



# **AG Pass for Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner's Office**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
APRIL 18, 2023  
AGENDA ITEM NO. 28**



# Staff's Recommendation:

Adopt a Resolution to:

- a. Find that the approval of the AG Pass Program is categoryically exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- b. Approve the Monterey County AG Pass Program subject to eligibility requirements and other terms described in the staff report; and
- c. Authorize the Agricultural Commissioner's Office as the Administrator of the AG Pass Program.



# What is the AG Pass Program?

**AG Pass Program** may allow commercial agriculturalists limited emergency access to areas that may otherwise be restricted due to a **fire, flood, storm, earthquake, explosion or other disaster** for the following activities:

- ✓ **Sheltering, moving, transporting, evacuating, feeding, watering, or administering veterinary care to livestock and irrigating crops.**
- ✓ **Provide auxiliary support to emergency personnel such as identifying water points or roads and any other local knowledge that may assist emergency response personnel.**
- Activity **not allowed** under the AG Pass: **Harvesting of crops.**
- County provides a uniform way to vet commercial agricultural operations and eligibility for an AG Pass.
- An AG Pass ID Card, allows for emergency staff at disaster check points to easily identify AG Pass holders.
- Possession of AG Pass ID Card **does not guarantee entry.**





# Background

- Board Referral- April 4, 2022- Determine the feasibility of an AG Pass Program.
- Staff studied Chaptered *AB1103 Agricultural lands: livestock producers: managerial employees: livestock pass program: disaster access to ranch lands.*
- Staff studied an updated draft of *AB1103- AB1141 Agricultural lands: farmers and producers: agricultural pass program: disaster access to farm lands.* (Extends ag pass to all types of commercial ag operations.)
- University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR) Publication 8685, December 2020, *Preparing for Disaster: Establishing an Ag Pass Program in Your Community.*
- Staff surveyed other California Counties on their AG Pass Programs.
- Developed framework and presented stakeholders/partnerships June 2022 and March 2023 and had a separate meeting with first responders in September 2022 and April 2023.
- Updated the Board of Supervisors in October 2022 and Board directed staff to finalize the program pursuant to staff's eligibility recommendation and requested cost analysis of program.



# AG Pass Card Eligibility

## Eligibility for an AG Pass?

- The Operation must be:
  - A commercial agricultural operation; **or**
  - Educational Institution conducting agricultural research or instruction; **and**
  - Property located in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) of Monterey County; **and**
  - Required fire and safety training course(s) for AG Pass holders.

