

SAGE

*Associates*

AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

Offices in  
Santa Barbara  
Mammoth Lakes

# RANCHO LA LAGUNA

## AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY STUDY

AND

## RANGELAND ASSESSMENT



Prepared for:

**MNS Engineers, Inc.**  
201 Industrial Way  
Buellton, CA 93427  
September 2007

## **Introduction**

An Agricultural Viability Study and Rangeland Assessment were prepared to determine the agricultural viability of cropland and the sustainable moderate level of cattle grazing carrying capacity for the existing 3,934-acre Rancho La Laguna and thirteen proposed lots at the request of Ms. Tish Beltranena, Principal Planner for MNS Engineers, Inc. The ranch agricultural acreage is net and excludes the Foxen Canyon Road and Zaca Road right-of-ways that would preclude agricultural uses.

The following methodology for this agricultural viability study and rangeland assessment were prepared by Sage Associates to be consistent with the County of Santa Barbara Planning & Development Department Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual revised October 2002 with Replacement Pages July 2003, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) Soil Survey, The California Department of Conservation Important Farmlands Mapping Program, and the University of California/Santa Barbara County Cooperative Extension (UCCE) published grazing performance standards.

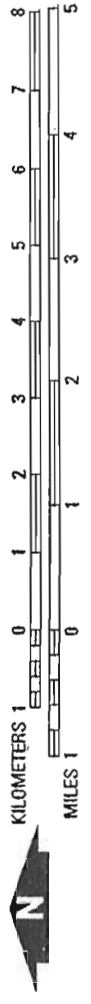
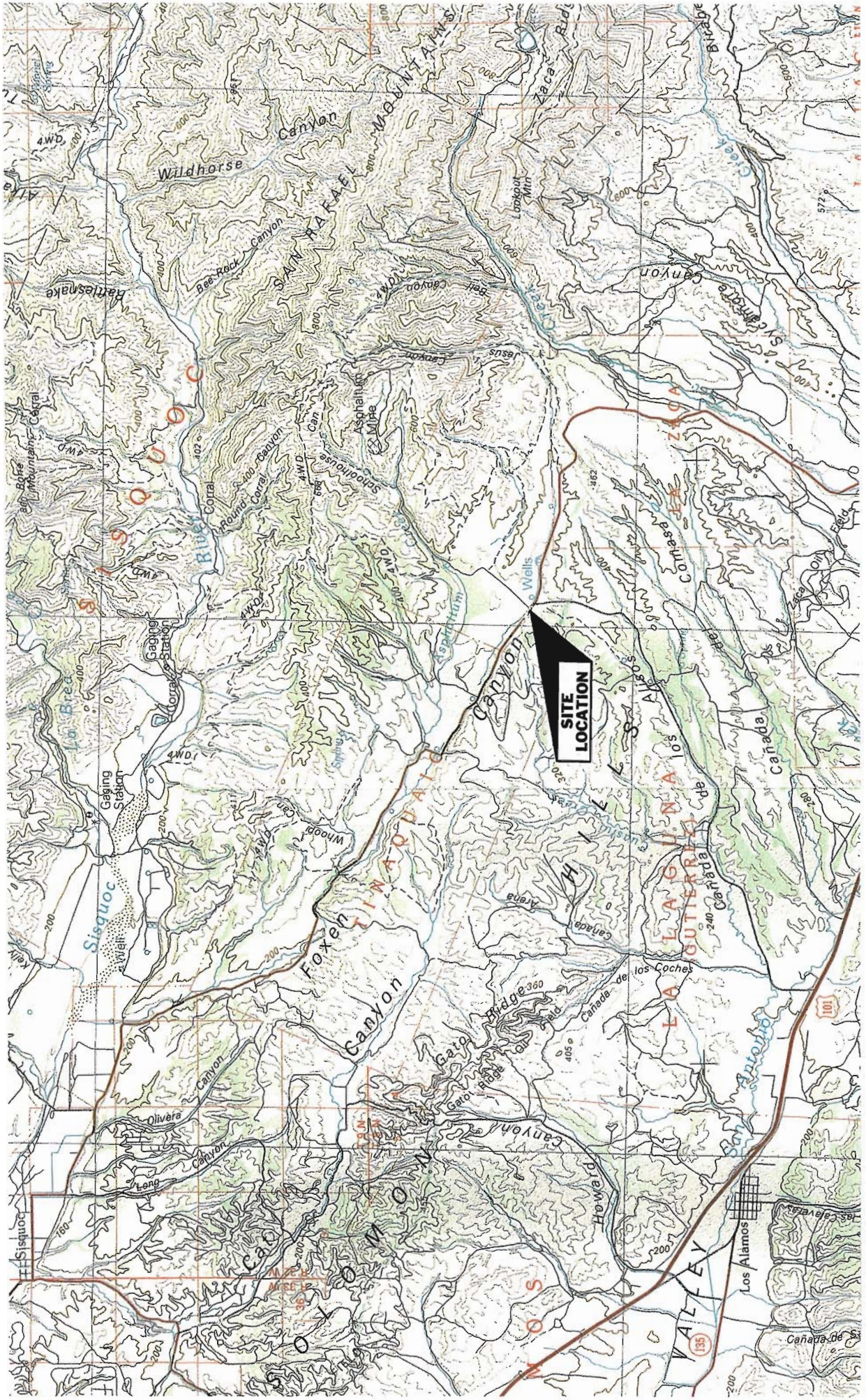
Rancho La Laguna is located northeast of the community of Los Alamos and northeast of the intersection of Aliso Canyon Road and Foxen Canyon Road in the northern part of Santa Barbara County (Figure 1 Vicinity Map). Figure 2 shows a Topographical Map of the ranch area, and Figure 3 shows a Proposed Lot Map of the ranch boundaries and each of the 13 proposed lots.

