

4849 See Ranch Lane
Templeton, CA 93465

November 20, 2014

Mr. Murry Wilson
SLO County Department of Planning & Building
976 Osos St, Room 200
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

Dear Mr. Wilson,

When I first heard about the proposal by Phillips 66 to build a spur track at the Nipomo Refinery, I honestly didn't think much of it. Much as I dislike our reliance on fossil fuels and would prefer a rapid shift to renewables, I recognize that shift is going to take time. I understand that oil refineries are a necessary evil for many years to come and prefer expanding existing facilities as opposed to building new ones to meet demand. However, the more I learned about this project, the less I can support it. I urge you to reject the application.

SLH-01

The project poses far too many risks to county residents and too few benefits. I am most concerned about the risks associated with increased train traffic traveling down Cuesta Grade and the County's ability to respond in the event of an accident. As the number of trains carrying shipments of crude oil has increased significantly in recent years, so have the number of accidents – with often horrific results. Cuesta Grade is a challenging section of track and poses greater risks than most. The REIR itself notes (4.11-25) "In San Luis Obispo County, the Cuesta Grade represents an area where a runaway train could occur. A runaway train coming down the Cuesta Grade could result in spills of crude oil and associated fires." The REIR also notes (4.11-23) that the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has identified a number of Local Safety Hazard Sites (LSHS) within California, including the Cuesta Grade. Over the past 5 years there have been 58 derailments at or near LSHS sites. Yet in spite of the likelihood of an accident, our County is ill-equipped to handle a major incident involving a spill, fire or explosion of rail cars carrying crude oil.

SLH-02

I am also very concerned the number of "significant and unavoidable" Class I impacts associated with air quality and greenhouse gases (Air Quality 2-6). The REIR notes that emissions from trains enroute to the facilities and activities at the refinery itself would exceed SLO County Air Pollution Control District thresholds. This is not acceptable, particularly in the community of Nipomo which has been suffering from poor air quality for years.

SLH-03

In light of these findings, I urge you to reject the proposed project in the interests of protecting the health and safety of County residents. Thank you.

SLH-04

Sincerely,



Holly Sletteland