From: Cynthia Hicks <cghicks977@att.net>
To: p66-railspur-comments@co.slo.ca.us
Date: 11/23/2014 12:39 PM
Subject: Phillips 66 Rail Terminal Expansion Project

To the Attention of Mr. Murry Wilson
SLO County Planning Department

I'm emailing you to express my strong opposition to the Phillips 66 rail terminal expansion project. I am a resident of San Leandro and live on the periphery of the identified blast zone. I am also a teacher in San Leandro, and several of our school campuses are within the blast zone through which the oil trains would travel. Therefore, I'm deeply concerned about the potential dangers associated with this entire project. HUC-01

Additionally, bringing tar sands oil to California will undermine our state's efforts to be a global leader addressing climate change, and these trains will put our communities directly in harm's way. HUC-02

Specifically, our emergency responders are not prepared to deal with potential accidents with these heavy, dangerous trains, and the current safety standards won't protect our people and property along the blast zones. My understanding is that the draft EIR doesn't fully inform our first responders because it inadequately assesses the risks of an oil train disaster in San Leandro. The EIR only evaluates rail-accident rates between 2003 and 2012 and the spill rates between 2005 and 2009, while omitting important data about accident frequency and magnitude in more recent years. This is troubling because we know that more crude spilled from trains in 2013 than during the past four decades combined. The EIR must look at recent data, which reflects the increased quantities of crude being transported in old and unsafe tank cars.

Our School District Emergency Operations Procedure plan is not prepared to address this threat to our school communities. School teachers, as public employees, become state mandated emergency workers when disaster strikes. This proposed project threatens school communities along the entire north to south California rail route planned for these oil shipments. HUC-03

The EIR's worst-case scenario estimates a spill of 180,000 gallons, or roughly six tank cars of crude. This has to be an error because most crude trains have 100 or more tank cars, carrying millions of gallons. Depending upon where an accident occurred, such a spill could devastate our scarce water resources, sensitive ecosystems, schools, homes, transit facilities and rail lines, businesses, and our local economy. In Alameda County, this rail route parallels major highways and urban areas in several cities, including (but not limited to) Berkeley, Oakland, San Lorenzo, and Hayward. In San Leandro, these trains would pass within less than a mile from our City Hall, Police Department, two BART Stations, and the tracks pass through the heart of our downtown.

Also, the toxic air emissions that will accompany this project pose an unacceptable risk to public health. In its latest environmental review Phillips 66 admits that its proposed oil train facility will create "significant and unavoidable" levels of air pollution along the rail route, with sulfur dioxide and other toxic chemicals leaked that increase risk of cancer, heart disease, respiratory disease and premature death. HUC-04

The EIR has yet to fully analyze the worst-case scenario of a spill near each of the many watersheds crossed en route to the Santa Maria refinery.

The proposed route brings oil trains through the San Francisco Bay-Delta watershed and along California's central coast. A derailment near a river, stream, reservoir or aquifer could contaminate drinking water for millions of Californians, an unacceptable risk anytime, made more severe in this time of extreme drought. HUC-05

The planning department must examine the cumulative impacts of the Santa Maria and Rodeo proposals as a single project -- not in isolation -- since the proposed terminal in Santa Maria is directly linked by pipeline to the Phillips 66 refinery in Rodeo. Phillips 66 is proposing to modify both facilities to allow it to refine the most toxic crude oil on Earth: Canadian tar sands. HUC-06

Phillips 66 must disclose crude-quality information so decision-makers fully understand the climate impacts of the proposed rail project. At every stage of the mining, transportation and refining process, Canadian tar sands are more carbon intensive than any other source of oil -- making this project simply incompatible with California's plans to be a climate leader.

We don't live in a bubble, this proposed project that you are considering in Santa Maria will affect the health and well-being of millions of people along the train routes, as well as the dangers to our school communities, environment, water resources, local economies, and private property. HUC-07

For all these reasons, I urge the San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to soundly reject the Phillips 66 proposed rail spur.

With Respect,

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