6 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

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6 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

This chapter describes the existing agricultural setting, summarizes the applicable regulations, evaluates the potential agricultural resource impacts from the construction and operation of the proposed Montezuma II Wind Energy Project (Montezuma II project), and identifies mitigation measures to address the impacts found to be potentially significant.

6.1 AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Solano County is a predominately suburban and rural area located between San Francisco and Sacramento. The County covers 910 square miles (582,255 acres), consisting of approximately 830 square miles of land (531,200 acres) and 80 square miles of water (51,200 acres) (Solano County Planning Division 2008). Incorporated land areas in the County total 81,678 acres, and unincorporated lands total 494,437 acres (Solano County Planning Division 2008). The total acreage of existing land uses in Solano County is shown in Table 14.1-2, Solano County Land Use.

In 2006 Solano County had 373,500 acres of land in agriculture, with 360,562 of these acres under agricultural production (Solano County Planning Division 2008). Agricultural activities within Solano County include irrigated agriculture, dry-land farming, and grazing/pasture. In 2009, Solano County's top five agricultural commodities, in terms of acreage, were pasture and rangeland, field crops, fruit and nuts, vegetable crops, and seed crops (Solano County Department of Agriculture 2010). In 2009, the gross value of Solano County's agricultural production was approximately $252 million. For every dollar generated by agriculture sales an estimated $0.58 is generated elsewhere in Solano County's economy (Solano County Planning Division 2008). Therefore, agriculture's total economic contribution is estimated at $398 million. Table 6.1-1 lists the 2008 acreage dedicated to major crops and other agricultural activities in Solano County.

Table 6.1-1
2009 SOLANO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION (ACREAGE)

Use Classification	Total Acres	Percent of Total
Nursery Products	1,223	0.3%
Seed Crops	11,264	3.2%
Vegetable Crops	14,559	4.1%
Other	15,971	4.5%
Fruit and Nut Crops	18,999	5.3%
Field Crops	91,282	25.5%
Pasture and Rangeland	204,518	57.2%
Total	357,816	100%

Source: Solano County Department of Agriculture 2010.

The Solano County General Plan identifies ten broad geographic areas that have similar agricultural characteristics. The Montezuma II project is located in the Montezuma Hills agricultural region, a 58,035-acre region generally composed of grazing land and cropland with a minimum lot size of 160 acres (Solano County Planning Division 2008). The General Plan designates the area as an agricultural land use with lower quality soils most suitable for non-irrigated agricultural production (Solano County Planning Division 2008). Small grains, such as barley and oats, are the main crops in the Montezuma Hills, and sheep are the primary livestock (Solano County Planning Division

2008). A crop rotation system is in place that includes grazing sheep on the hillsides, growing small grains such as oats and barley, and a fallow period. The 2009 Solano County Crop and Livestock Report does not contain crop yield or gross sales information for the Montezuma Hills region (Solano County Department of Agriculture 2010).

The General Plan includes provisions for multiple uses of agricultural lands and states (Page RS-53): "Agricultural lands within the county are particularly appropriate for wind harvesting as turbines generally do not interfere with daily agricultural operations and can provide additional revenue on these properties." Therefore, wind energy development is advocated (by use permit) on agricultural lands within the Montezuma Hills agricultural region of Solano County.

The Montezuma II project area does not include Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance, as defined by the California Department of Conservation (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, which rates lands according to agricultural potential (CDC 2009). The CDC maps the project area as exclusively Grazing Land. Soil types found within the project area are primarily those of the Altamont and Diablo series (see Chapter 10, Geologic Resources), which are not associated with Important Farmland.

