

## 5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

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### 2. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzes the Project's potential impacts on agricultural and forest resources. The analysis describes agricultural and forest resources in the Project vicinity and provides the respective farmland classifications for the Project Site. The analysis is based in part on information provided by the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (Farmland Mapping Program) and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) California Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program (Land Cover Mapping Program). Supporting data, maps, and related correspondence are provided in **Appendix 5.2** of this Draft EIR.

#### 2. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

##### a. Regulatory Setting

##### (1) Federal Regulations

##### *(a) National Soil Survey Handbook<sup>1</sup>*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (Conservation Service), formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service, produces the National Soil Survey Handbook and oversees the National Cooperative Soil Survey, a soil mapping database for the United States that classifies soils by capability (i.e., limitations on use). According to Part 622.02(e)(1)(ii) of the National Soil Survey Handbook, the soil capability classes are defined as follows:

- Class I soils have slight limitations that restrict their use.
- Class II soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, *National Soil Survey Handbook*, title 430-VI, [www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/soils/survey/?cid=nrcs142p2\\_054242](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/soils/survey/?cid=nrcs142p2_054242), accessed February 27, 2015.

- Class III soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require special conservation practices, or both.
- Class IV soils have very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require very careful management, or both.
- Class V soils have little or no hazard or erosion but have other limitations, impractical to remove, that limit their use mainly to pasture, rangeland, forest land, or wildlife habitat.
- Class VI soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuited to cultivation and that limit their use mainly to pasture, rangeland, forest land, or wildlife habitat.
- Class VII soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuited to cultivation and that restrict their use mainly to rangeland, forest land, or wildlife habitat.
- Class VIII soils and miscellaneous areas have limitations that preclude their use for commercial plant production and limit their use mainly to recreation, wildlife habitat, water supply, or esthetic purposes.

Capability class is the broadest category in the Conservation Service's land capability classification system, followed by subclass and unit. The soil capability classes listed above account for varying soil characteristics such as soil reaction (pH), surface texture, permeability, drainage, minimum depth to water table, salinity, slope, and erosion potential, among other properties. Thus, a given soil type may fall into one or more of the Capability Classes depending on the various characteristics that define each class. In general, Capability Classes I–II are considered excellent to good in terms of agricultural suitability; Capability Classes III–IV are considered fair to poor; Capability Classes VI–VII are classified as very poor; and Capability Class VIII is considered unsuitable. The capability classifications of soils found within the Project Site are discussed in Subsection 2b(2)(b), Farmland and Farmland Suitability, below.

### ***(b) U.S. Forest Service***

Also under the umbrella of the USDA, the United States Forest Service (U.S. Forest Service) manages public lands in national forests and grasslands, known collectively as the National Forest System. The U.S. Forest Service also performs forestry research and provides technical and financial assistance to state and private forestry agencies. California is located in U.S. Forest Service Region 5, the Pacific Southwest Region, and as discussed further below, portions of Angeles National Forest and Los Padres National Forest are located within the Santa Clarita Valley (Valley). Management of these national

forests is directed by Land Management Plans, which provide a framework and guidance for forest activities.

## (2) State Regulations

### (a) *California Department of Conservation*

Within the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Department of Conservation engages in land conservation planning, administration of conservation easement grants (i.e., tax incentives to retain land as agricultural or open space), farmland mapping and monitoring, and other programs related to public safety, the environment, and the economy.<sup>2</sup> The Department also administers the California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act) Program, discussed below.

#### (i) *State Farmland Designations*

Using data from the Conservation Service, the Farmland Mapping Program provides maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources.<sup>3</sup> Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status. The maps, called Important Farmland Maps, are updated every two years.

The Farmland Mapping Program study area coincides with the USDA soil surveys.<sup>4</sup> Important Farmland Maps show the relationship between the quality of soils for agricultural production and the land's actual use for agricultural, urban, or other purposes.<sup>5</sup> The Farmland Mapping Program identifies eight categories of farmland, defined as follows:<sup>6</sup>

- **Prime Farmland.** Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high

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<sup>2</sup> California Department of Conservation, *About Us*, [www.conservation.ca.gov/index/AboutUs/Pages/aboutUs.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/index/AboutUs/Pages/aboutUs.aspx), accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> California Department of Conservation, *Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program*, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Index.aspx), accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> California Department of Conservation, *Important Farmland Categories*, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/mccu/Pages/map\\_categories.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/mccu/Pages/map_categories.aspx), accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> California Department of Conservation, *What the Maps Consist of and How the Information is Used*, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/mccu/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/mccu/Pages/index.aspx), accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> California Department of Conservation, *Important Farmland Categories*, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/mccu/Pages/map\\_categories.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/mccu/Pages/map_categories.aspx), accessed February 27, 2015.

yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

- **Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Unique Farmland.** Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Local Importance.** Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. The County of Los Angeles (County) has determined that the definition of Farmland of Local Importance does not include Confined Animal Agriculture facilities.
- **Grazing Land.** Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.
- **Urban and Built-Up Land.** Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
- **Other Land.** Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than forty acres. Vacant and non-agricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.
- **Water.** Perennial water bodies with an extent of at least 40 acres.

The designated Farmland present within the Project Site is discussed in Subsection 2b(2)(b), Farmland and Farmland Suitability, below.

**(ii) Williamson Act Contracts<sup>7</sup>**

Agricultural uses in California are protected through the California Land Conservation Act, better known as the Williamson Act, under which local governments can enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. Not all local jurisdictions participate in the Williamson Act Program; the County does not participate in the Williamson Act program within the Project area.<sup>8</sup>

**(iii) Agricultural Conservation Easements**

The California Farmland Conservancy Program is a statewide grant funding program that supports local efforts to establish agricultural conservation easements and plan projects to preserve important agricultural resources.<sup>9</sup> An agricultural conservation easement is a voluntary, legally recorded deed restriction placed on a specific property used for agricultural production.<sup>10</sup> The goal of an agricultural conservation easement is to maintain agricultural land in active production by removing development pressures. Such an easement prohibits practices that would damage or interfere with the agricultural use of the land. The California Farmland Conservancy Program does not currently have any conservation easements funded in the County.<sup>11</sup>

**(b) California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007**

California Public Resources Code section 12220(g) defines forest land as “land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation and other benefits.” Section 12220 is part of the California Forest Legacy Program Act of 2007, which allows owners of private forest resources or woodlands to voluntarily protect

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<sup>7</sup> California Government Code, Sections 51200-51207, Williamson Act.

<sup>8</sup> California Department of Conservation, Los Angeles County Williamson Act FY 2012/2013, [ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/LA\\_12\\_13\\_WA.pdf](ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/LA_12_13_WA.pdf), accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> California Department of Conservation, Overview of CFCP & Agricultural Conservation Easements, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/cfcp/overview/Pages/Index.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/cfcp/overview/Pages/Index.aspx), accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> California Department of Conservation, Agricultural Conservation Easements, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/cfcp/overview/Pages/ag\\_consrv\\_easements.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/cfcp/overview/Pages/ag_consrv_easements.aspx), accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Electronic correspondence, Molly Penberth, Program Manager, California Farmland Conservancy Program, November 26, 2013. See **Appendix 5.2** of this Draft EIR.

significant resources by selling or donating conservation easements that restrict the rights to develop these lands.<sup>12</sup>

### **(c) California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection**

The Project Site is located within CAL FIRE's South Coast area, which includes portions of Los Angeles, Ventura, Kern, Santa Barbara, and other coastal counties.<sup>13</sup> In collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, CAL FIRE conducts land cover mapping and monitoring to enhance natural resource management and fire protection on public and private lands in California.<sup>14</sup> The different types of land cover within the State are classified as follows: forestland (conifer forest, hardwood forest); forest and rangeland (conifer woodland, hardwood woodland); rangeland (shrub, herbaceous, wetland, desert); and other (agriculture, urban, barren/other, water). The land cover types present within the Project Site are discussed in Subsection 2b(2)(c), Forest Land Resources, below.

