

Energy - Docket Optical System

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Subject: coal on the rail tracks and in the air PDOC comments
Attachments: pos_March_4-1-1-1.doc

California Energy Commission

DOCKETED

08-AFC-8A

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Comments on the PDOC for HECA by the SJVAPCD

The San Joaquin Valley Air district has not adequately studied the effect of coal and coal dust coming from the trains in Kern County littering the ground, polluting the air, and contaminating crops. On May 15, 2013, as documented by Channel 17 news, there was coal between 4 and 6 inches deep between the rail tracks as far as the eye could see going south out of Wasco from the coal unloading depot. When disturbed, the wind blew it decidedly to the south east, as documented by Channel 17. It appears the coal is leaking out of the bottom of the rail cars. It is also evident that open pipes about 6 inches in diameter are on the side of the rail cars with loose coal ready to fall out. These pipes dump the coal on the outside of the rails. The volume on the ground is alarming. HECA said they will not cover their rail cars but will put a spray on the top of the cars to hold down dust. But that will not stop the drainage from the bottom of the cars as was witnessed.

I am wondering what information Dave Warner has that is not public? He was quoted in the same 17 News report saying the rail cars will be totally enclosed. Where is this information coming from? That statement was also repeated by a speaker in the audience that same evening at the hearing in Buttonwillow. Mr. Warner did not correct the speaker, letting the audience believe that coal is enclosed in the rail cars. I request Mr. Warner clarify the enclosed rail car statements.

They speak of the enclosed unloading building capturing coal dust. But the problem is not the building. It is the tracks where the rail cars are sitting. Whether the coal is unloaded in Wasco or at the HECA site, the rail cars will sit in the open waiting to be unloaded or waiting to return to the coal mine. During this time they leak coal onto the ground in large quantities as we see in Wasco. Coal is also spilled from these cars as they journey through California.

Recognizing now that there is a problem with coal getting out of the train, what new studies is the air district doing knowing the problem will escalate with the huge increase for HECA? What will be the increase of the air pollution in Wasco? Kern County? What are the risks of loose coal contaminating crops? What is the danger to people working daily breathing the dust from all that stuff on the ground and in the air? What is the recourse if ANY coal gets dumped in a right of way or near private property? And what

agency is responsible for overseeing coal leaking from rail cars? This new information should require additional mitigation knowing our air will be more polluted.

We have not had experience with what could go wrong with leakage from trucks, as is HECA's alternate delivery method. We ask that the air district or the CEC investigate what could go wrong. Could coal dribble out the bottom of the coal trucks? What agency is responsible to oversee such loose coal pollution? If coal is on the roads or in a field, is that a violation?

Is there a penalty if it happens? Who is responsible for cleaning it up? Can that agency stop all operation of HECA until the problem is corrected?

No one is taking care of the mess on the tracks now, even with repeated complaints to SJVAPCD. How are we to believe anyone will be doing anything more once HECA is built and the problem escalates?

Appreciate your response to these issues.

Chris Romanini

HECA Neighbors



**BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
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**AMENDED APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
FOR THE HYDROGEN ENERGY
CALIFORNIA PROJECT**

**Docket No. 08-AFC-08A
PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 3/4/13)**

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DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Chris Romanini _____, declare that on May 23, 2013, I served and filed copies of the attached coal on the rail tracks____, dated May 23____, 2013. This document is accompanied by the most recent Proof of Service, which I copied from the web page for this project at: http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/hydrogen_energy/.

The document has been sent to the other persons on the Service List above in the following manner:

(Check one)

For service to all other parties and filing with the Docket Unit at the Energy Commission:

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OR

 Instead of e-mailing the document, I personally delivered it or deposited it in the US mail with first class postage to all of the persons on the Service List for whom a mailing address is given.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct, and that I am over the age of 18 years.

Dated: May 23, 2013 _____

Chris Romanini
HECA Neighbors