

MONTEREY COUNTY

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

168 WEST ALISAL ST., 2nd FLOOR, SALINAS, CA 93901

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NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Date: March 1, 2017

To: Responsible Agencies/Interested Parties

From: Robert Roach, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner
Monterey County Office of the Agricultural Commissioner

Subject: Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for Monterey County's Consideration to Renew its 5-Year Cooperative Services Agreement with the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the USDA Wildlife Service Program in Monterey County

The County of Monterey will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate the continued implementation of the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Wildlife Services (APHIS-WS) Integrated Wildlife Damage Management (IWDM) Program and Agreement Renewal (proposed project). We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. The current 5-Year Cooperative Services Agreement between the County and USDA expires June 30, 2018.

In February 2017, the County completed preparation of an Initial Study to assess the potential environmental effects of continuing the program. Although the study found no significant environmental effects under CEQA review standards, the County is nonetheless interested in conducting environmental review above and beyond what is required by CEQA. The result of this process will be a voluntary, non-CEQA-mandated informational EIR. The project location and a summary of the project description are provided in the attached Initial Study. The Initial Study is also available for review at the Agricultural Commissioner's Office, 1428 Abbott Street, Salinas, during normal business hours, and online at: <http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/agricultural-commissioner#ag>.

At this time, the scope of the EIR is anticipated to focus on biological resource impacts (including effects upon wildlife resources within the County) as well as feasible alternatives to the program as proposed.

One public scoping meeting is planned to be held during the 30-day public review period of the NOP. The meeting has been scheduled on Thursday, March 16, 2017, beginning at 3:00 PM in the Conference Room at the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, 1428 Abbott Street, Salinas. County staff and consultants will provide a brief overview of the project, followed by public/agency input regarding the scope of the environmental review.

All interested parties are invited to attend the public scoping meeting and to submit written comments on the environmental issues that will be analyzed in the draft EIR. Due to time limits mandated by state law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than **5:00 PM on Friday, March 31, 2017**. There will be another opportunity to submit comments when the draft EIR is released for public review.

Please submit your response along with a contact person in your agency to:

Robert Roach, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner
Monterey County Office of the Agricultural Commissioner
1428 Abbott Street
Salinas, CA 93901

Written comments may also be submitted via email to roachb@co.monterey.ca.us or faxed to (831) 759-2268. Questions may be directed to Mr. Roach at (831) 759-7379.

Attachments: Initial Study

cc: State Clearinghouse, Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044