

## Agricultural Cluster Subdivisions Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### 1. How does agricultural land qualify for a subdivision?

A: Land designated Agriculture qualifies for a subdivision by the size of the property and the intensity of the agricultural activities on the land. These tables show how minimum parcel size is determined for lands designated Agriculture:

Current Agricultural Land Use	Minimum Parcel Size
<b>Irrigated row crops</b> , specialty crops, nurseries, field crops, orchards and vineyards (examples: vegetables, strawberries, cut flowers and flower seed, avocados, kiwi, other fruits and nuts, wine grapes)	40 acres; except parcels may be as small as 20 acres as provided Below ( <i>in italics</i> )
<b>Irrigated pasture</b> , grain and hay (examples: alfalfa, irrigated grain and hay) and Dry Farm orchards, vineyards	40 acres <sup>1</sup> (80 acres) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Dry Farm field crops</b> (examples: beans, specialty field crops) and grain and hay (examples: barley, wheat, oats, hay)	160 acres
<b>Grazing</b>	320 acres
Notes: 1. A larger minimum parcel size (80 acres) may be required where that parcel size will ensure agricultural capability in accordance with the provisions of the Agriculture Preserve Rules of Procedure and the adopted Agriculture and Open Space Element of the general plan	

In addition to the type and acreage of an agricultural use, agricultural lands may qualify for subdivision by the type of soils found on the property:

NRCS Classification	Minimum Parcel Size	
	Irrigated <sup>1</sup>	Non-irrigated
Class I or II	20 <sup>2</sup>	N/A
Class III or IV	40 acres <sup>3</sup> (80 acres)	160 acres
Class Vi, VII or VIII	320	320 acres
Notes: 1. Irrigated - as defined in the Agriculture and Open Space Element (Appendix G-8) using an installed production water source from underlying ground water basins, permitted, riparian or other appropriative water rights that would deliver adequate, reliable water. 2. Proposed parcels may be as small as 20 acres if planted and if all of the criteria in Subsection B.1.b. are met. If the criteria in Subsection B.1.b are not satisfied, a minimum parcel size of at least 40 acres shall be required. 3. A larger minimum parcel size (80 acres) may be required where that parcel size will ensure agricultural capability in accordance with the provisions of the Agriculture Preserve Rules of Procedure and the adopted Agriculture and Open Space Element of the general plan.		

*Proposed parcels less than 40 acres, but no smaller than 20 acres, may be proposed if all of the following criteria are met for each proposed parcel:*

- (1) *the proposed parcels must be Class I or II soils irrigated, or other soils listed as prime by NRCS;*

- (2) *there must be at least 18 acres or 90 percent of the acreage of the total site, whichever is larger, planted in irrigated row crops, specialty crops, field crops, orchards or vineyards (as defined in the preceding Table);*
- (3) *there must be a production water source currently installed;*
- (4) *approval or establishment of more than one residential use (other than farm support quarters) on the parcel will not be requested and cannot be approved.*
- (5) *the resulting parcels must enter into a Williamson Act agricultural preserve contract in accordance with the county Rules of Procedure. Separate sale of parcels of record must be in compliance with Table 1 of the Agriculture Preserve Rules of Procedure.*

## **2. What changes to minor and major Ag Clusters are proposed?**

### **A: “Minor ag clusters”?**

If your land is designated Agriculture and could qualify for a subdivision based on the tables above, you may be able to subdivide under existing rules through either a “minor agricultural cluster subdivision” or a “standard” subdivision. A “standard” subdivision will usually result in 40- 160 acre lot sizes. Minor ag clusters can result in up to 25% more parcels than allowed under a “standard” subdivision and the lot size would be 1- 5 acres instead of 40-160 acres.

### **“Major ag clusters”?**

“Major ag clusters” are currently allowed within 5 miles of certain urban areas. Under the proposed rules, major ag clusters would be allowed within 2 miles of those urban areas.

## **3. Which lands are affected by the proposed deletion of minor ag clusters?**

- A: All of the lands in **light green and dark green on this map** are currently allowed to apply for a “minor” agricultural cluster subdivision under the existing rules. If the proposed ordinance changes are adopted, no minor agricultural cluster subdivisions would be possible. A “standard” subdivision would still be possible in these locations if the site qualifies for subdivision based on the tables above.

