

DOCKETED

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Pecho energy request to stop

See attached letter originally to board of supervisors begging all parties involved to stop the Pecho Energy Plant at Hollister Peak. Many of us live right in the proposed area and have lived here for decades, and centuries. Please stop the placement of this plant in our scenic byway, Chumash artifact area, and our water wells. Thank you.

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Charlene Bucis

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December 14, 2021

To: San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors:

Good morning,

My name is Charlene Bucis, and my address is 2548 Canet Road, San Luis Obispo, and I own property and live at the base of Hollister Peak. I am writing out of desperation regarding the proposed Hydrostar 400 megawatt compressed air energy storage plant.

According to Hydrostar, they plan to commercialize and industrialize the area, “compress air and store it underground in large caverns. When energy is needed, the compressed air is then released through a turbine that produces electricity”. According to Hydrostar “the energy can be stored for 8 hours”. My neighbors and I live at the base of Hollister Peak, adjacent to the proposed plant. I am requesting you stop the progression of even the thought of disrupting the cultural balance of nature and the Chorro Creek watershed, along with disrupting the possibility of Chumash artifacts buried in the area and contaminating the water supply for the surrounding properties.

The pond that Hydrostar is planning to build to cool the air, is planning to pump 351,918,950, gallons of water from the aquifer to fill their pond. Did you know that’s 1080 acre feet! We all have wells out here. There will not be any water left for us after they take the water for their pond, and then “displace water” in the deep caverns to hold the air they have collected. What condition will the remaining water for our wells be in after it is constantly “displaced” just one acre away from where we live?

I understand that the project would require an amendment to the “General Plan/Local Coastal Program” to continue. Specifically, to consider a permit for industrial use, the zoning would have to be changed from agricultural. Please don’t let this happen. Is this property part of the “Williamson Act” the agricultural conservation easement?

My neighbors and I would like to be informed of the review process, what it entails, and informed whenever a review or meeting regarding this project is discussed. Obviously, this has been in the works for sometime, without our knowledge or input. The public was not made aware of the project until November 23, 2021. The following week, there were already trucks with surveyors, surveying the area, and the following week there were drilling trucks out there from Gregg Drilling. This has to have been in the works for awhile for this much work to be started already.

As I am sure you are aware, this plant will destroy our agricultural base, along with the scenic integrity of Hollister Peak. Chorro Creek goes into the Estuary, and runs very close to the potential site. The Chorro Valley is historic on many levels. There is absolutely no room for the company to come across the existing bridge on Canet Road through Chorro Creek. The road is narrow and winding and privately owned. There has to be another access point if this project is approved in any capacity. Can you tell me when will there be an environmental assessment under the California Environmental Quality Act?

My family and my ancestors are the original landowners of the San Bernardo Land Grant which included Hollister Peak in the 1840's. Unfortunately, most of the land was sold off decades ago. But some of us still remain on the Rancho, we own a few acres, and we still maintain the Canet Family Cemetery on the hill on Canet Road at the base of Hollister Peak. Right now the view from the cemetery and from my home and all my neighbors homes that also live at the base of Hollister Peak is the beautiful, untouched, serene countryside that has been the same for thousands of years. (As an aside, my grandmother Ramona Romero owned the water rights to Chorro Creek. She "sold" those water rights to the City of Morro Bay for ONE DOLLAR, because, she said "everyone should have free water". And we know what happened to the water after that.) So, our concern is real, and devastating to the homeowners in the area (who are all against it) along with many, many local residents.

I personally tried to build on my father's part of the San Bernardo land grant (at the base of Hollister Peak) for 30 years, but was refused because of the Coastal Commission moratorium. After that, I tried again and was told I was in a landslide area and had to jump through many hoops to see if I could possibly build in the future. Instead, I have left the land natural. I have bought back a piece of our family heritage, upon buying my uncles home at 2548 Canet Road. I have planned to retire here, just like my cousin, uncle, grandparents, great grandparents, great, great grandparents, and so on since the 1840's.

If this project goes through, we will have 400 people working to build the plant in our backyard, according to Hydrostar. We will also have 40-50 continuous people operating the plant for the foreseeable future. Please don't let this happen to our peaceful quiet community and the view from my home for the rest of my life.

There is already a 600 megawatt battery storage plant proposed for Morro Bay. Certainly, there is another area in all of San Luis Obispo County to house this monstrosity of a plant, which now is planned in full view of the "scenic Highway One". Thank you for hearing me out and your anticipated response.

Charlene Bucis -resident of Hollister Peak