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To: p66-railspur-comments@co.slo.ca.us
Date: 11/19/2014 07:47 AM
Subject: Comment about Phillips 66 Rail Spur Project

Mr. Murry Wilson, SLO County Planning Department

This note is to urge the County Plan Board to recommend against the Phillips 66 Rail Spur Project because the outcomes would be contrary to land use plans, would yield unacceptable health, safety and environmental impacts, and would not provide significant benefits to residents, visitors, and commerce in San Luis Obispo County.

OCJ-01

First, the increased intensity of industrial activity, both near the refinery and especially along the rail routes to be used, is completely inconsistent with several elements of the carefully established and highly satisfactory county land use plan for agricultural, scenic, residential, and commercial development. It is even possible that if the refinery had not been constructed prior to the present plan, its current activities might not be considered appropriate, much less those in the proposed Project.

OCJ-02

Second, the revised environmental impact report describes a number of Class 1 consequences of the Project. These include: a) exacerbating the current unhealthy amount of particulate and toxic air pollution; b) great danger from off-site accidents involving insufficiently safe tank cars, especially on the Cuesta Grade and through the cities; c) inadequate local capability to respond to likely emergency scenarios; and d) deleterious biological and agricultural effects from spills and accidents. Each of these effects alone might be sufficient to stop the Project; the combination of them makes it absolutely unacceptable.

OCJ-03

Third, the report omits or downplays several negative effects such as excessive noise and extensive lighting at the site and along the rail routes, and potential impacts on surface and ground water, that will have impacts much greater than described.

OCJ-04

Finally, the construction and operation of the Rail Spur activities seem to provide no major environmental enhancements for current and future residents, tourists, and businesses of the County.

OCJ-05

On balance, the sum total of the undesirable impacts would be very deleterious to the quality of life in a large portion of San Luis Obispo County, while there seem to be no benefits. The Project should not go forward.

Thank you for your attention.

John P. O'Connell
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Responses to John P. O'Connell Comments

OCJ-01	These comments do not identify a specific environmental analysis or CEQA issue relative to the EIR and compliance with CEQA. The commenter's concerns about land use, health, and hazards are included in the FEIR for the decision-makers' consideration as part of the County's deliberations on the proposed project.
OCJ-02	The Project's consistency with existing land uses and applicable plans and policies is addressed in Section 4.8 and Appendix G of the RDEIR. While the RDEIR discusses potential inconsistencies with applicable planning documents, the decision of whether a proposed project is consistent with a particular plan or policy must ultimately be made by the local decision-making body. The comment has been included in the FEIR for the decision-makers' consideration as part of the County's deliberations on the proposed project. No other revisions or additional information is required.
OCJ-03	This comment does not identify a specific environmental analysis or CEQA issue relative to the EIR and compliance with CEQA. The comment just lists the Class I impact identified in the RDEIR and that these impacts make the project unacceptable. The commenter's concerns about the Class I impacts identified in the RDEIR are included in the FEIR for the decision-makers' consideration as part of the County's deliberations on the proposed project.
OCJ-04	The comment alleges that the RDEIR downplays or omits impacts from noise and lighting at the SMR and along the rail routes as well as potential impact on surface and groundwater, but provides no specifics as to what has been downplayed or omitted. The RDEIR address the noise and visual impact of the proposed project as well as the impact of construction and operation on surface and groundwater. Given the lack of specificity in the comment no further response can be provided.
OCJ-05	These comments do not identify a specific environmental analysis or CEQA issue relative to the EIR and compliance with CEQA. The commenter's concerns about the project having no benefit to the community and major impacts to quality of life are included in the FEIR for the decision-makers' consideration as part of the County's deliberations on the proposed project.