

November 20, 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

Dear Mr. Wilson:

I have lived and worked in San Luis Obispo County for almost 30 years. For the past 24 years I have interacted with the people at the refinery, many who are friends of mine, in a wide variety of settings and circumstances both professional and personal. I have found that the facility operates safely and is a respectful member of the community. The refinery is more than just an oil facility. In this day and age where well-paying local head of household jobs are in short supply, the refinery is important to South County and to the Central Coast in general. This extends to not only the people that work at the refinery but also to the many jobs that this facility generates locally.

ZET-01

The draft EIR is long, thorough and does a very good job in reviewing the project and I truly feel that it addresses every detail of the project. The fact that the draft EIR was recirculated again as well as increasing the study area has only increased the level of review of the project. In fact it addresses the additional areas of concern that were raised in the last circulation. The analysis is more than adequate for moving the document to a final EIR and proceeding to public hearing without delay.

ZET-02

One of the areas that I feel that the draft EIR has not addressed is the benefit that this project has to the County, the State and the Nation in terms of freeing us from relying on other countries for our source of crude oil; oil that we use to manufacture everything from gasoline to plastics. Here we have an opportunity to increase our energy independence in a safe and environmentally prudent manner. If the project is denied then we indirectly financially endorse countries such as Nigeria, Libya and other countries that do not produce nor transport crude oil in an environmentally conscious manner, let alone place the value on human life that we do in the US.

ZET-03

I feel that the concerns associated with a spill of the type of crude oil that will be shipped to the refinery are overblown. The heavy crude that these trains will transport has the consistency of tar and will not readily burn. In fact I have a sample of this type of crude and you can open the sample jar and turn it upside down and the oil will not come out. The same would occur in a breach of a tank car. Granted there will be spilled cargo but it will not burst into flames or flow unimpeded. In fact similar crude shipments have been travelling past the refinery from San Ardo since 1997 with no incidents or problems.

ZET-04

Having looked at this project in detail 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 very strong "yes" vote for the rail project request.

ZET-05

Sincerely,



Tom Zehnder
4553 Wavertree St.
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
(805) 441-9342