## **(3) Local Regulations**

### **(a) County of Los Angeles General Plan**

As discussed in more detail in **Section 5.11**, Land Use and Planning, of this Draft EIR, the County's General Plan directs future growth and development in the County's unincorporated areas and establishes goals, policies, and objectives that pertain to the entire County. The current General Plan, adopted in 1980, includes a Conservation and Open Space Element that sets policy for the County's agricultural and forest resources. Relevant policies focus on the preservation of agricultural lands, including areas with prime soils and grazing lands, and the development of a comprehensive management program for National Forests.

As also discussed further in **Section 5.11**, Land Use and Planning, of this Draft EIR, the County circulated a draft General Plan update, entitled Los Angeles County General Plan 2035 (Draft General Plan), in January 2014 and a Draft EIR addressing the Draft General Plan in June 2014. This Draft General Plan contains a new Conservation and Natural Resources Element that addresses agricultural and forest resources with stated goals of protecting productive farmland for local food production, open space, public health,

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<sup>12</sup> *California Public Resources Code Section 12220 et seq.*

<sup>13</sup> *Monitoring Land Cover Changes in California, South Coast Project Area (July 2002)*, p. iv, [http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/land\\_cover/monitoring/pdfs/socdp\\_final2.pdf](http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/land_cover/monitoring/pdfs/socdp_final2.pdf), accessed February 27, 2015.

<sup>14</sup> *California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, California Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program*, [http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/land\\_cover/index.html](http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/land_cover/index.html), accessed February 27, 2015.

and the local economy; encouraging sustainable agricultural practices; and sustainably managing the County's forests and woodlands.

The General Plan policy consistency analysis provided in **Section 5.11**, Land Use and Planning, of this Draft EIR, indicates the Project would be consistent with relevant General Plan polices related to agricultural and forest resources.

**(b) Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012**

As discussed in greater detail in **Section 5.11**, Land Use and Planning, of this Draft EIR, the recently updated Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan: One Valley One Vision 2012 (Area Plan) serves as a long-term guide for development in the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (Valley Planning Area) over the next 20 years. The Area Plan ensures consistency between the General Plans of the County and the City of Santa Clarita (City) in order to achieve common goals. Within the Area Plan, both the Land Use Element and the Conservation and Open Space Element address issues relating to agricultural and forest land.

Based on the Conservation Service's soil capability classifications, the Land Use Element indicates the western portion of the Valley Planning Area contains Class I and Class II soils.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, based on the California Department of Conservation's Important Farmland Maps, the Land Use Element identifies substantial farmland in the same area, particularly along the Santa Clara River (River), including within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (Specific Plan) area near the Project Site.<sup>16</sup> In addition, as indicated in the Conservation and Open Space Element, nearly half the Valley Planning Area is located within National Forest lands, although as discussed below, no forest land is located within the Project Site.<sup>17</sup> Relevant polices within the two Area Plan Elements address the preservation of agricultural and forest resources and the compatibility of surrounding development.

The Area Plan policy consistency analysis provided in **Section 5.11**, Land Use and Planning, of this Draft EIR, indicates the Project would be consistent with applicable Area Plan polices related to agricultural and forest resources.

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<sup>15</sup> *Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan Update: One Valley One Vision 2012, Chapter 2: Land Use Element, p. 47.*

<sup>16</sup> *Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan Update: One Valley One Vision 2012, Chapter 2: Land Use Element, p. 48.*

<sup>17</sup> *Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan Update: One Valley One Vision 2012, Chapter 4: Conservation and Open Space Element, p. 141.*

#### **(4) Previously Adopted Plans and Mitigation**

##### **(a) Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP and EIS/EIR**

The Project Site is included in the project area for the Applicant's Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spineflower Conservation Plan (RMDP/SCP), shown in **Figure 3-5**, RMDP/SCP Project Area, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, which covers certain aspects of resource management for the Project and other nearby developments. As discussed in greater detail in **Section 4.1**, Environmental and Regulatory Setting, the RMDP component of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project is a conservation, mitigation, and permitting plan for the long-term management of sensitive biological resources and development-related infrastructure in the River and tributary drainages within the 11,999-acre Specific Plan area and along the extension of Magic Mountain Parkway through the Project Site. The SCP component of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project is a conservation and management plan to permanently protect and manage a system of preserves designed to maximize the long-term persistence of the San Fernando Valley spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* ssp. *Fernandina*) (spineflower), a federal candidate and state-listed endangered plant species. The SCP encompasses the Specific Plan area, the Valencia Commerce Center planning area, and the Project Site, in order to conduct conservation planning and preserve design on the Project Applicant's land holdings in Los Angeles County that contain known spineflower populations.

The Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project was the subject of a joint Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) (SCH No. 2000011025) by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).<sup>18,19</sup> At the time CDFW certified the EIR portion of the EIS/EIR in December 2010, it also adopted the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) for the RMDP/SCP project. This regulatory plan, required under CEQA, describes the mitigation measures, monitoring, and/or reporting plan for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project (including the Entrada South Project Site). CDFW adopted mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to agricultural resources resulting from implementation of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project (see Mitigation Measures (MMs) RMDP/SCP AG-1 and AG-2 in **Appendix 2A**).

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<sup>18</sup> *Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spineflower Conservation Plan, Final Joint Environmental Impact Statement and Environmental Impact Report, June 2010.*

<sup>19</sup> *The California Department of Fish and Game was officially renamed the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as of January 1, 2013.*

In particular, MM RMDP/SCP AG-2 requires the establishment of a conservation easement on 138 acres of agricultural land within the Salt Creek Corridor to serve as mitigation for significant impacts to approximately 122.8 acres of agricultural soils designated as Prime, Unique, or of Statewide Importance, resulting from construction of the infrastructure facilities proposed as part of the RMDP. Furthermore, additional agricultural lands that include 142.5 acres of designated Farmland would be protected against future development due to conditions imposed as part of related permits, discussed further below. By combining these acreages, a total of 280.5 acres of designated Farmland would be protected against future development.

**(i) Newhall Ranch Section 404 Permit**

The Corps issued the Applicant the final Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit (Permit No. SPL-2003-01264-AOA) for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project on October 17, 2012.<sup>20</sup> As part of that permit, the Corps imposed special conditions requiring the Applicant to record a restrictive covenant for floodplain protection over 119 acres, including 89 acres of waters of the United States immediately downstream of the Specific Plan area, as shown on Exhibit 1 attached to the Section 404 permit.<sup>21</sup> The restrictive covenant prohibits any development (as defined) within the area shown in purple on Exhibit 1. (For purposes of the restrictive covenant, the term “development” means any man-made change to improved or unimproved land including buildings, other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or grading operations, and storage of equipment or materials. Agricultural activities, including farming, ranching, orchards, and vineyards are expressly excluded from the term “development.”)<sup>22</sup>

Of the 119 acres to be protected, 7.8 acres are designated as Farmland under the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping Program. Thus, the 404 permit conditions result in the protection of 7.8 acres of designated Farmland, immediately west of the Specific Plan area.

