Costa County

2016
New Orchards, Eastern Stanislaus County
2016
What are we seeing?

• Since 1984 California has lost:
  – 1.5 million acres of total agricultural land (Irrigated and Rangeland).
  – 1.1 million acres of irrigated land. 70% of which was prime
• Since 2004, 422K acres of irrigated land are no longer in production in SJ Valley.
• Between 2014-16, 130,000 acres of grazing lands were converted to orchards or vineyards.
Net Acreage Change 1984-2016
Why is this Happening?

- Population Increase and Change
- Commute Tolerance
- Different Transportation Options
- Changing economies – crop shifts, logistics centers, housing costs
- Generational change
Why we conserve farmland?

• Grow Food and Fiber
• Climate Change
• Farmer-Led Land Stewardship
• Agricultural Economies
• Public health, mental health, and California Culture
What we do

• Help locals with farmland planning
• Protect Farmland Through Conservation Easements
• Map Farmland
• Williamson Act
• Support Resource Conservation Districts and Land Trusts
What have we accomplished?

- 110,000 acres of farmland protected
- 33,000 acres of rangeland protected
- Map farmland since 1982
- Public trust in our staff and programs
New year, new goals...

Goals

• Increase sustainability and permanence of regional agricultural economies
• Increase sequestration of carbon on private lands/improve soil quality and forage production
...and new opportunities

• New Guidelines for Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation – In Public Review
  ✓ Increased flexibility for planning grants
  ✓ Funding for carbon farming plans
  ✓ Fee title option
• Rulemaking for Farmland Mapping Program
• Williamson Act
Thank you!

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