

June 27, 2016

Samuel B. Villalobos
1428 Via Palermo
Montebello, California 90640

California Public Utilities Commission
RE: Mesa 500k-V Substation Project
c/o Ecology and Environment, Inc.
505 Sansome Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94111

**SUBJECT: Comments on DRAFT EIR
 Mesa 500-kV Substation Project**

Dear California Public Utilities Commission Members,

Please receive and file my opposition to any approval of the application and the proposed approval and Certification of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) by the proponent for the Mesa 500k-V Substation Project to consist of the following:

- Construct a new 500/200/66/16-kV substation and increasing the substation, increasing the substation's footprint from 22 acres to 69 acres,
- Replacement (removal and installation) and modification of transmission lines, sub transmission lines, and distribution structures to accommodate the new 500/200/66/16-kV substation.
- New telecommunication lines and modifications to an existing line, mostly on existing poles and existing duct.
- Temporary modifications to 220=kV equipment at several existing substations to prevent electrical outages during construction.
- Relocation and replacement of an existing 72=inch-diameter waterline with an 84-inch-diameter waterline on the substation site.
- Electrical and/ or telecommunications equipment upgrades at 27 existing substations.
- Undergrounding of three spans of overhead streetlight conductors

The bifurcation of the proposed 500/200/66/16-kV substation insisting that the only site for the "Project" will be in placed in the City of Monterey Park at the Montebello Station site, amid and nested 20 feet of 1949 homes in the City of Monterey, 60 feet of Sale Single Housing Development recently developed in 2015-2016 and 200 feet from existing Montebello Hills development by Continental Development in the City of Montebello causes grave concern over the short and long range implication, impacts and health issues both physical and psychological to the residential communities in the City of Monterey Park and the City of Montebello.

The bifurcation of the Mesa 500-kV Substation Project warrants global and Media attention evaluation, analysis and review before anyone might permit such land use. After completing a review of the Draft EIR the conclusion is that the planning tool is inadequate and that the certification of this document will not proceed unchallenged for the following reasons:

- **NEPA Review Requirement**
- **Public Notification Failures**
- **Air Quality Cummulative Impact**
- **Aesthetics Impact**
- **Noise Impact**
- **Fire Hazards Impacts**
- **Methane Gas Impacts**
- **Electric Magnetic Forces Impacts**
- **Water Resources Impact**
- **Air Fields and Heliport Impacts**

NEPA Review

Because of direct and/or indirect funding of federal dollars received by the proponent from the U.S. Department Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Transportation and other known or unknown federal agencies the proposed project is subject to NEPA review.

Public Notification

The Draft Environmental Impact report preparation and the review and comment period has failed to meet the minimum requires for "Public Notification" of the Proposed 500k-V Mesa Project. For example, the written outreach was limited to 200 feet from the site. The draft EIR never recognized the regional implications of the project nor reported on any notification to households adjacent to transmission lines or subtransmission lines residing and located along the proposed staging and phases of the proposed Mesa Project development. The two (2) Scoping meeting held very little participation. At the first scoping meeting only and hand full of residents attended. At the second scoping meeting only three (3) residents signed in. The Notice of Availability Draft Environmental Impact Report For the Mesa 500k-V Substation Project Application No. 15-03-003 announcing the Draft EIR Information/ Public Review Period/ Public Meeting sent interested persons to the wrong published address as 350S. McPherrin. The meeting was held and conducted at an alternate unpolished address. The notification of extension of time was not sent to the impacted households. It was simply posted on a letter to the Library Branch attached to the volume I of the drat EIR document.

Air Quality Cummulative Impact

The true challenge is to evaluate and analyze the vast environmental impact to human health, economics to residential communities, already impacted by two (2) other environmental impacts that the I-69 Freeway reported over 200,000 eastbound and westbound trips per day polluting the local and regional air quality in the City of Montebello and Monterey Park and the second project impacting the region is Operating Industry Land Fill (OII) site located directly contiguous site on the north and south parcel previously operated in the Monterey Park municipal boundary. The cumulative impact to both Cities was recently experienced when the oil tanker explosion while eastbound on I-60 underneath the Paramount Boulevard freeway overpass. The explosion and subsequent fire of the concrete and steel components of the bridge create a high toxic air and ambient quality to the surrounding neighborhoods of both cities. This was further exacerbated by the traffic created when the bridge destruction and the reconstruction period which intensified air pollution during and past the recovery period. Under CEQA the California Department of Transportation delivered a reconstruction of the bridge through an emergency negative declaration expeditiously ignoring the Methane issues created by the Land Fill and bifurcated the analysis of the processed Edison Mesa Project which was well on its way evident by the storage onsite of all the component parts of the tension poles and infra-structure ready to build without EIR review.

