



COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 21-27, 2014

LAST WEEK

**GIBSON DISCRIMINATES - SHUTS DOWN SPEAKER
WHO WAS IN BOUNDS**

**(He allowed anti-oil and anti-nuclear advocates full
time and then shut down 1 speaker with opposing view)**

**ARNOLD'S ATTEMPTED INTERVENTION
SMACKED DOWN HARD**

THIS WEEK

ALERT

**ATTACK ON OIL INDUSTRY SET FOR TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 BOARD MEETING**

1:30 PM

(see details on next page)

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON SEPT. 23RD

ALSO VERY IMPORTANT

**SHOW UP, COMPLAIN TO BOARD ABOUT GIBSON'S
OPPRESSIVE AND INTIMIDATING REGIME**

9:00 AM

SUPPORT ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Domestic oil and natural gas production benefits California families and local economies. The energy industry in California creates hundreds of thousands of jobs and provides billions of dollars in tax revenues that go directly to funding vital services including schools and public safety.



PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN IMPORTANT DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY'S IMPACT ON SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY.

WHAT:

San Luis Obispo
Board of Supervisors Meeting

DATE:

Tuesday, September 23, 2014

TIME:

1:30 pm

LOCATION:

County Government Center
Board Chambers
1055 Monterey Street
Room D-170
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

PLEASE RSVP VIA EMAIL TO:

mcallahan@bcfpublicaffairs.com

CALIFORNIANS FOR
**ENERGY
INDEPENDENCE**

www.energyindependenceca.com

**MUCH MORE STARTING ON PAGE 8
(AGENDA ITEM 30)**

Item 9- General Public Comment Period for Matters Not on the Agenda - Gibson Suppresses Public Comment with which He Disagrees. Board Chairman Bruce Gibson shut down Libertarian analyst Gary Kirkland for attempting to speak against emerging efforts to attack the oil industry and Diablo Nuclear Power Plant. Gibson stated that the matters were not within the purview of the Board of Supervisors and therefore Kirkland could not speak on them. The California open meeting law allows public bodies to confine public comment to matters that are in the purview of the governing body which is being addressed. Thus, a speaker who might advocate for lower tuition at state universities, who is addressing a board of supervisors, could be ruled out of bounds because a board of supervisors has no authority over university tuition. Similarly, a speaker who supports Scottish independence would be out of bounds because a board of supervisors has no role in international affairs and no authority over the Scots.

Blatant Discrimination Against Kirkland: A prior speaker (Jeanne Blackwell) who is a well-known anti-oil industry activist and President of SLO Clean Water Action had just finished urging the Board to agendaize consideration of an anti-oil fracturing ordinance when Kirkland attempted to point out how oil and oil derived products are essential to the maintenance of our current industrial/techno civilization. As Kirkland was demonstrating how many products in the meeting room were derived from oil and how ridiculous it would be to regress to a “civilization” illuminated by candles and whale oil, Gibson stopped him and ruled that the speech covered matters not in the purview of the Board of Supervisors. Kirkland professionally and quietly submitted to the rule of the Chair and returned to his seat.

Of course Gibson does not want to hear from anyone who supports nuclear energy. The same day that he shut Kirkland down, he had the San Luis Obispo Tribune (which has essentially a party organ for the left politicians) publish a lengthy letter to the Editor entitled “Community Deserves Discussion on Diablo Canyon.” In the letter, Gibson slams PG&E and insults the intelligence of citizens. It is included at the end of this Weekly Update as **Addendum A** on page 14.

