

Salinas Valley Water Coalition



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Draft General Plan Update YOUR Help is Needed!!

The Monterey County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on the Draft General Plan to receive public testimony on Draft General Plan policies and the Planning Commission policy recommendations.

- ◆ July 15, 2002 – 7:00 pm
- ◆ July 16, 2002 – 10:00 am [staff presentation] 1:40 pm [public testimony]
- ◆ July 17, 2002 – 9:30 am – Board work session (closed public hearing) to consider the Planning Commission and staff recommendations and Public Testimony and to give direction to staff

We are concerned about the aggressive timeline the Board of Supervisors has adopted for their receipt of, and consideration of, public comment. Public participation is critical to the Board's decision-making, and to the production of a final document that truly represents the varying interests within the County.

Though tedious and sometimes overwhelming, the Planning Commissioners demonstrated their commitment to our community during their consideration of the draft General Plan Update. We appreciate their willingness to listen to the differing concerns expressed, and their consideration of those concerns as represented in their recommendations. However, their recommendation does not go far enough, and therefore the Draft General Plan is still unacceptable!

As an example, according to the staff report to the Supervisors, "The Planning Commission recommends maintaining Policy PS-3.2 suggesting that water metering should be required in areas of aquifer overdraft. This policy should be implemented *first* in the areas where the overdraft is most significant."

We know that North County and Carmel Valley are – and if you add all of Salinas Valley as some individuals have stated it is in overdraft – you will have the *entire* County required to install meters! THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE!

Further the Planning Commission recommendations do not discuss, nor mention, Environmental Resource Management Policy ER-5.2 which states:

"The County shall manage the operation of water storage dams and retention facilities to provide adequate water flow within streams and rivers with the goal of maintaining the viability of native fish and amphibian species habitat."

Their failure to address this policy assumes that it will continue to be included within the General Plan! This is not acceptable! This policy provides no consideration of maintaining the viability of our \$2 billion agricultural industry! Nor is there any consideration of maintaining the viability of our drinking water! And last, but certainly not least, there is no consideration of maintaining or protecting the water rights of the landowners. The two Salinas Valley reservoirs are operated in such a way as to address the water recharge, flood control and recreation needs throughout the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin, including halting seawater intrusion. This Draft General Plan

is inconsistent with the current operation of the reservoirs and with the water right permits issued by the State Water Resources Control Board for the reservoirs, and the Plan clearly places the viability of fish and amphibian species over people – this is NOT good policy or good resources management, and it will serve to revitalize the ‘water wars’.

This is a key example of how the Draft General Plan places the environment over people. Rather than develop policies that will manage and protect both, the plan pits one against the other.

The Salinas Valley Water Coalition is joining other individuals and organizations to ask the Board of Supervisors to establish a broad-based Citizens' Advisory Committee whose purpose would be to review the recommendations that have been made by various groups, individuals, the Planning Commission and staff, with the objective to provide goal and policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for adoption in the Monterey County 21st Century General Plan.

It is critical that these interests are considered in the selection and evaluation of options and alternatives to the Draft General Plan. Only

through such a process can this General Plan become one that we all can support. This General Plan must be acceptable to the people of Monterey County – after all, this will be OUR General Plan.

PLEASE JOIN US IN THIS SUPPORT BY ATTENDING ONE OF THE ABOVE PUBLIC HEARINGS AND/OR SENDING A LETTER TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND REQUESTING THEY ESTABLISH A BROAD-BASED CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE!

Send your letter to:
Mr. Dave Potter, Chair
Monterey County Board of Supervisors
240 Church Street
Salinas, Ca 93908
Fax: (831) 755-5888
And a copy to:
Supervisor Lou Calcagno
PO Box 946
King City, Ca 93930
Fax: (831) 385-8327

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