Loss of farmlands to urban development is a concern throughout the State of California. The most recent California Farmland Conversion Report (2006-2008) shows that Solano County gained 529 new urban acres, and farmlands are still being lost locally to other uses (CDC, 2009a). Overall, loss of farmlands to urban and other development pressures in Solano County is occurring at a moderate rate in terms of statewide trends (CDC 2009a).

enXco currently holds a use permit to operate the enXco V (formerly U.S. Windpower) wind energy project on six of the 12 parcels that comprise the Montezuma II project area (see Section 3.3-1 of the Project Description). The six parcels that currently contain enXco V project components represent 52.7 percent (1,337 acres) of the proposed 2,539-acre Montezuma II project area. Currently, the enXco V project components occupy approximately 13 acres of land on these six parcels. The enXco V use permits requires enXco to decommission the enXco V project, which would include the removal of enXco V project components and reclamation of disturbed lands to pre-project conditions. As described in Section in 3.3-1 of the Project Description, enXco would decommission the wind turbines, unused access roads, and meteorological towers located in the Montezuma II project area prior to construction of the proposed Project.

As proposed, 11 of the 12 parcels that comprise the project area where turbines and associated facilities would be installed are under Williamson Act contracts, including all six of the enXco V project parcels. A principal purpose of the Williamson Act is to preserve agricultural lands from conversion to residential, industrial, or other non-agricultural or non-compatible uses (see Section 6.3, Regulatory Setting, for additional discussion of the Williamson Act).

6.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES REGULATORY SETTING

State and local laws and policies on agricultural resources apply to the proposed Project.

6.2.1 State

Williamson Act (California Land Conservation Act of 1965)

The Williamson Act (California Government Code Section 51200 et seq) allows county governments to enter into contracts with private landowners who agree to restrict parcels of land to agricultural uses or uses compatible with agriculture for at least ten years. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based upon income derived from farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value of the property.

Section 51238(a) of the Williamson Act establishes electric facilities such as wind energy projects as land uses compatible with Williamson Act lands:

> *Section 51238(a)(1)* Notwithstanding any determination of compatible uses by the county or city pursuant to this article, unless the board or council after notice and hearing makes a finding to the contrary, the erection, construction, alteration, or maintenance of gas, electric, water, communication, or agricultural laborer housing facilities are hereby determined to be compatible uses within any agricultural preserve.

Wind energy facilities are "electric facilities" within the meaning of Section 51238 and therefore have been deemed to be compatible uses by the statute. Solano County has also independently determined that wind facilities are compatible uses on Williamson Act land (Solano County Planning Division 2008a).

In addition to the Williamson Act, the CDC administers the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program to rate lands by agricultural potential. The first three categories in descending order of potential are Prime Farmland, Farmland of State Importance, and Unique Farmland; these are collectively classified as Important Farmland. No lands in the project area are classified as Important Farmland under this rating system.

Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta

The Delta Protection Act of 1992 (Public Resources Code Section 29760 et seq.) requires the Delta Protection Commission to prepare, adopt, and maintain a comprehensive long-term resource management plan for land uses within the Primary Zone. The Primary Zone of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) includes approximately 500,000 acres of waterways, levees, and farmed lands extending over portions of five counties, including Solano and Contra Costa counties. The goals of the Plan are to "protect, maintain, and where possible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the Delta environment," including agricultural lands. With respect to agricultural resources, the Plan's goal is to support the long-term viability of commercial agriculture and discourage inappropriate development of agricultural lands (Delta Protection Commission 2007). The Primary Zone of the Delta is located about two miles south of the nearest project boundary. The Delta Protection Act also established the Secondary Zone of the Delta, which covers all Delta land and water within the legal boundary of the delta that are not included within the Primary Zone. Secondary zone lands are subject to the land use authority of local government. The Secondary Zone of the Delta abuts the south side of Talbert Lane near its intersection with Collinsville Road. It is therefore adjacent to, but does not include, the southwest boundary of the Project (Galef 2010).

6.2.2 Local

Solano County has established long-term policies for protecting agricultural lands, as outlined below.