## **4. Which lands are affected by the proposed change from 5 miles from an urban area to 2 miles?**

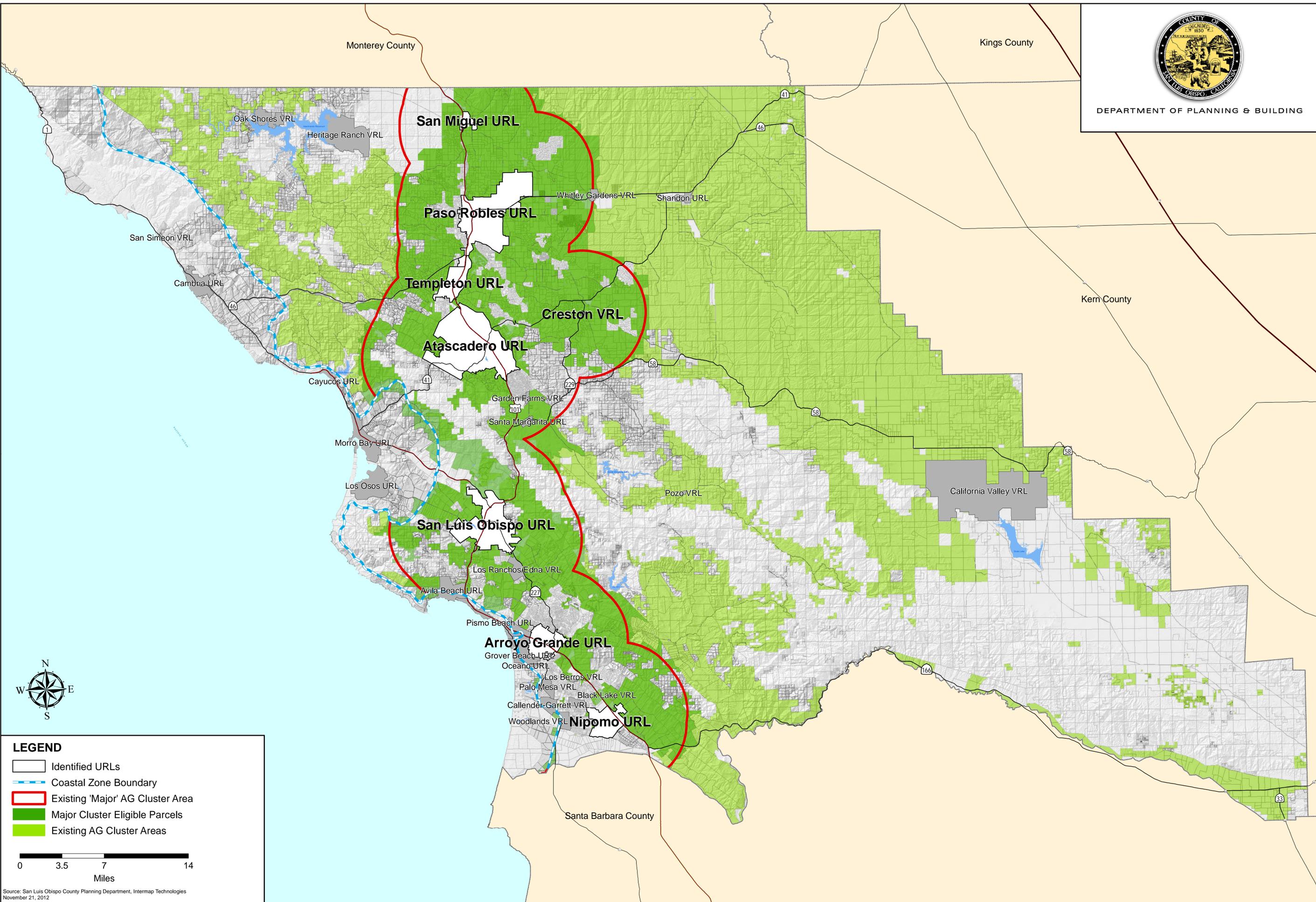
- A. The lands affected by the distance change from 5 miles to 2 miles from an urban area are shown in **peach color on this map**. The lands in darker green are 2 miles from urban areas and would not be affected by the change from 5 miles to 2 miles. In any case, ag lands in all colors can still apply for a “standard” subdivision if they qualify per the tables above.

## **5. How do I find out if my property is eligible for a subdivision including an ag cluster?**

- A. You can either call (805) 781-5600 or come into the Planning and Building Department's Permit Center (976 Osos St; Room 200) between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday to discuss the subdivision potential of a specific property.



