



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING AND BUILDING

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November 21, 2024

Natalie Sare, Chair
San Mateo County Agricultural Advisory Committee

Dear Natalie:

Thank you for your letter regarding the prime agricultural soils mitigation requirement for the Pescadero fire station project, and the Agricultural Advisory Committee's desire to be involved in the process.

The County must and will mitigate for the conversion of prime agricultural land according to the criteria established by the California Coastal Commission (CCC), and subsequently included as Mitigation Measure AG-1 in the CEQA Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project our IS/MND for the project, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

The requirement by the County to mitigate for the conversion of prime agricultural soils on a 2:1 basis is also specifically captured in the Local Coastal Program amendments (new LUP Policy 2.60) that were certified by the CCC in February 2024.

Further, the agricultural mitigation is included as a condition of approval in the Coastal Development Permit for the Pescadero Fire Station project.

To mitigate for the prime agricultural soils conversion, the County is partnering with Peninsula Open Space Trust to contribute funds, equivalent to the cost of 3.5 acres, toward an Agricultural Conservation Easement (ACE) on currently-unprotected prime agricultural soils. The County has reviewed this approach with California Coastal Commission staff, who have provided preliminary approval that it meets the criteria as they intended, and will again consult with CCC staff prior to final recordation of the easement(s).

In the meantime, prior to final recordation of an ACE, Planning and Building staff welcome any suggestion of possible mitigation parcels by AAC members, and will gladly review and consider them for compliance with the CCC criteria.

Sincerely,

Sophie Mintier
Assistant Director