Specifically, the County of Santa Barbara Planning & Development Department Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual revised October 2002 with Replacement pages July 2003, for agricultural resources states the following:

*“The weighted point system is utilized to assign relative values to particular characteristics of a site’s agricultural productivity (e.g. soil type, water supply, etc.). Where the points from the following formula total 60 or more, the following types of projects will be considered to have a potentially significant impact:*

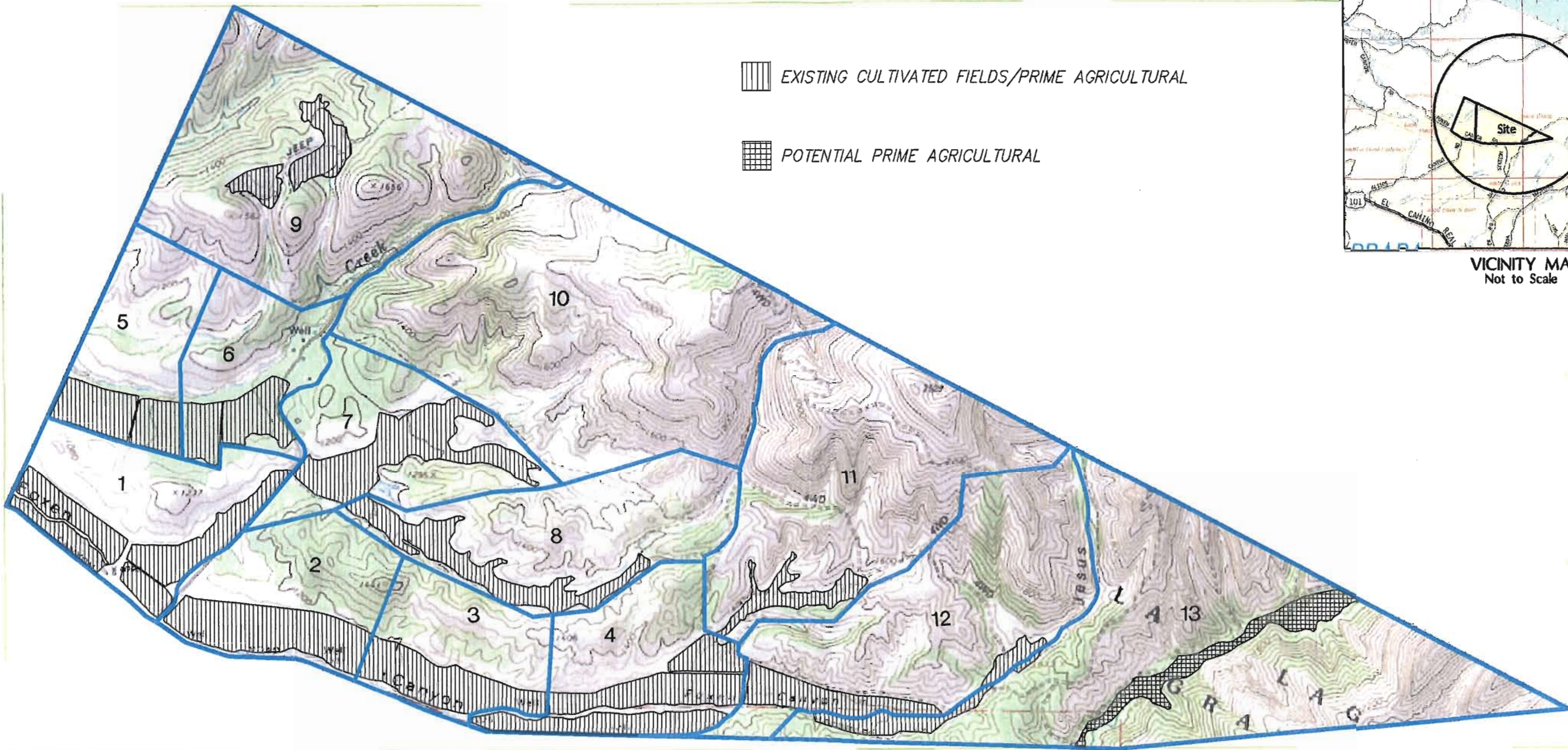
*- A division of land (including Parcel and Tract Maps, etc.) which is currently considered viable but would result in parcels which would not be considered viable using the weighting system.”*