Gibson’s Frame of Mind: Gibson was already irritated and had stopped several other speakers who had attempted to discuss the burgeoning matters involving alleged potential sexual harassment issues in Arroyo Grande and the lack of open action by the Arroyo Grande Mayor and Council.¹ Speakers were attempting to criticize the City Council’s seeming reluctance to have a truly outside independent expert investigation, which includes themselves (the council) and other officials who are likely to have information with respect to the scope of the alleged conduct and its impact on the morale, integrity standards, and organizational fitness of the City administration. Gibson ruled that the Board of Supervisors had no jurisdiction over such matters in the City of Arroyo Grande ignoring the fact that they could ask the County Civil Grand Jury or the County District Attorney to take a look. The Mayor and 3 of the 4 Council members have

¹ Even if sex in a government workplace is consensual, it may result in fears by other employees and citizens concerning favoritism, impaired judgment, or the ability of someone to use the situation to negatively exert control over the subject officials. Under California law such results may constitute sexual harassment.

endorsed 4th District Supervisor Caren Ray for reelection. Obviously a majority of the Council feels that it has some direct interest in the make-up of County Board.

Reciprocally and on the other hand, if the Board of Supervisors wants to be disassociated with the City, would Ray reject the endorsements and return any campaign contributions? It seems hypocritical to sit there and concur with Gibson that the Board has no relationship with the City, and then in the next breath, say, I'm proud that 4 of their top 5 elected officials have given me their valuable endorsement. (And perhaps a campaign contribution).

Kirkland's Speech Clearly on Point - Why Gibson extended his wrath to Kirkland is a Matter of Grave Concern: As noted above, anti-oil activist Blackwell had just been allowed to speak against fossil fuel energy. She had been preceded by 4 speakers who detailed their opposition to nuclear energy. Of course the County has been deeply involved in the Diablo relicensing issue (Gibson personally serves on an expert State sponsored Diablo oversight committee). Moreover, and as noted below, **Item 30** of this week's agenda is a hearing on whether the County should become involved in banning hydraulic fracturing, other advanced oil extraction techniques, and even some well maintenance activities.

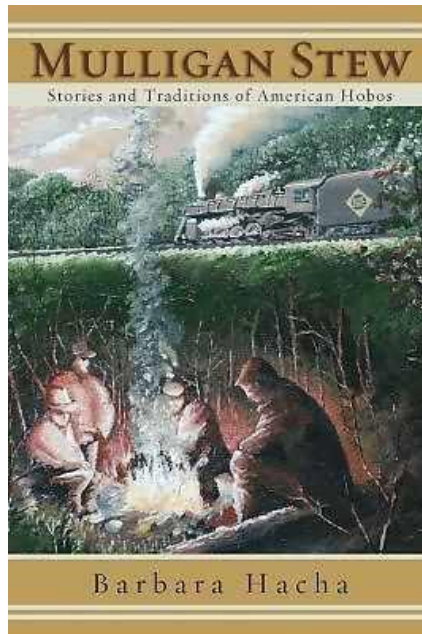
Gibson's (with other Board members silent assent) Blatant and Insulting Disrespect for Supervisor Arnold: After public comment ended, Supervisor Arnold respectfully requested that Gibson (as Chairman) allow her to briefly question Kirkland. From time to time, Board members will ask to question speakers and so far as we know, the Chair has never refused. Gibson quickly and bluntly refused her request. The other 3 Board members said nothing and servilely accepted Gibson's outrageous ruling.

Ray under the thumb of the Gibson/Hill Machine? What did Ray think of the Chairman's treatment of her colleague Arnold? She said nothing. As a candidate for re-election, her position about the conduct and tone of Board meetings and treatment of her colleagues and the public is central to her candidacy. She should publicly repudiate Gibson's ruling and demand that Kirkland be given 6 minutes this week (and a public apology by the Board). She should demand that Arnold be given all the time she needs to question Kirkland (and a public apology by Gibson). After all, this is about a fundamental systemic issue that impacts the entire conduct of County business. It is much more important than an artificial politically correct attack on a traditional mulligan stew railroading museum event.

If you attend enough Board meetings, hopping freight sounds better and better. The old Feather River Canyon Western Pacific route is spectacular this time of year. (The trees are turning).



