

DOCKETED

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HECA Project: Comment Letter

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

To: California Energy Commission

RE: HECA Project – Opposed to location of project in Kern County

I was out of town breathing clean air in Minnesota thus unable to attend the September Buttonwillow hearing. I appreciate the opportunity to express my opposition electronically. I am a retired widow living on the far west side of Bakersfield, so this project, if approved, will affect the air I breathe and traffic with which I must contend -- and may destroy other intrinsic quality of life assets I enjoy in this area of California. I urge the CEC and DOE to look more closely at this new version of HECA, and I believe you will find it does not meet the future needs of Kern County, California or the planet.

As an atmospheric chemist and climate change author said in a long Minnesota evening discussion of global warming, “The best way to sequester fossil fuel is to leave it in the ground.” He and I know that is not likely to happen in the near future. Then he further warned of the methane release that is around the corner from the CO2 release concentrating in our atmosphere. I hope you are thinking 50 and 100 years out, not just five or 25 years. It is time for all of us to make a stand on climate change.

Here I Stand

1. This HECA “demonstration” project keeps getting reinvented. Red flag!
2. First, HECA was not even proposed for California but another state.
3. Then the owner found out the technology could not make any money so they sold it.
4. The current owner/applicant decided the way to make this profitable is to use the ash byproducts and make fertilizer.
 - NOTE to CEC - Is the need for more fertilizer in the U.S. documented in the SCS HECA plan? From what I read on a worldwide basis use of fertilizer is declining even as per-acre production rises.
 - NOTE to CEC - Are the ash byproducts that will not be made into fertilizer properly calculated and included in waste management plans, including pollution caused by transporting them to a landfill?
5. I don't know how the applicant picked Kern County but, based on our poor air quality, HECA could not have picked a worse site. The figures that allow our SJVAPCD to find that HECA won't increase pollution deserve a second look once all mitigation measures are identified. Red flag here, too.
6. HECA promises 300MW of power generation, but that is small compared to the 8,000MW of permitted alternative power already approved in Kern County – wind and solar. However, it now sounds like HECA will need all the energy they produce to turn ash byproducts into fertilizer.
7. If HECA is such a good idea, why does the applicant plan to sell it once it is built?
 - NOTE to CEC – Does applicant address their ability to sell the plant upon completion? Who would buy it? I know plans address the buyer's being held to all agreements, but what's the reality?
8. The volume of water used by HECA is tremendous – as it is for the oil companies using enhanced recovery methods included in the CO2 sequestration process. I would rather see the water used by farmers in the Valley who have demonstrated that they know what crops to plant that can tolerate saline water. The water IS usable.
9. Tule Elk Preserve next to the HECA project is a unique and historic place. We almost lost all Tule Elk in the late 1800's and bringing them back to health is important to California and Kern County.
 - Note to CEC - There is no way the significant environmental impacts on Tule Elk Preserve can be mitigated – and it is the HECA Project's next door neighbor.

I support the farming families who stand to have generations of an American way of life upended if HECA is approved. I support families who face daily medical problems due to our bad air but can't move. I support union workers who would find healthier job conditions in the alternative energy field where 8,000MW are being added to our outstanding energy record in Kern County.

I oppose HECA because it is not in the best interests of the majority of citizens in Kern County.

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