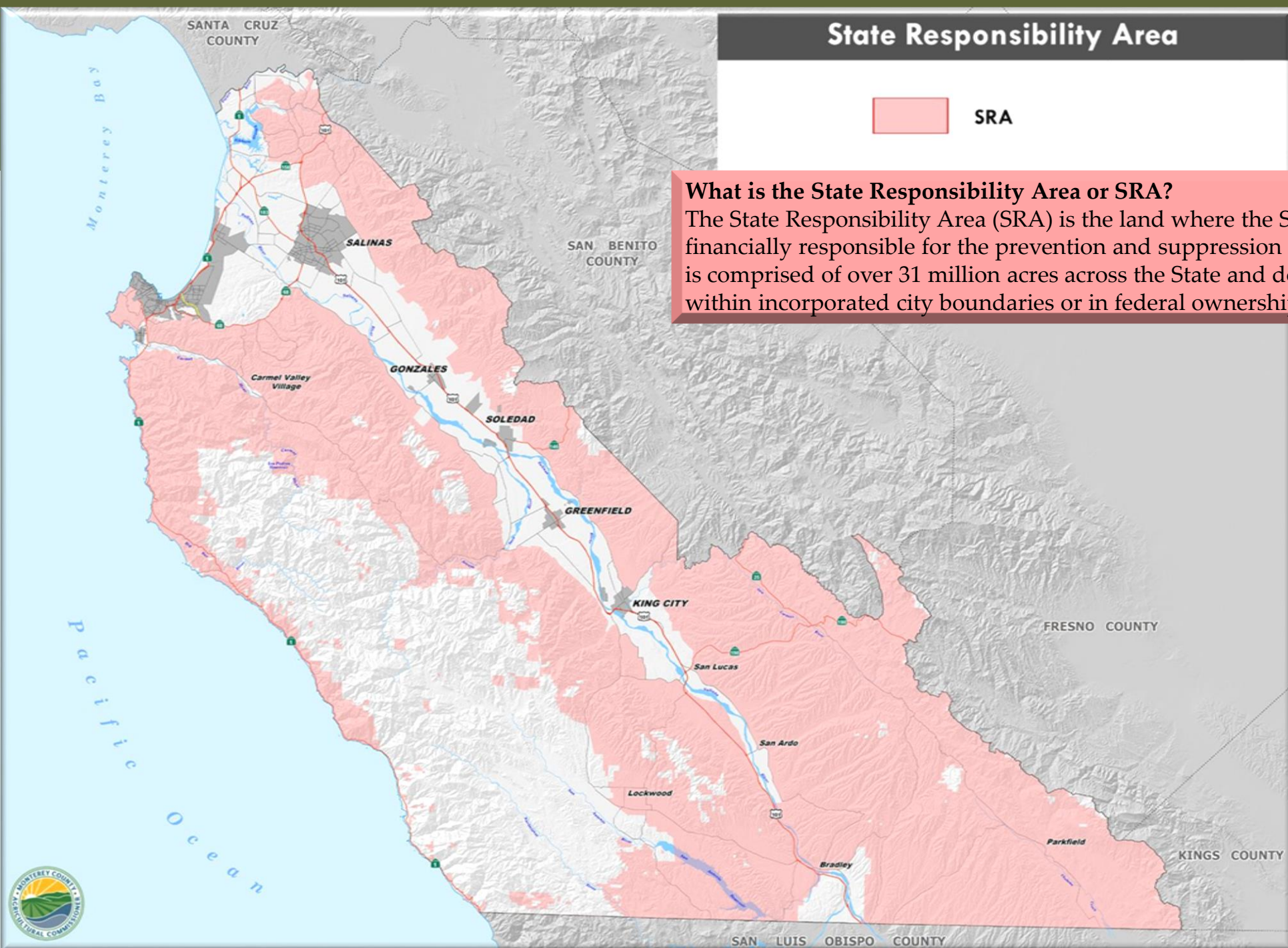


## State Responsibility Area



### What is the State Responsibility Area or SRA?

The State Responsibility Area (SRA) is the land where the State of California is financially responsible for the prevention and suppression of wildfires. The SRA is comprised of over 31 million acres across the State and does not include lands within incorporated city boundaries or in federal ownership.





# Ag Commissioner's Office Administrators of the AG Pass Program

## **Administration responsibilities include:**

- Process applications (verify eligibility)
- Coordinate and Verify Fire and Safety Training
- Printing and Distributing AG Pass Identification Cards
- Record Keeping
- Renewal Notification



# AG Pass Process

## **Step 1: Do I Meet the AG Pass Program Eligibility?**

Am I:

- A commercial agricultural operation; or
- An entity conducting agricultural research or instruction by an educational institution? **AND**
- The subject site(s) are located within a State Responsibility Area? (verify by entering subject Assessor's Parcel Numbers through link that will be provided).

## **Step 2: Submit an AG Pass Application and Application Materials.**

- AG Pass Email Address
- By Fax
- In Person

## **Step 3: AG Pass Applicants will come into Ag Commissioner's Office for picture appointment.**

- Will be contacted by Ag Commissioner's staff for photo appointment.
- If fee is charged, fee will be collected at that time.
- AG Pass applicant will be scheduled for fire and safety training and given training information flyer.

## **Step 4: AG Pass Program Mandatory Fire and Safety In- Person Training.**

- Ag Commissioner's staff will register AG Pass Applicant at training and verify completion of 4-hour training.

