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FIGURES

Figure 4.2-1 FMMP Land Use Designations in the Project Area

Agricultural Resources

This section evaluates the potential direct and indirect impacts from development under the 2005 LRDP on regional and on-campus agricultural resources, including designated farmland and land zoned for agricultural use or under Williamson Act contract. Public comments received in response to the Notice of Preparation for this EIR did not raise any issues concerning impacts on agricultural resources.

4.2.1 Environmental Setting

Because of its historic and economic importance, agricultural land has been subject to protection by both state and federal entities. Consequently, this section discusses not only the physical environment related to agricultural resources, but also provides background on governmental policies related to agricultural lands.

4.2.1.1 Study Area

For purposes of evaluating direct and indirect impacts of the 2005 LRDP on agricultural resources, the study area is defined to include the approximately 2,020-acre main campus site¹ and all lands within 1 mile of the campus boundary. The study area also includes the 2300 Delaware Avenue property and all lands within 1 mile of that property.

4.2.1.2 Regulatory Background

State Programs

The California Department of Conservation is charged with developing programs for the protection of the agricultural resources of the state. Based on data from the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the California Department of Conservation has developed a Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) to classify agricultural soil types based on their ability to sustain agricultural crops (CDC 2003). The FMMP was created to assess the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural lands to deal with the loss of important farmland to development. The FMMP produces Important Farmland maps and statistical data for every county in the state that show the amount of land under agricultural and nonagricultural land use categories. The Department of Conservation defines the following categories for purposes of FMMP Important Farmland maps:

- **Prime Farmland** is land with the best combination of physical and chemical features for the long-term production of agricultural crops. This land can economically produce sustained high yields when treated and managed according to modern farming methods. The land must have been used for the production of irrigated crops at some time during the two update cycles prior to the mapping date.

¹ Throughout this section, “campus” refers to the main campus. The property at 2300 Delaware Avenue, although part of the UC Santa Cruz campus, is referred to by its street address.

- **Farmland of Statewide Importance** is land with a good combination of physical and chemical features but with minor shortcomings such as greater slopes or with less ability to hold and store moisture. Crops must have been grown on the land at some time prior to the mapping date.
- **Unique Farmland** is land with lesser-quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural cash crops. This land is usually irrigated but may include nonirrigated orchards. Crops must have been grown on the land at some time prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Local Importance** is pastureland and other agricultural land identified by the local jurisdiction as being important.
- **Grazing Land** is land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.
- **Urban and Built-Up** is land occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel.
- **Other Land** is land that does not meet the criteria of any other category.
- **Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use** is existing farm land, grazing land, and vacant areas that have a permanent commitment for development.

The FMMP updates maps every two years. The mapping program is used under CEQA and other state laws (including Government Code Section 65561) to measure the impact of eliminating different kinds of lands on the production of food and other agricultural products. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines also recommends the use of FMMP mapping for the evaluation of impacts on agricultural resources.

California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

The California Land Conservation Act (LCA), better known as the Williamson Act, allows for property taxation based on agricultural productivity and not on surrounding urban land values for lands that are under Williamson Act contracts. Due to the specific tax-exempt status of the University of California, land owned by the University is not subject to Williamson Act land use/tax contracts.

Local Programs

Because of their interest in agricultural open space protection, and because significant portions of income and employment in many counties of California are derived from agriculture, local governments have also developed agricultural land protection tools in the form of general plan policies and zoning. As a State entity, the University is not subject to such local land use policies and laws. Nevertheless, the University seeks to work cooperatively with the County and the City to ensure that, where feasible, campus land uses and policies are consistent with local plans and policies for adjacent noncampus lands.

