

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	15-AFC-01
Project Title:	Puente Power Project
TN #:	215775
Document Title:	Steven Nash Comments: Docket Number: 15-AFC-01, Project Title: Puente Power Project
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	Steven Nash
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	2/6/2017 12:31:51 PM
Docketed Date:	2/6/2017

Comment Received From: Steven Nash

Submitted On: 2/6/2017

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This is a follow-up written comment to the verbal comments I made at the 2-1-17 CEC meeting in Oxnard.

I have looked at the presentation of evidence from both sides on this issue. I have reviewed the written submissions and testimony. I have attended the public meetings and made both written and verbal comments that are part of the official record.

I understand and respect the process as it has played out to this point in time. However, what I neither understand nor condone is the continuation of the evidentiary hearing. These facts are indisputable: the site is subject to sea-level rise, coastal inundation and flooding, tsunami and seismic risk, and degradation of endangered species habitat. To give the applicant and their team of lawyers and experts the opportunity to present an alternate reality is to give false equivalency to an untruth. The community is largely unified against the project. The City Council has stated this is an inappropriate land use at this location. The project should, at this point, be dead in the water. But it isn't, why?

Why, indeed. As a male of white privilege, I am always reluctant to put forth the racism card. After all, what do I know of racism? While I might not suffer from the overt and damaging impacts of racism, I believe I can recognize it and call it out when it is so painfully obvious as it is in this situation.

Oxnard, as it has been pointed out by many speakers, is a predominantly Hispanic community. We do not have the resources or the expertise to fight a project such as the Puente Power Project that wealthier, "whiter" communities such as Santa Barbara, Montecito, Malibu or Thousand Oaks could marshal to stop similar projects in their towns. This is why it is always Oxnard that is asked to bear the brunt of environmentally-damaging uses such as power plants, landfills, recycling smelters and other heavy industry.

If PPP is approved, the community will know why. It is not because the "facts" support the decisions because, quite simply, they don't. It will be because of the systemic racism that says minority communities don't matter. They do not deserve the same consideration for the health, safety and welfare of its residents as do their richer, whiter neighbors.

The Commissioners of the Energy Commission will make a decision that will impact the health of our community for decades. Do not turn your backs on the residents who have already paid in full for the greater good of the region. Do not continue this legacy of racism.

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