

Supplemental Item –
Correspondence for Agenda Item No. 17

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(CC Mtg 8/24/2020)

Wendi Sims

From: Santa Lucia Sierra Club [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, August 21, 2020 1:11 PM
To: Wendi Sims
Subject: Re 8/24/20 meeting agenda item #17, Offshore Oil Production and Trucking Proposal Position

Dear Mayor Lee and Councilmembers,

I am writing on behalf of the Sierra Club and our 3,000 members in San Luis Obispo County to request that you direct staff to prepare a resolution or letter opposing Exxon's oil trucking project at your August 24 meeting.

Exxon's offshore platforms and onshore processing facilities, major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions on the Central Coast, shut down when the Plains All American Pipeline ruptured onto Refugio State Beach in 2015 and have not reopened. Now, in the midst of a pandemic and an oil glut, Exxon is seeking a permit to allow up to 70 oil tankers a day to truck oil from its Goleta facility to Santa Maria, and then across the Twitchell Reservoir and the length of the Santa Maria watershed to the San Joaquin Valley on Highway 166, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In the May 19 edition of the Santa Barbara Independent, Katie Davis, chair of Sierra Club's Los Padres Chapter, described what it was like to live through the Refugio Beach oil spill five years previously. She wrote:

"You can't completely clean up an offshore oil spill. The oil sinks into the marine environment, damaging fragile underwater ecosystems, killing or contaminating fish and smaller organisms that are essential links in the food chain, including the food we eat. The environmental damage can last for decades. More than 300 dolphins, seals, sea lions, pelicans and other birds and animals washed up dead. Many others were found alive and suffering. Oil clogs the blowholes of whales and dolphins, affecting their ability to breathe and communicate. It coats the fur of seals and birds, impairing their ability to float, fly, and regulate temperatures. They die of hypothermia or toxicity or starvation. They go blind or develop birth defects or tumors."

Ms. Davis also described what it was like to live through the 2018 Holiday Fire, turbocharged by global warming, as Exxon pressed for approval of more oil projects that will lead inevitably to more oil spills and worsening climate change.

For residents of Santa Barbara, a touted \$2 million increase in property tax payments to the County General Fund from the restart of offshore drilling represents 0.2 percent – one-fifth of one 1 percent – of the county's \$950 million annual budget. It cost \$257 million to clean up the Refugio spill. For residents of Grover Beach and San Luis Obispo County, from the risks of resumed offshore drilling to a spike in regional greenhouse gas emissions, impacts on a coastal watershed and the danger to drivers on our highways, there is nothing good in this dangerous and unnecessary project.

In response to proposals by the Trump administration to dramatically expand drilling off the California coast for the first time in more than 30 years while simultaneously rolling back protections that prevent catastrophic oil spills, more than 80 West Coast communities have formally voiced their opposition to offshore drilling, and more than one million Americans have submitted comments to the administration demanding that we keep offshore oil in the ground and not prioritize the profits of the fossil fuel industry over the interests of our communities and the health of our oceans.

The Exxon trucking proposal is an opportunity for your council's voice to be heard in a significant way on a specific project that would impact the Central Coast. Santa Barbara County planning staff's recommendation for a slightly reduced version of the project does nothing to address the impacts of the revival of the offshore platforms and the restart of the biggest carbon emitting facility in the region, or the fact that burning the 4 million barrels of oil intended to be trucked every year would result in over 1.7 million metric tons of carbon pollution -- the same amount as burning nearly 2 billion pounds of coal. A recent scientific study confirmed that every barrel of California oil left in the ground will result in a net decrease of about half a barrel of oil consumption globally.

Please join with the cities of San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay, Goleta and Santa Barbara, as well as UAW2865, Environmental Justice Alliance, Sweetwater Collaborative, Mercury Press International, Quail Springs Permaculture, Sunburst Sanctuary, Gaviota Coast Conservancy, and the Cuyama Valley Community Association and let the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors know that the city of Grover Beach opposes Santa Barbara County Planning Commission Project Case # 17RVP-00000-00081, an application to truck offshore oil along Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Kern County highways.

Thank you for your attention to this issue,

Andrew Christie, Director
Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club



August 24, 2020

Re: Grover Beach City Council Item 17

Dear Mayor Lee and Grover Beach Council Members,

The South County Chambers of Commerce supports the Exxonmobil interim trucking plans in Santa Barbara County for the Phillips 66 (P66) refinery in Santa Maria. Oil from the P66 Santa Maria location can then be sent via pipeline to the P66 Nipomo Mesa Refinery.

The P66 facility is running below capacity due to the cost of trucking oil from other locations in Kern County and Southern California, over 100 miles in each direction. If approved the Santa Ynez Unit (SYU) trucking program will dramatically reduce the current long-distance oil trucks coming from Kern County on HWY 166 and the long-distance oil trucks coming from Southern CA on HWY 101. Since the SYU project greatly reduces or eliminates oil trucks in SLO County on HWY 166. The SYU project actually improves our local air quality and safety by eliminating oil truck traffic in SLO County.

P66 recently announced plans to close the Nipomo Mesa refinery in 2024, stating impacts to the oil industry and the move towards renewable energy sources. The refinery support 200 high wage jobs and supports other local businesses through additional contract work.

Our local businesses and workforce have been negatively impacted because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The future of the local economy remains uncertain. The restart of the SYU project not only protects the current P66 jobs it will allow them to bring back additional head of household jobs putting more money into our local economy at a critical time.

While we understand the Grover Beach Council's position on additional offshore oil drilling, it is the Chamber's position that the SYU project is largely a Santa Barbara County issue that can positively impact SLO County with additional union, high wage jobs and reduce oil trucking on our roads.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of Jocelyn Brennan.

Jocelyn Brennan, President I CEO
& 2020 South County Chambers Board of Directors