

DOCKETED

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Oppose Oxnard Beach Power Plant

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy

CAUSE regional power in action

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September 27, 2016

California Energy Commission (CEC)
Public Hearing
Oxnard, California

RE: Oppose Oxnard Beach Power Plant

Dear Commissioners Douglas and Scott,

Good evening, my name is Maricela Morales, Executive Director of CAUSE working on the California central coast for social, economic and environmental justice. I am a resident of Oxnard, an appointed alternate to the California Coastal Commission, and a former Councilmember and Mayor of the City of Port Hueneme. CAUSE is a member of the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA).

We have been working with Oxnard youth, Latino and low-income residents, the City of Oxnard and other community organizations for the past two years to focus the attention of public decision-makers on the grave environmental *injustice* of this Oxnard fossil fuel power plant project. This fossil fuel energy project perpetuates a decades-long pattern of repeatedly siting polluting fossil fuel power plants in Oxnard to supply regional energy. California public regulatory agencies seem complicit – whether intentionally or unintentionally – with profit-driven energy companies, to choose Oxnard as the region's scape goat for dirty fossil fuel projects.

We worked to raise these issues with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), who acknowledged the environmental justice concerns raised by the community and will now be incorporating environmental justice into its approval of *future* contracts, but told us that the CEC is the only body who will review the environmental justice issues of this Oxnard fossil fuel project.

Earlier this month, I spoke before the California Coastal Commission, who unanimously voted to oppose this project location, for its negative impact to coastal wetlands habitat, the risk of sea level rise at its location, and its pollution burden on a disadvantaged community. The Coastal Commission sent a firm message to you, the Energy Commission, that this location is seriously flawed. The ultimate power to reject this project is in your hands.

www.causenow.org • 2021 Sperry Ave., #9, Ventura, CA 93003 • 402 South Miller St., Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 658-0810 • 4225 Saviers Rd., Oxnard, CA 93033 • 601 E Montecito St., Santa Barbara, CA 93103
• 217 North 10th Street #7, Santa Paula, CA 93060

In the time since this project was proposed, California has moved forward. The state legislature passed:

SB 350, to move our utilities towards a 50% renewable standard;

SB 32, to dramatically reduce our carbon emissions; and

AB 197, to ensure direct on-site emissions reductions in frontline communities like Oxnard.

Yet, as California moves forward, and makes headlines across the world for our environmental leadership, here in Oxnard we see the opposite. We see another fossil fuel power plant proposed in our community by NRG, a company that ranks among the largest buyers of offset credits to avoid reducing their emissions in communities like Oxnard where they choose to propose their polluting facilities. Instead of the expansion of clean renewable energy or energy storage that will be happening across the state in the coming years, here in Oxnard, we get another gas-burning fossil fuel power plant.

Enough is enough! STOP making Oxnard the region's *Sacrifice Zone*!

NRG justifies putting more power plants in Oxnard by using fuzzy math. They are including the decommissioning of the old Mandalay power plant in the description of this project, despite the fact that the Mandalay plant is already required to be shut down to comply with state environmental standards, whether this project is approved or not. By including the shutdown of Mandalay in their calculations for this project, NRG is trying its best to hide the new emissions from this new fossil fuel power plant. If the CEC accepts this logic, you are telling the people of Oxnard that continuing to burden us with pollution is acceptable because Oxnard is already polluted. Oxnard children, youth, elderly, low-income and people of color – those most vulnerable - deserve a review of this fossil fuel power plant based on the emissions that the power plant itself will produce.

As California moves towards a clean energy future, Oxnard deserves to be at the forefront of progress with clean energy projects with *less* pollution in the air our children breathe, and not at the tail-pipe end of fossil fuel plants and environmental racism. After disproportionately bearing the burden for the region's fossil fuel energy production for more than half a century, we deserve real alternatives to this project.

We are happy to see the CEC staff will be preparing a full environmental justice analysis in their final assessment of this project. We hope for adequate time to review and comment on this analysis. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Maricela Morales
Executive Director