

DOCKETED

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Comment Received From: Charles J. Spink

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Floodplain Concerns

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

To: California Energy Commission 8/26/16
Re: Mission Rock Energy Center (MREC)

I would like to bring your attention to what seems to be a most important letter (#212909) recently submitted to the CEC by Nina Danza from our local Sierra Club chapter. In it, she explored critical, new areas of floodplain concern for us to think about.

In light of our increased awareness that Climate Change is real -not off in the future, but increasingly showing up in headlines almost every day- she rightly points out that we have not yet forced ourselves to adequately acknowledge this reality when planning future infrastructure projects such as the one Calpine is proposing for us here in this Valley.

During your site visit a few months back, the Santa Clara River might have seemed like a rather inconsequential threat, given the long drought we've been having... "You say there's a river out there?" However, we all have stories to tell, with future stories that will likely making ours seem trivial by comparison, of the havoc intermittently visited upon us by its dark side. Gauged by current standards of mitigation, ten feet of site elevation might seem adequate to engineers. But this is based on "reverse engineering" and represents backward thinking that greatly underestimates the potential power this river has in these new times.

Thankfully, thinking appears to be changing in this regard. As Ms. Danza points out, new, forward-looking policies being implemented by FEMA, the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), and the Office of the President of the United States are encouraging us to update 'naïve' risk assessments that would lead us into siting critical infrastructure, at great cost, in inappropriate places.

There are many other troubling issues, to be sure, regarding Calpine's project; none seem more problematic to me than this one, however. I encourage you to thoroughly review Ms. Danza's letter, for it asks many crucial questions that need to be answered. Her concerns are all our concerns, and I trust, that, after critical analysis, you will agree: a volatile floodplain with future 'gifts' we can only begin imagine, is no place to be putting a power plant.

-Charles Spink
8-25-2016