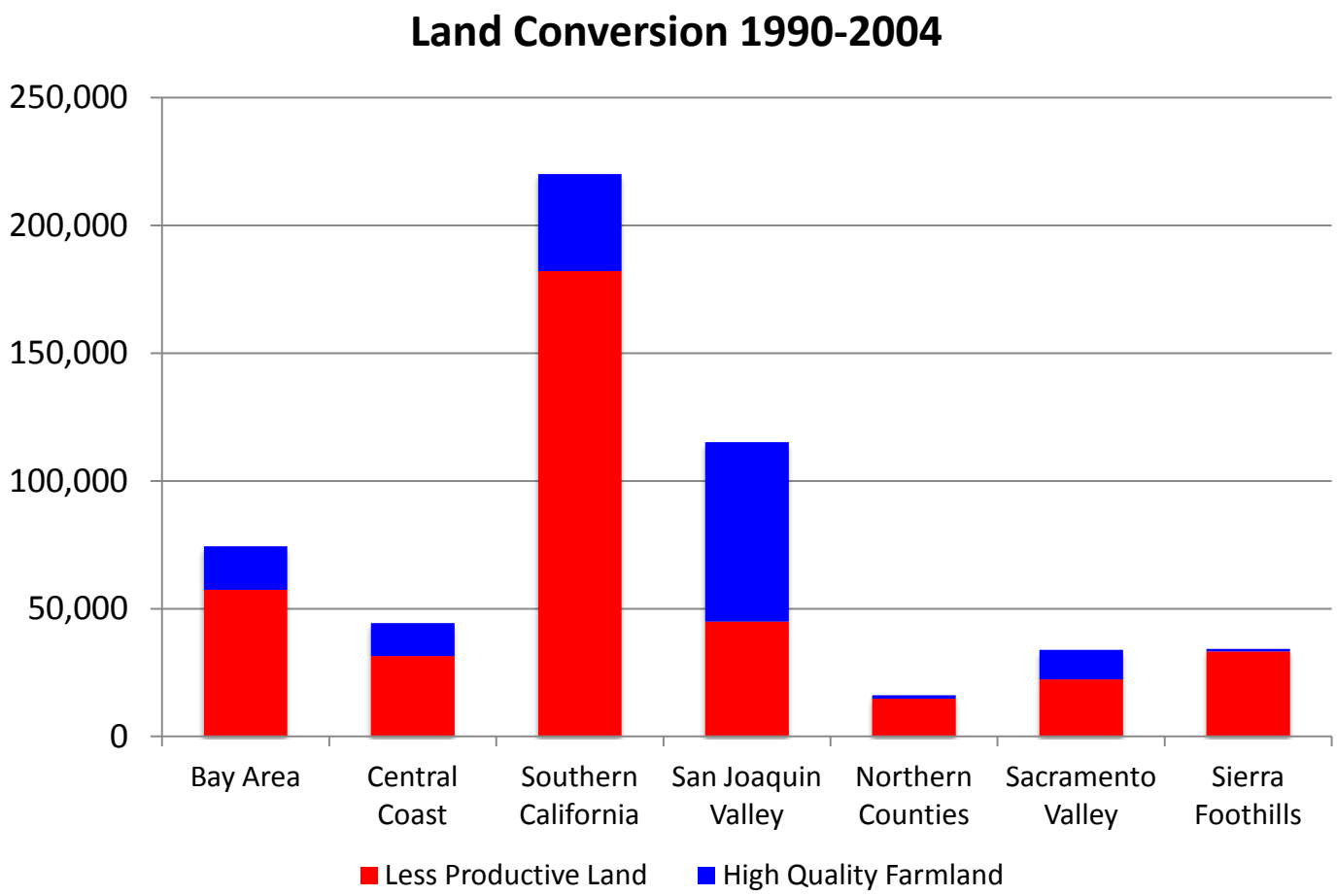
What's Happening to California Farmland And What Can We Do About It?

American Farmland Trust
Saving the Land that Sustains Us



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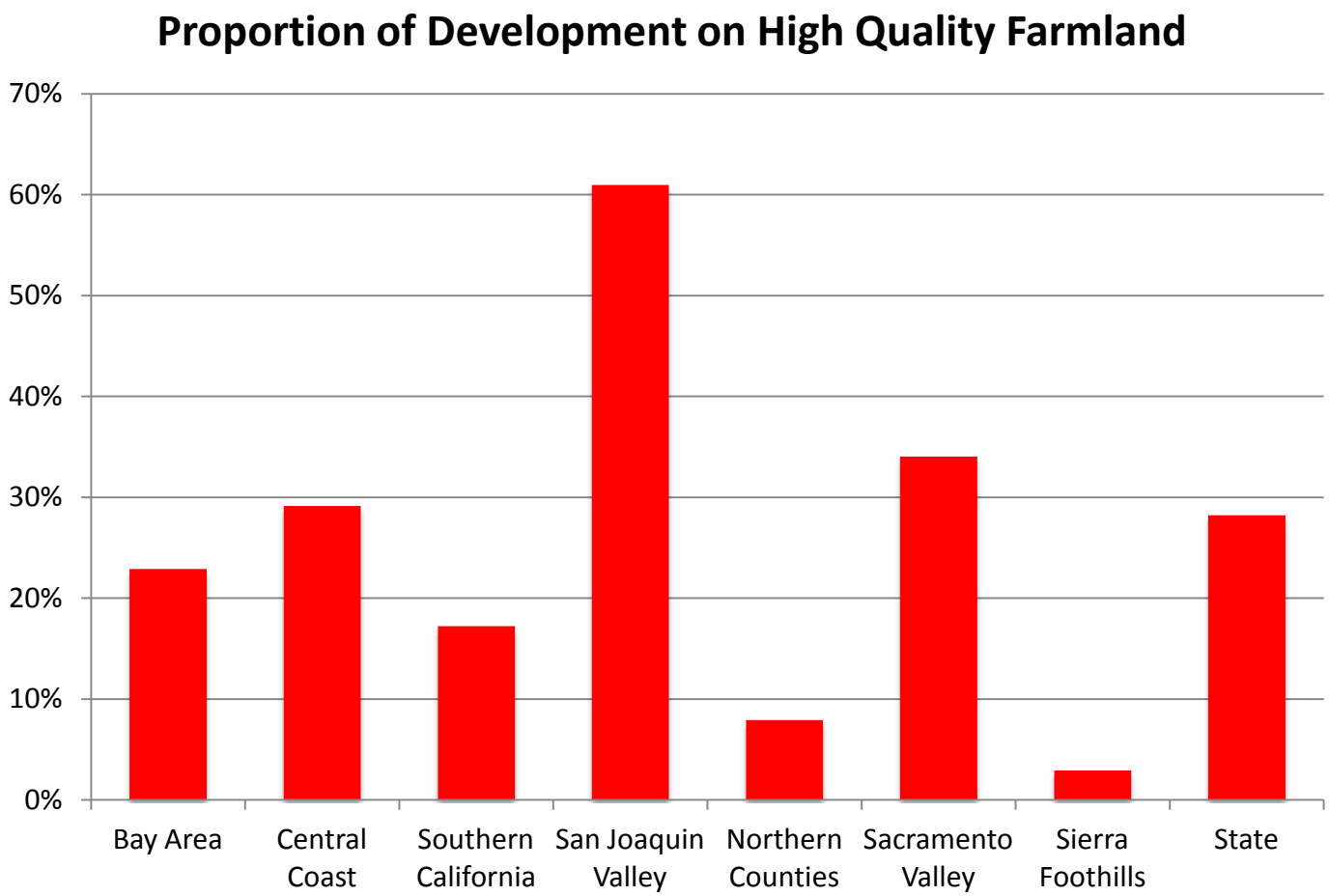

