

10-15-01

DOCKET

01-AFC-21

DATE OCT 15 2001

RECD OCT 18 2001

To whom it May Concern,
If you are not
as it yet, Florida Power & Light
would like you put a plant to
generate steam for electricity near
our home. The plant will be
on Midway Road (East of Tracy)
on the Alameda County border.

We might not be
able to "see" the plant but will
be able to hear it and smell it.
We have been heavily impacted
by traffic because of Tracy's
growth. We oppose one more
truck or one more car out
here! Besides more traffic there
will be danger with chemicals
on an already heavily impacted
road.

We already have one
"eye-sore" in our valley - PSE - so
we don't want any more!

Barbara L. Nand
19835 Pittman Pass Rd
Tracy, Ca 95377



Enrique Gutierrez/Tracy Press

Above, Barbara Hand keeps a sign outside her Patterson Pass Road advising speeding motorists on how many accidents have occurred near the area the past few days. Below, Tracy CHP officer Brian Hemenway keeps an eye out.

CHP, county focus on speeders in rural area

Ben van der Maer

The Tracy Press

A rural Tracy road is becoming a place where commuters are literally colliding with country living.

Both the California Highway Patrol and San Joaquin County's public works department are paying more attention to the south end of Patterson Pass Road where it begins winding through the Altamont hills.

"If we find that there's a lot of people there at a certain time, we'll send that information to the highway patrol," said Sukhminder Chahal, a senior civil engineer with the county's public works department. "We'll also look whether we need to reduce speed for that area."

In most situations, Patterson Pass is what locals would describe as a quiet road — except from 5:30 to 8 in the morning, and 3:30 to 6:30 in the evening.

Then, as taillights come to life on nearby



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PATTERSON: Law enforcement targets speeders

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Interstates 205 and 580, commuters from Tracy and elsewhere use the road as a shortcut to and from jobs over the hill.

Barbara Hand, who has lived on a Patterson Pass ranch for six years, said she understands the commuters' "I'm not sitting in that mess" thinking.

What she's opposed to, she said, is how they do it: At faster than the posted limit of 55 mph, and defying double-yellow lines that bar passing other vehicles.

While the speeding-commuter pattern was almost routine since she moved there, Hand said, the situation took a different turn a month ago.

That's when county workers began a chip-and-seal project on Patterson Pass outside Hand's ranch, and put up signs saying, "Local Traffic Only."

People defied the signs, she

said. But they quickly discovered another problem: The ongoing road work left Patterson Pass with a lot of loose gravel and soft shoulders.

Hand said she saw the results on July 5, when the driver of a sport-utility vehicle went through her white corral fence. That same evening, another driver bashed a barbed-wire fence at an adjoining property.

On July 12, a driver plowed into a telephone pole, destroying the car and requiring the driver to be airlifted to the hospital. And another neighbor lost a mailbox Monday.

"That's when I decided six years was enough," Hand said. She contacted both the patrol and the county, asking for some kind of help.

On Wednesday afternoon, help came. Cars coming eastward on Patterson Pass quickly

slowed when they spotted a pair of CHP cars ahead.

Brian Hemenway, one of the two officers, said he and another officer had written nearly 20 citations for speeding and illegal passing in two days.

"The speeds range anywhere from 70 to 80 mph," he said. "The residents out here told us it's a constant problem."

Hand was also scouting the road, with a sign at the end of her driveway telling in black stenciled letters how many recent accidents had happened on that road, along with the admonition, "WHY HURRY?"

"They hit the straightaway, and they go nuts," she said. "I don't want to be picking up parts again."

Chahal said his department will begin a traffic study on Patterson Pass road next week, after the road work is completed.

The purpose is not to determine how many cars are using the road — about 4,000 daily, according to a 1997 county study — but when and how they're doing so, he said.

In addition, Sgt. Bill Dunnaway said units from Tracy's CHP office will patrol the road regularly.

"From what I've seen, when people notice the highway patrol around, they get a little more careful in their highway habits," he said.

Both Chahal and Dunnaway said Patterson Pass Road is not unique as a commuter alternative. Bryon, West Grant Line and a number of other western county streets are popular with anyone trying to avoid congestion.

Hand said she just wants her road to be safer. "Maybe if people see the patrols, it'll get them to go the limit," she said.