Santa Cruz County Programs. The Santa Cruz County General Plan (County of Santa Cruz 2005a) includes numerous goals and policies to protect and preserve agricultural resources, including the policies for the protection of coastal agriculture summarized below:

- *All lands designated as Agricultural Resource shall be maintained in an Agricultural Land Use designation, unless the property is included in public park or biotic reserve and assigned as Parks, Recreation and Open Space (O-R), Resource Conservation (O-C), or Public Facility (P) land use designations. (Policy 5.13.3)*

- *Maintain a Commercial Agricultural (CA) Zone District for application to commercial agricultural lands that are intended to be maintained exclusively for long-term commercial agricultural use. Allow principal permitted uses in the CA Zone District to include only agricultural pursuits for the commercial cultivation of plant crops, including food, flower, and fiber crops and raising of animals including grazing and livestock production. (Policy 5.13.5)*
- *Encourage energy-efficient and resource protection agricultural practices such as organic farming, integrated pest management, biodynamic cultivation and utilization of agricultural wastes for on-site energy production. (Policy 5.13.12)*
- *Encourage the pursuit of agriculture, particularly tree crops and open field horticulture, to provide visually pleasing open space. (Policy 5.14.6)*
- *Require large scale agricultural structures, such as greenhouses, packing sheds, and closed storage structures to minimize their visual impact on designated scenic roads, beaches, or recreation facilities. Visual impacts shall be minimized by locating structures within or near existing groups of structures; using materials and colors which blend with the building cluster or the natural vegetative cover of the site (except greenhouses); and/or using landscaping to screen or soften the appearance of structures. Prohibit location of such structures where they would block public ocean views. Shoreline facility structures shall be well screened. (Policy 5.14.11)*

City of Santa Cruz Program. The City of Santa Cruz General Plan Agricultural Element includes the following goal:

- Protect the quality of, and prevent significant new incursion of urban development into areas designated as open space or agricultural lands.

The City of Santa Cruz General Plan also contains other policies for the protection of agriculture. City Land Use Policy 3.1.3 supports County of Santa Cruz policies and programs aimed at preservation of agricultural/grazing land. The City Land Use Policy 3.1.3.1 encourages organic farming practices on agricultural lands.

4.2.1.3 Conditions at and Around UC Santa Cruz

Figure 4.2-1, *FMMP Designations in the Project Area*, presents the Santa Cruz County Important Farmlands on and in the vicinity of the campus as designated in the California Department of Conservation FMMP.

Main Campus

According to the FMMP, there is no Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local Importance on the main campus. The Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems farms approximately 25 acres in the lower campus. Approximately 16 acres of this land are designated Unique Farmland in the FMMP. Unique Farmland is land with lesser quality soils used for the production of cash crops. On the campus, this land is used for agriculture and for research, training, and teaching concerning organic production methods.

The rest of the main campus lands are classified as Grazing Land, Other Land, and Urban and Built-Up Land. The lower campus has about 270 acres of Grazing Land, of which 190 acres are leased to a rancher for cattle grazing. Grazing provides vegetation management and fire hazard reduction benefits to the campus. In addition, approximately 80 acres in the far northwestern corner of the campus in the Marshall Field area are also designated Grazing Land. Approximately 970 acres of land in the upper campus and north campus, approximately 50 acres in the central campus, and approximately 23 acres in the vicinity of the Arboretum in the south campus are designated in the FMMP as Other Land, the designation used mainly for forested areas. The central and lower campus includes approximately 357 acres of Urban and Built-Up Land.

2300 Delaware Avenue

The FMMP designates this 18-acre property as Urban and Built-Up Land.

Lands Adjacent to the Main Campus and 2300 Delaware Avenue

According to the FMMP, there is no Prime Farmland or Unique Farmland mapped within 1 mile of the campus boundary. Forested lands adjoining the campus to the north, east, and west are designated Other Land. Some grazing land is identified within Wilder Ranch State Park. The lands to the south and southeast of the campus, which are mostly residential and commercial properties, are classified almost entirely as Urban and Built-Up Land, with some smaller parcels of Other Land in the vicinity of Moore Creek in west Santa Cruz. The Cave Gulch neighborhood is mapped as Other Land. A small area (about 17.5 acres) on Golf Club Drive north of Harvey West Park is mapped as Farmland of Statewide Importance, and another parcel (about 36 acres) to the east of the previous parcel is designated as Prime Farmland.