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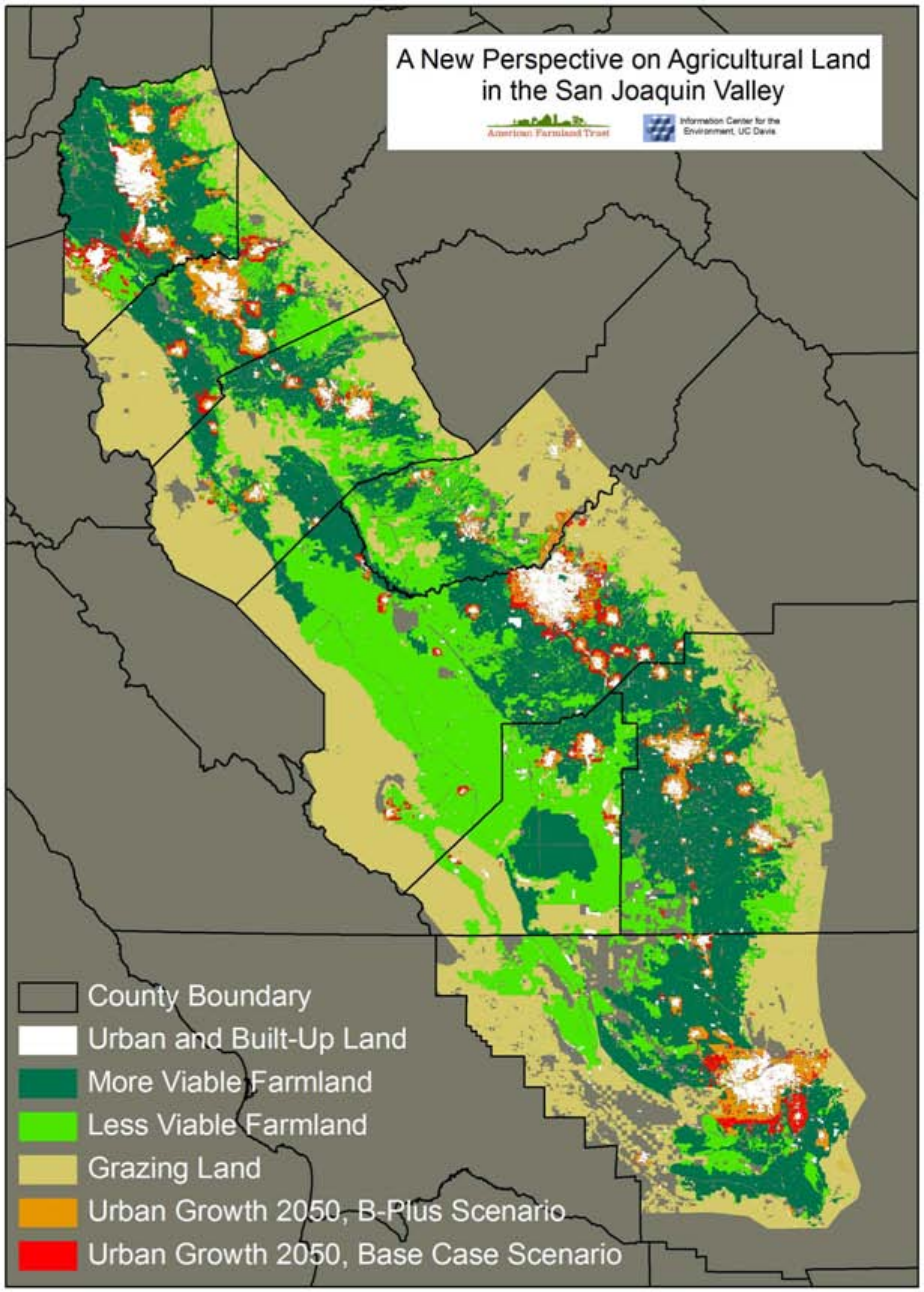

