

☰ TRENDING: IT'S POURING | TORRENTIAL RAIN IN VENTURA COUNTY IN PIC...



VCReporter

NEWS CULTURE ARTS & OPINION

- HOME
- NEWS ▾
- ART AND CULTURE ▾
- MUSIC ▾
- OPINION ▾
- DINING ▾
- SPECIAL ISSUES ▾

POWER PLAY | QUESTION OF NECESSITY ARISES OVER PROPOSED ENERGY PLANT NEAR SANTA PAULA

Jun 28, 2017 | Chris O'Neal, News | 0 🗨️ | ★★★★★

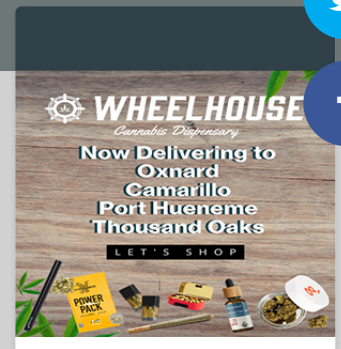


Twitter
0



Facebook
0

The Wishtoyo Foundation filed a motion on June 9 to intervene in proceedings regarding a proposed natural-gas power plant in the Santa Clara River Valley as



DIGITAL EDITIONS

[Shelf by Issuu](#)

VCReporter 4-1-2020



questions loom on whether or not the power plant is needed. The motion is currently being considered by the California Energy Commission with a decision expected by the end of June.

The plant, dubbed the Mission Rock Energy Center (MREC), would sit in what the Wishtoyo Foundation calls “Chumash traditional territory” on land the Chumash consider sacred and “essential to their traditions and cultures” to the east of Santa Paula.

Mission Rock Energy Center would generate electricity via a natural gas-fired, turbine electrical generating facility, capable of producing 255 megawatts.

The project, which was proposed in December 2015, has been opposed by Santa Paula residents and the Santa Paula City Council, who questioned the need for the power plant and issued a formal objection to the plant in October 2016, raising environmental and social concerns. The City Council’s formal objection letter notes that the Energy Center’s opposition to information requests submitted by the city to the Energy Commission “may foretell MREC’s response to demands for information, once operational.”

At an earlier City Council meeting in April 2016, Mitch Weinberg, director of strategic origination and development at Calpine, the natural gas and geothermal energy producer that proposed the plant, said that the project would generate \$3 million in property taxes and

**LIKE US ON
FACEBOOK**

 Like

Share

**SUBSCRIBE
HERE**

Subscribe

EMAIL ADDRESS

**COMMUNITY
EVENTS**

**SUBMIT YOUR
VENTURA
COUNTY
EVENT HERE.**

You must be

that the Santa Paula School District would receive \$500,000 annually. The project is not within Santa Paula city limits, however, and as such the tax revenue would mostly benefit the county, as reported in the Citizens Journal, "Santa Paula Council and Citizens: Dialogue with Calpine about Mission Rock Peaker Plant" on April 5, 2016.

A statement provided to the VCReporter from Weinberg says that Calpine has no objection to the Wishtoyo Foundation's motion to intervene and that "Calpine welcomes public participation in the regulatory review process."

"The Mission Rock proposal is uniquely suited to meet the regional need for reliable clean power while also supporting the increasing renewable energy on California's grid," said Weinberg. "The Mission Rock configuration not only includes storage to help capture renewable energy that can be discharged later during peak demand, but also includes five small peaking engines that can operate separately to avoid unnecessary use and minimize emissions. The Mission Rock proposal also uniquely allows the peakers to support voltage balance on the grid without using fuel."

"California's regulatory review process for this type of project is rigorous," Weinberg continued. "We look forward to addressing any environmental or other concerns as part of the California Environmental Quality Act process."

registered and logged in to post your events.



UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

STUDENT ART SHOW

April 2 - April 21

CANCELED: CALLUPALO OZA

April 16 @ 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm

CANCELED: REEL JUSTICE FILM SERIES: 'TIME FOR ILHAN'

April 16 @ 6:30 pm

Angela Johnson Meszaros, attorney at Earthjustice, a nonprofit environmental law organization representing the Wishtoyo Foundation, says that the foundation has several questions regarding the plant that need to be addressed.

