

portions of the Sonoma Valley viticultural area. Soils in the Sonoma Mountain viticultural area, other than the overlapping portion, vary from those within the Bennett Valley area.

The foothills soils, comprised primarily of the Goulding-Toomes-Guenoc Association, are of a volcanic origin that include lava flows, tuff beds, sandstone, gravel, and some conglomerate. The lower slopes and valley floor soils have more variety, including some of alluvial origin. The distribution of Spreckels loam, a well-drained loam with clay subsoil is about 24 percent in the Bennett Valley area, 27 percent in the Sonoma Mountain viticultural area, and almost 42 percent in the common area that overlaps the two areas.

#### Climate

The Bennett Valley viticultural area has a unique microclimate, resulting

from its sheltered inland location and access to cooling coastal fogs and breezes. The broad and tall Sonoma Mountain diverts the foggy, south-to-north coastal breezes of the Petaluma gap to the north and into the Crane Canyon gap. This gap, between Sonoma Mountain and Taylor Mountain, funnels the coastal fog and winds east into the Bennett Valley. Rainfall amounts in the Bennett Valley area are 17 to 25 percent higher than in the areas to the immediate north and east. Valley residents indicate that rainfall amounts vary with elevation and proximity to the mountains and wind patterns.

#### *Overlaps With the Sonoma Mountain and Sonoma Coast Viticultural Areas*

The Bennett Valley area is almost entirely within the Sonoma Valley viticultural area. The Sonoma Mountain viticultural area, which is totally within

the larger Sonoma Valley viticultural area, overlaps 13.1 percent of the Bennett Valley area. A small part, 3.4 percent, of the Bennett Valley viticultural area overlaps into the Sonoma Coast viticultural area. The Sonoma Coast and the interior Sonoma Valley viticultural areas, both within the larger North Coast viticultural area, share a common boundary line along Sonoma Valley's western border. This common boundary line is the site of the boundary's small overlap into the Sonoma Coast area.

The following table summarizes the 8,140-acre Bennett Valley viticultural area's overlaps with other, established viticultural areas:

| Viticultural area                                 | Acres within the Bennett Valley area | Percent of the Bennett Valley area in overlap (percent) |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Sonoma Valley only .....                          | 6,796                                | 83.5  |
| Sonoma Mountain (within Sonoma Valley area) ..... | 1,063                                | 13.1  |
| Total within Sonoma Valley .....                  | 7,859                                | 96.6  |
| Sonoma Coast .....                                | 281                                  | 3.4   |
| Grand Total .....                                 | 8,140                                | 100.0   |

#### Sonoma Valley Viticultural Area (27 CFR 9.29)

The Bennett Valley viticultural area is primarily within the Sonoma Valley viticultural area. The Bennett Valley area occupies 7,859 acres, or approximately 7 percent, of the larger Sonoma Valley viticultural area's acreage. The Sonoma Valley viticultural area petition included the Bennett Valley due to its similar soil and climate. The Sonoma Mountain viticultural area is totally within, and located in the western portion of, the Sonoma Valley viticultural area.

#### Sonoma Mountain Viticultural Area (27 CFR 9.102)

The Bennett Valley viticultural area overlaps 1,063 acres (13.1 percent of its territory) of the Sonoma Mountain viticultural area, which is itself totally within the Sonoma Valley viticultural area. The overlap is in the southeast corner of the Bennett Valley area and the northwestern portion of the Sonoma Mountain area. The overlap is seen on the Glen Ellen and Kenwood USGS maps in Sections 11 through 14, T6N, R7W. The overlap is mainly that portion of the Bennett Valley viticultural area

north of the 1,600-foot elevation line on Sonoma Mountain in Sections 13, 14, and 23, and the land east of the common line between Sections 15 and 14, as shown on the Glen Ellen map. The northern limit of the overlap is the 800-foot elevation line from its southern most intersection with the common line between Sections 10 and 11 to its intersection with Bennett Valley Road, as shown on the Kenwood map.

The overlap area between the Bennett Valley and the Sonoma Mountain viticultural areas contains common geographic features, including the Matanzas Creek watershed, similar vineyard elevations, and the "thermal belt" phenomenon. This thermal phenomenon drains cold air and fog from the upper mountain slopes to the lower elevations, which moderates temperatures at the lower levels. The overlapping area is within the Crane Canyon wind gap range, which delivers the Pacific Ocean's cooling marine influence to the Bennett Valley area.

Strong soil similarities, within the Bennett Valley and Sonoma Mountain overlapping boundary area, include Goulding clay loam that covers 30.2 percent of the Bennett Valley area, 33.4

percent of this overlapping area, and from 7.4 to 49.8 percent of other sections of Sonoma Valley viticultural areas. Goulding cobbly clay loam covers 18.5 percent of the Bennett Valley area, 19.0 percent of the Sonoma Mountain overlap, and covers 10.8 to 43.1 percent of other areas.

Several Sonoma Mountain area grape growers state that diverse growing conditions exist on different sides, and at various elevations, on Sonoma Mountain. Specifically, they explain that the overlapping area benefits from the coastal influence and wind, which contrasts to the protected, warmer, eastern side of the mountain.

#### Sonoma Coast Viticultural Area (27 CFR 9.116)

The Bennett Valley viticultural area overlaps approximately 281 acres (3.4 percent of its territory) of the established Sonoma Coast viticultural area. This overlapping area is in two portions on the Bennett Valley's west boundary side. The first is located north of Crane Canyon Road and can be found in Sections 9 and 8, T6N, R7W, on the Cotati and Santa Rosa USGS maps. The second is located in Sections 15 and 16,