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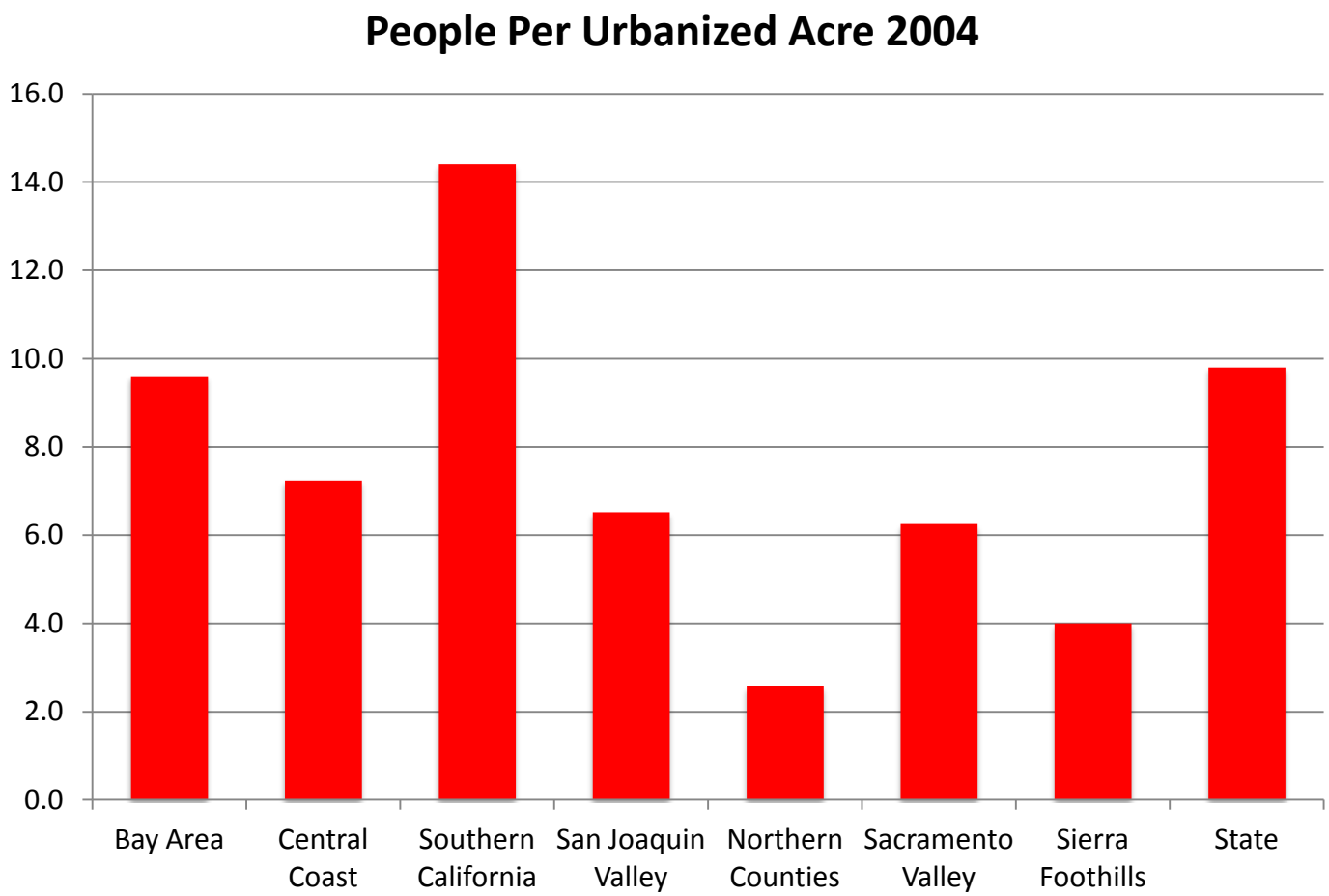
SAVING THE LAND THAT SUSTAINS US



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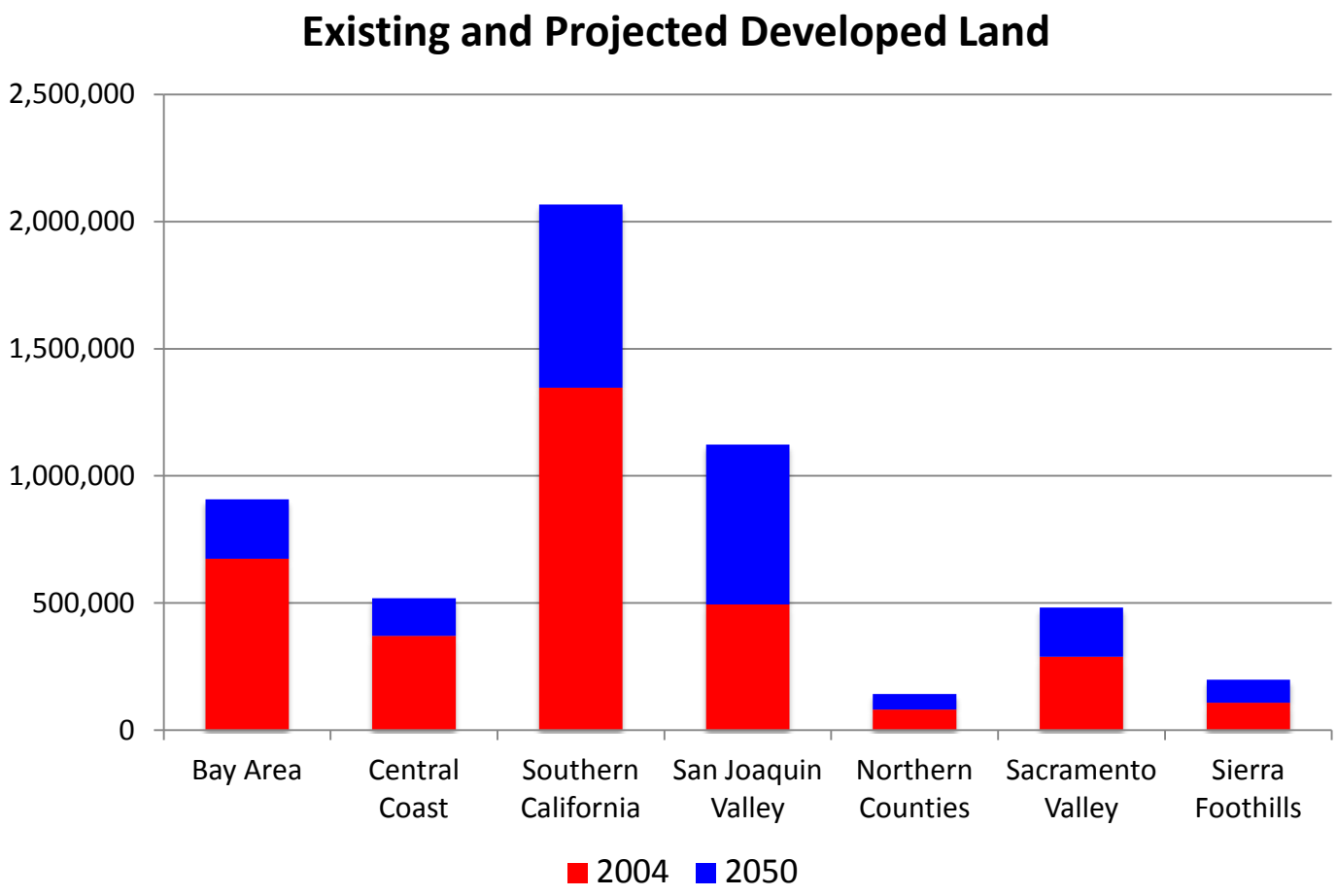

