

LAW OFFICE OF MARC CHYTILO

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

February 1, 2016

San Luis Obispo County
Planning Commission
976 Los Osos Street, Room 200
Sal Luis Obispo, CA 93408-2040

By email to rhostetter@co.slo.ca.us

RE: Phillips 66 Rail Spur Project

Dear Planning Commissioners,

This office represents the Gaviota Coast Conservancy (GCC) and the Naples Coalition - an association of non-profit groups including the Los Padres Chapter of the Sierra Club, Santa Barbara Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, Santa Barbara Chapter of the Audubon Society, Citizens Planning Association of Santa Barbara County, The League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara County, the Gaviota Coast Conservancy, and the Santa Barbara County Action Network. The Gaviota Coast Conservancy and the Naples Coalition are dedicated to the long-term protection of the environment and rural character of the Gaviota Coast and the property known as “Naples” located thereon.

The Gaviota Coast spans over 100,000 acres of relatively undeveloped coastline from the City of Goleta to Vandenberg Air Force Base. The Gaviota Coast is widely recognized for its extraordinary ecological importance, unique beauty, and agricultural and cultural heritage, and was found suitable for inclusion in the National Park System¹. Annually over 560,000 people visit the Gaviota Coast’s three California State Parks, and tens of thousands access scenic beaches via informal coastal access trails². Union Pacific’s railroad tracks extend along the entire length of the Gaviota Coast, passing through historically significant working coastal ranches, through Gaviota, Refugio, and El Capitan State Parks, and through countless environmentally sensitive habitat areas and significant cultural and archaeological sites.

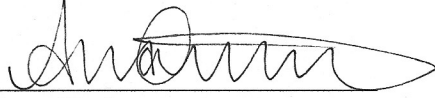
The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Staff Report for the Phillips 66 Rail Spur Project (Project) identify numerous significant impacts and policy inconsistencies the proposed Project would cause to lands, residents and habitats throughout the county along the “mainline”. These significant impacts – including to agricultural, biological, archaeological, air quality, and water resources, and associated policy inconsistencies – result from the significant risk of derailment, spill, fire or explosion caused by the Project. These Project documents make clear that the transportation of hazardous crude oil by rail proposed by Phillips 66 poses a direct and serious threat to the unique resources of the Gaviota Coast, and to the people who live and recreate adjacent to the mainline. Accordingly **we respectfully request that you follow staff’s recommendation and deny the Phillips 66 Rail Spur Project.**

¹ See Gaviota Coast Study Group Report, <http://ocpc.msi.ucsb.edu/pdfs/GCSG.pdf>

² See Santa Barbara County Trails Council Gaviota Coastal Trail and Access Study, <https://sbtrails.org/docs/gct/gaviota-coastal-trail-and-access-study.pdf>

Respectfully submitted,

LAW OFFICE OF MARC CHYTILO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ana Citrin', written over a horizontal line.

Ana Citrin

For Gaviota Coast Conservancy and Naples Coalition