Feather River Canyon



Public Bodies such as the SLO Board of Supervisors May Not Suppress Speech with which They Disagree:

*Public meetings of governmental bodies have been found to be public fora. As such, members of the public have **broad constitutional rights** to comment on **any subject** relating to the business of the governmental body. Any attempt to restrict the content of such speech must be narrowly tailored to effectuate a **compelling state interest**.*

*When a member of the public testifies before a legislative body the body **may not prohibit the individual from criticizing the policies, procedures, programs, or services of the agency or the acts or omissions of the legislative body.***

What compelling state interest did Gibson effectuate by shutting down Mr. Kirkland?

Gibson is attempting to intimidate public members who disagree with his policies and management in violation of the law. Where is County Counsel?

If You Want to Review the Video Tape:

http://slocounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=1868

at 0035:31 Mr. DeFadda begins his remarks. He's actually quite clever. Mr. Gibson rudely cuts him off

at 0042:46 Eric Greening speaks about the Climate March, Oil and Fossil Fuels...Gibson doesn't interrupt his remarks

at 0045:48 Ms. Blackwell does 3 minutes on the horrors of oil, fracking, etc.

at 0049:05 Julie Tacker begins, defends Mr. DeFadda and gives many reasons why his remarks could be "under the purview" of the County. Gibson tries to cut her off but she doesn't let it stop her.

at 0052:12 Gary Kirkland begins. Gibson stops him when he starts talking about fracking and tells him to "get on topic with something that has to do with this County's purview".

at 0057:55 Debbie Arnold wants to invite Mr. Kirkland back to the podium because she wanted to hear his remarks regarding oil, since it's going to be on their agenda next week. Gibson denies her request.

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, September 23, 2014 (Scheduled)

Item 1 - Breakup of the General Services Department and Establishment of 4 Separate New Departments. This item contains a series of ordinances, which if enacted would break up the current General Services Department into 4 new departments. The item also sets the actual hearing for the subject on October 7, 2014.

The General Services Department contains four functional divisions, including Parks and Recreation, Information Technology, the Airport, and a division also named General Services, which includes support services such as construction services, central mail, facilities maintenance, custodial services, purchasing, property management, energy management, reprographics, and fleet maintenance. The write-up states in part:

The dissolution of the Agency and creation of four independent departments (General Services, Information Technology, Airports and Parks and Recreation) will allow for more direct oversight of the departments, consistent with the relationship that other operating departments have with the County Administrative Office. This reorganization will also enable departmental staff to focus more specifically on their constituents and areas of expertise and responsibility. One of the goals of the dissolution of the Agency is to improve services in several key areas, including the management of the County's capital projects program

We will report and make recommendations in the Weekly Update that covers the October 7th meeting.

In the meantime the CEO and Board ought to consider:

At this point and prior to creating a new organizational structure, we wonder if the County ought to take a comprehensive look to see if some of the services and activities lend themselves to privatization. For example in many jurisdictions, construction services (especially for large projects-SLO has issued contracts for some), custodial services, reprographics, fleet maintenance, and golf courses (part of Parks) are outsourced to specialty companies with deep expertise and economies of scale.

Since the airport is a key economic development factor that benefits not only the County but also the cities (and especially the City of SLO), should the feasibility of creating a joint powers authority to govern the airport and spread the financial risk among the beneficiaries be considered, (such as the joint Pasadena-Glendale-Burbank Airport Authority)?

Finally the analysis of the financial cost of the new organization needs refinement. For example:

- Will the current division heads serving in the existing structure automatically be promoted or, given that their pay as Department heads will be higher, will there be competition for the positions? We have heard that some of the current division heads are pretty good.
- As distinct separate departments, how will internal organic financial and clerical support be provided? Has the cost of replicating these 4 times been considered?
- Information Technology, digital communications, and digital service provision are very important strategic business tools for organizations. Governments have barely scratched the surface. Why is it easier to buy a Mercedes Benz on line or get beach front room you want at a Hyatt resort in Bali than to obtain a minor use permit? A more fully developed vision needs to be explicated for this function prior to committing to an organizational structure.
- What specific beneficial outcomes are projected from this reorganization that do not now exist for each agency?
- What are the predicted cost/benefits?