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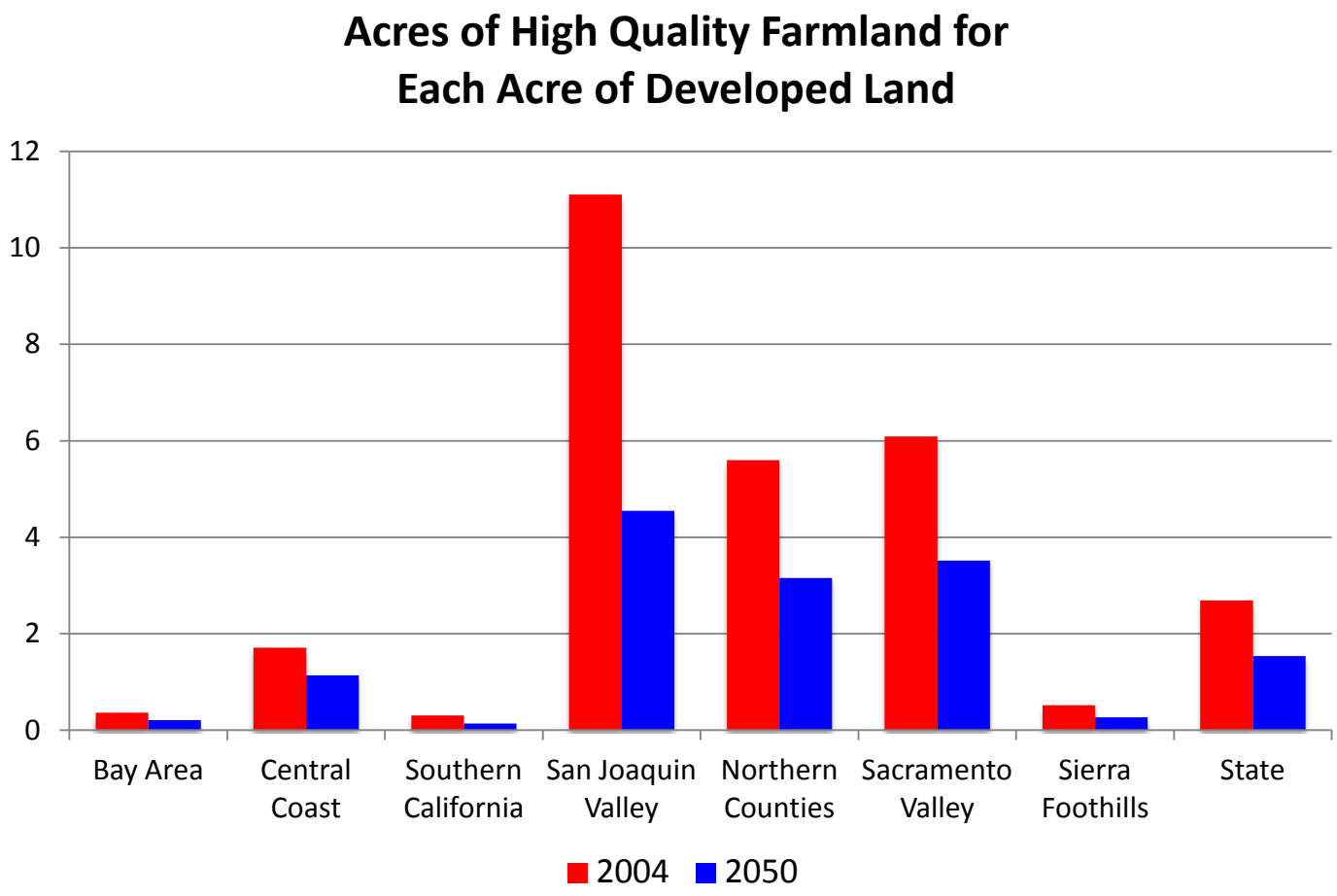

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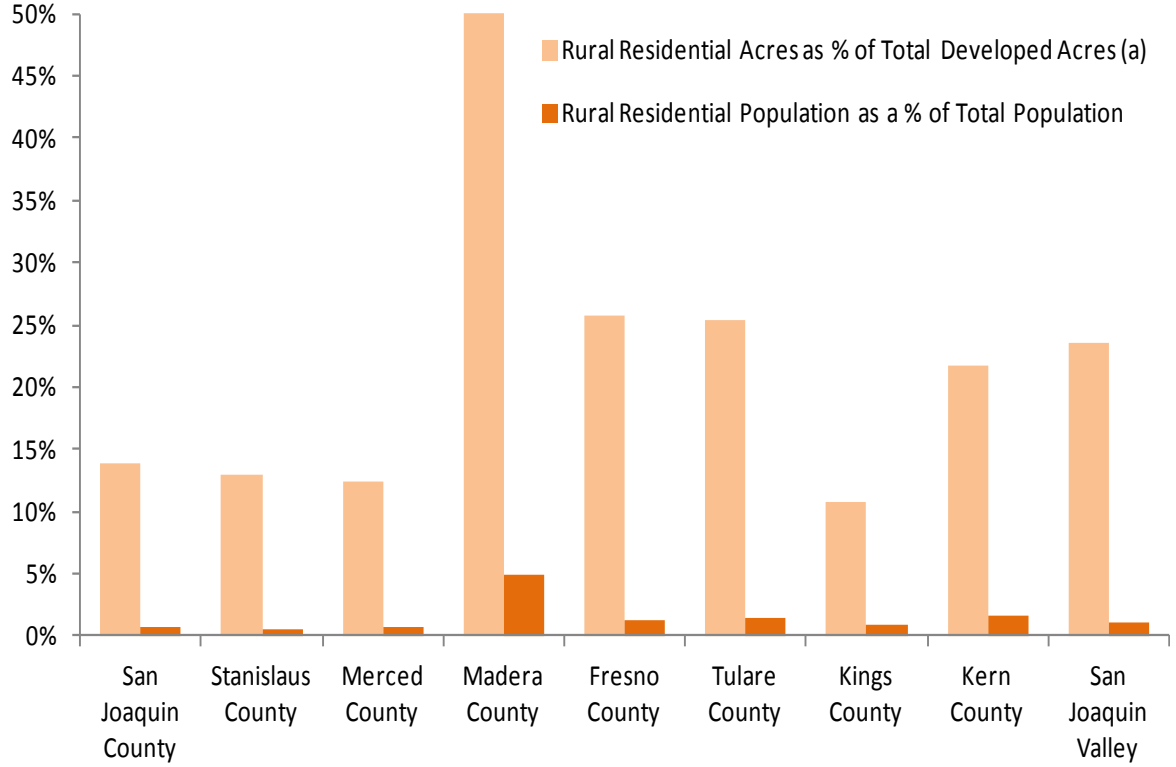

Notes: (a) The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program considerrs rural residential as residential areas of 1 to 5 structures per 10 acres.
Sources: CA Department of Finance, 2010; CA Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2008

