

#### 4.2.2.8 Alternative H

Alternative H runs along I-215 and affects 4 ha (10 ac) of existing Prime Farmland near the route's northern terminus and 119 ha (294 ac) of existing Farmland of Local Importance. Most of the affected farmland is along the northern one-third of the route. Farming operations affected by Alternative H are predominately croplands near I-215 north of Menifee in an area that is rapidly converting to residential use.

#### 4.2.3 Potential Mitigation Measures to be Considered in Tier 2

In considering potential mitigation measures for adverse impacts caused by the proposed CETAP alternatives, the specificity of information currently available for analysis must first be considered. The alternatives evaluated range from 150 to 300 m (500 to 1,000 ft) in width, and include right-of-way preservation for potential interchanges with existing freeways that are much larger than will be necessary for future construction. The areas permanently disturbed or displaced by the project are estimated to be one-third to one-half the size of the areas evaluated in this analysis. The potential mitigation measures that follow are described within that framework.

- 4.2.3.1 RCTC shall provide fair market compensation for farmland acquired in accordance with the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act (Uniform Act) of 1970 (Public Law 91-646, 84 Stat. 1894) (as amended in 1990), which mandates that certain relocation services and payments be made available to eligible displaced residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations. The Act provides for uniform and equitable treatment by federal or federally assisted programs of persons displaced from their homes, businesses, or farms, and establishes uniform and equitable land acquisition policies.
- 4.2.3.2 RCTC shall complete agency consultations (Natural Resource Conservation Service) and documentation required under the federal Farmland Protection Policy Act governing the loss of Important Farmland, including the completion of Form AD-1006. If a threshold score is reached on Form AD-1066, alternatives to avoid converting farmland will be considered.<sup>1</sup>
- 4.2.3.3 If an alternative is selected that passes through areas dominated by agricultural uses—such as Alternatives 1, 3, 7a, or 7b—preliminary design shall seek alternatives to minimize Farmland conversion, avoid more valuable agricultural lands and improvements, and incorporate features that minimize disruption to farming operations.
- 4.2.3.4 RCTC will investigate opportunities to replace Prime, Unique, or Farmlands of Statewide or Local Importance lost as a result of right-of-way acquisition, including the use of conservation easements on alternate farmland parcels. Agricultural easements involve permanent restrictions on the use of land from more intensive purposes.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Caltrans website, Standard Environmental Reference, Environmental Handbook, Volume 4, Community Impact Assessment.