*“As a general guideline, an agricultural parcel of land should be considered viable if it is of sufficient size and capability to support an agricultural enterprise independent of any other parcel. To qualify as agriculturally viable, the area of land in question need only be of sufficient size and/or productive capability to be economically attractive to an agricultural lessee. This productivity standard should take into consideration the cultural practices and leasehold production units in the area, as well as soil type and water availability. For dry land farming and grazing operations the production or carrying capacity should be based upon normal rainfall years only, not periods of drought or heavy rainfall. It should be noted that the Santa Barbara County Cattlemen’s Association has stated that an appropriate threshold for impacts to grazing land in the County is the displacement or division of land capable of sustaining between 25 to 30 animal units per*



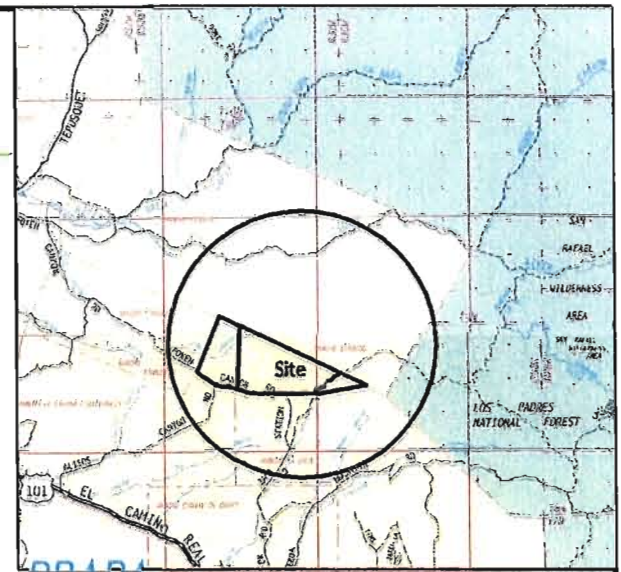
**Figure 1: Vicinity Map**





EXISTING CULTIVATED FIELDS/PRIME AGRICULTURAL

POTENTIAL PRIME AGRICULTURAL



VICINITY MAP  
Not to Scale

Figure 3:

### Proposed Lot Map

RANCHO LA LAGUNA  
 APN's 133-080-026, 133-080-036 & 133-080-037  
 In the County of Santa Barbara, California



SCALE: 1" = 2000'