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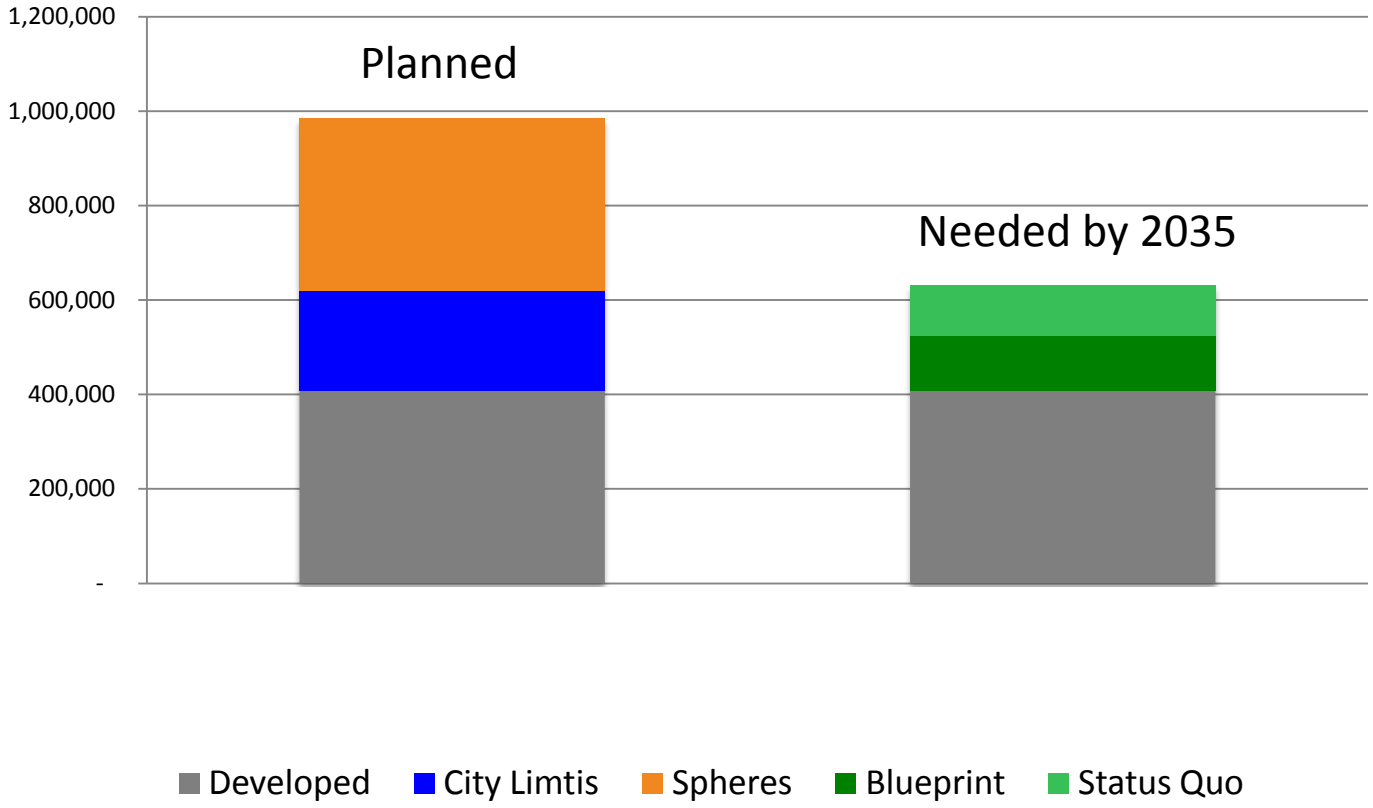
Acres of Land Needed for Development vs. Areas Planned for Development in the San Joaquin Valley



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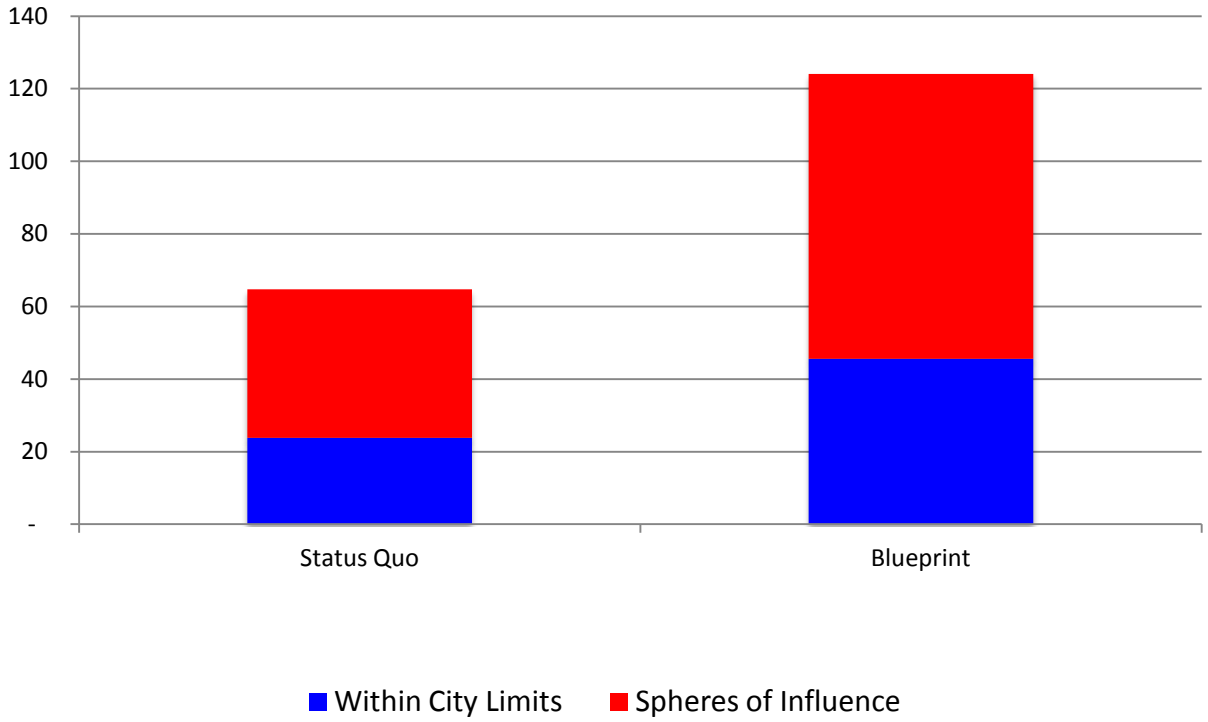
Years of Development That Can Be Accommodated in Planned Growth Areas in the San Joaquin Valley



