



November 15, 2014

Murry Wilson, Environmental Resource Specialist
County of San Luis Obispo
Department of Planning and Building
976 Osos Street, Room 300
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408-2040

Re: Response to Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery Rail Project Recirculated Draft EIR

Dear Mr. Wilson:

I am writing to offer comment on the Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery Rail Project Draft EIR, reaffirm my personal support for the project and ask that the project be given fair consideration.

I commented on the prior draft EIR and my feelings have not changed. The recirculated draft goes further in its analysis (both geographically and substantively) and addresses many of the questions raised in the last year. I appreciate the draft's thoroughness and I am eager to see the project now make its way to the Planning Commission.

As a native of San Luis Obispo County I have been here 9 years longer than the Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery, which has been quietly doing its job for 60 years. For 5 of those years I owned a trucking company that transported an operational byproduct (gypsum) from this facility to agricultural operations throughout northern San Luis Obispo County and the San Joaquin Valley. Through my engagement as a business owner in the County for over 40 years, I commend the ongoing outreach by the refinery managers to the community that have kept us informed; they welcome our questions and address our concerns.

What I have observed is a business that operates safely and with respect for our community. I have friends who work at the refinery and I know personally that the commitment and caring extends to every staff member. The refinery is more than just an oil facility. It is important to South County and to the Central Coast in general.

The refinery today needs to change its operations in order to continue to operate efficiently. While every business has to adapt to changing market conditions to survive, not everyone's changes are subject to the scrutiny the refinery is managing. The draft EIR is long, thorough and addresses every detail of the project.

WIL-01

My conclusion is an easy one. I believe a 60 year track record of sound operations, coupled with an EIR that indicates the project is manageable should add up to a “yes” vote for the rail project request.

WIL-01
cont

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Willhoit". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Richard J. Willhoit
cc: SLO County Board of Supervisors
SLO County Planning Commission
Jim Anderson, Phillips 66