

Farm Labor Housing Streamlining



**COUNTY OF
SAN MATEO**

Agricultural Advisory Committee
August 11, 2025

Purpose

Make the farm labor housing permitting process easier, faster, and more predictable

Identify Opportunities

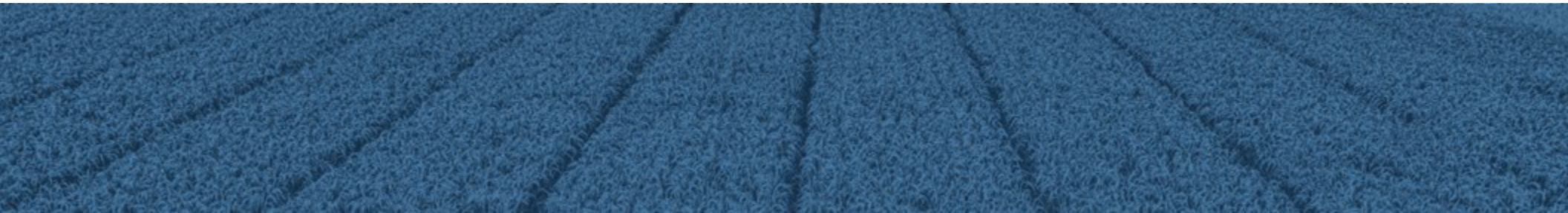
- Identify current regulatory frameworks that impede construction or placement of farm labor housing on existing farms

Streamline Permitting

- Recommend adjustments to policies and ordinances to simplify and streamline permitting

Meet our FLH Goals

- Increase the availability of safe and affordable farm labor housing



Regulatory Barriers for Farm Labor Housing

Zoning

- **RM/RM CZ:** Development Review and Use Permit required.
- **PAD:** Discretionary Planned Agricultural District Permit required, including public hearing.
- **Coastal Development District (CD):** Coastal Development Permit required, appealable to Coastal Commission

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

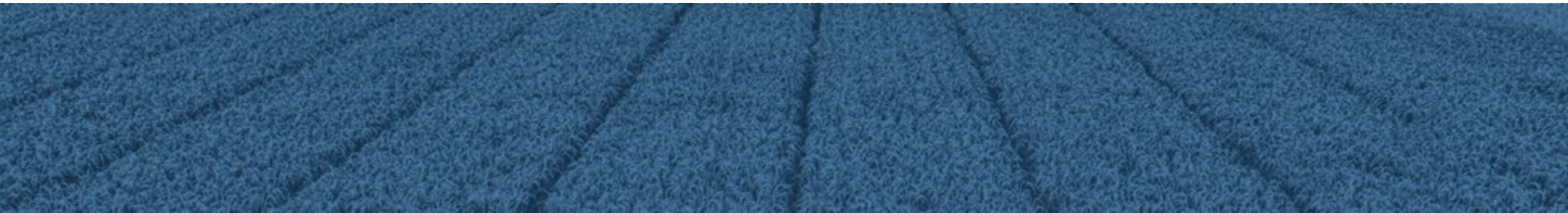
CEQA review required due to the discretionary DR, PAD, Use, and Coastal Development permits

Building Permit

Building Permit required prior to construction

Permit Renewals

Annual Environmental Health inspection, Use Permit renewals every 3-5 years (4 or less units) or 10 years (5 or More)



Current Permitting Process

Permit	PAD	RM
M/DRP		X
UP		X
PAD	X	
CDP	X	X
CEQA	X	X

Step 1:
Planning Permit(s)
Target: 9 months
Actual: 12-24 months

- Planning, zoning and environmental review
- Other agency review EH, Fire, advisory agencies etc.
- CEQA IS/MND and 30-day public review
- Staff report and public hearing(s)