Simply reorganizing usually does not guarantee benefits.

Item 3 - Tourism Grant Agreement with Visit San Luis Obispo County for Tourism Promotion Services (\$325,854). This is the County's annual contribution to assist Visit SLO's efforts to coordinate and promote increased tourism within the County. At least this one comes with a fairly detailed 6-page scope of work that actually contains some metrics. It is accompanied by a detailed report of prior activities.

a. If we are running out of water and the residents and farmers must be restricted, does it make sense to promote more visitors, more hotels, more attractions, etc.? (New vineyards are now taboo without a water offset.)

b. Is County policy contradictory?

Item 17- Naci Pipeline Now \$675,000. Just two week ago the staff requested and was given \$425,000 of budget authority. Now it is up to \$675,000.

a. How high could this go?

b. Why is the Board of Supervisors the entity approving the budget and bid waivers? What is the role of the Nacimiento Authority, which governs the pipeline and which the Board has insisted is an autonomous agency specifically in relation to debt service matters (for instance, default on the bonds)? So why is the Board the decision maker for this matter? Shouldn't the Authority be approving the expenditures?

Or have the Board of Supervisors (and County taxpayers as opposed to the municipal and water district rate payers) been the ultimate bag holders all along?

Attachment A - Chronology of Investigation and Repair Actions

- Week of July 14th: Teichert did not respond to County's request to fix. The District mobilized contractors under the emergency contracting resolution.
- Week of July 21st: District contractors repaired the identified leak. Subsequent pressure testing of the now isolated river crossing failed. Additional work efforts discovered additional leaks and spot deterioration of the pipe's lining on the west half of the crossing, additional leaks discovered.
- Week of July 28th: District contractors initiated further investigation of the easterly half of the crossing.
- Week of August 4th: An initial sample of pipe near the Nacimiento River crossing was retrieved to be tested by a consultant hired by Teichert. Additional samples at the leak location(s) may be taken later.
- Week of August 11th: District contractors and staff continued investigation of the river crossing pipes, including dewatering and video inspection efforts. Week of August 18th: District contractors and staff continued investigation work at the Salinas River north crossing.
- Week of August 25th: District underwater contractor diving crew took physical internal pipeline measurements inside the Nacimiento River crossing pipe.
- Week of September 1st: Investigation into the integrity of the Salinas River crossing (also installed by Teichert via HDD). A hydrostatic pressure test was conducted.

Item 20 - Public Comment Period. The General Public Comment period for items not on the agenda is likely to take place fairly soon after 9:AM, as the consent agenda will probably be pushed through fast. It presents a timely opportunity for the public to comment on Chairman Gibson's improper and bullying meeting management of last week. Citizens should be outraged and not let this pass.

Item 30 - Attack on Oil Industry Hearing Will Take Place After 1:30 PM

There are several ceremonial award items and two hearing items prior to the Hydraulic Fracturing item. These should not take too long.

Item 30 - Hydraulic Fracturing Ban To Be Considered. (Submittal of a report and solicitation of possible Board direction related to Hydraulic Fracturing). Vladimir Putin, the ISIS Caliphate, the Columbian communists, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Syria, the Sierra Club, and government subsidized “green energy” corporations all oppose the development of American fossil fuels. Vast new oil and gas discoveries combined with advanced extraction techniques in the United States are threatening to the enviro-socialist movement (Not to mention oil exporting dictatorships).

It is possible that by late Tuesday afternoon, voters in San Luis Obispo County will have an idea where their elected County Supervisors stand.