**(ii) Newhall Ranch Section 401 Water Quality Certification**

By federal law, no Section 404 permit can be issued until a CWA Section 401 water quality certification has been issued or waived by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board). On September 14, 2012, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality

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<sup>20</sup> See **Appendix 2F** of this Draft EIR for a copy of Newhall’s final Section 404 permit and **Appendix 2D** for the associated Record of Decision (August 2011).

<sup>21</sup> See final Section 404 permit (October 17, 2012), Special Condition Nos. 2 and 29.

<sup>22</sup> See final Section 404 permit (October 17, 2012), Special Condition No. 29.

Control Board (LA Regional Water Board) approved Order No. R4-2012-0139, which includes the CWA Section 401 water quality certification and waste discharge requirements for the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP project.<sup>23</sup>

As part of both the Newhall Ranch Section 401 water quality certification and the Newhall/California Coastal Conservancy Agreement (August 6, 2012) entered into in conjunction with the Section 401 process, the Applicant must record a restrictive covenant for floodplain protection over 439 acres of land adjacent to the Santa Clara River, located in Ventura County downstream of the Project area. Of the 439 acres, 223 acres are river bottom floodplain, and the balance consists of 216 acres of upland floodplain.<sup>24</sup>

Of the 216 acres of upland floodplain, approximately 11.6 acres are Prime Farmland, as defined by the California Department of Conservation. The restrictive covenant prohibits any development within the 439 acres with the exception of structures for agricultural activities, including farming, ranching, orchards and vineyards; installation of agricultural water wells; installation of pipelines or utility lines; outfall structures; activities associated with habitat restoration and enhancement; and other defined uses. (For purposes of the restrictive covenant, the term “development” means any man-made change to improved or unimproved land including buildings, other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation or grading operations, and storage of equipment or materials.)

Under the covenant, approximately 134.6 acres of Farmland, including the 11.6 acres of Prime Farmland located within the upland floodplain referenced above, are protected against further development. Additionally, the covenant allows for the continuation of existing agricultural activities, including farming and ranching, and those activities may continue indefinitely, unless and until the farm areas are scoured by flooding, in which case, under the restrictive covenant, those areas cannot be reclaimed for farming purposes except as needed for water wells, pipelines, utility lines, outfall structures, roads, and other infrastructure. The restrictive covenant runs with the land and binds subsequent landowners. Implementation of this restrictive covenant is required prior to any permanent impacts to waters of the United States. Thus, the 439-acre restrictive covenant results in the protection of approximately 134.6 acres of designated Farmland, immediately downstream of the Specific Plan area. Even if the land is scoured and cannot be reclaimed for farming purposes, the restrictive covenant nonetheless protects approximately

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<sup>23</sup> See **Appendix 2E** of this Draft EIR for a copy of Newhall’s final Section 401 water quality certification (September 2012).

<sup>24</sup> See *Newhall/Conservancy Agreement (August 6, 2012), Figure 2, Newhall Land Ventura County Property—Floodplain Areas.*

134.6 acres of designated Farmland, which offsets impacts to other Farmland within the Project area.

## **b. Existing Conditions**

### **(1) Santa Clarita Valley**

The Valley Planning Area contains approximately 1,994 acres of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance, as designated by the California Department of Conservation.<sup>25</sup> These farmlands occur in scattered locations, but generally on alluvial soils adjacent to the Santa Clara River and other water courses. As previously indicated, the largest areas of farmland are located in the western portion of the Valley within the general Project vicinity. In addition, there are approximately 61,000 acres of designated Grazing Land in the Planning Area, much of which is located in the undeveloped foothills surrounding the Valley and adjacent to U.S. Forest Service land.

With respect to forest lands, portions of Angeles National Forest and Los Padres National Forest are located in the Valley and together comprise approximately 49 percent (237 square miles) of the Planning Area. Angeles National Forest covers roughly 700,000 acres in the San Gabriel Mountains and forms the northern and southern boundaries of the Planning Area. Los Padres National Forest, which encompasses approximately 2 million acres, is located primarily in Ventura County, with a portion in Los Angeles County approximately nine miles north of the Project Site.<sup>26</sup> The predominant vegetation within National Forest lands includes mixed chaparral with hardwood and conifer forests at higher elevations, and riparian vegetation along stream channels. In addition, based on CAL FIRE data, portions of the Valley are mapped as forestland (conifer forest, hardwood forest) and forest and rangeland (conifer woodland, hardwood woodland).<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan Update: One Valley One Vision 2012, Chapter 2: Land Use Element, p. 48.*

<sup>26</sup> *United States Department of Agriculture, Welcome to Los Padres National Forest!, [www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fsm9\\_034051.pdf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fsm9_034051.pdf), accessed February 27, 2015.*

<sup>27</sup> *California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire and Resources Assessment Program, Land Cover Map, Multi-Source Data Compiled in 2006, [http://frap.fire.ca.gov/data/frapgismaps/pdfs/fvegwhr13b\\_map.pdf](http://frap.fire.ca.gov/data/frapgismaps/pdfs/fvegwhr13b_map.pdf), accessed February 27, 2015.*

## **(2) Project Site**

The current agricultural uses, farmland suitability, and Forest Land Resources within the Project Site are discussed below.

### ***(a) Agricultural Uses***

As shown in **Figure 5.2-1**, Current Agricultural Uses On-Site, on page 5.2-13, approximately 7.45 acres of the Project Site are used as pasture. Previous uses on-site have included limited areas of agricultural production for vegetables, while the majority of the land has remained vacant. No portion of the Project Site is zoned for agricultural uses. In addition, the Project Site is not under a Williamson Act contract.



**Figure 5.2-1**  
Current Agricultural Uses On-Site

**(b) Farmland and Farmland Suitability**

As shown **Figure 5.2-2**, Farmland On-Site, on page 5.2-15, the Project Site contains 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland, 364.9 acres of Grazing Land, 21.7 acres of Urban and Built-Up Land, and 108.1 acres of Other Land, as mapped by the Farmland Mapping Program.<sup>28</sup> The 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland are included in the 7.45 acres of pasture on-site.