Land to the east of 2300 Delaware Avenue is designated Urban and Built-Up Land, as it is mostly developed with industrial/commercial/institutional uses and some residential uses. The parcels immediately west and south of the property, which include Antonelli Pond and the Moore Creek Preserve, and the Natural Bridges State Beach, are designated Other Land, as are also other undeveloped parcels west of Antonelli Pond. The UC Santa Cruz Marine Science Campus, the DeAnza Santa Cruz trailer park, and urban development along Shaffer Road north of the railroad tracks are designated as Urban and Built-Up Land. The Younger Ranch lands west of the Marine Science Campus (about 2,000 feet from 2300 Delaware Avenue) are designated Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.

4.2.2 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

4.2.2.1 Standards of Significance

The following standards of significance are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. For the purposes of this EIR, the project would have a significant impact with regard to agricultural resources if it would:

- Convert to nonagricultural use Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Important Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency.

- Involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland considered Prime, Unique, or of Statewide Importance to nonagricultural use.

4.2.2.2 CEQA Checklist Items Adequately Addressed in the Initial Study

- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

The 2005 LRDP identifies land use changes only for land owned by the University of California. The University of California is not subject to city or county zoning. Due to the specific tax-exempt status of the University of California, land owned by the University of California is not subject to Williamson Act land use/tax contracts. Accordingly, the 2005 LRDP would not conflict with existing zoning or with Williamson Act contracts. No additional analysis is required.

4.2.2.3 Analytical Method

To evaluate direct impacts on agricultural resources, the development area map that identifies new lands to be developed under the 2005 LRDP was superimposed on the FMMP map for the study area to determine the acreage of land that would be converted to nonagricultural uses. To evaluate indirect impacts, the FMMP map for the areas surrounding the campus was examined for the presence of Important Farmland.

4.2.2.4 2005 LRDP Impacts and Mitigation Measures

LRDP Impact AG-1: Development under the 2005 LRDP would not convert any lands on campus identified as Important Farmland under the State Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program to nonagricultural uses.

Significance: No impact

LRDP Mitigation: Mitigation not required

Residual Significance: Not applicable

Based on the Important Farmland map produced by the California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection under the FMMP, no part of the UC Santa Cruz campus has been designated as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. A 16-acre parcel of Unique Farmland is located at the southern end of campus near the main entrance. As stated earlier, this parcel is farmed by the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems. The area that is farmed is designated on the 2005 LRDP land use plan as Site Research and Support. This designation would ensure that the land remains in agricultural use through 2020, and the parcel of Unique Farmland within the CASFS would not be converted to other uses under the proposed 2005 LRDP.

Development within the central campus under the 2005 LRDP would convert approximately 30 acres out of the 370 acres on the campus that are designated as Grazing Land under the FMMP.² This is not, however, considered a significant impact because Grazing Land by definition is not Important Farmland. Furthermore, even after this conversion, ample land would be available on the campus for continued grazing which, in any case is conducted mainly for fire hazard reduction and not as a farming activity.

The 18-acre parcel at 2300 Delaware Avenue is not designated Important Farmland; therefore, there would be no direct impact from the redevelopment of that parcel under the 2005 LRDP.

Much of the forested land in the central, northern and upper campus meets the definition of timberland under the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act, which defines "timberland" as "land...which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of any commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products...." Timberland is not considered to be farmland. The potential impacts of the proposed 2005 LRDP with respect to conversion of potential timberlands to other uses are addressed in Section 4.4.2.6, *Biological Resources*, in Volume I of this EIR, and in other pertinent sections.

In summary, the proposed project would not have a significant impact with respect to conversion of Important Farmland to non-agricultural uses, and no mitigation is required.

LRDP Impact AG-2: Development under the 2005 LRDP would not result in changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use.

Significance: No impact

LRDP Mitigation: Mitigation not required

Residual Significance: Not applicable

Indirect impacts on agricultural lands can result under two types of conditions: (1) Urban development can place pressure on adjacent agricultural lands to convert to nonagricultural uses; and (2) location of urban uses adjacent to existing agricultural uses can create conflicts between the two types of uses, which can, in extreme cases, result in the abandonment of agriculture in the zone of conflict. Such indirect impacts are considered unlikely to result from campus development under the 2005 LRDP for a number of reasons. As described in Section 4.2.1.2, *Regulatory Background*, no lands within a 1-mile radius of the campus are designated Important Farmland; the designations are Other Land, Grazing Land, or Urban and Built-Up Land. Furthermore, most of the land adjoining the campus is within state or city parks and are unlikely to be developed for other uses. With respect to conflict between campus and off-campus agricultural uses, there are no on-going agricultural operations on any of the lands that adjoin the campus, other than grazing on the grasslands to the west of the campus. While a parcel of land that is currently being used for agricultural purposes east of Pogonip City Park is classified as Farmland of Statewide Importance, this parcel is too far from the campus to be indirectly affected by any development on the campus. Note that conversion of Important Farmland on account of pressure for new housing is discussed below under LRDP Impact AG-3. There is agricultural land within 1 mile of 2300 Delaware Avenue

