

# Salinas Valley Water Coalition



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Transmitted via Email

Monterey County ERP  
General Plan Update Team  
240 Church Street Building 3  
Salinas, Ca 93901

2 April, 2004

**Re: Monterey County General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report,  
SCH#2001051078 Public Review Draft, February 17, 2004**

The Salinas Valley Water Coalition (Coalition) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Monterey County's (County) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for their proposed General Plan Update. The Coalition understands the importance of the General Plan --- once adopted it will become the blueprint for the County development for the next twenty years. It will be the constitution to guide in the 'right' direction.

Let us say upfront that we, along with many other groups and individuals, have found the draft General Plan confusing and difficult to review and analyze. The DEIR is a lengthy, equally confusing and difficult to review no-growth document. The DEIR fails to establish an objective, clearly defined scientific basis for determining the significance of potential impacts and instead relies on subjective conclusions that cannot be substantiated by factual analysis.

The Salinas Valley Water Coalition supports the comments submitted by Minitier and Associates. Those comments have been submitted on behalf of several organizations including the Salinas Valley Water Coalition. We refer you to that document for specific comments on the DEIR.

The Refinement Group has submitted recommendations on several of the General Plan Update elements, and they continue to work on the remaining portions. These recommendations have been submitted to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The Salinas Valley Water Coalition requests that the Refinement Group's recommendations be included as an alternative in the DEIR for evaluation. The Refinement Group's work is the product of a broad-base diverse group of individuals and organizations representing thousands of Monterey County citizens. We believe these recommendations meet the Guiding Objectives of the General Plan and the needs of the community.

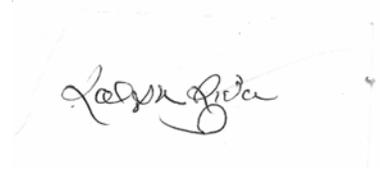
There is significant controversy surrounding the Draft General Plan Update and the manner in which the proposed policies will be implemented. Until we have a document that truly represents a community plan, we will have failed. We stress the need for the County to consider the adverse impacts to the individual landowners and the various regions of the valley associated with the project components and the measures necessary to mitigate these identified adverse impacts. It is important that the public is informed through the appropriate CEQA documents, as to the specific project components, the manner in which they will be operated and managed to meet the project goals, the adverse environmental and economic impacts associated with them,

as well as the mitigation measures necessary to avoid or reduce, significant adverse impacts, and the cost of this mitigation. The DEIR does not adequately address these matters.

Unfortunately this is a General Plan that is not in the best interest of the public it is meant to serve. It does not plan but rather proposes to implement great restrictions on the landowners within the County --- many of which are considered a taking of private property rights. The County and the public would be better served if the General Plan were developed in a way that protected private property rights. The Salinas Valley Water Coalition is committed to continuing to work with the County to develop a General Plan that will do this. We are committed to finding a solution and hope that the County is as well.

We respectfully state that the DEIR is inadequate and must be changed to adequately evaluate the impacts to the agricultural community and the potential impacts to the community and quality of life and the Refinement Group's recommendations.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph Riva", is centered on a white rectangular background.

**Ralph Riva, Chair  
Salinas Valley Water Coalition**