Chapter 7: Agriculture

7.1 Overview and Key findings

- Close to 60 percent of all farmland in the Delta is classified as Prime Farmland, the California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program's highest designated tier.
- Total cropped acreage in 2010 was 423,727 acres, not including approximately 38,000 acres of grazing land.
- The top five Delta crops in terms of acreage are: 1) Corn, 2) Alfalfa, 3) Processing Tomatoes, 4) Wheat, and 5) Wine Grapes.
- Total crop value in 2009 was approximately $702 million. Truck and vineyard crops account for 69 percent of crop revenues on 18 percent of acreage.
- The top five Delta crops in terms of value are: 1) Processing Tomatoes, 2) Wine Grapes, 3) Corn, 4) Alfalfa, and 5) Asparagus.
- The highest per-acre values in the Delta come from truck crops mainly situated in the southern Delta and deciduous crops principally located in the northern Delta.
- The approximately $702 million in Delta crop production and $93 million in Delta animal and animal product revenue has an economic impact of 9,561 jobs, $593 million in value added and $1.416 billion in output in the five Delta counties. Across all of California, the economic impact of Delta agriculture is 12,934 jobs, $819 million in value added, and $1.843 billion in output.
- When related value-added manufacturing such as wineries, nurseries, and dairy products are included with the impact of Delta agriculture, the total economic impact of Delta agriculture is 13,192 jobs, $1.069 billion in value-added, and nearly $2.647 billion in economic output in the five Delta counties. Including value-added manufacturing, the statewide impact of Delta agriculture is 25,125 jobs, $2.136 billion in value-added, and $5.372 billion in economic output.
- The 10 year land allocation forecast in the base case scenario predicts a future increase in vineyards, deciduous, and truck crops, and decreases in grain and pasture crops. Field crops will continue to account for 50 percent or more Delta agriculture acreage for the foreseeable future. This shift of 6 percent of land to higher value crops could lead to an approximately $111 million gain in crop revenues.
- The potential impact of policy changes on Delta salinity is highly uncertain at this time and depends on decisions on water quality standards and the effect of isolated conveyance. A preliminary estimate of losses from increased salinity is between $20 million and $60 million per year. The loss of farmland to construct the conveyance facility is estimated to generate an additional $10 to $15 million in crop losses per year.
- The agricultural impacts of most of the BDCP conservation measures are difficult to quantify due to the lack of precision in site specification and other details. Broad ranges of potential annual crop losses have been calculated from the land requirements and descriptions of easement costs in the draft BDCP.
- Tidal habitat restoration losses range from $18 to $77 million annually with lower losses when restoration is targeted to 8U Sun Marsh.
- Natural Communities Protection losses are estimated to range from $5 to $25 million annually.