Methane extraction wells managed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are located on site and in numerous locations surrounding the site for the proposed construct a the proposed new 500/200/66/16-kV substation and increasing the substation and the substation's footprint from 22 acres to 69 acres. Going over two decades the EPA continues to serve its mission to perform ongoing mitigation measures and remedies charged against the owners and responsible parties of Operating Industries (OII) and other parties of records. In the initial year in the 1990s the EPA remedial work at the OII site allocated over \$20K to make operational a Methane recovery and flare burn system. Methane gas is still seeping from the ground to date and EPA is still on assignment to date. The bifurcation of the Mesa 500k-V Project, approval and certification of the draft EIR document when having direct knowledge that the "Project" site is heavily impacted the methane located subterranean on site and on the adjacent and contiguous OII landfill site will place heavy consequences of public review and scrutiny of the actions of CPUC and may expose charges of criminal negligence should the Mesa 500k-V Project be allowed to move forward. The EIR document did not address the mitigation of the existing methane exposure of the site.

Aesthetics Impact

The ongoing operations of the existing 22-acre 200-kV electric utility substation and the condition of the site is self-evident the industrial blight the such land uses knowingly create. The existing conditions of the property is self-evident of the lack of the lack of maintenance and blight which the residential communities have suffered and endures for decades. The current operation and condition of the site

shows negative impact to the environment of 22 acres. Increasing the substation's footprint from 22 acres to 69 acres will increase the industrial blight. The current and proposed expansion of electrical utility station land use shows negligence and disregard for the residents and homeowners of the City of Monterey Park and Montebello alike. The EIR draft document fails to introduce mitigations nor to introduce any conversation of a landscaping and planting plans for the site. A plausible alternative is for the proponent to terminate the operation of the 200k-V Substation and relocate it industrial land uses to an other location, which would offer residential communities a buffer distance of ½ mile to a one mile range. The proponent might consider donating the existing 22 acre toxic site to the City of Monterey Park after abating and serving as responsible party to clear the site through remedial measure under the supervision and management of the U.S. Environment Protection Agency. Currently neither the proponent nor the Draft EIR offers any conversation about whether or not the proponent acknowledges that must have a property management plan and abide to care and good neighbor policies. The Draft EIR document does not include any evidence that the proponent has now nor in the past opened a dialogue with the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) to propose a regional nor site specific landscape planning and implementation of planting and irrigation along the sites known north boundary line along the east-west rout of the I-60 Pomona Freeway.

Noise Impact

The draft EIR does not discuss the cumulative noise impact of the I-60 traffic flow with motor vehicles and the long term industrial noise levels that would emit from the proposed Construct of a new 500/200/66/16-kV substation beyond the construction phase. At this time, for the record, please recognize that the noise to be emitted by the proposed Construct a new 500/200/66/16-kV substation will exceed the noise levels permitted by the City of Montebello Specific Plan. The Draft EIR document did not included any testimonials from residential homeowner, tenants or residents about the ambient high noise level that the suffer as a results of the current operations of the 200k-V substation, transmission lines, sub transmission lines, distribution structures and generator. As a testimonial, I constantly hear 24/7 year round, year after year the constant humm of the noise coming from the substation. Additionally, the proponent does not inspect nor maintain the transmission lines, subtransmission lines, distribution structures nor the transformer amounted on posts. For example, all the towers and transmission lines along the proponents easement and right-of-way behind Schurr High School in the City of Montebello have not been replaced since the 1960s. The transformer on the wood posts on I-60 located adjacent ti the proposed Mesa Project site are constantly humming out of control and they are seldom if ever replaced or repaired. The Draft EIR document fails to address noise pollution remediation measures for the temporary construction and the long range operational phases for each and every identified staging area of the proposed "Project". The draft EIR also fails to address any mitigation for the noise levels that are measured to be higher the code allowed by the General Plan for both the City of Monterey Park and the City of Montebello.

Fire Hazards Impacts

The draft EIR document fails to identify the proposed site for the Construction of a new 500/200/66/16-kV substation and that the increasing of the substation's footprint from 22 acres to 69 acres would endanger the entire urban sprawl located in the City of Monterey Park and the City of Montebello as well as the entire Whittier Narrows Preservation area currently managed the U.S. Corps. of Engineers and will greatly expand and increase exposure Monterey Park and Montebello residents to threats by fire. The recently southern California May 2016 in the Calabasas/ Valencia area reported by the Media to have been started by a downed electrical power transmission lines following a Motor Vehicle Accident collision when a car hit a power pole setting the hillsides on fire and spreading rapidly cause economic loss and environmental impact to wildlife and vegetation. The June 2016 Duarte Fire in the San Gabriel Mountains has consumed vast acreage lost to fire damage and the loss of two lives, smoke inhalation to firefighter, many homes lost by the fire and devastated the lives thousands of home owner and residents of those communities. The draft EIR has failed to recognize and comment of the ¼ mile close distance of the proposed Mesa Project site to the Whittier Narrows. The draft EIR document fails to certain that the Whittier Narrows Preservation has forest like environmental conditions to be protected to any thing that the create a forest fire. Thirdly, the EIR document has failed to report on the Fire that consume a portion of the Whittier Narrows area in the Summer of 2015 when as initially reported by the Media that a spark from a power pole had ignited the Fire (much later the Media reported that an unknown transient was involved)