Solano County General Plan

The Land Use Chapter of the General Plan designates the project area and adjacent lands as Agriculture, and describes this designation as follows:

> "Provides areas for the practice of agriculture as the primary use, including areas that contribute significantly to the local agricultural economy, and allows for secondary uses that support the economic viability of agriculture. Agricultural land use designations protect these areas from intrusion by nonagricultural uses and other uses that do not directly support the economic viability of agriculture."

The General Plan sets forth several policies that apply to development of lands designated agriculture on the General Plan's Land Use Diagram:

- **AG.P-1:** Ensure that agricultural parcels are maintained at a sufficient minimum parcel size so as to remain a farmable unit.
- **AG.P-4:** Require farmland conversion mitigation for either of the following actions: a) a General Plan amendment that changes the designation of any land from an agricultural to a nonagricultural use or b) an application for a development permit that changes the use of land from production agriculture to a nonagricultural use, regardless of the General Plan designation.
- **AG.P-28:** Recognize that agriculture is to be the predominant land use in the Dixon Ridge, Elmira and Maine Prairie, Montezuma Hills, Ryer Island, and Winters regions. These are agricultural areas where preservation efforts should be focused and conflicting land uses avoided.

The General Plan policies promote the preservation of essential agricultural lands by protecting them from urbanization and preventing conflicting land uses from occurring within essential agricultural areas. Policy AG.P-4, directs the County to require farmland conversion mitigation for development permits that change the use of land from production agriculture to nonagricultural use, however, this policy does not apply to the proposed Project since the General Plan acknowledges that wind energy projects do not interfere with agricultural operations, stating on Page RS-53 "… Agricultural lands within the county are particularly appropriate for wind harvesting as turbines generally do not interfere with daily agricultural operations and can provide additional revenue on these properties."

The General Plan's Public Facilities and Services Chapter sets policies for placement of utility cables through agricultural lands. According to Policy PF.P-50, all transmission lines should be located, designed, and constructed in a manner that minimizes disruption of natural vegetation, agricultural activities, scenic areas, and avoids unnecessary scarring of hill areas (Solano County Planning Division 2008).

In 2008, Solano County adopted new rules and regulations governing agricultural preserves and land conservation contracts, which, in part, clarified the compatibility of commercial wind development on lands under control of the Williamson Act (Solano County Planning Division 2008a). In

particular, the new regulations identify commercial wind turbine generators as a compatible Communications and Infrastructure land use on prime and non-prime agricultural lands. The lands within the project area are non-prime agricultural lands.

Solano County Zoning Ordinance

All of the land in the project area is zoned Exclusive Agriculture (A-160). The Solano County Zoning Ordinance permits construction and operation of commercial wind turbines on A-160 lands with a use permit. Conditions for wind energy development are related to general land use, not specifically agricultural uses. Solano County is in the process of updating its zoning regulations that govern commercial wind turbines, as discussed in Chapter 14, Land Use and Population.

6.3 SIGNIFICANT CRITERIA FOR AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

This EIR considered the criteria listed below in the evaluation of potential impacts on agricultural resources related to construction and operation of the proposed Project. The Montezuma II Project would have a significant impact on agricultural resources if it would:

- Convert Prime, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural uses;
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location, could individually or cumulatively result in loss of Farmland to nonagricultural use;
- Permanently exclude a substantial portion of land from agricultural use following construction and decommissioning;
- Cause substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;
- Significantly impair the productivity of or land use in adjacent agricultural areas;
- Introduce or cause a substantial increase in pests and/or diseases in nearby agricultural areas.

6.4 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION

The project would cause the following impacts to agricultural resources. Because the Project does not involve the introduction of new plants or animals, there would be no impacts or mitigation related to increases in pests or diseases in nearby agricultural areas.