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING



- LEGEND**
- Identified URLs
  - Coastal Zone Boundary
  - Existing 'Major' AG Cluster Area
  - Major Cluster Eligible Parcels
  - Existing AG Cluster Areas

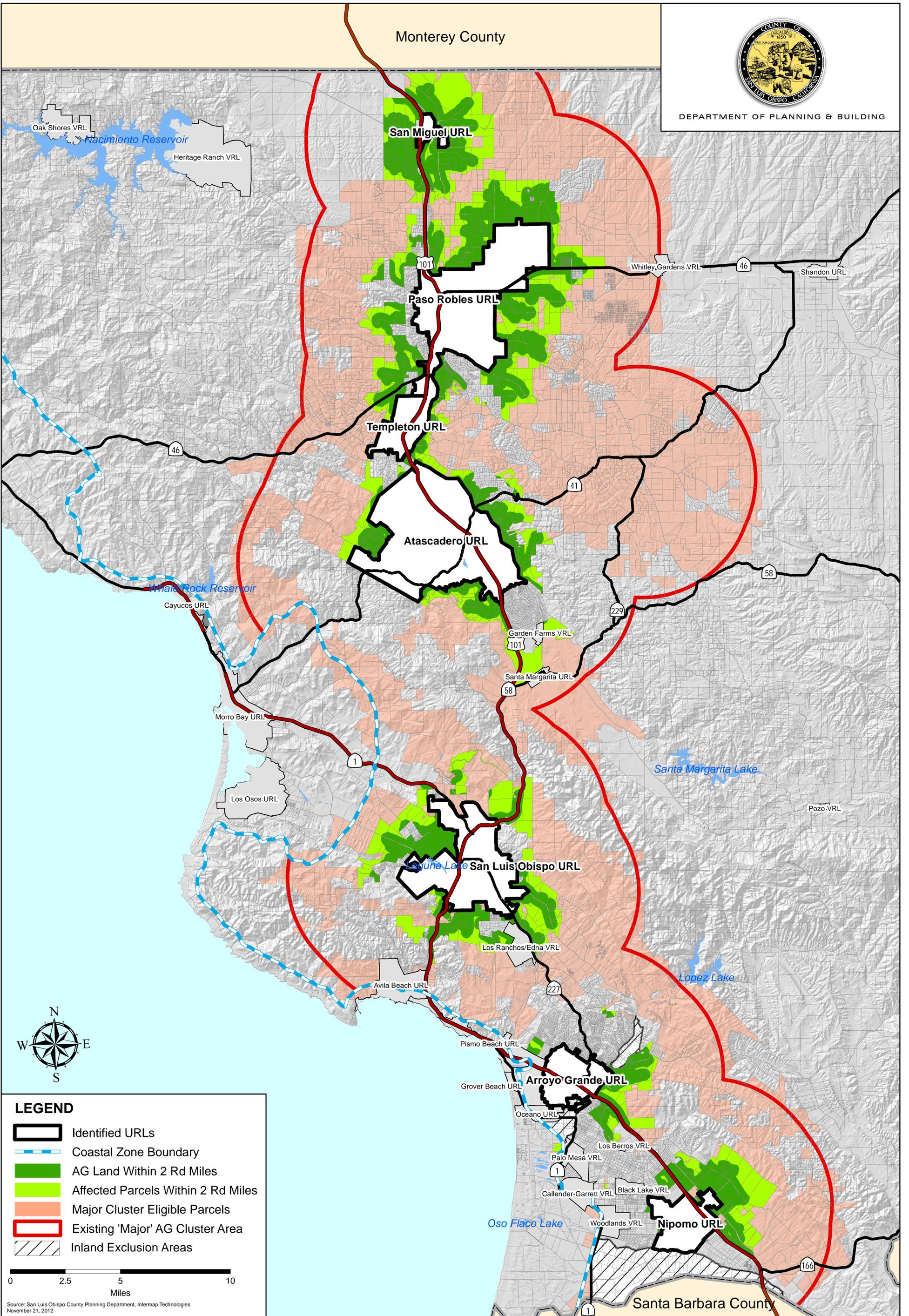


Source: San Luis Obispo County Planning Department, Intermap Technologies  
November 21, 2012

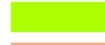
Monterey County



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING



**LEGEND**

-  Identified URLs
-  Coastal Zone Boundary
-  AG Land Within 2 Rd Miles
-  Affected Parcels Within 2 Rd Miles
-  Major Cluster Eligible Parcels
-  Existing 'Major' AG Cluster Area
-  Inland Exclusion Areas



Source: San Luis Obispo County Planning Department, Intermap Technologies  
November 21, 2012