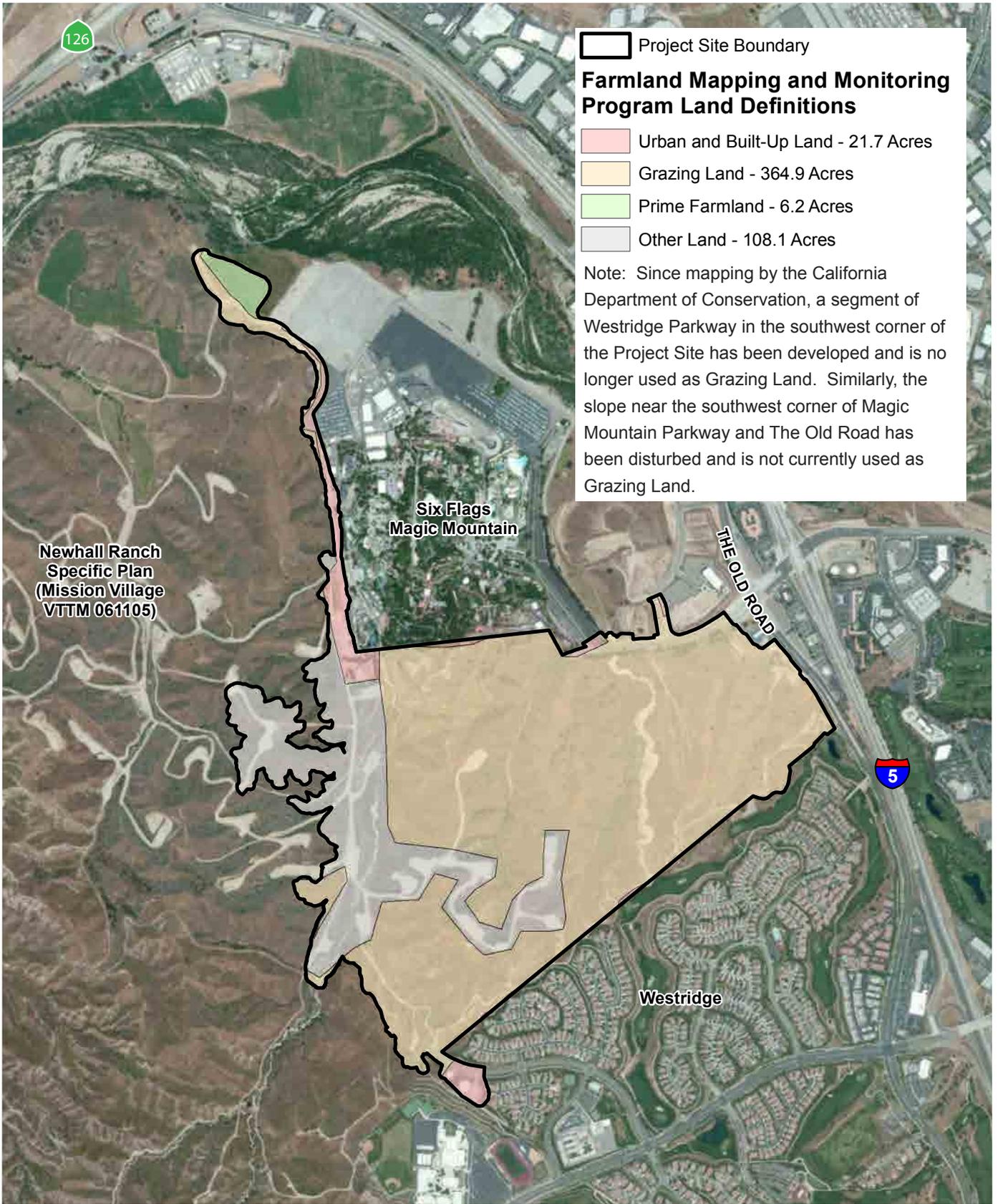
According to the Conservation Service, there are 10 different soil types present within the Project Site. **Table 5.2-1**, Soil Types and Soil Suitability On-Site, on page 5.2-16 lists these soils and identifies the agricultural activities for which each soil is most suited (if any), the amount of each soil type on the Project Site, and whether or not the soil type meets Conservation Service criteria for Prime Farmland soils. As shown, 7 of the 10 soil types would meet Conservation Service criteria for Prime Farmland soils if irrigated, representing 101.5 acres of the Project Site's 501.4 acres.

**Figure 5.2-3**, Soil Types On-Site, on page 5.2-17 shows the locations of the different soil types identified on-site. The determinations are made without regard to whether or not the soils are actually farmed and, as noted, depend on whether the soils could be irrigated. In other words, while the Conservation Service identifies soils that meet Prime Farmland criteria (if irrigated), some of these areas may not actually be suitable for farming or capable of being farmed. On the other hand, the Farmland Mapping Program designates Farmland such as Prime Farmland based on soil type and actual land use. The Farmland Mapping Program is updated every two years and provides a more in-depth analysis of Farmland. Accordingly, of the approximately 102 acres of on-site soils that would meet Prime Farmland criteria if irrigated, only 6.2 acres are actually designated as Prime Farmland.

**Figure 5.2-4**, Soil Suitability On-Site, on page 5.2-18 identifies the areas of the Project Site that are suitable for farming based on the Project Site's soil capability classes per the Conservation Service's classifications for non-irrigated soils. As shown, approximately 109 acres are classified as Fair to Poor (Capability Classes III–IV), and approximately 393 acres within the Project Site are classified as Very Poor (Capability Classes VI–VII).

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<sup>28</sup> However, since the most recent mapping by the California Department of Conservation, Westridge Parkway in the southwest corner of the Project Site has been developed and is no longer used as Grazing Land. Similarly, the slope near the southwest corner of Magic Mountain Parkway and The Old Road has been disturbed and is not currently used as Grazing Land.



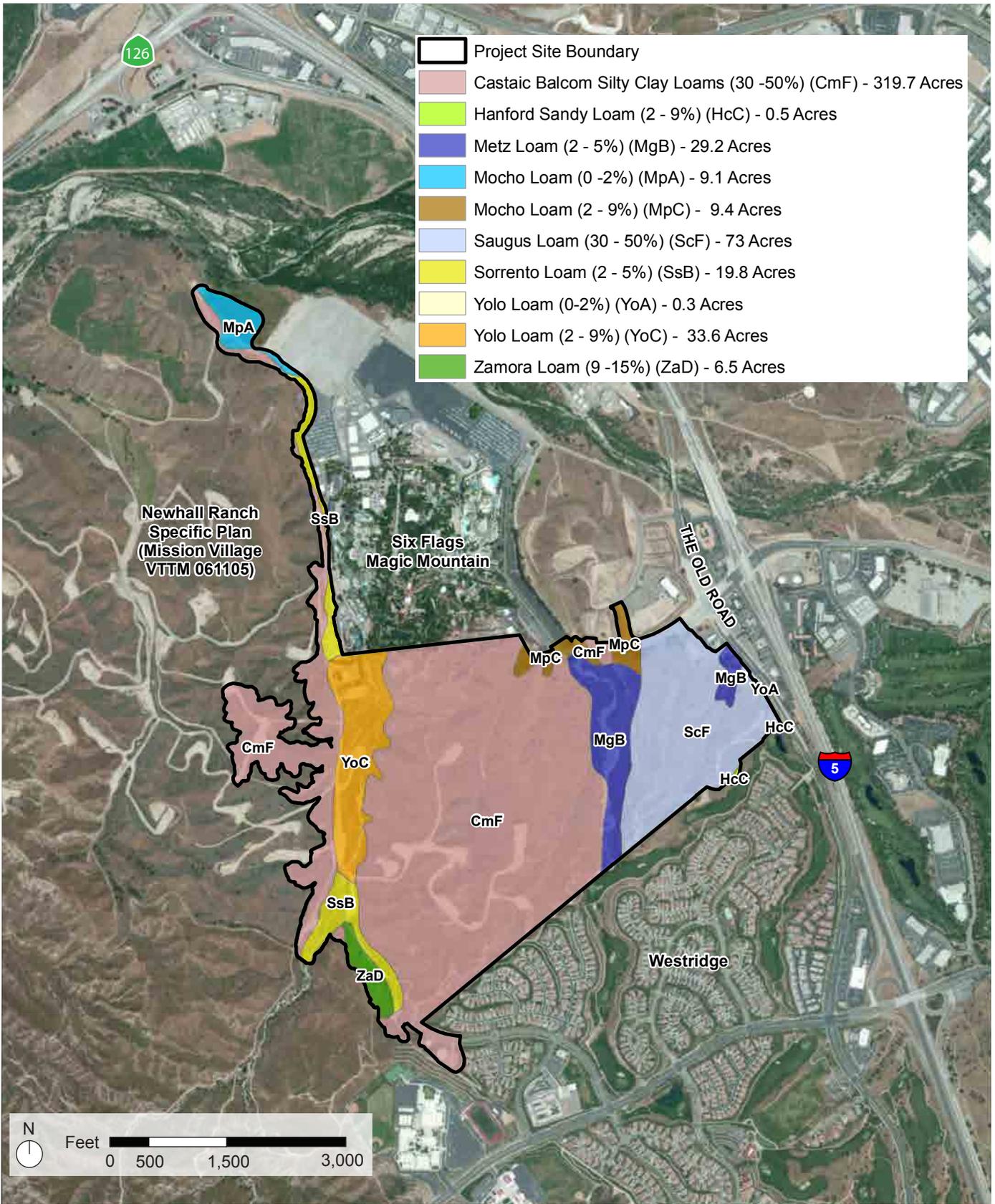
**Table 5.2-1  
Soil Types and Soil Suitability On-Site**