Earlier in the year the Board directed the staff to prepare a report on options for the County to ban or otherwise regulate hydraulic fracturing, which is a technique whereby an emulsion containing sand, water, and chemicals is injected under pressure into rock surrounding oil wells. The rock is fractured, allowing trapped oil to be released and ultimately pumped to the surface. A danger of hydraulic fracturing is that, in shallow oil fields, the pressurized emulsion might leak into an aquifer. This has reportedly happened in Pennsylvania. The enviro-socialist left has seized upon this risk to launch a national campaign to promote fear and hysteria, not only about hydraulic fracturing, but other advanced techniques of oil recovery including but not limited to: cyclic steam stimulation, waterflood injection, steam flood injection, acid well stimulation, matrix acidization, and well acidization. These other advanced techniques are used commonly, not only in new wells but to maintain existing wells.

Often when “anti- fracking” ordinances are proposed, proponents secure the inclusion of bans on the other techniques as a way of promoting the eventual shutdown of the oil industry in their jurisdictions. Again, there is no fracking in SLO County, no fracking proposed in current applications for new wells, and the rock in SLO County does not lend itself to fracking,

What are the proponents trying to accomplish?

Why has the Board of Supervisors elevated this to such a prominent issue?

Will the Board send staff back to work on an ordinance that not only prohibits fracking, but also other advanced extraction and well stimulation techniques?

Buried in the staff report is a list of alternative actions which the Board could direct to be undertaken:

Options for Consideration (From Page 8 of the Staff Report)

Based on the information provided in this briefing, your Board could pursue any of the following options (it should be noted that some of these actions would require significant amounts of staff resources to complete):

A. Maintain the status quo and direct the Clerk to receive and file this report; County Planning will continue to follow and comment on SB4-related regulations;

B. Direct staff to obtain additional or more specific information and report back to the Board at a future date; this may include a more detailed review of hydraulic fracturing potential in County and other jurisdictions;

C. Direct staff to provide specific or additional comments to the State on SB4 EIR and proposed regulations, as well as the SWQCB's companion efforts to develop a groundwater monitoring plan;

D. Direct staff to report back once the final SB4 measures are approved;

E. Direct staff to propose LUO revisions and bring back for Board consideration; such changes could include additional provisions relating to projects using well stimulation, such as hydraulic fracturing; COLAB NOTE: Choice E opens the door to the creation of bans on other well stimulation techniques. Should the Board include this choice or similar language in direction to staff, it will signal their intent to attack the oil and gas industry generally.

F. Direct staff to prepare or develop process to limit or ban certain well stimulation processes, such as hydraulic fracturing, and bring back for Board consideration; COLAB NOTE: Similarly and in line with item E above, if the Board includes item F or similar language in direction to staff, it will signal their intent to attack the oil and gas industry.

G. Direct staff to consider additional input from the County's Water Resources Advisory Committee or other committees.

Note: The staff left at least one other possibility off the list: The Board could place an advanced well stimulation technique ban on a future ballot. Or as an alternative they could create an environment that helps a group of activists collect signatures to place a ban on the ballot. Is Tuesday's hearing really a political theater event to rally the troops? In this scenario the Board majority can wring its hands, say we didn't do it, and avoid the accountability. After all and given the facts, why did the Board need to agendize this issue in the first place?

Big Picture/Real Purpose: The real purpose in the first instance is to blunt the growth of the fossil fuels, make them scarcer and more costly, and thereby promote so called green energy alternatives.

The larger purpose is to weaken the economy, increase joblessness, promote poverty and undermine capitalism, erode private property, and beckon a national crisis that will be used to expand governmental powers, expand governmental functions, justify wealth transfers, and ultimately wreck democracy and freedom.

While Tuesday’s discussion will be camouflaged in rhetoric about public safety, drinking water, earthquakes, and the environment, the public should not be fooled. After all, and as the County staff report notes:

- 1. There is no hydraulic fracturing in San Luis Obispo County.**
- 2. There are no applications for hydraulic fracturing in any new proposed oil wells.**
- 3. The type of rock in oil fields within the county does not lend itself to hydraulic fracturing.**

Of course these facts have been well known for years. So, why is the Board of Supervisors majority pushing the issue?