² Note that the FMMP designates some of the grasslands on the campus as Other Land and therefore the reported total average of grazing lands (340 acres) is less than the grassland acreage reported in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*.

property outside the Santa Cruz city limits. This land, the Younger Ranch, is protected from conversion to non-agricultural uses by County land use policies. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to indirect conversion of farmland, and no mitigation is required.

4.2.2.5 Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

LRDP Impact AG-3: Growth under the 2005 LRDP, in conjunction with other growth in the region, would not result in the conversion of substantial acreages of Important Farmlands to nonagricultural uses.

Significance: Less than significant

LRDP Mitigation: Mitigation not required

Residual Significance: Not applicable

As discussed above under LRDP Impacts AG-1 and AG-2, development on the campus under the 2005 LRDP would not directly or indirectly result in the conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural uses, and therefore would not directly contribute to the cumulative loss of Important Farmland in the county.

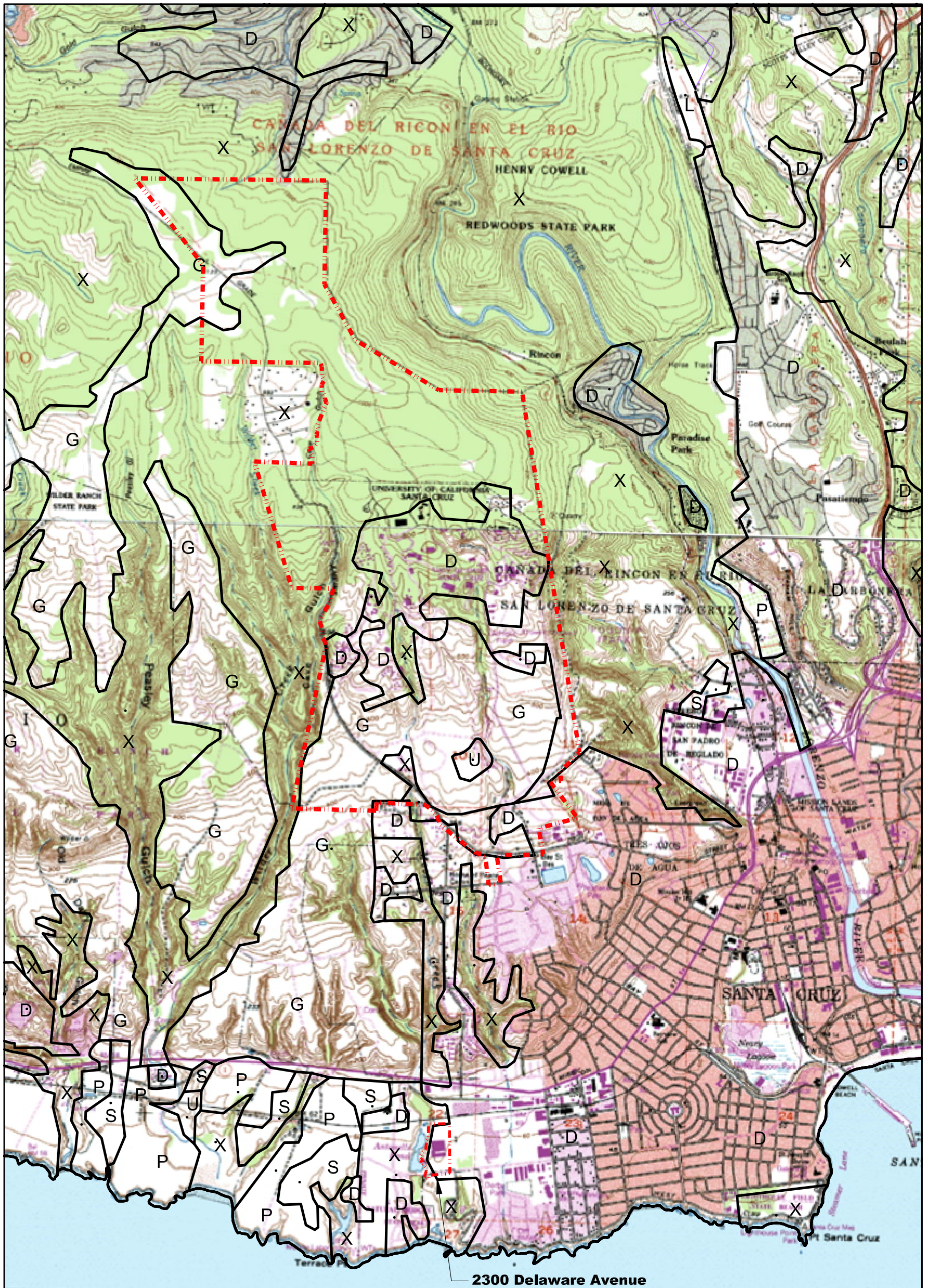
As discussed in Section 4.11, *Population and Housing* (Volume II), new population would be added to the region as a result of campus growth under the 2005 LRDP. This population, coupled with the non-UC-related growth, would increase the demand for housing, retail, and other services in the study area communities. An examination of the housing elements and General Plans of the affected cities and the county reveals that these communities expect to handle the demand for housing through 2007 by infilling and increasing the density of development rather than by annexation of land, especially agricultural land (City of Santa Cruz 2003; City of Capitola 2004; County of Santa Cruz 2005b). Furthermore, the County General Plan states specifically that prime agricultural lands and lands that are economically productive when used for agriculture shall be preserved for agricultural use (County of Santa Cruz 1994). Therefore, the conversion of agricultural lands in the county to nonagricultural uses in the near term is considered unlikely.