<b>Soil Type</b>	<b>Most Suitable Agricultural Activity/Crops<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Project Site Acreage</b>	<b>Meets Prime Farmland Criteria when Irrigated?</b>
Castaic Balcom Silty Clay Loams (30–50%) (CmF)	Range	320.4	No
Hanford Sandy Loam (2–9%) (HcC)	Irrigated crops such as alfalfa, small grains, sugar beets, potatoes, and fruit and nut trees	0.4	Yes
Metz Loam (2–5%) (MgB)	Irrigated alfalfa and grain and non-irrigated grain and range	29.1	Yes
Mocho Loam (0–2%) (MpA)	Dryland and irrigated crops	9.0	Yes
Mocho Loam (2–9%) (MpC)	Irrigated crops such as alfalfa, small grains, sugar beets, potatoes, and fruit and nut trees	9.5	Yes
Saugus Loam (30–50%) (ScF)	Range, watershed, wildlife areas, home sites	72.8	No
Sorrento Loam (2–5%) (SsB)	Irrigated crops such as alfalfa, green onions, carrots, walnuts, and pasture	19.6	Yes
Yolo Loam (0–2 %) (YoA)	Irrigate crops such as alfalfa, small grains, sugar beets, and potatoes	0.3	Yes
Yolo Loam (2–9%) (YoC)	Irrigated crops and range	33.6	Yes
Zamora Loam (9–15%) (ZaD)	Range	6.6	No
<b>Total<sup>b</sup></b>		<b>501.3</b>	

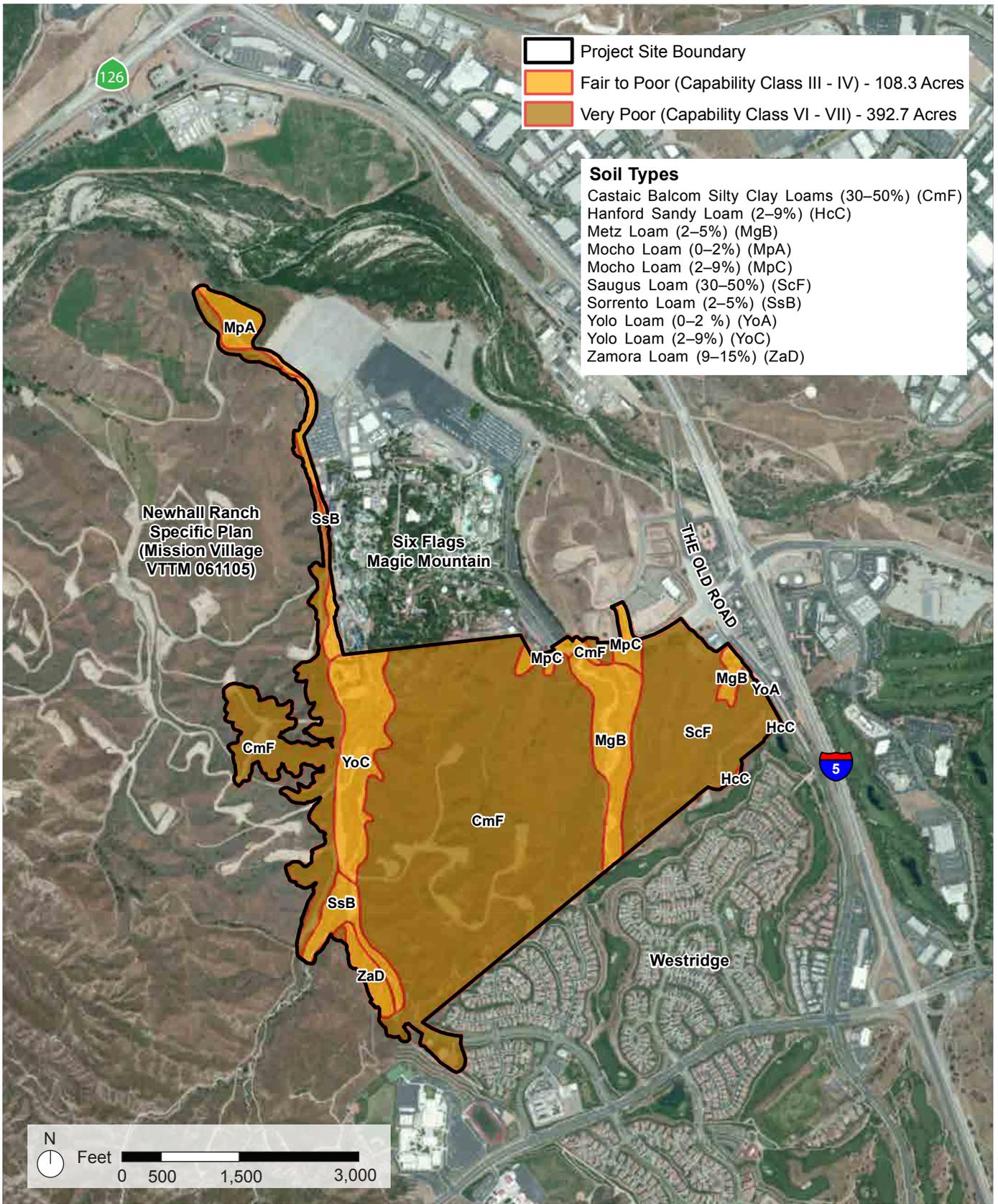
<sup>a</sup> Range is defined as open land used for grazing.

<sup>b</sup> Total does not sum exactly to the Project Site's 501.4 acres due to rounding.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service, 2012; and Dudek, 2014.