“First is whether or not this power plant is needed at all,” said Meszaros. “They’re also concerned about a range of impacts to the air, to the water and to the animals that live there, [as well as] to the landscape, and they’re concerned about its impact on their cultural resources.”

The motion, if approved by the California Energy Commission, would allow Wishtoyo to present evidence and arguments in regard to Mission Rock Energy Center.

An environmental assessment, however, has not yet been completed for the Energy Center. A study of all potential impacts, including environmental, economic and otherwise, is currently being compiled, with no set timeline for completion. The study, dubbed a Preliminary Staff Assessment, is issued by the CEC, which is currently in the “siting process” and under review by staff.

“It’s the last wild stream in SoCal,” said Meszaros. “This is the time to be thoughtful about how we want to protect that.”

Concerns that the plant is not needed are buoyed by recent news reports on the state of California having an

**CANCELED:
5 X 15: A
MINI
MUSICAL
THEATRE
FESTIVAL**

April 16 @ 8:00
pm

**CANCELED:
SPRING
CHORAL
CONCERT**

April 17 @ 7:30
pm

**CONEJO
VALLEY
QUILTERS
PRESENTS
“PLAYING
WITH
PRECUTS”**

April 20 @ 7:00
pm - 9:00 pm

**CANNABIS
KITCHEN**

April 22 @ 6:00
pm - 7:00 pm

**MOTHER’S
DAY
LUNCHEON**

April 24 @ 11:30
am - 2:00 pm

MOTHER’S

overabundance of energy. As reported in the Los Angeles Times on Feb. 5, 2017, (“Californians are paying billions for power they don’t need”), the Sutter Energy Center, constructed in 2001, shuttered after just 15 years of a 30- to 40-year expected lifespan due to an oversupply of energy created in part by another nearby power plant opened in 2010 just 40 miles away.

The result of the LA Times investigation was that by 2020, California will have produced 21 percent more energy than needed, resulting in higher costs for homeowners. The Times reports that the cause of the glut is a power company building spree that began in 2008 and is expected to continue in coming years.

On June 6, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power put on hold plans to rebuild old natural-gas power plants, a \$2.2 billion project, instead choosing to study clean energy alternatives.

The proposed site of the plant sits in Ventura County Supervisor Kelly Long’s District 3. In a statement provided to the VCReporter, Long says that she will “continue to monitor this process closely, and carefully consider the forthcoming data and potential impacts to [her] constituents.” She wrote:

The siting process for any power plant is multifaceted and the Mission Rock Energy Center proposal is no exception. It is only about halfway through a six-phase compliance process with a hearing phase upcoming. A

DAY LUNCHEON

April 24 @ 11:30
am - 2:00 pm

**CANCELLED
: SPRING
AND SHOUT
DINNER
AND
DANCE:
TRIBUTE TO
NEIL
DIAMOND
AND RONNY
& THE
CLASSICS**

April 24 @ 5:30
pm - 10:00 pm

**Vie
w
All
Eve
nts**

preliminary staff assessment from the California Energy Commission is due to be released later this summer and will include an analysis of 23 technical categories and provide a much clearer picture of what the project impacts will be. I anticipate more public outreach and input as this process plays out and look forward to local questions and concerns being addressed. It is important to make sure we have local energy reliability while at the same time ensuring that any new power plants make sense from economic, environmental and siting perspectives.

SHARE THIS:



RELATED

[POWERING DOWN | Four Oxnard power plants to close this year, two proposals suspended in Oxnard, Santa Paula](#)
 March 14, 2018
 In "Chris O'Neal"

[2017: YEAR IN REVIEW](#)
 December 27, 2017
 In "Camarillo"

[Power predicament](#)
 November 25, 2015
 In "Imported"

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR VENTURA COUNTY WATER PROVIDERS:

REST ASSURED, YOUR TAP WATER IS SAFE AND RELIABLE.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) does not present a threat to our water supplies. Ventura County water providers continually monitor and test the quality of your water, and are committed to providing a safe supply.

You can be certain your drinking water remains safe, available, and plentiful.

If you have questions or concerns please contact your local water provider, or visit www.calleguas.com.

WHEELHOUSE
 Cannabis Dispensary

Now Delivering to
 Oxnard
 Camarillo
 Port Hueneme
 Thousand Oaks

LET'S SHOP