

Salinas Valley Water Coalition



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Supervisor Dave Potter, Chair
Monterey County Board of Supervisors
240 Church Street
Salinas, Ca 93901

26 February, 2002

Dear Chairman Potter and Members of the Board;

This letter is written specifically to comment on the February 12, 2002 letter and related documents jointly sent to you by Common Ground Monterey County and LandWatch Monterey County outlining their agreement on certain “conservation and development principles.” The Salinas Valley Water Coalition (SVWC) **DOES NOT** agree with, and cannot support, the “Recommended Principles for Conservation and Development” submitted by these organizations. To the contrary the Salinas Valley Water Coalition finds the ‘principles’ completely unacceptable and potentially destructive of production agriculture and achievement of meaningful water solutions! Common Ground Monterey County purports to represent a broad base within our communities, including a particularly large segment of the agriculture community; let us firmly state **THEY DO NOT!**

We believe the General Plan Update now in process, offers an opportunity for the community and the decision-makers to develop policies to guide the future development of Monterey County. However, we also believe that there are many existing mechanisms in place that can, and do, provide for the conservation of lands. Monterey County has approximately 750,000 acres under Williamson Act restrictions and another 750,000 acres in state and federal lands, which are off limits to any development. To propose a resource conversation policies and mapping overlays is not necessary, does nothing to preserve or promote our critical agricultural industry, and is clearly a taking of private property for an undefined and indefinable public benefit.

We support, as we always have, working within the General Plan Update process delineated by the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission. We are reviewing the Draft General Plan and look forward to getting the accompanying document, the Draft Environmental Impact Report. We believe the Recommended Principles for Conservation and Development submitted will only serve to disrupt the process and encourage you **NOT** to accept it.

Thank you,

Ralph Riva, Chair