**Figure 5.2-3**  
Soil Types On-Site



**Figure 5.2-4**  
Soil Suitability On-Site

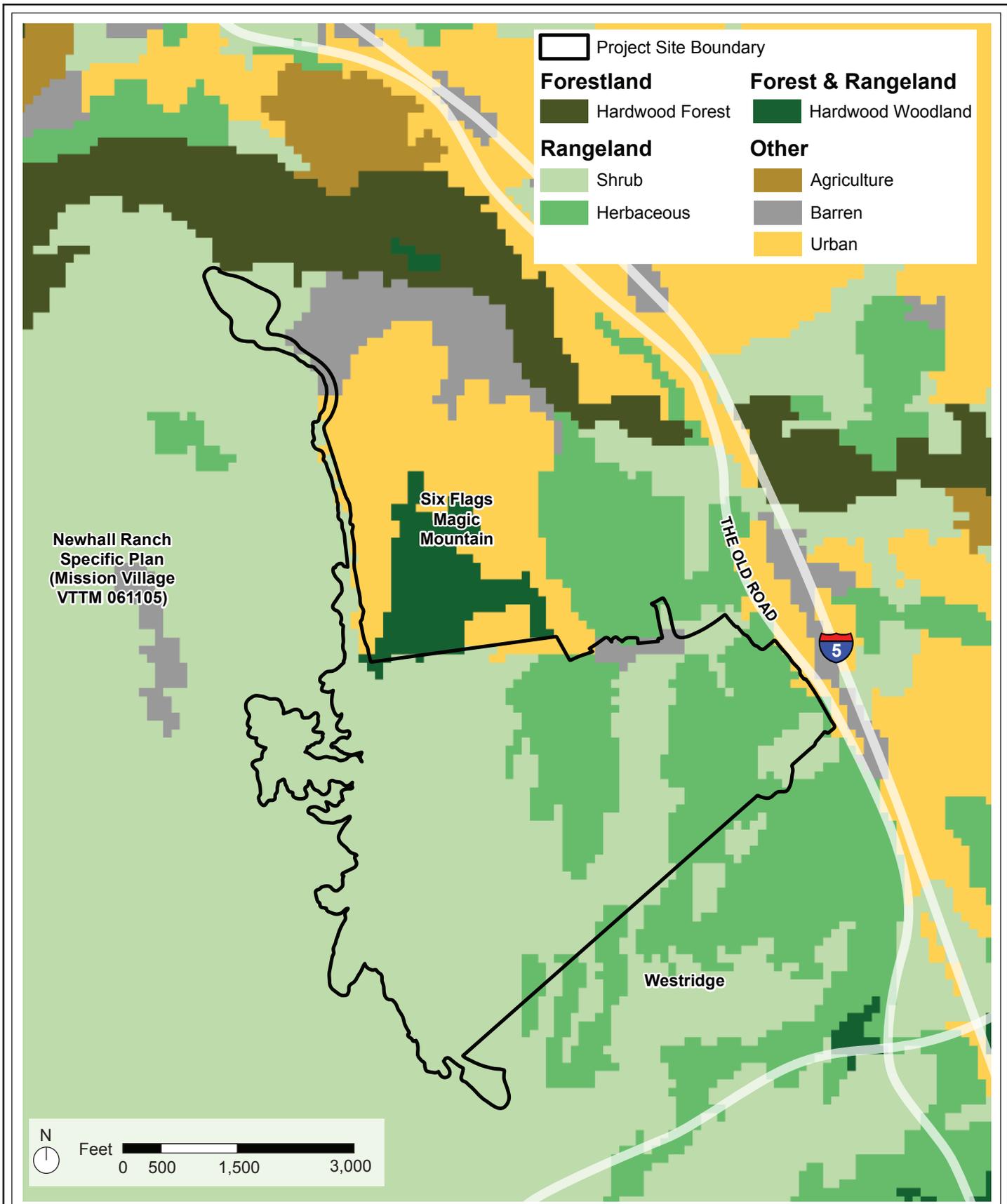
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**(c) Forest Land Resources**

**Figure 5.2-5**, Forest Land Cover On-Site, on page 5.2-20 illustrates CAL FIRE's mapping for the Project Site and the immediately surrounding area.<sup>29</sup> As shown, the majority of the Project Site is classified as rangeland, specifically shrub and herbaceous land covers. Portions of the Project Site are mapped as other land covers, specifically urban and barren/other, and a small area abutting Six Flags Magic Mountain is classified as forest and rangeland, specifically hardwood woodland. This area corresponds to a large area of oak woodland within the southern portion of Six Flags Magic Mountain. More specifically, there are no oak trees located within this area of the Project Site (see **Figure 5.4-8**, Oak Trees, in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR), and the mapped area of hardwood woodland on-site is actually associated with the adjacent tree canopy, some of which extends over the property line. However, there are 4.5 acres of valley oak forest and woodland in other areas of the Project Site, but these areas have not been mapped as hardwood woodland by CAL FIRE. Refer to **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR for further discussion and mapping of oak trees and oak woodland on-site. Additionally, no portion of the Project Site is zoned for forest land or timberland, nor is any portion of the Project Site used for timberland production.

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<sup>29</sup> California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire and Resources Assessment Program, Land Cover Map, Multi-Source Data Compiled in 2006, [http://frap.fire.ca.gov/data/frapgismaps/pdfs/fvegwhr13b\\_map.pdf](http://frap.fire.ca.gov/data/frapgismaps/pdfs/fvegwhr13b_map.pdf), accessed February 27, 2015.



**Figure 5.2-5**  
Forest Land Cover On-Site



Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire and Resource Assessment Program, Land Cover Map 2006; ESRI 2014.

### 3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

#### a. Methodology

The methodology used to evaluate potential impacts on agricultural and forest resources involved the following: (1) review the farmland designations for the Project Site according to the Important Farmland Maps of the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program; (2) review existing agricultural zoning designations and Williamson Act contracts, if any; (3) review CAL FIRE and U.S. Forest Service data to determine whether the Project Site contains any designated forest land; (4) evaluate how implementation of the Project may impact on-site and surrounding agricultural and forest land resources; and (5) evaluate whether adoption of the applicable mitigation measures and permit conditions set forth in the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR, the Newhall Ranch 404 Permit, and the Newhall Ranch 401 water quality certification would mitigate the Project's impacts to on-site and surrounding agricultural and forest land resources or whether additional Project-specific mitigation measures would be necessary. Information, regulations, and policies set forth by the California Department of Conservation, the Conservation Service, CAL FIRE, and the County were also reviewed, and field review of the Project Site was conducted.

#### b. Project Design Elements/Project Design Features

As discussed in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, Project implementation would introduce new land uses in the largely undeveloped Project Site and replace the limited agricultural uses, Six Flags Magic Mountain plant nursery, abandoned oil wells, and associated access roads that currently exist on-site. Approximately 119.4 acres would be maintained as open space, of which 27.2 acres would be established as a Spineflower Conservation Area (Spineflower Preserve). Within the open space areas and other areas of the Project Site, approximately 0.5 acre of valley oak forest and woodland would be preserved. As part of the Project's mitigation for impacts to oak trees and oak woodland, a minimum of 158 replacement oak trees would be planted, and 4.1 acres of valley oak/grass would be created, enhanced, and/or restored on-site. Refer to **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR for further discussion of oak tree/oak woodland impacts and mitigation.

Beyond these Project characteristics, no specific project design features (PDFs) are proposed that relate to agricultural and forest resources.