Methane Gas

Methane extraction wells managed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are located on site and in numerous location surrounding the site for the proposed construct a the proposed new 500/200/66/16-kV substation and increasing the substation and the substation's footprint from 22 acres to 69 acres. Going over two dacades the EPA continues to serve its mission to perform ongoing mitigation measures and remedies charged against the owners and responsible parties of Operating Industries (OII) and other parties of records. In the initial year in the 1990s the EPA remedial work at the OII site allocated over \$20K to make operational an Methane recovery and flare burn system. Methane gas is still seeping form the ground to date and EPA is still on assignment to date. The Bifurcation of the Mesa 500k-V Project, approval and certification of the draft EIR document when having direct knowledge that the "Project" site is heavily impacted the methane located subterranean on site and on the adjacent and contiguous OII landfill site will place heavy consequences of public review and scrutiny of the actions of CPUC and may expose charges of criminal negligence should the Mesa 500k-V Project be allowed to move forward. The EIR document did not address the mitigation of the existing methane exposure of the site.

Electric Magnetic Forces

The Draft Environmental Impact report has failed to review and to analyse the Electric Magnetic Forces (EMF) effects on Human Health, Commercial Food Storage and Temperature Regulation codes and standards, or effects to telecommunications to Hospital Facilities, Clinics and such. The draft EIR study hinds behind an allegation that there are no federal nor state standards to provide criteria for review of the "Devastation to Communities" living and working beneath the peak impacts and influences of the proposed Mesa 500k-V EMF dome's thermal radiation. The draft EIR also ignored the vast amount of scientific national and international literature and journals on the subject of the effects of EMF on human health. It disregarded the findings of the published U.S. National Institute of Environment and Health Sciences and ongoing studies on every major teaching hospital on the effects and impact on human tissue and inflammation theories and studies on chronic respiratory, vascular, heart, and lung illnesses and disorders, stem cell research and pathologies that study human cell development and cancers. Under the cover of lack of federal and state criteria the draft EIR concluded no impact on human health. The information review and comment period failed to recognize or discuss that the "Mesa" project is situated approximately 100 feet on the north side of the CA SR 60 Pomona freeway directly in front of Costco Montebello where thousands of families rely on cold storage refrigeration food storage and supplies for a members only chain store. The draft EIR ignorance by design, intent to conceal or error of omission, bifurcating the study and analysis of the Mesa 500kV project might result in a membership class action law suit for breaching the public trust and social contract that government agencies accept their obligation for the consideration of the impacts to human health under these urban and residential land use conditions. The draft EIR document fails to analyse the impact of EMF on the Kaiser Permanente Montebello Medical Center on the human health impact of patients, professional and paraprofessional staff assigned to this medical center situated approximately 500 yards to the south east of the proposed "Mesa Project". Because the draft EIR miserably fails to study the effects and impacts on human health, it should not be considered a reliable nor adequate Planning instrument. As such, we pray that the certification of the draft EIR document should not be supported in any fashion nor approved. We strongly petition that the approval of the draft EIR be declined for its failure to study, review and comment on the proposed Mesa Project EMF. The draft document does not provide any measurements of distances of the peak EMF currents of thermal energy, electric field, magnetic field or exposure (occupational or general public) the draft document completely ignored EMF findings of other state Transmission Line Standards and Guidelines and the findings of the global scientific community to analyse EMF exposure of the proposed 500kV Mesa substation.

Protection of Protected Species – Gnat Catcher Species of Bird

The proposed 500kV Mesa substation project threatens the survival of the California **Gnat Catcher Species of Bird** on the endangered list. This bird relies on the open area Mesa Project site the obtain its needed water consumption due to a historical creek water current that can be traced to the Rio Hondo River and underground

water springs. It is not alone to assign a bird nest counting during the construction phase of the proposed 500kV Mesa Project. It is very important the area continues to be preserved where the Montebello California Gnat Catcher bird species can continue to obtain its water supplies and to fill its life-cycle needs in order to live, reproduce, and survive in the arid San Gabriel Valley climate. Otherwise, the Mesa Project will cause the demise and the survival of the Montebello California Gnat Catcher bird species.

Adverse Economic Impact

In consultation with real estate agents located in Southern California and a member of the Real Estate Council California Association of Realtors the proposed construction of a new 500kV substation will result in a diminished valuation of home in the Montebello Hills and surrounding communities in the Montebello and Monterey Park. Current home comp values range upward then \$675,000 to over 1 million dollars. The draft EIR document fails to provide a relocation plan for residents and property owners that are adversely impacted should the Mesa Project be implemented.

The proposed Mesa Development Project will threaten the drying out of the Potrero Grande Water Creek a San Gabriel Valley Historical preserve and water artery of the Rio Hondo River, this alone will warrant the denial of draft EIR approval.

Air Fields and Heliports

National and State Guidelines on Airways and regulatory law mandate that no electric utility substation be placed located within two miles of airfields. The draft EIR failed to study impact to the heliports of the East Los Angeles Sheriffs Station located half a miles distance at Third Street and Eastern Avenue station heliports.

Should you need more information please contact me at 323-722-0475.

Sincerely,


Samuel B. Villalobos