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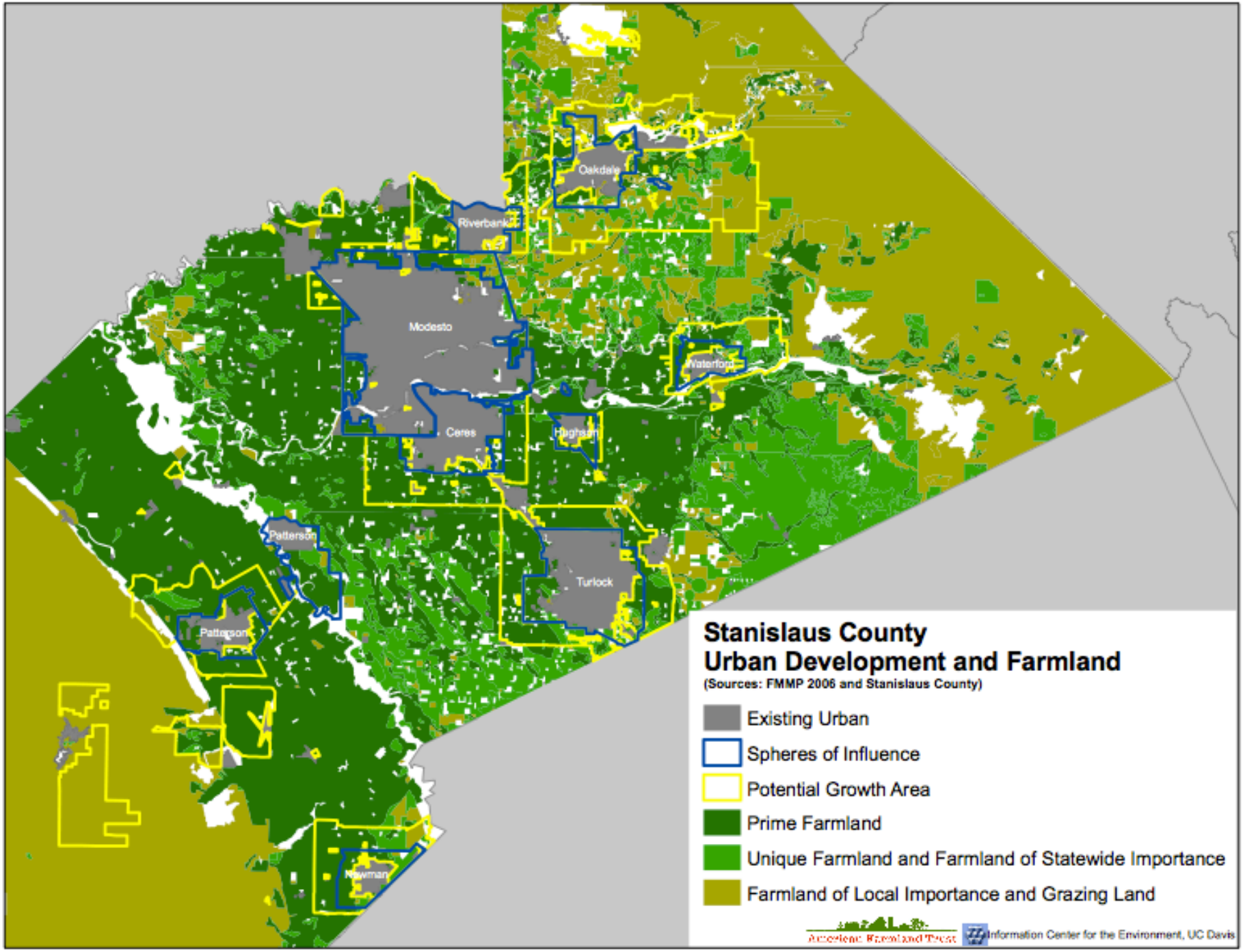
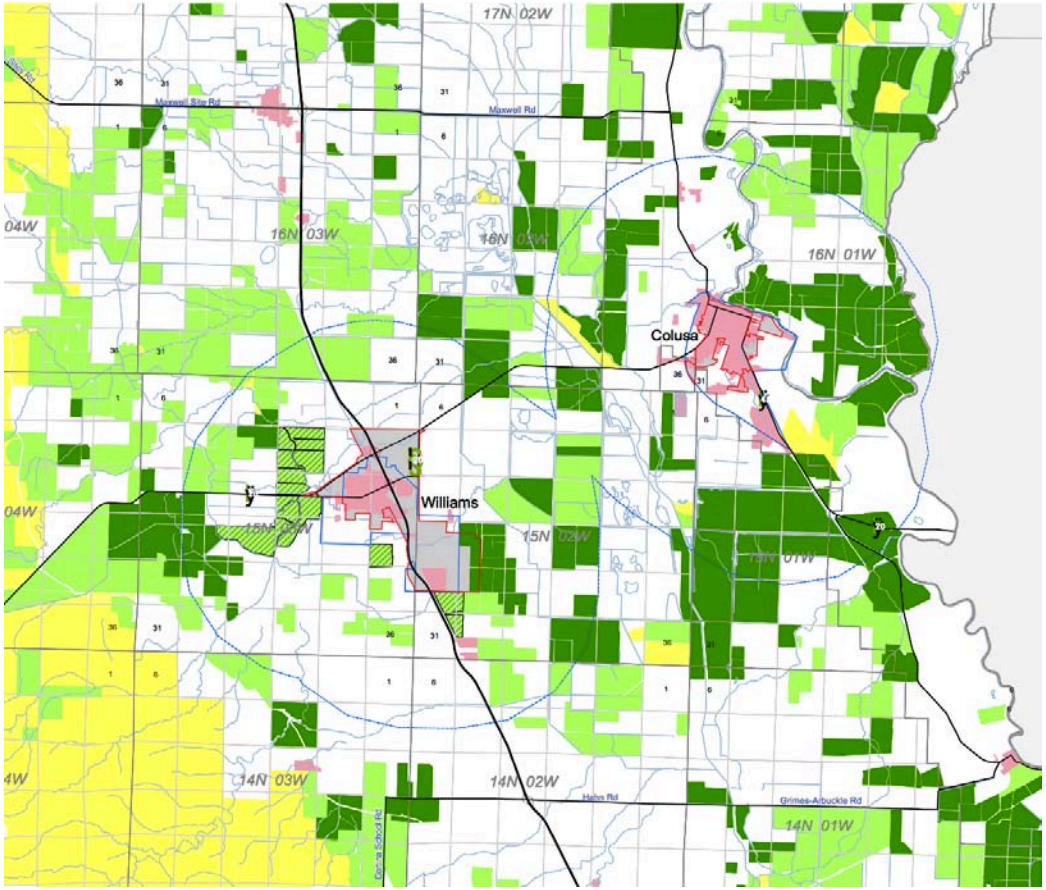

