

Monterey County
Planning and Building
Inspection Administration

OCT 29 2008

RECEIVED

*this is hard copy
of email comments*

Robert Hale
813 Cypress Street
Monterey, CA 93940
27 October 2008

Carl Holm, Monterey County Planning Department

RE: Comments on Draft EIR for 2007 General Plan (GPU 5)

1) Agricultural conversion of slopes over 25 percent.

I strongly oppose the elimination of the 25 percent slope limitation on agricultural land conversion for lands outside of Carmel Valley. This elimination opens up substantial acreage of generally oak woodland and chaparral to alteration. Has the draft EIR estimated how much loss of current oak woodland and chaparral will be lost?, estimated the visual impact change this will have on our county?, estimated how much more sediment erosion and pesticide/fertilizer pollution will be introduced into our watersheds and groundwater supplies?, and impacts on wildlife habitat and corridors for wildlife movement? If the EIR has not addressed these issues, then I request that the EIR analyze the impacts of slope conversion on amount of acreage potentially convertible, on the visual impacts, on the amount of erosion and pollution from expanded agricultural uses, and impacts on fragmentation of wildlife habitat and wildlife movement corridors.

The General Plan needs to preserve the current policies that have served well to limit agricultural conversion (typically to vineyards) to less sloped lands in our county with preservation of the slopes which has served our county well in preserving views while allowing expansion of grape cultivation.

2) Impacts on sensitive plants and wildlife - I strongly urge the general plan to provide better protection for the rich biological heritage and diversity of Monterey County -- BY using the Department of Fish and Game's Special Status Plant and Animal lists rather than only considering those plants and animals that have been officially listed as threatened or endangered. The Draft EIR does not address the impacts or cumulative impacts on the many sensitive plants, animals and ecological communities that Monterey County contains and must include an analysis of these impacts based on the Dept. Fish and Game Special Status Plant and Animal lists.

Thank you for your consideration,

Robert Hale

