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Subject: Rail Service to and through Patterson to Los Banos 2

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Has any thought ever gone into extending the ACE corridor from its current route through Tracy to Stockton to include a line going south from Tracy to Los Banos through the towns of Vernalis, Westley, Patterson, Crows Landing, Newman, Gustine, and Los Banos?

West Park LLC is in the process of planning a business park at Crows Landing, which is mostly opposed by Patterson due to the amount of truck and rail traffic that will be generated by the facility when fully operational. The rail traffic will be using an existing spur that originates in Tracy and terminates in Los Banos.

Unfortunately a large portion of the residence in the west valley are forced to commute long distances, mostly over the already congested Altamont Pass, in order to make the wages necessary to pay for their mortgages. While the West Park project will create jobs, what can the expected wages be? Enough to afford a house on the west side? Most likely no. This will add to the congestion to be created by traffic being created by operations at Crow's Landing.

By adding commuter rail service through this portion of the state, the agricultural communities that were converted to bedrooms for San Francisco Bay Area will continue to be viable alternatives in the face of rising fuel prices and dropping home values. The addition of rail service will also reduce the need to widen Interstate 5 / 580 as planned by Caltrans and reduce the smog created by commuters due to the lack of good paying jobs on the western side of the San Joaquin river basin.

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