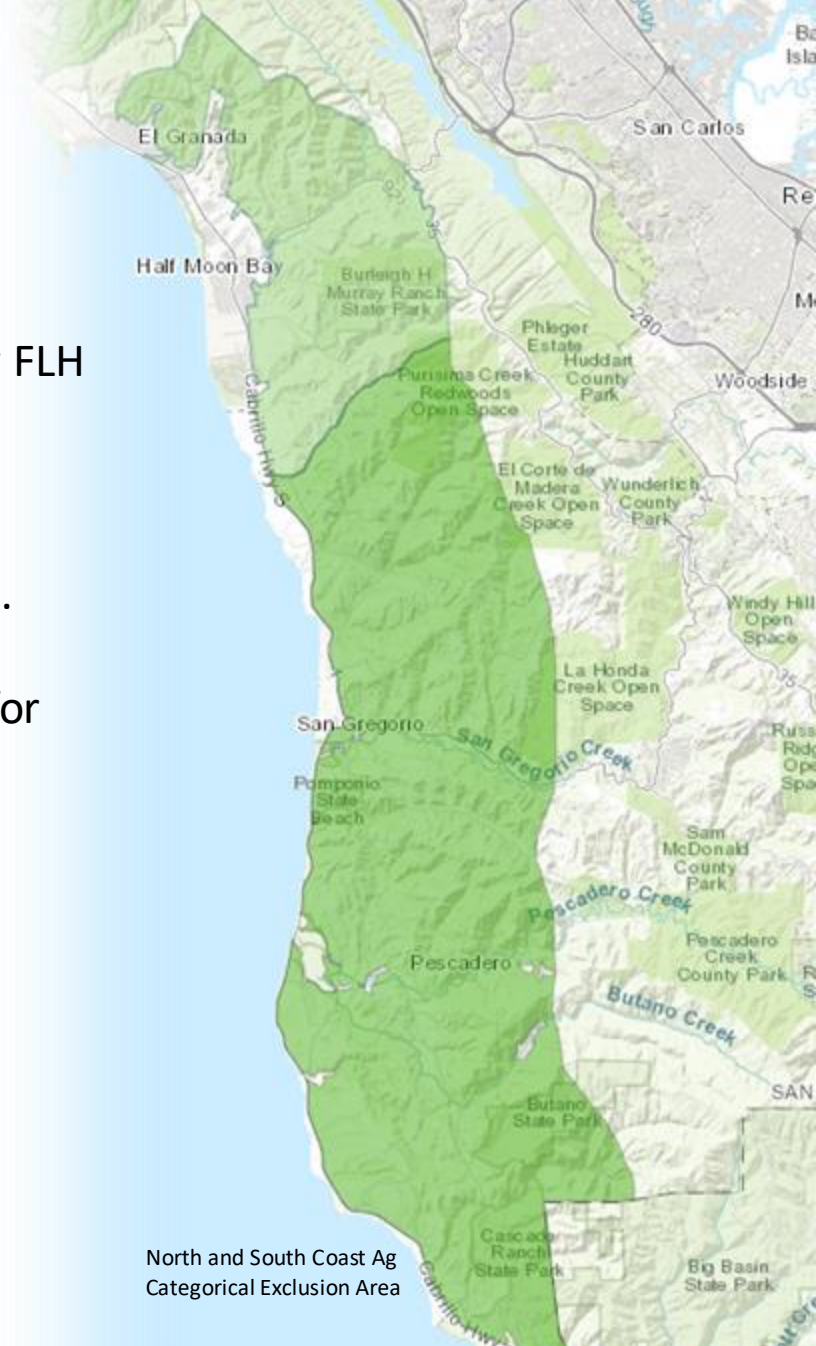
Step 2:
Building Permit
Target: 4 months
Actual: 5-12 months

- Routing to applicable agencies for review
- Environmental Health review of water and wastewater systems
- Building Permit Issuance
- Inspections
- Final Inspection/Certificate of Occupancy

Recommendations

Streamline Permitting

1. Amend the PAD and RM/RM-CZ zoning districts to allow FLH as a principally permitted use.
2. Add farm labor housing to the Agricultural Categorical Exclusion. 1-4 units of permanent or temporary housing.
3. Develop criteria with minimum qualification standards for temporary and permanent FLH.
4. Amend the Local Coastal Program (LCP).



