

**WS-PACE Comments on the Notice of Preparation NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the West Park Specific Plan Project and Addendum (State Clearinghouse # 2008062066)**

**WS-PACE.org**  
P.O. Box 1044  
Patterson CA 95363  
209-892-6266 info@ws-pace.org



West Side-Patterson Alliance for the  
Community and the Environment

August 5, 2008

Via: Email & US Mail

Keith Boggs  
Deputy Executive Officer – Economic Development  
1010 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 6800, Sixth Floor  
Modesto, California 95354  
E-mail address: [boggsk@stancounty.com](mailto:boggsk@stancounty.com)  
Telephone (209) 652-1514

**Re: Comments on the Notice of Preparation NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the West Park Specific Plan Project and Addendum (State Clearinghouse # 2008062066)**

Mr. Boggs:

We take this opportunity to submit written comments on the Notice of Preparation for the EIR and the Addendum for the West Park Specific Plan Project and the Memorandum of Understanding between Stanislaus County and PCCP West Park, LLC. This letter supplements our input at the scoping meeting held at the Bonita Elementary School Cafeteria on July 1, 2008, and at Harvest Hall, Stanislaus County Agricultural Center in Modesto, the latter attended by our Vice President, Claude Delphia. We address these comments to both Stanislaus County and PCCP West Park, LLC.

This is a massive, extremely expensive plan that will result in the conversion of thousands of acres of agricultural land and further environmental degradation of our resources on the West side. In order for the environmental review process on the project to provide meaningful and intelligible public review, it is essential that scoping and planning for the appropriate studies and documentation seriously consider the flaws in the underlying project. The County and PCCP West Park, LLC have been more than adequately counseled by the public with respect to the incredible waste of taxpayer dollars in the pursuit of a project that stands to benefit private interests.

**WS-PACE Comments on the Notice of Preparation NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the West Park Specific Plan Project and Addendum (State Clearinghouse # 2008062066)**

The future entitlements as outlined in the NOP and MOU serve as a foundation for segmenting/piecemealing this project. Our concern is that future approvals or changes granted *after* Phase One will be ministerial – without the benefit of public and agency input. Conditions will change over the period of the anticipated build out in 2030 – let alone the 99 year lease agreement with the US government. Yet, the public and agencies will have no assurity as to how and under what conditions Phases Two –Four will be completed– once entitlements are conferred to the entire project under Phase One.

We hereby repeat, and incorporate by this reference, all written comments and verbal testimony submitted to date by members of WS-PACE on the West Park Project, Crows Landing Biz Park, the West Park Inland Port/Intermodal Short-Haul Rail Commercial and Industrial Park, etc...). We reiterate each of the concerns raised by members of our organization and those of the public that attended the scoping meeting held on July 1, 2008, in Crows Landing.

It would have been helpful for the NOP to have included the California Environmental Quality Act checklist. We disagree with the NOP characterization: “probable environmental effects of the proposed project.” For each substantive area, specifically state why the particular model is being used. In including any analysis of data (impacts to biological and agricultural resources, cost-revenue analysis, reliance on historical documents, assumptions undergirding your business modeling, phasing, etc...), please explain any professional controversy behind your analysis.

As was clearly indicated at the scoping meeting on July 1, 2008, water supply is a very serious issue. Specifically, where will it come from? West Siders have had to endure the failed promises brought forth by the financially and environmentally bankrupt Diablo Grande and the Western Hills Water District which is in complete disarray due to the trihalomethanes that have been discovered in the water.

During the NOP scoping session the public and agencies raised concerns regarding the impacts to this project on air quality. Specifically, what are the implications of this project with respect to AB 32 and the entire San Joaquin Valley Air Basin? The graphs presented at the scoping meeting did not include an analysis as to how this project will improve air quality in an already overburdened air basin.

With respect to infrastructure and transportation there are more questions than answers created by this project. This plan to make a plan is reliant on regional planning arrangements that are not clearly understood by the public and provide momentum for approval prior to any environmental review.

While the addendum features additional studies, these studies raise more questions than they answer. One obvious example is the report included by the consulting group, Global Insights. In surveying distributors in the Valley on their potential need/use of an “inland intermodal port,” the consultants noted that: “while companies want to save on freight rates, they are mindful of total costs and often skeptical about rail’s ability to lower cost due to past service problems. It

**WS-PACE Comments on the Notice of Preparation NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the West Park Specific Plan Project and Addendum (State Clearinghouse # 2008062066)**

will be a challenge for us to get some shippers/receivers to even try the service, and they will be unforgiving if they try the service and have problems.”

Please address how this entire 4,800 acres will ultimately qualify for redevelopment designation. What is the nexus between the Enterprise Zone, Free Trade, and the Redevelopment Zone designation.

Please address the impacts to agriculture as it relates to the current General Plan, the recently passed Measure E, impacts to Williamson Act contracted lands in the vicinity, and mitigation that is being contemplated to offset the project and impacts to nearby conservation and agricultural easements.

This project should not rely on outdated material in its analysis.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Memorandum of Understanding approved by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on April 22, 2008, commits county resources and taxpayer dollars to this project in advance of required environmental review. This NOP and MOU so narrowly defines the project that alternatives are infeasible.

We expect to remain on your list for relevant meetings, hearings, and deadlines associated to this project.

Sincerely,



Ron Swift, President  
WS-PACE  
P.O. Box 1044  
Patterson, California 95363  
ron@ws-pace.org

cc: Interested parties