

Agricultural Preserve Review Committee Overview



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

May 6, 2024

Williamson Act Program

- Williamson Act program established according to the California Land Conservation Act of 1965
- A voluntary program between private landowners and local governments
- A way to preserve agricultural land by giving a property tax reduction to participating landowners
- SLO County's primary agricultural land protection program



Objectives of the Williamson Act & SLO County Ag Preserve Program

- To protect agricultural lands for continued production of food and fiber and limited types of land devoted to open-space and recreational uses

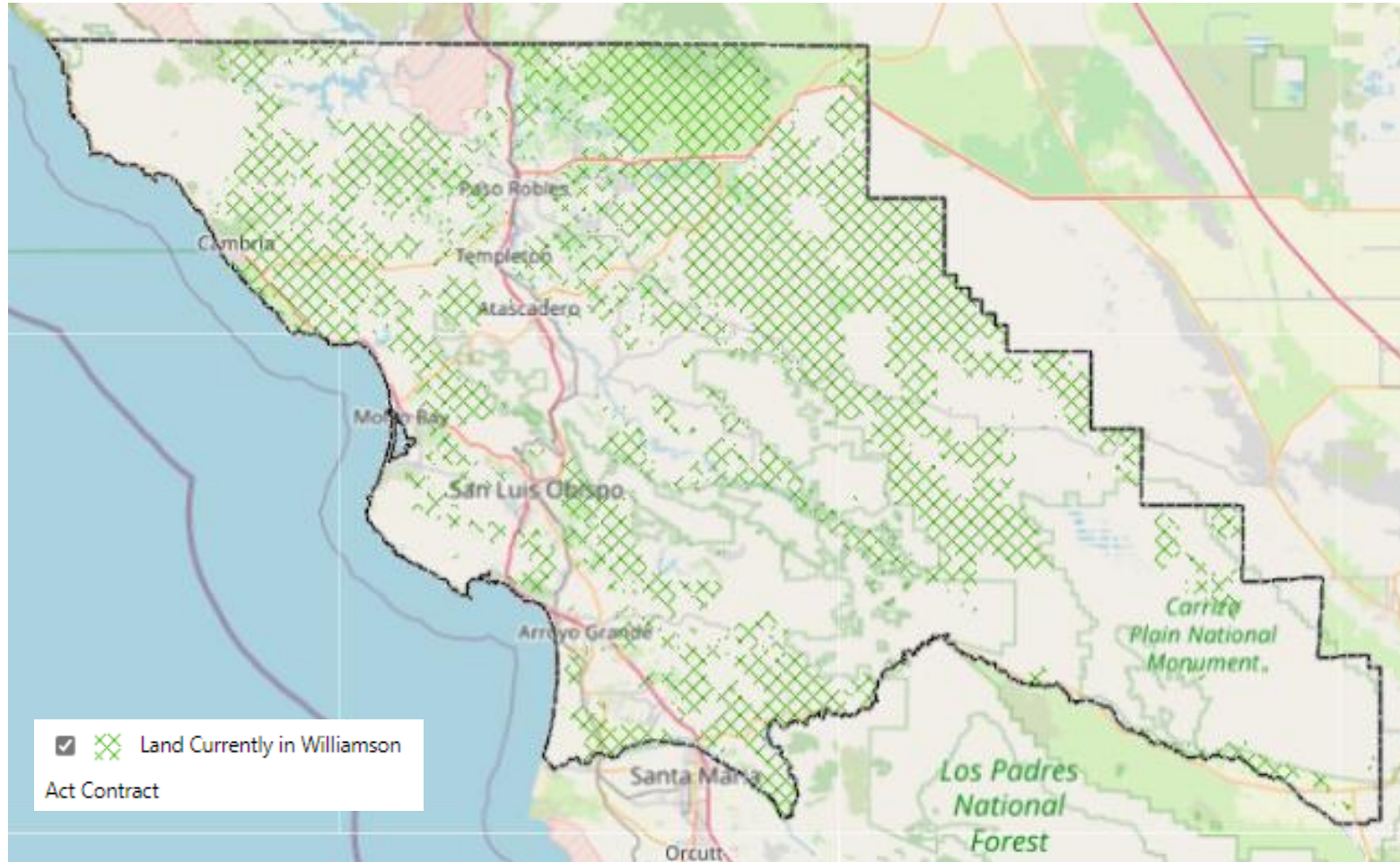


SLO County Ag Preserve Program Implementation

- The County Planning and Building Department provides the primary staff support for administering the program in SLO County, with assistance from the Assessor's, Ag Commissioner's & County Counsel's Offices



795,212 acres under contract countywide



Purpose of SLO County's Rules of Procedure

- To implement the County's agricultural preserve program consistent with the Williamson Act
- To enable voluntary landowner participation
- To establish procedures for entering into monitoring and terminating contracts
- To provide eligibility & land use standards for properties participating in the program



Agricultural Preserve Review Committee

- Primary advisory body for the program
- Role is to monitor the program & periodically review the Rules of Procedure
- Reviews new ag preserve applications
- Reviews preserve/contract amendments
- Comments on development proposals & other matters affecting the program
- Committee representation is broad-based.



Committee Representatives

- Ag Commissioner
- Ag Liaison Advisory Board
- Cattleman's Association
- County Assessor
- County Planning & Building Dept.
- Environmental Org member
- Farm Advisor
- Farm Bureau
- Farm Services Agency
- Land Conservancy
- Public-at-large member
- Soils Science member



Program Eligibility Standards

- Based on NRCS land capability classifications (soil classes) & intensity of existing agricultural uses
- Land with better land capability & more intensive ag uses qualifies for smaller minimum parcel sizes.



Preserve Sizes

- Prime Land preserves must be 40 acres with irrigated Class I or II soils, or other irrigated soils planted in crops producing \$1,000 per acre for 3 of the past 5 years.
- Highly Productive Prime Land preserves must be 20 acres, with 10 of the 20 acres of Class I or II soils fully planted in irrigated crops planted in crops producing \$2,000 or more per acre for 3 of the past 5 years
- Non-prime Land preserves must be 160 acres with Class III or IV soils; or 320 acres with at least 100 acres of land with dry-farm crops or soils moderately-suited for rangeland.



Parcel Sizes for Irrigated Land

- 10 acres of Class I or II soils for program eligibility with 20- or 40-acre minimums for subsequent division or conveyance
- 20 acres of other irrigated soils classes planted in orchards or vineyards for eligibility with 40-acre minimums for division or conveyance
- 40 acres for all other irrigated Class III & IV soils for eligibility, division and conveyance
- 10/20/40 acres for mixed irrigated & non-irrigated uses with 80- or 160-acre minimums for division or conveyance (based on a fractional portion of all land capability and size of agricultural use)



Parcel sizes for Non-Irrigated Soils

- 160 acres of Class III & IV soils for program eligibility with 160-acre minimums for subsequent division or conveyance
- 320 acres of Class VI & VII soils, rated as moderately to well suited as rangeland
- Class VIII soil is not to be used in determining minimum acreage requirements for land qualification. 320 acres of Class VIII soil for division or conveyance.



Questions?



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

www.slocounty.ca.gov