Background I: A group called SLO Clean Water Action is calling for a ban on advanced oil and gas recovery techniques. Its known allies (from Clean Water Action’s web site) are listed in the box below.



Jeanne Blackwell, President-SLO Clean Water Action. What if she strikes the rock and oil comes out?

It is remarkable to see how responsive the Board is to this coterie of interest groups. In contrast they never held a hearing to consider the

merits of the quiet title filing in connection with the Paso water basin issues. Instead they filed legal opposition without ever listening to their constituents in a hearing on the specific facts. They did not have the staff research the matter and prepare a public report.

ECOSLO

SLO CLEAN ENERGY

SLO PERMACULTURE GUILD

HOPE DANCE

SLO GRANGE 639

SIERRA CLUB CALIFORNIA FRACKING TEAM

San Luis Obispo Coastkeeper

Background II: In neighboring Santa Barbara County, a group of enviro-socialist radicals has secured the signatures to place a so-called “anti-fracking” measure (Measure P) on the ballot in November. Joe Armendariz, Executive Director of the Santa Barbara County Taxpayers’ Association, has written an excellent article on the negative economics of Measure P. It provides helpful context for consideration of any such limits in San Luis Obispo County. Parenthetically, the passage of Measure P in Santa Barbara County will negatively impact jobs and employers in

San Luis Obispo County that work in its large and potentially larger oil and gas industry. Mr. Armendariz's article is reproduced below:

Measure P Gets Oil Out, Badly...

Joe Armendariz

What is often lost in this debate over Measure P, and the get oil out crowd's ongoing efforts to outlaw domestic petroleum production, is the fact that what they deem "high-intensity" petroleum operations, are in fact high-efficiency operations. These enhanced recovery techniques, which they are attempting via Measure P, are the environmentally superior way to recover oil and gas. And these techniques, which they want to outlaw, have added to what is called "well-productivity" in the United States. And it is why global oil prices are actually stable today even as unprecedented turmoil all around the oil rich Middle East plays out daily on the front pages. This stability in oil prices in the midst of such turmoil wouldn't have been possible 10 or even 5 years ago.

Higher efficiency oil wells equates to less inputs with higher outputs. Indeed, less inputs is critical because less inputs result in less impacts. Conversely, higher energy outputs, with fewer inputs, mean more wealth created per well with more revenues generated to help pay for environmental mitigation. This is a win-win scenario. The economy wins, the environment wins. It's also worth noting that while the so-called "water guardians" continue to peddle their canard that Measure P leaves 80% of current production in Santa Barbara County alone, while supposedly exempting "conventional" oil recovery methods, their initiative would actually guarantee more inputs per well with less output per well, resulting in more environmental degradation, per overall operation. And that would mean less economic resources available to fund mitigations that offset any resulting environmental impacts. This is a lose-lose scenario. The economy loses, the environment loses.

