NOTICE OF PREPARATION
**of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**
**for the D'Arrigo Brothers and General Farm Investments Well Replacement Project**

**DATE:** December 22, 2025

**TO:** State Clearinghouse, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and other Interested Agencies, Parties, and Organizations

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the D'Arrigo Brothers and General Farm Investments Well Replacement Project

**COMMENT PERIOD:** December 22, 2025, to January 22, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.

**LEAD AGENCY:** County of Monterey, Environmental Health Bureau
1270 Natividad Road
Salinas, CA 93906
Contact: Roger Van Horn, Supervising Environmental Health Specialist
Email: VanHornRW@countyofmonterey.gov

The County of Monterey Environmental Health Bureau ("County EHB") acting in their authority as the Lead Agency will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") (California Public Resources Code ["PRC"], Section 21000, et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations ["CCR"] 1500 et seq.). This Notice of Preparation ("NOP") has been prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR §§ 15082, 15375).

County EHB will prepare the Draft EIR to evaluate potential environmental effects of the proposed D'Arrigo Brothers and General Farm Investments Well Replacement Project ("Proposed Project"). Implementation of the Proposed Project would include construction of two replacement wells to be located at two different properties, one owned and operated by the D'Arrigo Brothers of USA ("D'Arrigo") and the other owned and operated by General Farm Investments ("General Farms"). The D'Arrigo Well would be located at 0 Highway 183 and San Jon Road on Assessor's Parcel Number ("APN") 227-041-001-000 in Monterey County ("County") west of the City of Salinas, and the General Farms well would be located at 17 McFadden Road on APN 227-062-005-000 in the County and west of the City of Salinas. Please see figures included as an attachment to this NOP showing locations. Both proposed replacement wells would be drilled using reverse rotary drilling methods. Exact depth will depend on geologic conditions encountered during drilling, but it is estimated that both wells will be drilled to a depth of approximately 1710 feet. The wells would provide water for farmland production from the Deep Aquifer of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin ("Deep Aquifer"). Specifically, D'Arrigo would install a new replacement well with a maximum capacity of 2,000 gallons per minute ("GPM"), and General Farms would install a new 1,500 GPM replacement well. The replacement wells would replace existing agricultural production wells that pump water from the shallow zones in the 180/400 Foot Aquifer of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin, which are experiencing issues with diminishing water quality from sea water intrusion. The EIR will evaluate the proposed replacement wells to assess their potential impact on the hydrogeologic conditions and long-term viability of the Deep Aquifer.

**Agencies:** County EHB requests agencies' views on the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to an agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Proposed Project, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines sections 15082(b) and 15103. Agencies may need to use the EIR to consider permits or other approvals.

**Organizations and Interested Parties:** County EHB requests comments and concerns regarding the proposed scope of environmental topics that the Draft EIR will evaluate.

**Public Review Period:** County EHB issued this NOP for public review and comment pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR §§ 15082, 15375). County EHB established a 30-day review and scoping period from December 22, 2025, through January 22, 2026, in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR § 15082). The NOP is available for public review during regular business hours at the County EHB address listed below and are available for review online here:
https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/government/departments-a-h/health/environmental-health/drinking-water-protection/wells

Please send your written comments by 5:00p.m. on January 22, 2026, to:

**County of Monterey Environmental Health Bureau,**
**1270 Natividad Road**
**Salinas, CA 93906**
**ATTN: Roger Van Horn, Supervising Environmental Health Specialist**
**Or via email to:**
VanHornRW@countyofmonterey.gov

**Any comments provided should identify specific topics of environmental concern and your reason for suggesting the study of these topics in the EIR.**

**Public Scoping Meeting:** County EHB will hold a Scoping Meeting to give the public an opportunity to receive more information on the Proposed Project, and to provide written comments on the scope of the Draft EIR. All members of the public and interested persons are welcome to attend and provide written comments at that time. The meeting will be held on Tuesday January 13th, from 3:00p.m. to 4:30p.m. in person at County EHB office located at 1270 Natividad Road Salinas, CA 93906, Monterey County Health Department, Environmental Health Bureau, Whitney Conference Room. This meeting will be an in-person event only.

