Sustainable Agricultural Lands
Conservation Program
Climate and California’s Agricultural Land Protection

Kathryn Lyddan, Division Director
Division of Land Resource Protection
California Department of Conservation
California Agriculture

• Largest agricultural producing state in the nation

• California farmers grow over 40% of the nation’s fruits and vegetables and

• 100% of the nation’s almonds, artichokes, figs, olives and walnuts

$20 billion in exports
Agriculture’s Economic Contribution

$46 billion dollars to the state’s economy.

Almost 350,000 people work directly farming.

The agricultural value chain accounted for three million jobs.
California agricultural land resources

One of the few places in the world with a Mediterranean climate

62.9 million acres rangeland
9 million acres of prime farmland

Source: California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
Carbon sequestration potential of California agricultural land

One third of California’s land base is grazing land

We lose more than 16,000 acres a year
Population increase ahead

California’s population is projected to grow from 40 million to 50 million in the next 30 years.
As our housing needs increase, California is losing farmland at an alarming rate

1.1 million acres since 1984
An average of 50,000 acres a year.

Most loss occurs on prime farmland on the valley floors
California’s Climate Policy and the Strategic Growth Council

AB 32

SB 375

Cap and Trade Auctions
• Extended to 2030 by a two-thirds vote of the legislature, which because of California’s tax laws

Strategic Growth Council
• Tasked to incentivize smart growth
Farmland conservation as a climate change strategy

- Research demonstrates the climate change benefits of protecting agriculture.
- Protecting farm and ranch lands to prevent sprawl development and rural ranchettes.
Assemble team of advocacy partners to advance policy in Sacramento – CalCAN, AFT, CAFF

Engage scientific researchers to answer policy makers questions.

Work with state agencies to develop a program that accomplishes policy goals.

Bring in the practitioners to make sure that the program works on the ground.
Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program

Addresses both urban development and rural conservation
Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program

Agricultural Strategies and Outcomes

Agricultural Conservation Easements
Demonstrate agricultural lands are at risk of conversion

Result in quantifiable greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions
Demonstrating Risk of Conversion

All projects must show risk of development
Quantifying the GHG emissions avoided by eliminating development potential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Acres (Within Project Geographic Boundary)</th>
<th>Risk Option</th>
<th>Zoning Category</th>
<th>Average Minimum ft² per Lot</th>
<th>Average Density (Dwelling Units per Acre)</th>
<th>Development Rights Extinguished</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easement Test 1</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>5500</td>
<td>7.92</td>
<td>3136</td>
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\[ \text{X} = \frac{\text{Acres} \times \text{Density}}{} \]

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California’s historical investment in agricultural land protection

Williamson Act since 1965
- Protects over 16,000 acres of agricultural land

California Farmland Conservancy Program
- $86 million since 1996
- Permanently protected 59,000 acres

Williamson Act properties
California Farmland Conservancy Program

- $86 million since 1996
- Permanently protected 59,000 acres
What has SALC funded in the past three years? The statistics.

$76 million in funding

52 easements funded in 27 counties

80,000 acres protected

Elimination of 42 million metric tons of CO2e: the equivalent to removing over 9 million cars from the road for one year.
ACE Project: Monterey County

9,418 acres
Adjacent to the City of Salinas
$CO_2$ estimated reduction: 4,514,980 metric tons.$^1$
Irrigated cropland and rangeland

1- Based on the California Emission Estimator Model (CalEEMOD), version 2016.3.1, for the 30 year CARB-approved quantification methodology.
ACE Project: Solano County

2,204 acres
Within 0.5 miles of the City of Vacaville

$CO_2$ estimated reduction:
4,903,912 metric tons.\(^1\)

Protects both irrigated and range land

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1- Based on the California Emission Estimator Model (CalEEMOD), version 2016.3.1, for the 30 year CARB-approved quantification methodology.
What can we accomplish with steady funding?
Easement Profile: The Gallaghers

Staying on land that’s been in their family for four generations.... benefiting climate, the local economy, historical agriculture use, and the environment
Strategy & Outcome Grant

County of Santa Clara

Development of a regional Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchasing Program
What’s ahead for the SALC program?

Fourth round of funding
• Pre-proposals due May 22
• Final proposals due August 1

Prioritization of projects with sustainable management practices

Building capacity of land trusts and conservation partners
Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program

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