

HUASNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION

WORKING TO PRESERVE THE RURAL / AGRICULTURAL
SETTING OF THE HUASNA VALLEY

www.HuasnaValley.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Proposed Huasna Oil Project “Draft EIR” Requires Major Revision Huasna Residents Respond with Public Comment that Points Out Serious Flaws

Huasna Valley, CA — August 9, 2011.

Last Friday, August 5, 2011, marked the end of the public comment period for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Excelaron/Mankins Conditional Use Permit to establish an industrial oil production facility in the Huasna Valley.

According to John McKenzie, San Luis Obispo County Planning Department, at least 235 comment letters had been received by the County. Among those letters were comments pointing out deficiencies in the draft EIR including the following and more:

One letter calls the project a “Trojan Horse,” designed to open the floodgates to other oil development projects. Excelaron has told the county they intend to extract oil from 160 acres, but Excelaron’s two principle owners Australian Oil Co. and Canadian United Hunter Oil and Gas are both telling their investors they (Excelaron) plan to explore thousands of acres.

Excelaron’s methods, as described in the EIR, would only access a small fraction of their mineral rights, leading to the conclusion that more wells and/or other undisclosed methods would be required to reach the project objectives. In fact, Excelaron principles have revealed to prospective investors their intent to drill more wells and the “upside potential” to use steam stimulation for oil extraction (a method not mentioned in the County’s Draft EIR).

Exhaustive analysis revealed excessive shortcomings of the Draft EIR, which the County should require the applicant to revise and then circulate for another round of public review and comment. “The Draft EIR lacks data for many of its conclusions, contains contradictory logic and language, defers numerous mitigations to undefined future studies, and relies on mitigations without analyzing whether or not the mitigations would actually reduce impacts”, one letter writer points out.

Other comment letters expressed concern that Excelaron will use hydraulic “fracking,” that may contaminate groundwater and induce earthquakes on the nearby West Huasna Fault. While even more letters voice concerns of Fire Danger, Water and Noise Pollution, Excessive Traffic and Dangerous Road Conditions, and Environmental Pollution. All Community letters posted on the County Website can be read using the follow link:

<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning/environmental/EnvironmentalNotices/excelaron/opposition.htm>

“Three years ago, when our community asked for an EIR, we hoped to see a thorough analysis of the proposed project. What we got was just more of the same old shell game that Excelaron has been playing since the inception of their poorly conceived project,” said Ron Skinner, Coordinator of the Huasna Valley Association.

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