

DOCKETED

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Association of Irrigated Residents (AIR)
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Aug 7, 2013 **AIR Traffic Study Questions and Comments**

California Energy Commission

Docket number 08-AFC-08A

Re: Traffic Study Technical Memorandum (Revision 2) submitted by HECA on August 1, 2013 questions.

This traffic study is apparently incomplete. This “study” has left out one of the busiest and most complicated intersections along the route that would be impacted by the hundreds of daily coal trucks under the alternative 2 situation. AIR would like to know why this intersection was left out of the study.

The area in question is along Hwy 43 at the intersections of Los Angeles Ave, Beech, and Santa Fe Way. This is essentially a very busy 5 or 6-way intersection with 7 stop signs and really tight turns for any traffic traveling north on Hwy 43 which would be the case for the empty coal trucks returning to Wasco.

HECA needs to complete their study by analyzing the traffic flow, turns, safety, and road surface conditions at this intersection. It seems obvious that mitigation of this intersection will be needed. AIR suggests an overpass, traffic lights and more gradual turning radii would all be appropriate mitigations.

Below is a photo of the intersection from Google Maps. Please observe the length of the truck at the bottom of the photo in relation to this intersection. The seven stop signs are indicated with yellow and red dots inserted into the photo. We will also note that the building on the lower right is a medical center for patients. Many patients with breathing difficulties will be visiting this place on a daily basis and suffer from the added diesel exhaust and fine particulates coming from the coal trucks and the coal trains.

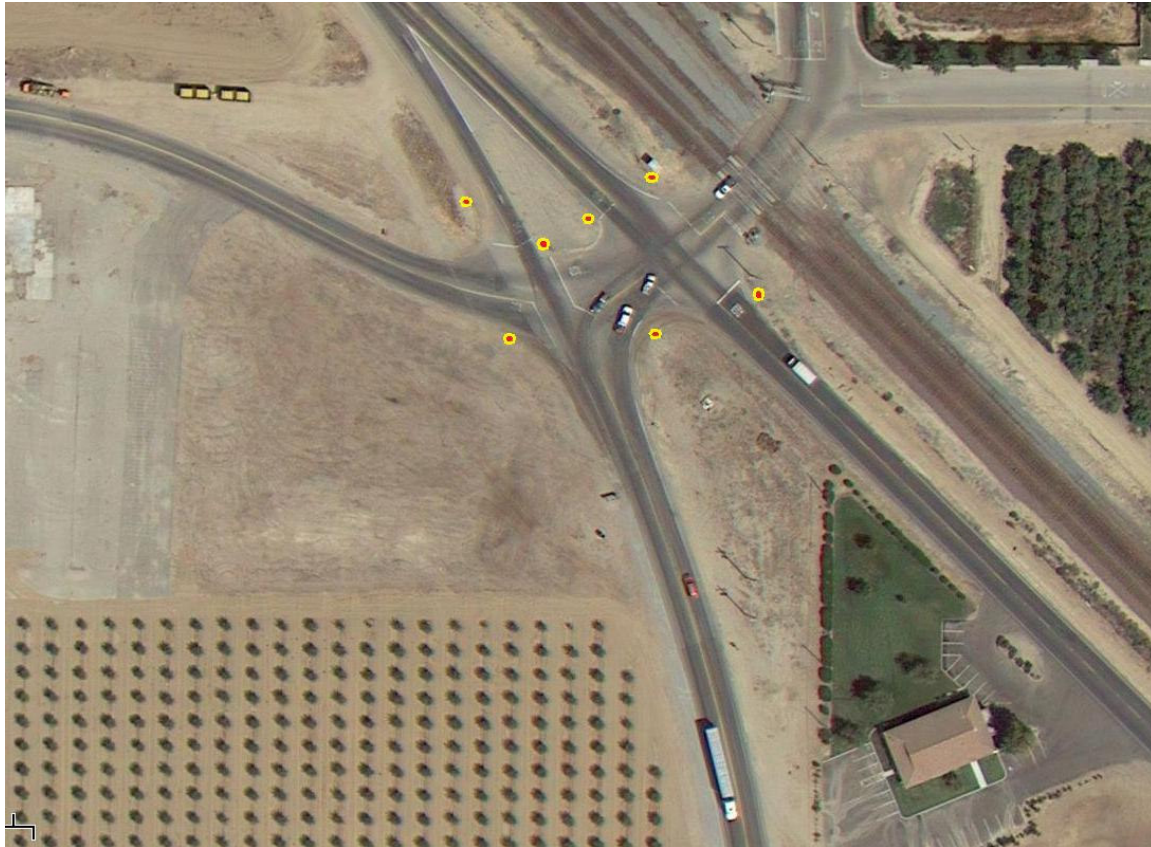
One dangerous aspect of this intersection is that northbound vehicles turning left from Hwy 43 onto Los Angeles Ave. do not have a stop sign. Another complicating factor is the railroad crossing immediately adjacent with yet another intersection and two roads approaching from just over the tracks to the east. Trains often slow in this area because there are long sidings in both directions which allow trains to pass each other. This backs up traffic at the stop signs surrounding this complicated intersection. The coal trains will definitely be responsible for backing up traffic in this area so that fact should be considered as well in this traffic study.

Ultimately, this intersection will be a great spot for local residents to watch coal trucks backed up at the stop signs along with local commuters while coal trains go rumbling by in either direction dropping off chunks of coal along the tracks next to our agricultural fields. Will this scene make Californian’s proud about how we produce our energy? AIR requests that HECA do

a before and after visualization of this scene for the aesthetics impact study.

In conclusion, this apparent omission in the traffic study should cause DOE, CEC, Caltrans, and Kern County to wonder what other “mistakes” may also be in this study and possibly others prepared by URS and HECA. In any case, this particular study cannot be considered complete or accurate at this time.

Tom Frantz
Association of Irrigated Residents



DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Tom Frantz, declare that on August 7, 2013, I served and filed copies of the AIR Traffic Study Questions and Comments dated Aug 7, 2013. The most recent Proof of Service List, which I copied from the web page for this project at: <http://www.energy.ca.gov>, is attached to this Declaration.

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Dated: Aug 7, 2013

 Tom Frantz

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