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Date: 11/03/2014 03:47 PM
Subject: Opposition to the Phillips 66 Rail Spur

To All it may concern,

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed Rail Spur. My fellow neighbors and I vehemently oppose of the Phillips 66 Rail Spur. The residents and homeowners on the Mesa are opposed for many reasons including Health, Safety, Quality of Living, Noise Pollution and Air pollution.

A 1.5 mile long string of black tanker cars extending into what is now farm land or open land would be a visual blight…or what Arcadis, their consultant termed a "horizontal linear discordant coloration".
But an earlier paragraph stated: The proposed unloading area would be within the existing industrial part of the coke processing facility, and would be consistent with the visual character of that area.(If you look at the visual character of that area on Google Maps, you will see mounds of "pet coke").

The rail spur which would extend approximately 0.9 mile east, would add an industrial element into land which currently serves as visual open space. As seen from State Route 1, the Coastal Trail, the De Anza Trail and other eastern viewpoints, the rail spur and associated rail cars would represent a visual expansion of the adjacent industrial refinery use. This expansion of industrial elements would not be entirely unexpected at this location; however the current balance of visual character elements would be altered. The visual encroachment of the industrial refinery-related activities onto the adjacent visual open space would have an adverse effect on the existing character of the site, and would represent a potentially significant impact. DEL-01

Their mitigation: An earthen berm shall be constructed around the eastern perimeter of the rail spur. The berm shall be a minimum of 10 feet tall and a maximum of 20 feet tall above the existing grade and as shown on the Berm Location Concept Map shown below (Figure 4.1-11) for the purpose of reducing views of the rail spur and trains from State Route 1 and the California Coastal Trail / De Anza Trail.

The view looking west and southwest from State Route 1 is considered a scenic vista because of the panoramic composition. The eastern extension of the rail spur and its associated trains would reduce views of the open space seen in the mid-ground, an important visual contributor to the overall scenic vista, which has the potential to be a significant impact.

What is most upsetting is that the KVA (Known Viewing Areas) chosen were selected by Phillips and were along US1; and not the elevations where people actually live along Monarch Ridge and Monarch

Dunes; some 100’ higher in elevation, and would thus provide a visual blight as the view would look down on to the tracks.

"The alignment of the proposed rail spur track extension would be oriented nearly perpendicular to State Route 1, and as a result views of the tracks and trains would generally be looking down the tracks rather than seeing them from the side. This viewing orientation would lessen the visible area of the project relative to the overall view shed as seen from key viewpoints along State Route 1. Nonsense!

This is a static view of the proposed 5 track spur, and not just a singular spur as the Project is defined. The reality is that from any elevation the string of 80 black tanker cars and associated diesel engines would be visible and present visual blight. What’s more, the system has been designed to allow for up to two full trains to temporarily be on the Refinery Site at one time in case a second train arrives while the first is still being unloaded. DEL-01 cont

That means that there is the reality that 160 black tanker cars will be the “industrial intrusion”. Adding to the blight, Phillips proposes a “Bad Order” Track. They continue with; Track 765 shall be repurposed as a “Bad Order” Track. This existing refinery spur track provides storage for crude railcars that cannot be unloaded and for rail cars requiring inspection and/or repair before continued use, as needed.. So not only will we be treated to the visual blight, we will also have endure a “Bad Order Track” that is comparable to a repair yard. Thus there will be additional noise as the tanker cars are uncoupled and shunted to this “Bad Order Track”. Repairs will go on as the other cars are being unloaded presenting a cacophony of discordant sounds of welding, hammering, and grinding and other assaults to the ear; possibly throughout the evening so that schedules can be met.

Thus, the visual blight cannot be mitigated and the Project should be denied. Please take our invitation to a drive through the community. Please Vote "no".

Sincerely,
Linda Del
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DEL-01	The project proposes to the construct the unloading facility and rail spur tracks adjacent to the southern slopes of a natural landform ridge. This adjacent landform rises to elevations ranging from approximately 120 to 145 feet above sea level. The proposed rail spur tracks are proposed at an elevation of approximately 94 feet above sea level, which would be as much as 55 feet lower than the landform to the north. As a result, views of the unloading facility and railroad spur from the north and the northeast would be substantially blocked. In addition, the eastern segment of the rail spur tracks, closest to Highway 1, are proposed to be constructed in an excavated area maintaining the approximately 94-foot elevation while the adjacent ground rises up eastward, resulting in the easternmost end of the tracks being approximately 20 feet below the surrounding natural terrain. This elevation difference, along with the required 10 to 20-foot tall mitigation berm, would combine for an approximately 30 to 40-foot tall earthen visual screen around the eastern end of the railroad spur. This berm height in combination with the natural ridge to the north will be sufficient to reduce visibility of the project to a less than significant level for viewpoints from the east, including elevated viewpoints on Via Concha, Louise Lane, Eucalyptus Road, Thomas Court, and other viewing areas. The RDEIR Aesthetics section considers all public viewpoints surrounding the project, and specifically addresses viewpoints associated with the developments east of Highway 1. The project location was directly viewed and analyzed from each of these potential viewpoints. The analysis, potential impacts and mitigation measures identified in the RDEIR Aesthetic section include and specifically address views from the residential and recreational developments east of Highway 1. Key Viewing Areas (KVAs) along Highway 1 provide a fair representation of how the majority of the public will experience the project. Highway 1 has the greatest traffic volume, is the closest public roadway and is a primary regional and local transportation route. KVAs along Highway 1 were positioned at major entrances to the Trilogy and other east side development to further increase their representative value. KVA-2, at the intersection of Highway 1 and Via Concha is at an elevation of approximately 200 feet above sea level. The closest residential street (and golf course) east of the project is at an elevation of approximately 235 feet above sea level. Potential viewpoints along Louise Lane and Eucalyptus Road rise to approximately 250 feet above sea level. Although the 35 to 50-foot viewpoint elevation difference between Highway 1 and the viewpoints to the east is not substantial when applied to the 0.5 to 1.5 mile viewing distance, field analysis showed that some public viewpoints would have slightly increased visual exposure to the project compared to views from Highway 1. This increased visual exposure would mostly occur through the 600-foot gap in the existing approximately one-mile long windrow of mature eucalyptus trees paralleling the east side of Highway 1. The RDEIR

	analyzed views from these elevated viewpoints, and includes mitigation measures which would minimize visual impacts from these areas. In addition, field review showed that this somewhat increased exposure also includes greater visibility of the existing Santa Maria Refinery, coke processing facility, railroad tracks and other development. As seen from these elevated locations the project would not block views of the Pacific Ocean, coastline, dunes, riparian corridors, or agricultural field patterns. Direct observation showed that from the vast majority of potential public views within the developed and recreation areas east of Highway 1, views of the project would be substantially or completely blocked by some combination of intervening vegetation, landform, distance or existing residential and recreational development.