#### c. Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and other relevant criteria, the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning has determined that a project would

have a potentially significant impact related to agricultural and forest land resources based on the following criteria:

- Threshold 5.2-1:** Would the Project 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?
- Threshold 5.2-2:** Would the Project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, with a designated Agricultural Opportunity Area, or with a Williamson Act contract?
- Threshold 5.2-3:** Would the Project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code § 12220 (g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code § 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined in Government Code § 51104(g))?
- Threshold 5.2-4:** Would the Project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- Threshold 5.2-5:** Would the Project 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?
- Threshold 5.2-6:** Would the Project result in a significant reduction in the amount of agricultural land?

As previously indicated, no portion of the Project Site is zoned for agricultural uses, and the Project Site is not under a Williamson Act contract. In addition, no portion of the Project Site is zoned for forest land or timberland, nor is any portion used for timberland production. As such, the Project would not have any impact with respect to these designations and uses, and no further analysis with regard to Threshold 5.2-2 and Threshold 5.2-3 is necessary.

#### **d. Project Impacts**

- Threshold 5.2-1:** Would the Project 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?
- Threshold 5.2-5:** Would the Project 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?

**Threshold 5.2-6:** Would the Project result in a significant reduction in the amount of agricultural land?

The combined analysis for Thresholds 5.2-1, 5.2-5, and 5.2-6 is provided below since these criteria address potential impacts related to the conversion or reduction of agricultural land due to Project implementation.

As previously discussed and shown in **Figure 5.2-1**, Current Agricultural Uses On-Site, the Project Site contains 7.45 acres of pasture within the northernmost portion of the Project Site, adjacent to the Santa Clara River. This area is not currently farmed with crops and is no longer irrigated but is still used as pasture land. Of the 7.45 acres, 6.2 acres are designated as Prime Farmland, as shown in **Figure 5.2-2**, Farmland On-Site. Under the Project, a water quality basin would be constructed in this area, as illustrated in **Figure 3-6**, Project Planning Areas and Proposed Land Uses, in **Section 3.0**, Project Description, of this Draft EIR. Accordingly, the existing 7.45 acres of pasture, including the 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland, would be removed and converted to non-agricultural uses.

The loss of 7.45 acres of pasture, in and of itself (i.e., notwithstanding that 6.2 acres within the pasture land is designated as Prime Farmland), would not be considered significant since: (1) this land is not currently irrigated or used for agricultural production; (2) it is not contiguous with but rather is isolated from other agricultural uses, which limits the productivity of a small, independent parcel; and (3) a reduction of this type and scale would not be significant in the context of the substantial agricultural and pasture uses throughout the Valley.

The conversion of 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland on-site (which are included in the 7.45 acres of pasture land discussed above) would represent a loss of approximately 0.3 percent of designated Farmland within the Valley. Despite the limited loss, impacts with respect to Prime Farmland would be significant given the importance of such soils in meeting short- and long-term needs for food and fiber and the continued trend of an overall reduction of Prime Farmland in the region.

In addition, Project implementation would involve development within the majority of the 364.9 acres of Grazing Land on-site, resulting in its conversion to other uses. However, the loss of Grazing Land is not considered a significant impact since it does not fall under the threshold of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide

Importance.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the loss of 364.9 acres of Grazing Land represents less than 0.60 percent of the Grazing Land in the Valley Planning Area and approximately 0.15 percent of the Grazing Land in the County as of 2012.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to direct impacts to designated Farmland and agricultural land, this analysis considers indirect impacts to neighboring lands in light of Threshold 5.1-5. The only agricultural uses in the immediate Project vicinity are located west of the Project Site within the approved Specific Plan area and north of the Project Site within the proposed Entrada North site. Project construction would involve ground disturbance and grading activities, which would generate fugitive dust emissions that may indirectly affect neighboring agricultural uses, as may emissions from the operation of construction equipment. However, as discussed in **Section 5.3**, Air Quality, of this Draft EIR, impacts with respect to fugitive dust and other construction emissions would be minimized to the extent feasible. Furthermore, these existing neighboring agricultural uses are located in areas planned for future development, unrelated to the Project. Their conversion to non-agricultural uses would not result from Project construction or operation, and thus, Project impacts would be less than significant.

Impacts to forest land are addressed below.

**Threshold 5.2-4:** Would the Project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

As previously discussed, a small area of the Project Site is mapped as hardwood woodland and classified as forest and rangeland per Land Cover Mapping Program. However, this area corresponds to a large area of oak woodland within the southern portion of Six Flags Magic Mountain where roller coasters and other amusement rides and amenities are located. As no oak trees are actually located within this area of the Project Site, Project implementation would not result in the removal or conversion of any designated forest land to non-forest uses. Further, this area is not zoned as forest land or timberland, nor used for forestry or timberland purposes. Additionally, other areas of oak woodland exist on-site, although they are not mapped as forestland or forest and rangeland, and, as discussed further in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft

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<sup>30</sup> Threshold 5.2-1 is set forth in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. Furthermore, with respect to Threshold 5.2-6, CEQA Section 21060.1 defines "agricultural land" as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

<sup>31</sup> Grazing Land in Los Angeles County derived from: California Department of Conservation, Los Angeles County Important Farmland Data Availability, Select A County: Los Angeles County, Historic Land Use Conversion: 1984–Present, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/LosAngeles.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/LosAngeles.aspx), accessed February 25, 2015. See **Appendix 5.2** of this Draft EIR.

EIR, Project mitigation would include the planting of a minimum of 158 oak trees and the creation, enhancement, and/or restoration of 4.1 acres of valley oak/grass elsewhere within the Project Site. As such, forest land impacts would be less than significant.

With respect to surrounding land covers, forest and forest and rangeland have been identified in scattered areas throughout the Project vicinity based on mapped hardwood woodland and hardwood forest. As mentioned, in addition to the hardwood woodland within Six Flags Magic Mountain, much of the Santa Clara River is mapped as hardwood forest. While indirect impacts such as air emissions during construction could have the potential to affect such resources, such emissions would be minimized to the extent feasible and in any case would not cause any conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Moreover, any anticipated loss or conversion of such land covers within off-site properties where future development is planned would occur as a result of those development activities regardless of the Project and would not result from Project construction or operation. Therefore, Project impacts to forest lands located off-site would be less than significant. Refer to in **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR for further discussion of oak trees and associated forest land resources.

#### 4. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The geographic context for the cumulative impact analysis of Important Farmland and other agricultural resources is the County, while the geographic context for the cumulative analysis of forest resources is CAL FIRE's 19.9-million acre South Coast area, which encompasses four national forests (Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres, and San Bernardino) and other federal, state, and privately owned land. Anticipated growth within these geographies is anticipated to result in a cumulative loss of agricultural and forest resources, as discussed further below.

##### a. Loss or Conversion of Farmland

According to the Los Angeles County 1984 to 2012 Land Use Summary Report prepared by the California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, the most updated report available, for the 28 years between 1984 and 2012, approximately 25,544 acres of Farmland were developed and converted to non-agricultural uses.<sup>32</sup> This reduction includes a net decrease of 12,326 acres of Prime Farmland, 13,704 acres of Farmland of Local Importance, and 176 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, plus a net increase of 662 acres of Unique Farmland. During the same period,

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<sup>32</sup> California Department of Conservation, *Los Angeles County Important Farmland Data Availability, Select A County: Los Angeles County, Historic Land Use Conversion: 1984–Present*, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/LosAngeles.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/LosAngeles.aspx), accessed February 25, 2015. See **Appendix 5.2** of this Draft EIR.

