

The three SLO Planning Commissioners' (SLO PC) stunning vote for the Phillips 66 (P66) proposal equates to an allegiance to political outlook rather than listening to county residents and neighbors to the north and south. Based on commissioner appointments by the Board of Supervisors (SLOBS), it is a foreshadowing of how the SLOBS will vote. And, in the upcoming June 7 nonpartisan election for supervisor, only one north county candidate is against the oil trains, Eric Michielssen. No wonder voters across the nation are angry and demoralized at the political status quo.

The P66 proposal process is one of the biggest issues to come before our SLO PC, affecting the whole northwest region of US. This proposal decision will set precedent for oil companies across the US.

The SLO PC were tasked with reviewing the 2 Environmental Impact Reports (EIR), reading their staff's detailed recommendation for denial, reading/listening to the testimony of the County's air quality and public health officials, comments of thousands of California citizens, along with the letters of dozens of cities, counties and school districts all urging denial.

Andrew Christie writes in the Sierra Club, Santa Lucia Chapter Newsletter, "it seemed like the facts, science, the law and the fundamentals of good planning would be enough to get the message across to at least a majority of the County's planning commissioners to deny this project."

Commissioner Eric Meyer (Supervisor Hill's appointee) asked, "Who benefits from this rail spur?" Contrary to what individuals are saying, P66 corporate has indicated neither the refinery will close nor jobs lost with denial.

I attended the May 16th SLO PC hearing and once it was apparent three supervisors were voting in favor of P66, I thought of the three infamous monkeys sitting shoulder to shoulder, one with hands over eyes, another, hands over ears and the third, hands over mouth. This threesome represent hear no evil, see no evil and speak no evil. In this case, however, I thought of the three SLO PC's who voted for the proposal, hearing no testimony, seeing none of the thousands of letters from folks like you and I from all over the state as well as hundreds of attendees at the hearings and, and not speaking out for the health and safety of their county residents.

Studies and health officials testimony guarantees increased air pollution all along the route of these oil trains. This reduced air quality would be detrimental for children whose lung capacity is still developing. Unmitigated, it ensures the wider community will be exposed to greatly increased amounts of airborne particulates and carcinogens from the three diesel engines per train and vaporous off-gassing from each rail car. The pollution created will be a direct causation of increased rates of childhood asthma, heart disease, cancer, and lung disease in our county.

County Deputy Counsel, Whitney McDonald added, "Staff still believes a Class I diesel PM impact exists under the 3-train alternative.

Eric Meyer (appointed by Hill) said, "P66 says it's about jobs. (But) we'd be importing a foreign product at the risk of local jobs." Eric and Ken Topping (appointed by Gibson), apparently were the only commissioners who read the EIR's and over 2000 comments, staff report and listened to testimony at six SLO Planning Commission hearings. They are my heroes just because they did their job, eyes and ears wide open.

Commissioner Don Campbell (Supervisor Arnold's appointee) cited his fervent allegiance to the unimpeded flow of industrial commerce. Commissioner Jim Harrison (Supervisor Compton's appointee) basically said that accidents happen and so few people have died in train derailments, it is not an issue of concern. Jim Irving (Supervisor Mecham's appointee) said it was a "local land issue." What about the significant environmental impacts and health and safety at risk?

Experts have described crude oils into different "packing groups" to determine volatility when shipped. Tar sands oil P66 wants to ship to Nipomo is in the *most dangerous* "Packing Group"..., the group with the highest risk of fire and explosion during a derailment.

Although the Commissioners' straw poll indicated potential approval of the project, they stated that two major areas must be agreed to by P66 -- the mitigations as per the final EIR, and additional "conditions of approval." A report will be prepared by County staff and distributed to the public who will be able to make public comment on September 22nd. For more info go to [messarefinerywatch.com](http://messarefinerywatch.com).

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