Impact AG-1: Potential Conflict with Williamson Act Contracts in the Project Area

Table 6.5-1 lists the landowner, parcel number, Williamson Act status, and the potential project features that would be located on Montezuma II project lands. As Table 6.5-1 shows, 11 of the 12 parcels in the project area are subject to Williamson Act contracts, and six of these Williamson Act parcels currently have enXco V wind energy facilities. The proposed project facilities would be located on 11 parcels subject to Williamson Act contracts. The other Williamson Act parcel within the project area will not contain project facilities. Under the Williamson Act, the County is authorized to approve compatible uses of non-prime land if the use will not significantly alter or degrade the long-term productivity of agricultural lands in the project area or adjacent areas or remove a significant amount of land from agricultural or open land uses or otherwise degrade or impair current and future agricultural activities. As described in Impact AG-2, AG-5, and AG-6 the Project would not permanently remove a significant amount of land from agricultural use or affect

the long-term productivity in the project area or in Solano County as a whole. Given the height and dispersed nature of the project facilities, existing agricultural uses are expected to continue in the project area in conjunction with wind energy generation.

One of the primary purposes of the Williamson Act is to preserve agricultural lands from conversion to residential, industrial, or other non-agricultural or non-compatible uses. By providing an additional revenue source for the landowners of this agricultural land, the Project would help preserve continued use of the area for dry-land farming and deter large-scale conversion of agricultural land in the project area into residential subdivisions or other non-compatible land uses. Solano County has designated the Montezuma Hills as suitable for wind development and determined that wind development is compatible with surrounding land uses, including agricultural lands under Williamson Act contracts. This is further supported by the County's rules and regulations governing agricultural preserves and land conservation contracts, adopted in 2008, which, in part, clarified the compatibility of commercial wind development on lands under control of the Williamson Act. In particular, the adopted regulations identify commercial wind turbines as a compatible Communications and Infrastructure land use on prime and non-prime agricultural lands. The lands within the project area are non-prime agricultural lands.

Table 6.4-1
WILLIAMSON ACT PARCELS IN THE MONTEZUMA II PROJECT AREA

Landowner	APN	Williamson Act Contract	Proposed Project Features
Anderson	0090-090-100	Yes	Turbines, roads, collection lines
	0090-090-110*	Yes	Turbines, roads, collection lines
	0090-100-140*	Yes	Turbines, roads, collection lines, met tower
Callaghan	0090-090-080	No	Turbines, roads, collection lines
Freese	0090-090-060	Yes	Turbines, roads, collection lines
	0090-090-070	Yes	Turbines, roads, collection lines, substation, switchyard
Meyer	0090-090-090	Yes	Turbines, roads, collection lines, O&M building, permanent and temporary laydown yards
	0090-090-130*	Yes	Roads, collection lines
	0090-090-140*	Yes	Turbines, roads, collection lines
	0090-100-030*	Yes	Turbines, roads, collection lines
	0090-190-150	Partial	None
	0090-190-160*	Partial	Turbines, roads, collection lines

Source: NextEra, 2010.
* Denotes parcel is part of existing enXco V project.

Level of Significance: Less than Significant.

Impact AG-2: Permanent Conversion of Lands to Non-Agricultural Use in the Project Area

The Project's turbines, access roads, towers, and other features would permanently occupy 47.5 acres of agricultural lands in the project area. Table 3.6-1 of the Project Description summarizes the amount of agricultural land that the Montezuma II project would occupy, including:

- 2.3 acres for 34 turbine tower bases;
- 34.6 acres for 11.4 miles of 25-foot wide access roads;
- 4.2 acres for the Project substation and switchyard;
- 6 acres for the O&M site including O&M building, parking area, and permanent laydown yard; and
- 0.5 acres for two meteorological towers.

The Applicant proposes to install 10.2 miles of power collection lines, which would require the Applicant to grade and excavate 26.9 acres of land for the power collection lines. The Applicant would restore these lands to preconstruction conditions after installation of the power collection lines, enabling agricultural activities to resume in these areas. In addition, the Applicant would also install approximately 1,000 feet of overhead 230-kV interconnection lines to transmit power from the new Montezuma II substation and switchyard to the existing PG&E Birds Landing switchyard. The Applicant would install these lines on existing transmission towers, also reducing the long-term loss of agricultural lands.

