

DOCKETED

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Mary Ann Krause IH Comments on Mission Rock

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Statement by Mary Ann Krause, AICP, Santa Paula Alliance

California Energy Commission Public Input Meeting June 28, 2016

Good evening. My name is Mary Ann Krause. I am a city planner, and former Councilmember and Mayor of Santa Paula. I am also a member of Santa Paula Alliance, which was formed to oppose this project. I am here to address the floodplain issue.

The Santa Clara River is the last free-flowing river in Southern California, and in 2005 was identified by the organization American Rivers as one of the most endangered rivers in America, due to concerns over continuing land development and channelization.

Since 2000, a consortium of agencies, including the State's own Coastal Conservancy, has been quietly purchasing portions of the floodway and floodplain with State tax dollars, and reestablishing habitat and wetlands to allow the river to flow naturally and to prevent further damage to both the man-made and natural environments. Property adjacent this project site is under active restoration.

The applicant proposes to raise the project site by one-foot to comply with County floodplain regulations and hopefully protect the site if the river overtops its banks. This will not protect the site from one of its greatest flooding risks, erosion. In the 2005 El Nino Santa Paula Airport, which is also adjacent the river, lost a portion of the tie-down area, taxiway, and runway. After many days of rain, the river was not in danger of overtopping its banks, but it did cut into the bank at an angle and take out valuable improvements. The airport was closed while Federal funding was secured and emergency work was conducted. This same erosive action could take out a significant portion of the power plant, create an environmental cleanup hazard, and render the plant unusable for some time.

Since this proposed project is not required to be adjacent a waterway, there is no practical justification for putting it in such a vulnerable location. And by extension of that logic, there is no justification to try and reduce its vulnerability by constructing a levee, which would negatively impact ongoing river restoration efforts.

The fact that this proposed project site is in the floodplain should be considered a fatal flaw for a project involving critical infrastructure, and the proposed project should be deemed incompatible with the long-established wetland and habitat restoration project. I urge you to reject this application.

Thank you.