**Further information:** For environmental review information or questions about the Proposed Project, please contact Roger Van Horn, Supervising Environmental Health Specialist at VanHornRW@countyofmonterey.gov.

Roger Van-Horn
Roger Van-Horn (Dec 22, 2025 15:38:10 PST)

Roger Van Horn
Supervising Environmental Health Specialist
Monterey County Environmental Health Bureau

Dec 22, 2025
Date

Thank you for your participation in the environmental review of this Project.

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**
**of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**
**for the D'Arrigo Brothers and General Farm Investments Well Replacement Project**

**INTRODUCTION:** The purpose of an EIR is to inform decision makers and the general public of the potential environmental effects of a proposed project. The environmental review process is intended to provide public agencies with the environmental information necessary to evaluate a project to determine whether it may have a significant effect on the environment, to establish methods for reducing adverse environmental impacts, and to consider alternatives prior to approval. This section provides an overview of the Proposed Project, including background, location, and a brief description of the Proposed Project.

**PROPOSED PROJECT AND CEQA OVERVIEW:** The Draft EIR will address the potential environmental effects of implementing the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would install two new replacement wells at two separate properties (two wells total) west of the City Salinas in unincorporated Monterey County. Each replacement well would be drilled to a depth of approximately 1710 feet in the Deep Aquifer.

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**: D'Arrigo and General Farms own and operate agricultural production wells that support their agricultural operations in the Salinas Valley. D'Arrigo and General Farms both operate existing agricultural production wells in the shallow zones in the 180/400 Foot Aquifer of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin on properties west of the City of Salinas. Existing wells, located on these properties, are experiencing water quality issues due to their location and depth in the shallow zones of the 180/400 Foot Aquifer. Both D'Arrigo and General Farms are seeking to replace their existing agricultural production wells with new replacement wells of the same capacity in the Deep Aquifer to improve water quality. The replacement wells will not result in any increase in irrigated acreage.

County EHB reviewed well applications from both D'Arrigo and General Farms to install new agricultural production wells in the Deep Aquifer and conducted separate Initial Studies for each of the proposed wells. County EHB concluded that the Proposed Project may result in a potential impact related to Hydrology and Water Quality and is requiring preparation of an EIR to properly evaluate this potential impact under CEQA.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The D'Arrigo Well is located at 0 Highway 183 and San Jon Road on Assessor's Parcel Number ("APN") 227-041-001-000 in Monterey County ("County") west of the City of Salinas. The General Farms well is located at 17 McFadden Road on APN 227-062-005-000 in the County and west of the City of Salinas. Both Project sites carry a County land use designation of Farmlands 40 – 160 acres minimum and a zoning designation of Farmland with a minimum building site of 40 acres ("F/40").

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Proposed Project would install two new replacement wells for existing agricultural production wells experiencing issues with water quality. Specifically, D'Arrigo would install a new replacement well with a maximum capacity of 2,000 GPM, and General Farms would install a new 1,500 GPM replacement well. Both wells would be drilled to a depth of approximately 1710 feet and be screened in the Deep Aquifer. The proposed wells would have about 800 feet of conductor casing and seal to isolate the production zone from the overlying sediments of the aquitard and the 180/400 Foot Aquifer of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. The Proposed Project would not result in an increase in irrigated land, and new replacement wells in the Deep Aquifer would replace existing wells in the shallow zones of the 180/400 Foot Aquifer. The Proposed Project would include destruction of the existing shallow wells by state and county approved methods. The area of disturbance during construction would be approximately 300 by 300 feet for each well; construction would occur on previously disturbed agricultural land.

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE TOPICS ANALYZED:** As discussed in **Project Background** above, County EHB prepared an Initial Study for each of the proposed replacement wells in January 2025. The Initial Studies only identified potential impacts to Hydrology and Water Quality. However, the Draft EIR will also evaluate the resource topics under the CEQA Guidelines listed below to confirm the Proposed Project's level of impact:

- Aesthetic Resources
- Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources/Tribal Consultation
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use & Planning
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Cumulative Impacts
- Alternative

Resource topics not anticipated to result in significant impacts, and which will not be evaluated in the Draft EIR include the following:

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Energy
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Wildfire

**Aesthetics:** The Draft EIR will review and describe the existing visual characteristics of the Project site and surrounding area to evaluate whether the Proposed Project would have a potentially significant impact on aesthetic resources. If potentially significant visual impacts are identified, the Draft EIR will include feasible mitigation measures.

**Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases:** This section of the Draft EIR will be based on estimates of emissions and associated changes in air quality and greenhouse gas emissions that are likely to occur based on activities that result from the implementation of the Proposed Project. Pollutants of concern include criteria pollutants and toxic air contaminants. An assessment of the air quality and greenhouse gas impacts will be conducted, and emissions estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model ("CalEEMod") land use and air quality model. The results will be compared to significance thresholds developed by the Monterey Bay Air Resources District. The Draft EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce the significance of air quality impacts, if identified.

**Biological Resources:** The Draft EIR will identify, characterize, and evaluate biological resource issues, including sensitive habitats, special-status species, and wildlife nesting/breeding. The Draft EIR will analyze the potential adverse effects to sensitive biological resources that may result from implementing the Proposed Project. The Draft EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce the significance of biological resource impacts, if identified.

**Cultural Resources:** The Draft EIR will address archaeological, historical, and cultural resource issues potentially present at the Project site through records searches. The Draft EIR will identify mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant cultural resources impacts, if required, and ensure that the Proposed Project protects cultural resources that may be discovered unexpectedly during construction.

**Geology and Soils:** The Draft EIR will address the potential impacts of the Proposed Project resulting from construction and operation consistent with CEQA Appendix G. The Draft EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce the significance of impacts regarding geology and soils, if identified.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** The Draft EIR will identify hazardous materials sites in the vicinity of the Project site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and will address potential impacts to emergency access routes and wildfire hazards. The Draft EIR will identify mitigation measures as applicable.

**Hydrology and Water Quality:** The hydrogeologic effects of the Proposed Project will be assessed using an existing groundwater and transport model sponsored by the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency ("SVBGSA"). The groundwater and transport models were developed during the development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan ("GSP") for the Salinas Basin by Montgomery & Associates ("M&A") to support groundwater management and assess seawater intrusion and is referred to as the Salinas Valley Seawater Intrusion Model ("SWI Model"). The SWI Model will be used as the basis for evaluation to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Project with regards to Hydrology and Water Quality.

**Land Use & Planning:** The Draft EIR would evaluate whether the Proposed Project would conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations of an agency with jurisdiction over the Proposed Project.

**Public Services and Recreation:** The Draft EIR will examine whether the Proposed Project would result in potentially significant impacts to performance levels of public services, namely fire and police protection, and recreation facilities, and thus, result in substantial physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Appendix G.

**Transportation:** The Draft EIR will assess potential transportation and traffic impacts on Vehicle Miles Traveled ("VMT") during construction and operation of the proposed well systems.

**Utilities and Service Systems:** The Draft EIR will address potential impacts regarding water supply, solid waste, and electrical and natural gas utility services. No wastewater utilities would be involved in the installation and operation of replacement wells for agricultural production.

**Other CEQA-Required Sections**: In accordance with CEQA requirements, topics screened out because they were determined to result in less than significant impacts, cumulative impacts, alternatives, and growth-inducement effects of the Proposed Project will be discussed in this chapter.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS:** Following completion of the 30-day NOP public review period, County EHB will incorporate relevant information into the Draft EIR and circulate the document for public review and comment. **County EHB requests that any potential Responsible or Trustee Agency responding to this notice do so in a manner consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b).**

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1. Regional Location Map

Attachment 2. Project Location Map




Source: Esri; Maxar, August 2025

Title: Regional Map

Date 8/25/025
Scale N/A
Project 2025.20


Denise Duffy and Associates, Inc.
Environmental Consultants Resource Planners
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Figure 1




Title:

# Project Location Map

| | |
|---|---|
| Date | 9/04/2025 |
| Scale | N/A |
| Project | 2025.20 |

Monterey | San Jose
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Figure 2