Information regarding housing and other urban development beyond 2007 for the affected cities and the unincorporated communities in the county is not available, and it is possible that as the last remaining parcels of undeveloped or underutilized land within urban areas are developed through 2007, additional urban development would occur on other lands adjoining the communities. Review of the Important Farmland mapping for the areas surrounding the city of Santa Cruz and other communities including Capitola, Live Oaks, Soquel, Aptos, Scotts Valley, and Felton shows that the surrounding undeveloped lands near these communities are almost entirely Other Lands (forested areas) or Grazing Lands. Parcels of Prime Farmland or other Important Farmlands are limited to the lands on the coastal terraces between the ocean and Highway 1 to the west of Santa Cruz and additional parcels between the highway and the coast south of Aptos, one parcel within the city of Santa Cruz, and a number of parcels in the Soquel Valley. The parcels located in the Coastal Zone are afforded protection from urban development both under the County General Plan and under the California Coastal Act. Therefore, the likelihood that these coastal agricultural lands would be converted to urban uses is very low. A small parcel of Important

Farmland that is inland in the City of Santa Cruz could potentially be converted, but this acreage is small (about 17.5 acres), and should this parcel be converted, the loss would be small and the cumulative impact on Important Farmland would be less than significant. Additional parcels of Important Farmland in the Soquel Valley could experience development pressures; however, given the County General Plan policy to protect agricultural resources and the County of Santa Cruz's growth management ordinance, it is considered unlikely that these areas would be converted to urban uses. California Department of Conservation FMMP data for the county show that the acres of Important Farmland within the county have increased by about 1,500 acres between 1984 and 2002 (CDC 2005). This suggests that historically, urbanization in the county has not occurred by converting significant acreages of Important Farmland. It is anticipated that this trend will continue. In summary, the proposed 2005 LRDP would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact associated with the conversion of Important Farmland.

4.2.3 References

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LEGEND:

- S - Farmland of Statewide Importance
- U - Unique Farmland
- G - Grazing Farmland
- D - Urban and Built-Up
- X - Other Land
- - - UC Santa Cruz Boundary

FMMP DESIGNATIONS IN PROJECT AREA

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Figure 4.2-1