As described above, the Montezuma II project would permanently occupy 47.5 acres of land within the project area. The enXco V project currently occupies approximately 13 acres; except for the 2.3 acres that the O&M building and substation occupy, almost all land disturbed by the enXco V project that would not be disturbed as part of the Montezuma II Project would return to agricultural land use after the project is fully decommissioned. The Montezuma II project, therefore, would result in the incremental conversion of 36.8 acres of land within the project area from agricultural to non-agricultural uses. Decommissioning of the enXco V project would include the removal of enXco V turbines, unused access roads, and meteorological towers and restoration of these lands in compliance with the enXco V project's existing use permits. The existing enXco V substation and O&M site, as well as other wind energy substations, would remain as non-agricultural land uses within the project area. The Applicant may re-use approximately four miles of existing, 12-foot wide enXco V access roads for the Montezuma II project, widening them, but avoiding up to six acres of restoration activities and new, permanent conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. The re-use of any enXco V access roads, however, would be a modification of current enXco V decommissioning requirements.

Although the Montezuma II project would permanently occupy up to 47.5 acres of land within the project area, the Project's incremental conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses would total 36.8 acres. The existing substations and switchyards would likely remain and some of the existing non-agricultural uses in the project area would return to agricultural production as a result of enXco V decommissioning. The incremental conversion of 36.8-acres of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses represents 1.4 percent of the 2,539-acre project area, and 0.01 percent of Solano County's estimated 2009 agricultural lands (357,816 acres). Agricultural and grazing activities

would continue on 98.1% of the project area during project operation. None of the 47.5 acres that the Montezuma II project would occupy would be Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland. Given the small percentage of land the Project would convert to non-agricultural uses and the fact these lands are not Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland, Impact AG-2 is considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required for this impact.

Level of Significance: Less than Significant.

Impact AG-3: Temporary Disturbance of Agricultural Lands during Construction

Construction of the Montezuma II project would also temporarily disturb 211.3 acres of agricultural lands. The Project's temporary agricultural disturbance would exceed the Project's permanent agricultural conversion since the Applicant must initially prepare and construct the Project's access road, turbine pads, and other areas large enough to support large equipment used to deliver infrastructure, excavate turbine and meteorological tower foundations, and assemble and install the Project's infrastructure. For example, access roads and turbine pads must be graded large enough to accommodate delivery and installation of turbine towers by over-sized trucks and cranes. Once infrastructure is installed, the Applicant would reduce the size of access roads, turbine pads, the substation's construction footprint, etc. since routine operations and maintenance would not require use of over-sized vehicles and equipment and graded and cut and fill areas could be restored

Table 3.6-1 of the Project Description summarizes the amount of agricultural land that would be temporarily converted to non-agricultural uses due to construction of the Montezuma II project, including:

- 74.3 acres to construct and install 34 turbines including foundations and pads;
- 83.7 acres to construct 11.4 miles of 55-foot wide access roads;
- 7.6 acres to construct the Project substation and switchyard;
- 26.9 acres to construct 10.2 miles of underground power collection lines;
- 0.6 acres to install the 230 kV overhead interconnection line on existing towers to the Birds Landing switchyard
- 6.6 acres to construct the O&M site, including O&M building, parking area, and permanent laydown yard
- 11.7 acres to construct the temporary laydown yard; and
- 0.6 acres to construct and install two meteorological towers.

As described above, the Montezuma II project would temporarily disturb a total of 211.3 acres of land during construction. This value represents 8.3 percent of the 2,539-acre project area. None of the land that the Applicant would temporarily disturb is Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland. The Applicant would return 163.8 acres of the disturbed lands, or approximately 6.5 percent of the project area, to pre-construction conditions, enabling landowners to resume agricultural activities. Given the limited area of impact and that the area is not Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland, this impact is considered less than significant.

