

DOCKETED

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Comment Received From: Monica Jacinto and Carmen Arenas

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Proposed Mission Rock Energy Center in Santa Paula, CA

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

July 26, 2016

Dear California Energy Commission,

We write to strongly oppose Calpine's proposed power plant in the Santa Clara River Valley. We also want to thank the California Energy Commission representatives that will host a hearing regarding the Mission Rock Energy Center on July 28, 2016 at 5:30pm at the Santa Paula Community Center (530 W Main Street, Santa Paula, CA 93060). We appreciate their openness to reschedule the hearing after an evident need for Spanish translation- given Santa Paula is approximately 80% Hispanic. We hope this letter will make you aware of the grave danger building this power plant poses to our community.

The proposed site falls within the 100 and 500-year floodplain defined by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that makes this site vulnerable to flooding. Previous flooding events have destroyed significant resources in the vicinity. It is not realistic to assume this will not occur again. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has defined the proposed area geologically unstable due to its 0.3-mile proximity to the Oakridge fault line that also makes the site subject to liquefaction. As a result, mitigation measures defined in the Public Resources Code, Section 2693 (c), will be required.¹

The Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, has measured Ventura County's current air quality as exceeding both state and federal air quality standards for ozone. The pollutants released from the burning of natural gas will further contribute to the already out of compliance ground level ozone. These elevated levels of pollution will increase the risk of significant pulmonary health issues, such as asthma and emphysema, for the Santa Clara River Valley residents, particularly children and elderly.

Calpine proposes to purchase up to 170 acre-feet of recycled water from the Limoneira Company, impacting the water resources of the valley. This is water that should be going back into the valley's aquifer. The aquifer is our main water source and its preservation for the community is of utmost importance given our experience with California's extended drought. Normally this recycled water would replenish the groundwater. Unless otherwise designated by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), all groundwater is considered suitable for municipal, domestic, and agricultural use.

The power plant would require the construction of a gas pipeline, overhead transmission lines, and a lighted facility that will diminish the scenic value of the Santa Clara River Valley and negatively impact tourism. Moreover, the site falls within an area designated for limited agricultural use by the County's Save our Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) initiative and within the boundaries of the Santa Clara River Valley Rural Historic District. This site was also determined to be part of the "Structures of Merit" under the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Ordinance that constitutes a "local register of historical resources." Consequently these resources should be regarded as historical resources pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, 21084.1). Further, the "G class" non-towered Santa Paula Airport that has close to 100,000 flight operations per year, is located east of the proposed site. Federal Airport Regulations (FAR) dictates 91.199 - Minimum Safe Altitudes height restrictions for flights in "G class" airspace. Pilots can fly as low as 200-feet above ground level when approaching the airport under a cloud layer. In the past few

years, there have been three fatalities caused by planes hitting standard height power lines. By the power plant adding additional lines, pilots are at a higher risk of colliding with transmission lines.

The power plant will also remain lit 24 hours a day. This will disrupt plants and animals dependent on the earth's daily cycle of light and dark rhythm to govern life-sustaining behaviors. Additionally, Calpine themselves declared that results of the power plant's noise pollution are unknown and that several design elements may be necessary to control noise emissions and meet project noise limits. The effects on wildlife and residents, other than those immediately adjacent to the site, have not been evaluated. Other issues of concern are that gas leaks and explosions are a reality. The recent Porter Ranch gas leak highlights the shortcomings of natural gas safety, as do several serious explosions around the country. Recently there was a serious environmental disaster locally at the Santa Clara Waste Water Company that is located within the same vicinity of this proposed plant.

It is also very important to note that the proposed plant violates the minimum 1,500-foot sensitive receptor distance requirement, with the local jail stationed 800-feet away. Todd Road Jail houses approx. 800 people awaiting trial and has over 185 employees. Neighboring the proposed site are also agricultural farms and a large packinghouse. Less than 2 miles away are Briggs Elementary School and Limoneira farmworker housing. The effects of previous chemical waste from the Santa Clara Waste Water company disaster, in combination with agricultural pesticides and the proposed plant's pollutants is yet to be explored and raises great concerns. Our community was already hindered in 2014 by the wastewater company disaster. A site that has not been completely cleaned up and some of the first responders to that emergency are still dealing with long-term health issues. This small town of minimal resources cannot afford another environmental disaster.

Given President Clinton's Executive Order 12898 that promises environmental protection for all communities, we urge your intervention in the construction of this power plant. This plant is a blatant example of environmental discrimination as it negatively impacts some of the most vulnerable populations. This plant will not only affect incarcerated people, children, and farm workers, but also our local population that is largely made up of modestly educated, immigrant, and low-income communities. Many of our residents have language barriers and lack the resources to hire lawyers that will advocate for them on an individual basis.

We trust that you will stand on our side, and do what is in your power to protect our community and surrounding communities. Moreover, in Senate Bill 350, the state of California mandates for 50% of retail electricity sales to come from renewable resources by 2030. California can't afford to take a step back and invest in non-renewable technology. With renewable energy, it's possible to meet the state's energy demand and protect our communities from toxic environmental pollution in the process.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Citizens of the Santa Clara Heritage Valley, including the residents of Santa Paula, Saticoy, Fillmore, Piru and the surrounding county residents.

¹ A site map depicting the Oakridge fault line can be found in the USGS Seismic Hazards Zones maps- Santa Paula Quadrangle.