## **Step 5: AG Pass Card Issuance Days Following Training.**

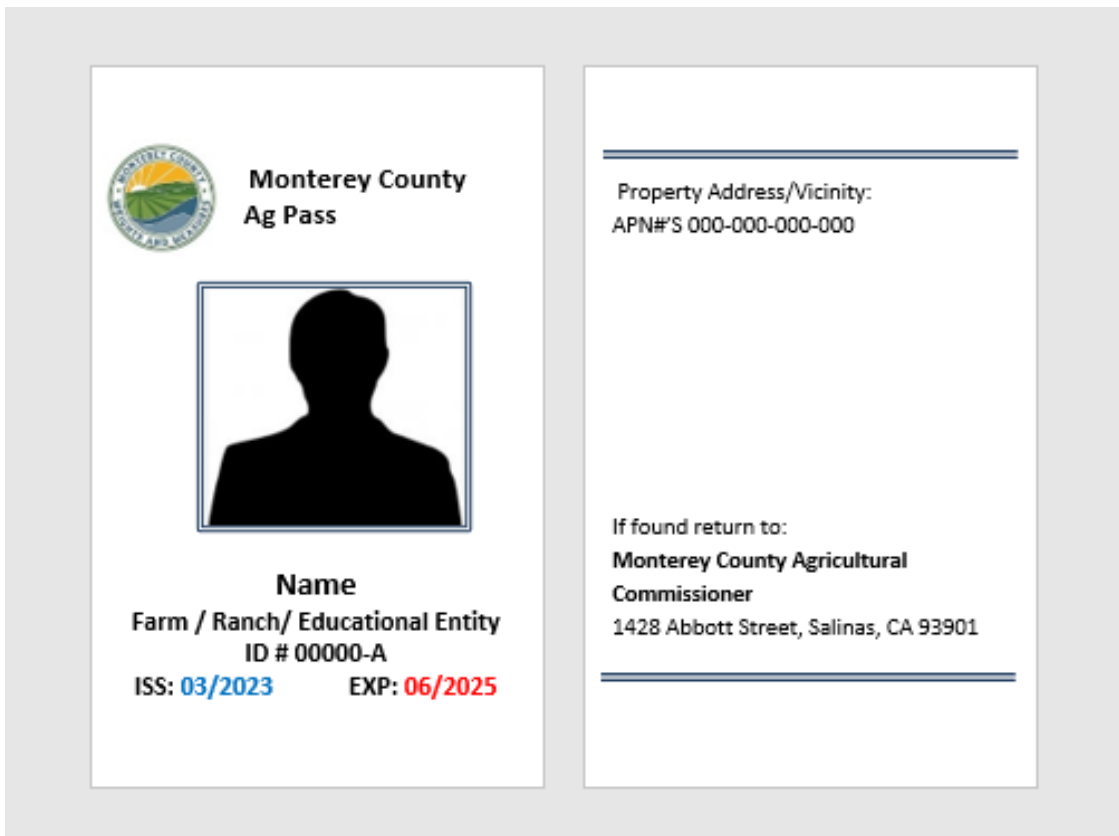
- Preferred method: Pick-up in person or snail mail?





# Picture ID AG Pass

- 3 AG Pass per application
- Valid for two years
- Annual renewal after two years with refresher training





# Cost Estimate for AG Pass Program

- AG Pass Program estimated at \$15,000 annually first year (FY 2022-23).
- Annual cost to decrease significantly thereafter.
- Staff recommends no fee is charged to applicant.
- AG Pass is a seasonal- yearly application process.
- Will not require any changes to levels of staffing.
- Should the Board opt for an application fee, staff recommends no more than \$25 application fee which would offset future replacement of ID Card equipment and/or supplies.



# Key Dates

- **Week of April 24, 2023: AG Pass Program goes live:**
  - Accepting AG Pass Application Materials with a seasonal deadline each year
  - AG Pass Program Webpage
- **June 5 & 6, 2023: Fire and Safety Training Scheduled:**
  - 4 hour training sessions- one AM session/one PM session
  - Training collaboration by: Fire Agencies, Sheriff, CHP, and County Public Works and Ag Commissioner's staff
  - Ag Conference Room, 1428 Abbott Street, Salinas



# Staff's Recommendation:

## Adopt a Resolution to:

- a. Find that the approval of the AG Pass Program is categorically exempt pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- b. Approve the Monterey County AG Pass Program subject to eligibility requirements and other terms described in the staff report, *including no application fee charged*; and
- c. Authorize the Agricultural Commissioner's Office as the Administrator of the AG Pass Program.