6,066 acres of Grazing Land were added to the Grazing Land inventory. As of 2012, over 35,000 acres of designated Farmland remained, plus over 235,000 acres of Grazing Land.<sup>33</sup>

Buildout of the Project and other future development projects in the County could result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses, thus continuing the trend in the County. In particular, Related Project No. 1, Mission Village; Related Project No. 2, Landmark Village; Related Project No. 4, Homestead South; Related Project No. 5, Entrada North; Related Project No. 6, Potrero Village; Related Project No. 7, Homestead North; Related Project No. 25, Keystone; and Related Project No. 67, Pitchess Detention Center are located on or in the vicinity of Farmland and, therefore, have the potential to involve the conversion of such lands, the cumulative effect of which would be potentially significant. (Please refer to **Section 4.2**, Cumulative Impact Analysis Methodology, of this Draft EIR, for a complete listing and map of the related projects.) In addition, other future growth could occur in as-yet undetermined locations that may likewise include Farmland. However, like the Project, all development projects resulting in the loss or conversion of Farmland would be required to mitigate such impacts, either through the conservation in perpetuity of other areas of Farmland of comparable quality, or through other means deemed adequate by the California Department of Conservation. Although the Project would eliminate 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland, this impact would be fully mitigated via MM ES 5.2-1/RMDP/SCP AG-2, detailed below. Accordingly, the Project's contribution to cumulative Farmland impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

In addition, with the exception of land under Williamson Act contract on Santa Catalina Island, no County lands are enrolled in the Williamson Act program.<sup>34</sup> As such, the Project and other future development projects in the area would not directly or indirectly conflict with or interfere with a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, cumulative impacts with respect to Williamson Act contracts would be less than significant.

#### **b. Reduction of Agricultural Land**

Aside from designated Farmland, other lands throughout the County are presently or have the potential to be used for agricultural purposes. Such lands may or may not be zoned for agricultural uses, whereas agriculturally zoned land may or may not be used for such purposes. Ongoing urban growth throughout the County is likely to continue the

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<sup>33</sup> California Department of Conservation, *Los Angeles County Important Farmland Data Availability, Select A County: Los Angeles County, Historic Land Use Conversion: 1984–Present*, [www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/LosAngeles.aspx](http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/LosAngeles.aspx), accessed February 25, 2015. See **Appendix 5.2** of this Draft EIR.

<sup>34</sup> California Department of Conservation, *Los Angeles County Williamson Act FY 2012/2013*, [ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/LA\\_12\\_13\\_WA.pdf](http://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/wa/LA_12_13_WA.pdf), accessed February 25, 2015.

general trend of converting agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. Future development projects resulting in significant impacts to agricultural lands would be expected to mitigate such impacts to the extent feasible. As the Project would result in a limited loss of only 7.45 acres of agricultural land, which is not currently farmed with crops or irrigated but rather used as pasture, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

### c. Forest Land and Timberland

Within its South Coast area, CAL FIRE has mapped and classified approximately 3.4 million acres of hardwoods and conifers, which represent forest and forest and rangeland species.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, the four national forests (Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres, and San Bernardino) located within the South Coast area comprise approximately 3.84 million acres, although presumably much of the national forests coincides with the mapped forest lands. Ongoing growth and development throughout the South Coast area is expected to result in the conversion of forest land and timberland to non-forest uses. Future development projects resulting in significant impacts to forest land and timberland would be expected to mitigate such impacts to the extent feasible. As the Project's impact involves a limited loss of forest land that is heavily disturbed and not used for forest or timberland purposes, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

## 5. MITIGATION MEASURES

### a. Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP Mitigation Measures

CDFW previously adopted mitigation measures to minimize impacts to designated Farmland converted to non-agricultural uses in connection with its adoption of the Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR. One of the RMDP/SCP mitigation measures also applies to the Project. If the status of the RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR is unresolved or set aside in the pending litigation at the time the County considers the Project EIR for certification, this EIR recommends that the County adopt the companion Entrada South (ES) mitigation measure set forth below, as applicable, to mitigate the Project's significant agricultural land impacts. Those RMDP/SCP mitigation measures that are not applicable to the Project are listed in **Appendix 2B** with an explanation as to why they do not apply. Any italicized text provided in the parentheses below provides necessary updated information and/or clarifications, as needed.

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<sup>35</sup> *United States Forest Service and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Monitoring Land Cover Changes in California, July 2002, p. 8, [http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/land\\_cover/monitoring/pdfs/socdp\\_final2.pdf](http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/land_cover/monitoring/pdfs/socdp_final2.pdf), accessed February 27, 2015.*

**MM ES 5.2-1/RMDP/SCP AG-2:** Newhall Land shall dedicate a permanent agriculture conservation easement for 138 acres of agricultural land located in the Salt Creek conservation area and on adjoining agricultural lands. *(The 6.2 acres of Project-impacted Prime Farmland would be mitigated either in a stand-alone 6.2-acre conservation easement in the Salt Creek conservation area and on adjoining agricultural lands or as part of the greater 138-acre conservation easement. This mitigation measure requiring dedication of the 138-acre conservation easement is to be implemented one time only by the first Newhall Ranch RMDP/SCP-related project (which may include Entrada South) for which grading permits are issued.)*

The 6.2 acres of Project-impacted Prime Farmland represent a portion of the Prime Farmland acreage impacted as part of the RMDP/SCP, as evaluated in the RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR and shown in Figure 4.12-2 therein. The proposed RMDP infrastructure facilities included a regional water quality basin as part of Mission Village in the same location as now proposed as part of the Project. Thus, this facility is a “shared” improvement for both the Mission Village project and the Entrada South Project’s External Map improvements. As such, the direct impacts of the RMDP project included the 6.2–acre area impacted by the Project due to installation of the regional water quality basin.

Mitigation Measure MM ES 5.2-1/RMDP/SCP AG-2 requires Newhall Land to dedicate a permanent agricultural conservation easement over a 138-acre agricultural land area located in the Salt Creek conservation area and on adjoining agricultural lands, as shown in Figure 4.12-3 of the RMDP/SCP EIS/EIR, in order to mitigate the direct impacts of the RMDP. Thus, the Project’s impact to the 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland in the water quality basin area have been previously considered and mitigated as part of MM ES 5.2-1/RMDP/SCP AG-2. Newhall Land must provide the specified agricultural conservation easement area in conjunction with the recordation of the applicable tract map, in this case either the Mission Village or the Entrada South tract map, whichever comes first.

#### **b. Entrada South Project-Level Mitigation Measures**

With implementation of the identified mitigation measure, there would be a less-than-significant impact on agricultural resources, including the loss of 6.2 acres of Prime Farmland. Accordingly, with the County’s adoption of the mitigation measure listed above, no further mitigation is necessary to address the Project’s agricultural impacts.

Project impacts on other agricultural lands and forest resources would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required. Refer to **Section 5.4**, Biological Resources, of this Draft EIR for mitigation measures addressing impacts to oak trees/oak

woodland and other species or vegetation communities. In addition, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts on Farmland, other agricultural lands, and forest resources would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures would be required.

## **6. LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION**

With implementation of MM ES 5.2-1/RMDP/SCP AG-2, Project impacts on Prime Farmland would be less than significant. Project impacts on other agricultural lands and forest land resources would also be less than significant. In addition, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts on Farmland, other agricultural lands, and forest land resources would be less than significant.