Oakdale
Riverbank
Modesto
Waterford
Ceres
Hughson
Patterson
Turlock
Patterson
Newman
Stanislaus County
Urban Development and Farmland
(Sources: FMMP 2006 and Stanislaus County)
Existing Urban
Spheres of Influence
Potential Growth Area
Prime Farmland
Unique Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance
Farmland of Local Importance and Grazing Land
American Farmland Trust
Information Center for the Environment, UC Davis

Williamson Act Enrollment



Colusa County

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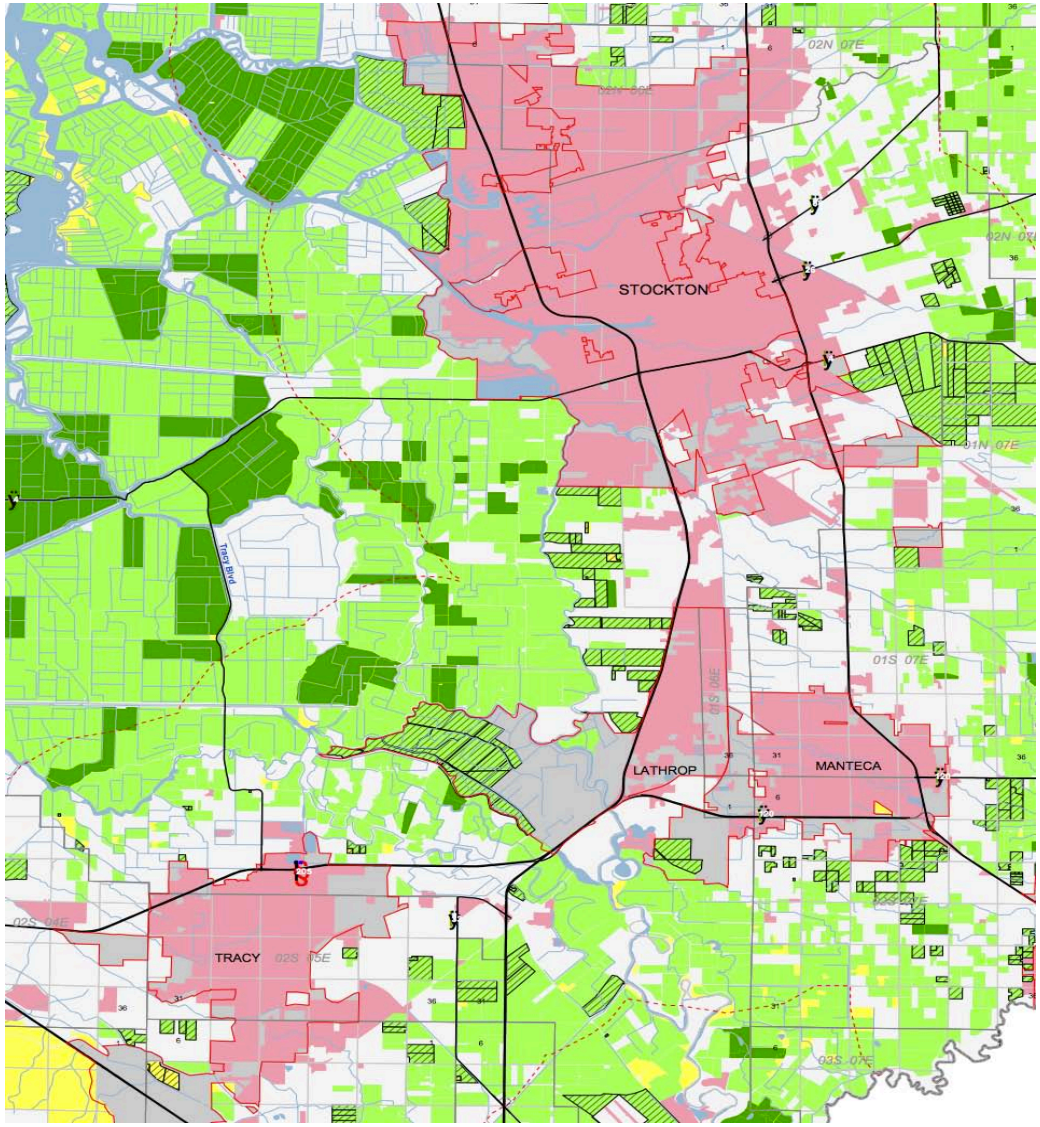

San Joaquin County

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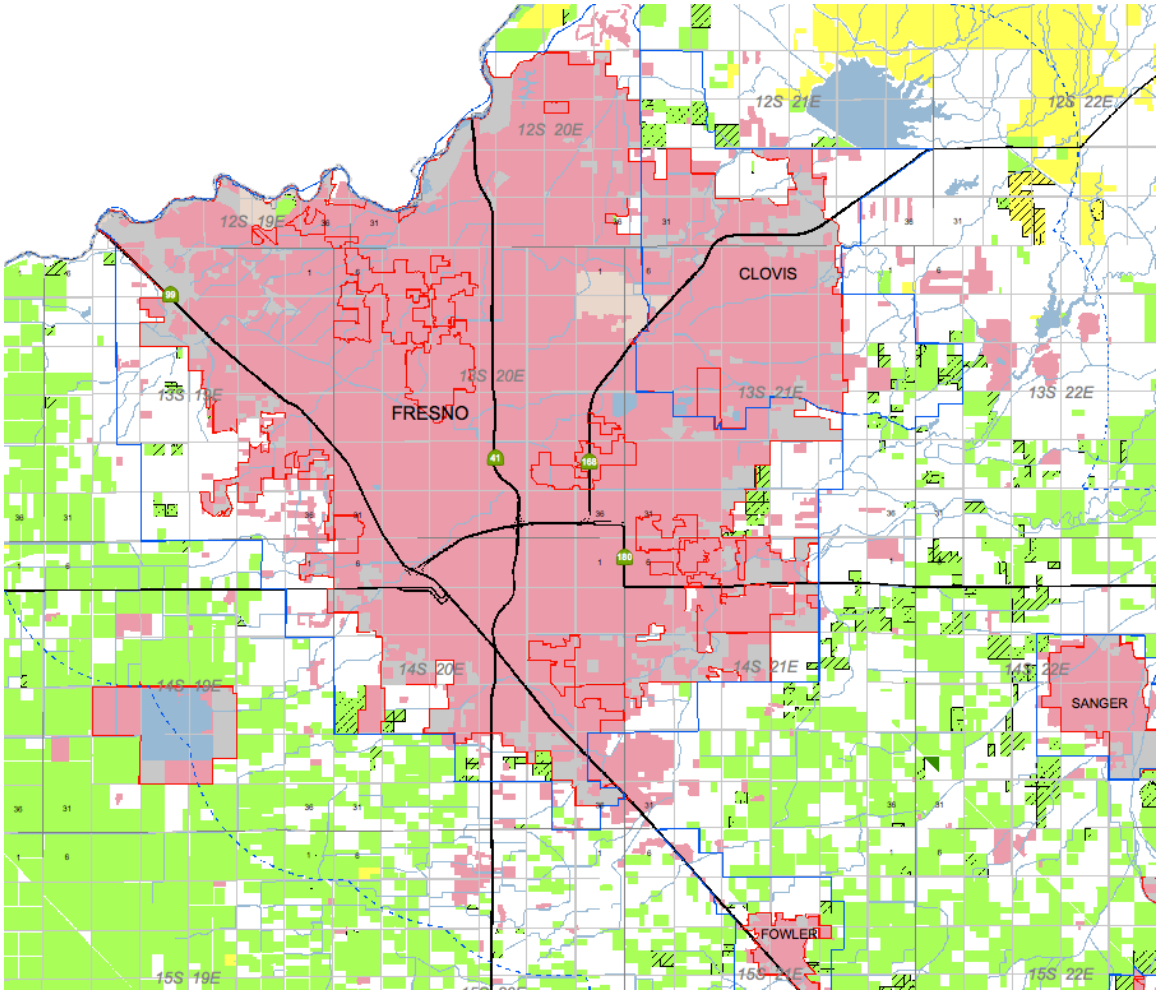

