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Date: 11/21/2014 12:23 PM  
Subject: RE: Phillips 66 Railroad Spur

To: Murray Wilson, County Environmental Coordinator  
County of San Luis Obispo Department of Planning and Building

I am opposed to Phillips 66 request for a rail spur to transport oil into San Luis Obispo County. The Nipomo Mesa is already in non-compliance with the Federal and State quality air standards. The proposed rail spur project to bring more oil to the refinery would greatly increase the amount of air pollution in an area already having the dirtiest air in the County. In addition, light pollution would now be added.

PAE-01

PAE-02

The Cuesta Grade presents a hazardous route for a train carrying oil. The County does not have certified hazard responders and is not equipped to handle an oil spill or explosion.

PAE-03

Please consider my opinion. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Parker, Mesa Resident

## Responses to Elizabeth Parker Comments

PAE-01	<p>The RDEIR addresses the potential impacts and recommends mitigation measures for the proposed Project consistent with the requirements of CEQA. Section 4.3 (Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases) addresses GHG emissions, criteria air emissions and health risks. The commenter's statement about air issues are included in the FEIR for the decision-makers' consideration as part of the County's deliberations on the proposed project.</p> <p>The EIR concludes that emissions of criteria pollutants would exceed the SLOCAPCD thresholds and would be a significant impact.</p>
PAE-02	<p>The RDEIR acknowledges visibility of new night lights from the surrounding areas and identifies substantial mitigation measures to minimize any potentially adverse effects.</p> <p>At the unloading facility all lights would be mounted under the proposed canopy. Forty of these canopy lights would be placed 60-feet apart, and 30 of them would be 20-feet apart. Lighting for the rail spur would only be for perimeter fencing security purposes and would be placed on 15-foot tall poles, 500 feet apart. The project proposes to 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 help reduce visibility of night lighting for viewpoints from the east, including elevated viewpoints associated with residential and recreational development.</p> <p>The lighting associated with the unloading facility would be viewed at a distance of approximately 1.5 miles or more from viewpoints east of Highway 1, and would be seen in the context of the Santa Maria Refinery immediately to the north. In addition the unloading facility proposes a covered canopy over the majority of the area, which would decrease light-trespass. Similar to the lack of visibility of the existing oil refinery's illuminated ground-plane, intervening topography would block views of the illuminated ground-plane of the unloading facility as seen from Highway 1 and the residential areas to the east. Although the unloading facility lights would introduce light into a new area, with applied mitigation measures they would not appear out of place given the</p>

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	<p>relatively close proximity to the existing refinery and coke processing facility, which emits high levels of industrial lighting throughout the night, every night of the year.</p> <p>In addition to the applicant-proposed lighting features such as downward-directed lights with fully shielded lenses, the RDEIR requires substantial mitigation measures that will minimize lighting impacts. Mitigation measures include that the lighting plan be based on a photometric study prepared by a qualified engineer who is an active member of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), using guidance and best practices endorsed by the International Dark Sky Association.</p> <p>Mitigation measures preclude illumination of adjacent slopes, prohibit placement of perimeter lights (which as previously described would be 15-foot tall) east of the screening berm (which as previously described would be 10 to 20- foot tall), and require the use of motion detectors rather than being continuously on.</p> <p>Importantly, following project completion the RDEIR requires the preparation of a Lighting Evaluation Report for review and approval by the County Department of Planning and Building prepared by a qualified lighting engineer not involved in the design of the original lighting plan. The Lighting Evaluation Report will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of in-place lighting, under all expected circumstances, and will require correction of any unexpected or residual lighting impacts based on direct observation of the completed project. The air quality mitigation that would limit rail car unloading from between 7 A.M. and 7 P.M. would also serve to reduce the nighttime lighting impacts to less than significant.</p>
PAE-03	<p>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 Rail Spur Project would use two additional locomotives (for a total of five locomotives) on the crude oil unit train for crossing the Cuesta Grade. These two additional locomotives would be added to the train at Santa Margarita and removed from the train in the City of San Luis Obispo once the train had crossed the Cuesta Grade. These additional locomotives would help to assure that the train can safely traverse the Cuesta Grade.</p>