In addition, the Applicant may re-use approximately four miles (6.0 acres) of existing enXco V access roads, which could reduce the amount of land temporarily disturbed during construction of the Project from 211.3 acres to 205.4 acres, further reducing the magnitude of impact AG-3. The Applicant's planned re-use of enXco V access roads, however, is subject to modification of current enXco V decommissioning requirements.

Level of Significance: Less than Significant.

Impact AG-4: Temporary Impacts on Agricultural Lands Adjacent to Construction Areas

Construction of the Montezuma II project could also result in temporary disruptions to agricultural and grazing operations immediately adjacent to project construction areas as a result of equipment operations.

Project construction could potentially degrade production on adjacent agricultural lands through operation of equipment outside work areas and use of short cuts across agricultural land to access construction sites, release of dust during construction activities, accidental discharges of hazardous materials, or through the inadvertent introduction of non-native species or noxious weeds from equipment, vehicles, and personnel brought on-site.

Level of Significance: Potentially Significant.

To reduce temporary impacts to adjacent agricultural lands during construction, Solano County would require the Applicant implement Mitigation AG-4 to confine operation of construction equipment to necessary work areas and use designed construction roads to access the construction sites as follows:

> **Mitigation AG-4: Confine construction activities to necessary work areas.** Prior to commencement of any construction activities, the Applicant shall fence or flag the construction area boundaries to limit the construction footprint, avoid intrusion into adjacent agricultural areas, and reduce other potential impacts (e.g., dust, spills, invasives) to adjacent agricultural operations. The construction boundary fencing or flagging shall be in addition to, and distinguished apart from, any other exclusionary fencing or flagging required for the protection of sensitive resources pursuant to mitigation measures BIO-1 (Minimize Temporary Disturbance and Restoration of Habitats within Project Area), BIO-2a (Avoid Impacts to Aquatic Resources [Wetlands, Vernal Pools, Streams, and Other Potential Waters of the U.S.]), BIO-2b (Avoid Impacts from Horizontal Directional Drilling under Aquatic Resources [Wetlands, Vernal Pools, Streams, and Other Potential Waters of the U.S.]), and BIO-4 (Habitat Avoidance - California Tiger Salamander and Special-Status Invertebrate Species).

As described in Chapter 7, Air Quality, and Chapter 12, Hazardous Materials, Solano County would require the Applicant to implement Mitigation Measures AIR-2 (Fugitive Dust Controls), HAZ-1a (Proper Use and Storage of Materials), and HAZ-1b (Waste Management Plan) to reduce potential impacts from dust emissions and accidental spills of hazardous materials. Mitigation Measure AIR-2 requires the Applicant to control dust emissions through use of water trucks equipped with fine

spray nozzles and Mitigation Measures HAZ-1a and HAZ-1b require the Applicant to control potential fuel spills through proper siting and containment of fueling areas.

Level of Significance with Mitigation: Less than Significant.

Impact AG-5: Soil Erosion, Soil Loss, and Decrease in Soil Productivity

Montezuma II project construction would require ground-disturbing construction activities that could result in the loss of soils or a decrease in soil productivity that could affect agricultural and grazing operations. As described in Chapter 10, Geologic Resources, and Chapter 12, Hydrology and Water Quality, disturbed soils are more susceptible to being re-suspended or entrained in wind and water and carried away, potentially impacting soil coverage, productivity, adjacent land uses, and nearby sensitive areas (i.e., water bodies).

Project ground-disturbing and earthmoving activities could also result in the mixing of fertile topsoil with less fertile subsurface soils, which could also affect land productivity. The use of heavy equipment could also result in rutting, which may also cause mixing of topsoil and subsoil, especially under excessively wet conditions. Finally, inadequate compaction of backfilled (restored) materials in trenches and other excavated areas could result in soil subsidence and alter drainage patterns, while severe over-compaction could impede vegetation growth due to restricted movement of air and water in the soil.