Fresno County

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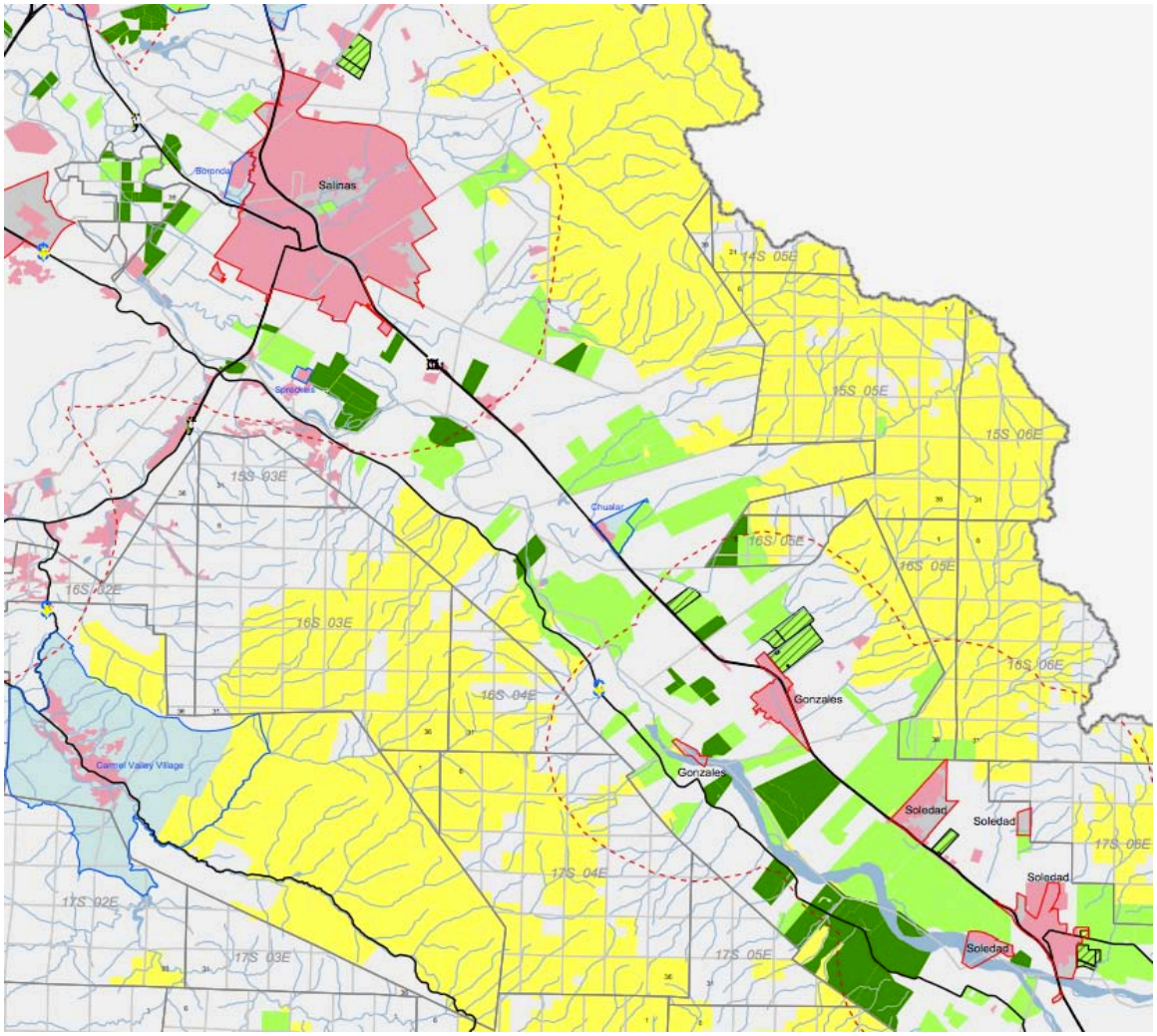

Monterey County

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Water?

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Potential Impact of Climate Change

Reduction in crop yields (San Joaquin Valley)

Orchards	9%
Grapes	6%
Citrus	18%

Reduction in suitable areas for some tree fruit and nut crops

Warmer winters – 23 to 46% less land suitable for walnuts, apricots, plums & peaches (minimum 700 chill hours)

Reduction in available water (California)

Agriculture	21%
Urban	0.7%

Consequent reduction in agricultural land (Central Valley) 18.7%

R. Howitt, et al., Climate Change, Markets and Technology
E. Luedeling, et al., Climatic Changes Lead to Declining Winter Chill for Fruit and Nut Trees in California during 1950–2099

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Strategies for Effective Agricultural Land Conservation

- Set clear land & water conservation goals
- Grow efficiently – up, not out
- Stabilize urban edges
- Discourage ranchettes & solar conversion of prime farmland
- Provide real incentives for long-term land conservation
- Encourage environmental stewardship
- Maintain water supplies
- Strengthen agricultural economic viability

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No Farms
No Food