

Tips for Crafting Effective Farmland Mitigation Measures

- ✓ Identify the reason for mitigation and specify both the mitigation ratio and required number of acres to be preserved.
- ✓ Use enforceable language.
- ✓ Specify caliber of farmland to be preserved (e.g. Prime, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland) and, if multiple types of farmland is to be mitigated, the required mitigation acreage for each type of farmland. Do not use vague language such a “similar to” when defining required quality of mitigation land. Consider use of Land Evaluation Site Assessment to quantify comparability of proposed mitigation site with development site.
http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/Pages/qh_lesa.aspx
- ✓ Specify that both farmland and related resources such as water necessary for agriculture be protected.
- ✓ Specify method(s) for providing mitigation (e.g. conservation easement, mitigation bank credits, in lieu fees, fee title).
- ✓ Specify geographic area where mitigation is to be located. Consider use of performance criteria instead of distinct boundaries to avoid escalating market value of mitigation lands.
- ✓ Identify roles and responsibilities of county/city/agency, project proponent and mitigation holder for implementing the mitigation.



Farmland Mitigation Measure Tips Cont.

- ✓ Require that the project proponent fully fund all costs incurred by the county/city/agency and mitigation holder inclusive of funds for the establishment of an endowment to provide for monitoring, enforcement, and all other services necessary to ensure that conservation purpose of the mitigation lands, conservation easement, or other mitigation tool are maintained in perpetuity.
- ✓ Require mitigation to occur before or concurrent with project's earliest entitlement (e.g. general plan amendment, rezone, tentative map, issuance of conditional use permit). Mitigation should occur early in the development while the intentions and expectations of the city/county/agency, project proponent, and mitigation holder are fresh in everyone's minds and clearly understood.
- ✓ Require early review by county/city/agency and mitigation holder to determine acceptability of proposed mitigation site and/or method.
- ✓ If "stacking" of multiple mitigation objectives (e.g. farmland and biological resources) is proposed, ensure that objectives are compatible and that the mitigation lands/conservation easement area will remain economically viable as farmland.
- ✓ Review all mitigation measures for each project to ensure they are consistent and compatible.

