



Report on Agricultural Grading Exemptions

Planning and Development
Long Range Planning Division

Board of Supervisors Hearing
July 12, 2011



Report on Agricultural Grading Exemptions

- Six other counties surveyed: Monterey, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz, Sonoma and Ventura
- Inland and coastal grading regulations were reviewed.
- A representative in each county was contacted.
- The report summarizes agricultural grading exempt from any permits and definitions for each county.



Similarities Among Counties Surveyed

- All counties have agricultural grading exemptions
- All counties exempt routine agricultural practices
- Similar criteria used to allow for exemptions include:
 - steepness of slope
 - amount of cut and fill material
 - distance to sensitive resources



Differences Among Counties Surveyed

- Definition of “grading”
- Specific threshold amounts vary among the counties (i.e. 50 vs. 100 cubic yards of cut and fill).
- Permit triggers unique to some counties include:
 - distance to property line or urban boundary line
 - potential for significant environmental damage
 - depth of water impounding structure
 - grading in new areas
- San Luis Obispo and Ventura counties require written notification for some agricultural grading exemptions.



Chart Summarizing Similar Criteria

County	Written Exemption Required	Common Criteria That Trigger a Permit		
		Slope	Amount of Cut/Fill	Sensitive Resources
Santa Barbara		X	X	X
Monterey		X	X	X
San Diego			X	
San Luis Obispo	X	X	X	
Santa Cruz		X	X	X
Sonoma		X	X	
Ventura	X	X	X	X



Staff Summary and Recommendation

- Santa Barbara County's agricultural grading exemptions and protocols are similar to those in other counties.
- Therefore, Staff does not recommend changing existing protocols or requiring County verification for agricultural grading exemptions.
- Questions?