

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	15-AFC-02
Project Title:	Mission Rock Energy Center
TN #:	211323
Document Title:	Audrey Vincent Comments: Environmental Justice Issues pertaining to proposed peaker plant
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	Audrey Vincent
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	4/30/2016 6:45:56 PM
Docketed Date:	5/2/2016

Comment Received From: Audrey Vincent

Submitted On: 4/30/2016

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Environmental Justice Issues pertaining to proposed peaker plant

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

April 30, 2016

California Energy Commission

Re: Docket Number 15-AFC-02 (Application For Certification) Mission Rock Energy Center

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed fossil fuel “peaker” plant on Mission Rock Road just west of Santa Paula, Ventura County.

I am a retired parish minister serving as a congregant in my home church, the Universalist Unitarian Church of Santa Paula, active with the Social Concerns Action Committee of the church and participate in the Santa Paula Ministerial Association. The focus of this letter is to address environmental justice issues pertaining to the proposed plant.

Santa Paula is a town rich in history, art, and diverse cultures yet economically depressed. We are 79% Latino; remainder white and other. Many of our residents are farm workers and others holding very low income jobs. The Ventura County Civic Alliance rates the Santa Clara Valley where we are located high on their “Misery Index,” meaning a composite of eight socioeconomic indicators: the poverty rate among children age 5 and under; the percentage of women-led households with children 5 and younger who are below the poverty line; the percentage of adults 25 and older without a high school diploma; the percentage of people who speak English “less than very well”; the portion of school children eligible for subsidized lunches; the portion of students classified as English learners; and the percentage of students who tested at “below proficient” for math and language arts.

Our churches are well aware of the severe needs here. More than several offer food pantries; one church hosts a hot meal serving more than 600 persons weekly; our church through our Social Concerns Action Committee funds counselling services, parenting classes, and support services for estranged teens needing to be reunited with families--all provided by Interface Children and Family Services; County health specialists pay regular visits to the weekly meal program in addition to staffing local clinics. All of this is to say that this economically deprived community suffers from related issues as well, such as compromised health issues, e.g., asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Air quality already exceeds state and federal standards without adding yet another source of pollution as would be produced by the proposed peaker plant.

Environmental justice issues argue heavily against such a facility.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Audrey W. Vincent

revavinc@earthlink.net

1001 June St, Santa Paula, CA., 93060