Level of Significance: Potentially Significant.

To reduce potential decreases in soil productivity, Solano County would require the Applicant to implement Mitigation Measure AG-5 to restore and recompact temporarily disturbed agricultural areas as follows:

> **Mitigation AG-5*:* Restore and decompact temporarily disturbed agricultural areas**. The Applicant shall restore all temporarily disturbed agricultural areas to preconstruction conditions to the extent feasible, including decompaction, restoration of natural contours, and revegetation where appropriate.

As described in Chapter 8, Biological Resources, Chapter 10, Geologic Resources, and Chapter 12, Hydrology and Water Quality, Solano County would require the Applicant to implement Mitigation Measures BIO-1 (Minimize Temporary Disturbance and Restoration of Habitats within Project Area) and BIO-3 (Prevent Erosion and Sedimentation in Aquatic Resource Environments), GEO-3 (Implement Erosion Controls), and HYD-2 (Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan) (SWPPP) to reduce soil erosion, soil loss, and potential soil productivity impacts. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 requires the Applicant to restore and revegetate all areas disturbed by construction to preconstruction conditions prior to Project operation and Mitigation Measure BIO-3 requires the Applicant to use erosion control measures in upland areas adjacent to wetlands, streams, drainages, swales, and other low-lying areas that may drain to nearby wetlands or the Sacramento River. Mitigation Measure GEO-3 requires the Applicant to salvage topsoil in all areas disturbed by the Montezuma II project and to reuse topsoil during restoration of disturbed areas. Finally, Mitigation

Measure HYD-2 requires the Applicant to develop and implement a project-specific SWPPP to control potential soil erosion.

Level of Significance with Mitigation: Less than Significant.

Impact AG-6: Impediments to the Resumption of Agricultural Use

Project construction equipment and activities could result in spills, loss of topsoil, compaction issues, and other potential construction, operation, and maintenance activity impacts that could damage agricultural lands and impede resumption of agriculture or grazing on those lands after decommissioning of the Montezuma II project. Project decommissioning would require removal of the wind turbine nacelles, blades, towers, foundations, cables, and other facilities to a depth of three feet below grade, removal of project roads, and restoration of disturbed lands to pre-project conditions.

Level of Significance: Potentially Significant.

To reduce potential impediments to the resumption of agricultural use of lands in the project area, Solano County would require the Applicant to implement Mitigation Measure AG-6 to restore disturbed areas to pre-construction conditions as follows:

> **Mitigation AG-6: Restore Disturbed Areas to Previous Conditions after Decommissioning.** To ensure resumption of full agricultural use after decommissioning, Solano County shall, at its discretion, compare the project area after decommissioning with the baseline conditions established in this Draft EIR, and, based on this assessment, the Applicant shall undertake any additional actions required by Solano County to restore the area to preconstruction conditions.

To the extent the potential presence of hazardous materials in the project area could interfere with the resumption of agricultural issues following decommissioning, as described in Chapter 12, Hazardous Materials, the County would require the Applicant to implement Mitigation Measures HAZ-1a (Proper Use and Storage of Materials), HAZ-1b (Waste Management Plan), and HAZ-2 (Encountering Hazardous Materials/Waste during Construction) reduce impacts from the use, storage, discovery, and potential spills of hazardous materials. Mitigation Measure HAZ-1a requires the Applicant to prepare and implement a Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan (Business Plan) and a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan (SPCC) to avoid spills and minimize impacts to agricultural lands in the event of a spill. Similarly, Mitigation Measure HAZ-1b requires the Applicant to prepare and implement a Waste Management Plan to describe the storage, transportation, and handling of wastes, which would mitigate potential damage to lands used for agriculture. Finally, Mitigation Measure HAZ-2 requires the Applicant to prepare and implement a written plan to specify proper handling, reporting, and disposal procedures in the event that hazardous materials are encountered unexpectedly during construction.

Level of Significance with Mitigation: Less than Significant.

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