

**Carr Lake Restoration and Park Development-Request for Comments-
Circulated MND (File Nos. GPA 2020-001; RZ 2020-001; SPR 2020-006)**

Garcia, Nadia x7384 <GarciaN4@co.monterey.ca.us>

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To: Thomas Wiles <thomaswi@ci.salinas.ca.us>

Dear Mr. Wiles,

Thank you for referring the subject Mitigated Negative Declaration and our office subsequent request for the City of Salinas Resolution No. 19422, *City of Salinas Agricultural Land Preservation Program* to our office for review within the environmental document comment period. The Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner's has reviewed the subject MND, Resolution No. 19422 and the City of Salinas 2002 General Plan and has the following comment:

Under the CHECKLIST section, item 2 (a) *Agricultural Resources* subsection, this office opines the impact to Prime Farmland is not a "less than significant impact" as the MND describes, but rather a "potentially significant unless mitigation incorporated". Although the proposed project will be consistent with its general plan designation of "Park", the underlying soils are designated as Prime Farmland. The proposal converts Prime Farmland to the non-agricultural use of a park and that conversion should be mitigated, pursuant to the City of Salinas Agricultural Land Preservation Program, measure AG-4 *Buffers between Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Uses*, further implementing City of Salinas General Plan Policy COS-10, for the protection of adjacent land designated as Prime Farmlands.

AG-4 of the City of Salinas Agricultural Land Preservation Program reads as follows: "The City will implement Implementation Program COS-10, which requires the City to encourage the provision and maintenance of buffers, such as roadways, topographic features, and open space, to prevent incompatibilities between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses. A number of factors shall be used to determine the appropriate buffer, including type of agricultural use, topography, and pesticide and machinery use, among others."

General Plan Policy COS-10 reads: "Encourage the provision and maintenance of buffers, such as roadways, topographic features, and open space, to prevent incompatibilities between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses. A number of factors shall be used to determine the appropriate buffer, including type of agricultural use, topography, and pesticide and machinery use, among others."

Our office suggests a mitigation measure shall be added requiring a well-defined agricultural buffer easement shown on the approved site map(s) and recorded as a agricultural buffer easement deed with maintenance provisions. The well-defined agricultural buffer easement areas shall be established pursuant to the policies in place and criteria described in AG-4 and COS-10 (roadways, topographic features, open space etc.).

Again, thank you for allowing the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner's Office to review and comment on the proposed project.

Sincerely,

Nadia Garcia

Agricultural Resources and Policy Manager

County of Monterey Agricultural Commissioner's Office

1428 Abbott Street, Salinas, CA 93901

Direct Phone Line: (831) 759-7384

Email: garcian4@co.monterey.ca.us

[Agricultural Commissioner's Office Website](#)