North and South Coast Ag
Categorical Exclusion Area

Streamlined Permitting Process

	PAD	RM
CDX:	X	X
MDR:		X

Step 1: Coastal Development Permit Exemption (1 month)

Ensure the project meets
Ag Employee Housing
and MDR Regulations and
qualifies for an
Agricultural CDX

Issue CDX and MDR

Step 2: Building Permit (4 months)

Routing to applicable
agencies to review

Environmental Health review
of water and wastewater
systems

Building permit issuance

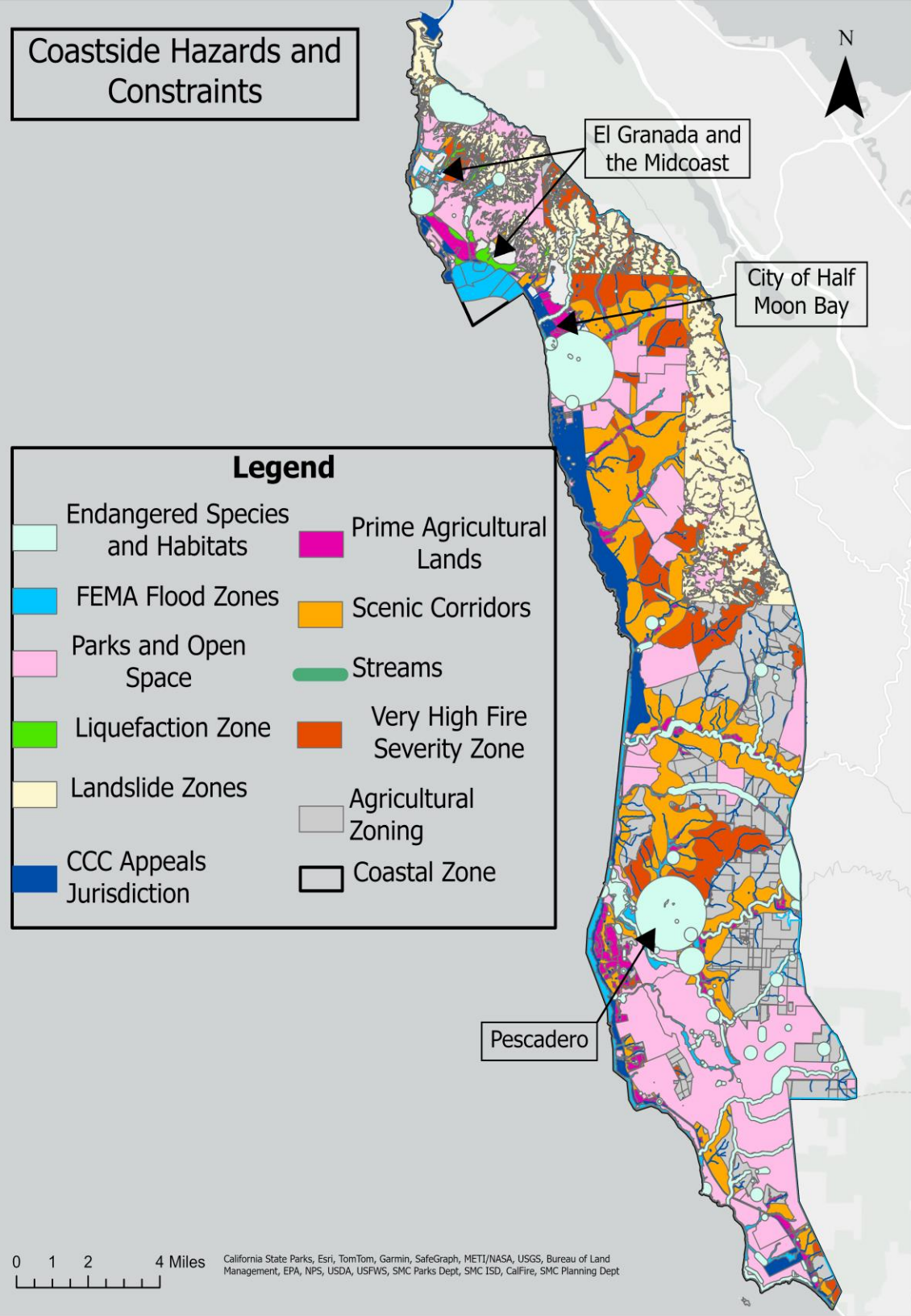
Inspections

Final Inspection/ Certificate
of Occupancy

Hazards & Constraints

Avoid pre-existing hazard/sensitive areas, including:

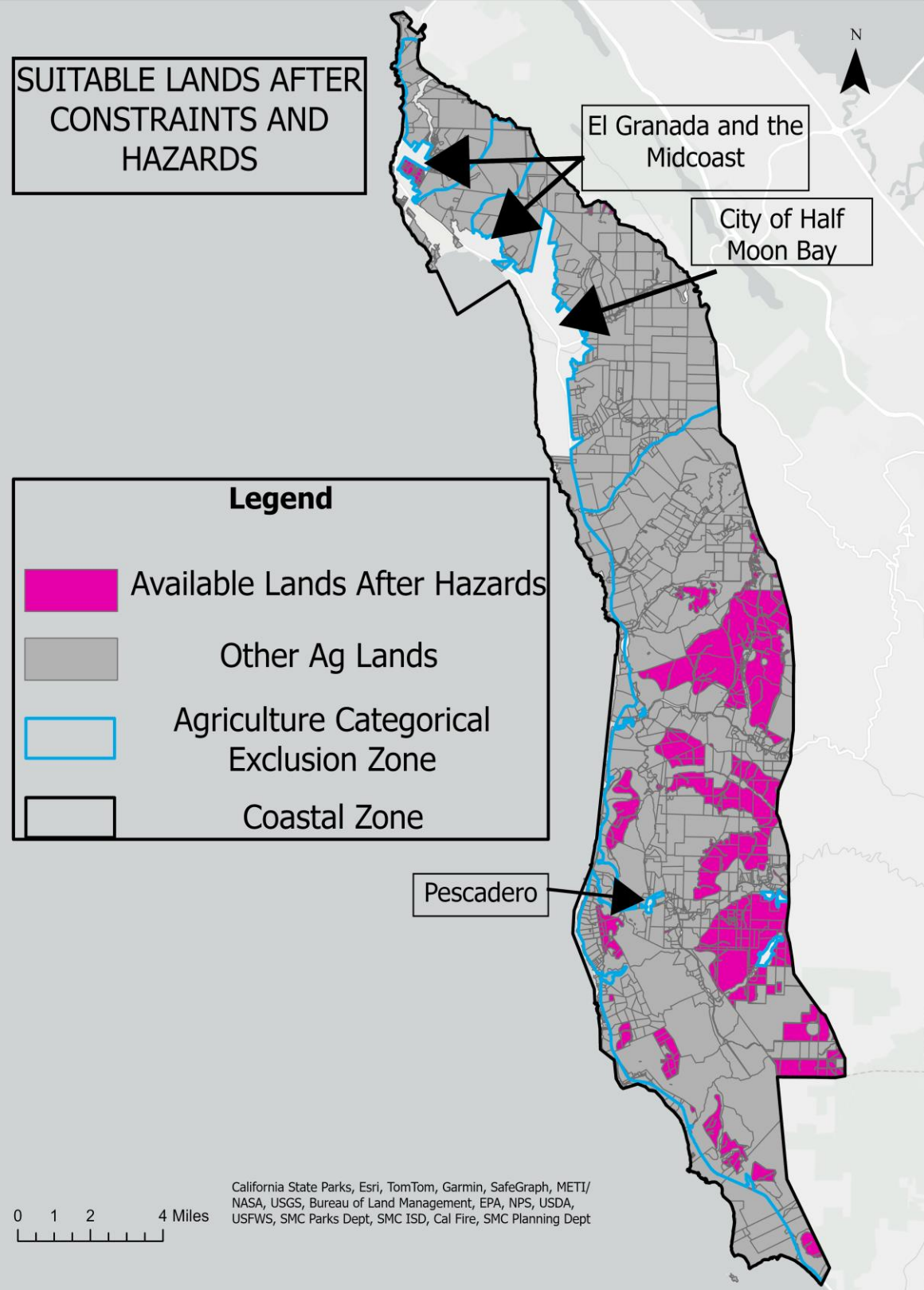
- Endangered species and habitats
- FEMA Flood Zones
- Listed Open Space
- Streams and wetlands
- Landslide and liquefaction zones
- Coastal appeals jurisdiction
- Prime agricultural soils
- State and County Scenic Corridors
- CalFire 2024 Very High Fire danger zone



Suitable Lands: Acreage

Excluding hazards/constraints, available lands include:

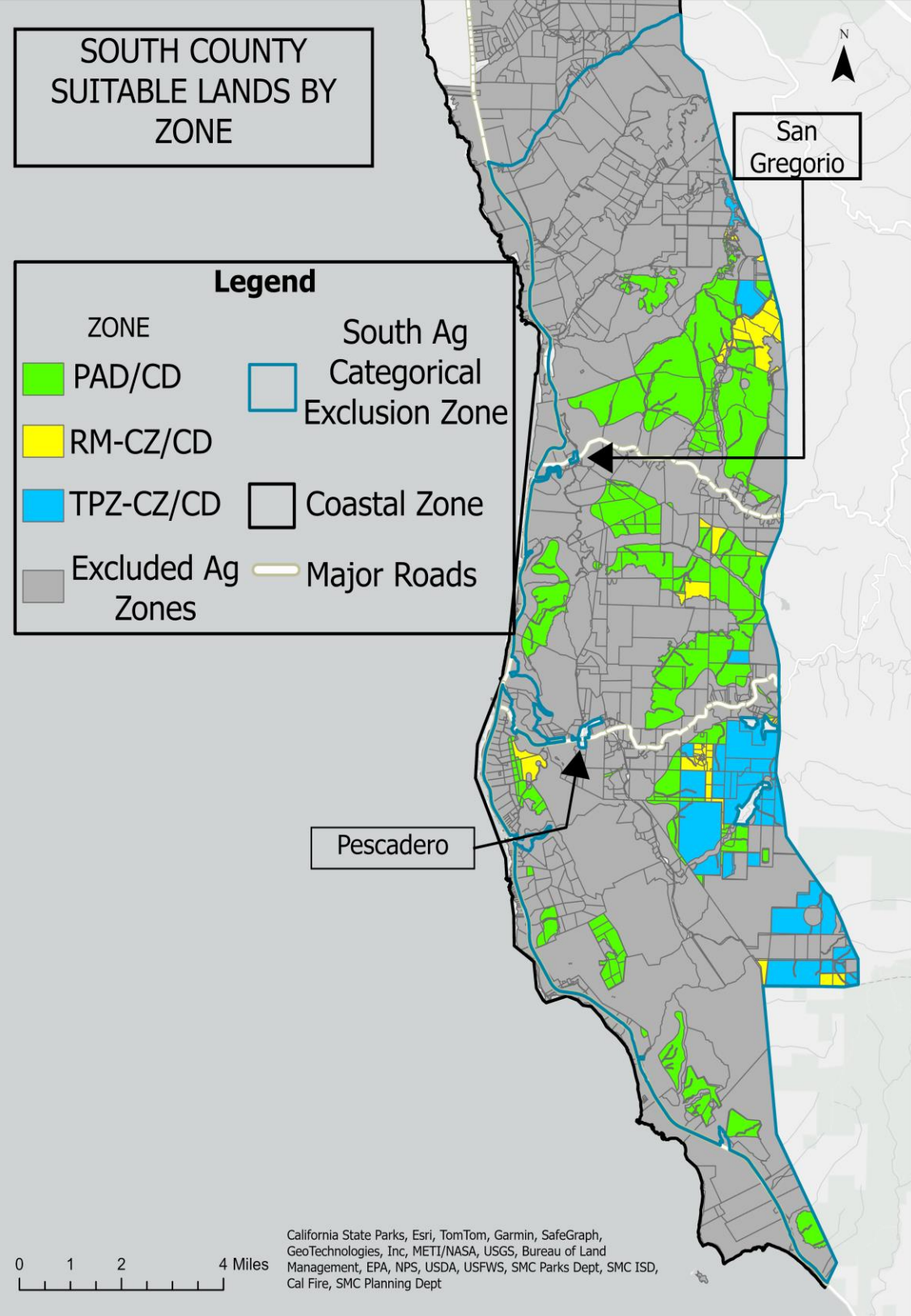
- North/Midcoast: 220 acres
- South Coast: 15,235 acres



Suitable Lands: Zoning

Majority of available land is zoned PAD

- PAD: 10,556 acres
- TPZ-CZ: 3,430 acres
- RM-CZ: 1,249 acres



Timeline