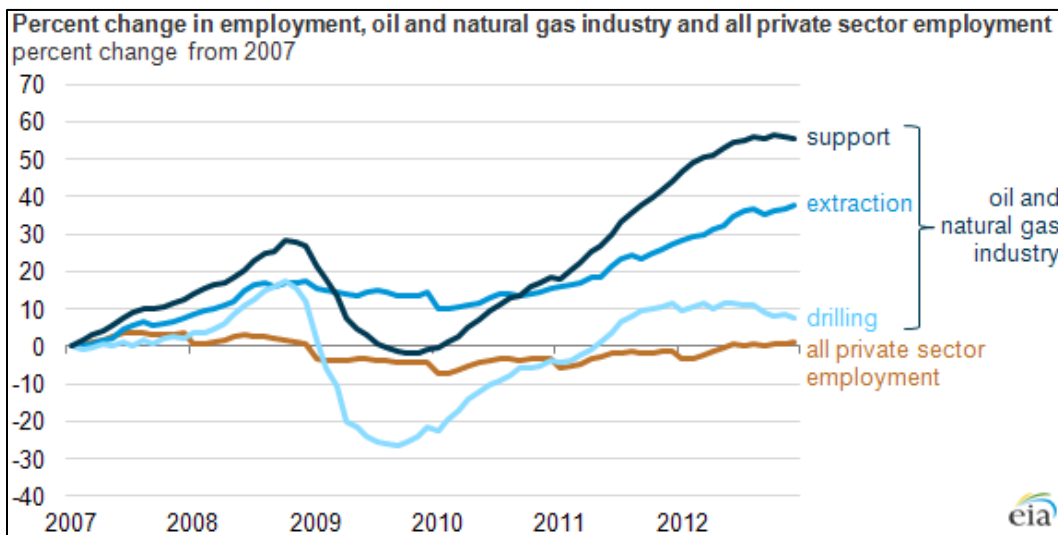
It is an unavoidable, and an inconvenient truth; Measure P is bad for our local economy, and it's bad for our local environment. Which brings to mind the most counter-intuitive, yet accurate title of any book written over the past 50 years. "Saving the environment from the environmentalists", written by Peter Huber and available on Amazon by clicking [here](#). I highly recommend you buy it and read it to better understand the mindset of this anti-American, anti-business, and dare I say it, anti-family movement.

Moreover, the chart below, comprised of data from the Energy Information Administration, tells the story of America's energy revolution in terms of job creation. The story it doesn't tell is a corresponding story about America's environmental renaissance. That is for another column. But suffice it to say, today's environmental renaissance is a reality made possible by American ingenuity, petro-entrepreneurialism, market-forces, and a uniquely American stew of private property, surface, and mineral rights. America is the most productive energy super-power on the planet. And we will remain so for decades to come due to these inherently American institutions colliding with each other.

Equally so is the fact that the “get oil out” crowd, by virtue of its support for Measure P, apparently supports getting oil out in the worst way possible. Because by claiming to leave 80% of current production alone, while only banning high-efficiency drilling techniques, the Measure would actually get oil out of the ground in an environmentally inferior way. Why? because more productive, environmentally superior, innovative, and remarkably productive drilling techniques are better for the environment while also generating bigger economic benefits which then help fund essential environmental mitigations.

The get oil out folks were on the wrong side of history yesterday, are on the wrong side of history today, and they will without a doubt be on the wrong side of history tomorrow. And with each political success they manage to achieve through their highly cynical economic divisiveness, and well-intentioned, but misguided environmental hysteria, our local economy and our local environment will be the worse for it thanks to their collectivist collective efforts. How ironic.

Joe Armendariz is the executive director of the Santa Barbara County Taxpayers Association and served two terms on the Carpinteria City Council.



San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) Meeting of Wednesday, September 24, 2014 (Scheduled)

No Significant Policy Matters: There do not appear to be any significant policy matters on the APCD agenda. The call for executive session does indicate that they will be working on the Friends of the Dunes lawsuit.

No Significant Policy Matters: There are no significant policy matters on this agenda.

Addendum A

Check out Gibson's elitist and arrogant letter below.

Community deserves discussion on Diablo Canyon

By Bruce Gibson

September 16, 2014

For more than a generation, residents and elected officials here have wrestled with the issue of whether the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant is safe to operate when we know that earthquakes are inevitable — and that a large earthquake is possible very near the plant. What risks are we willing to accept in return for the benefits that facility brings?

With the recent release of [PG&E's latest seismic investigations](#), this tough question comes back to center stage. In the coming months and years, state and federal regulators will render their formal decisions as to whether, how long and under what conditions Diablo Canyon should continue to operate, based on these reports and other information. That process is complex and technical and largely conducted in offices far outside SLO County.

Many members of our local community will offer their opinions on this matter as well — as they should. **COLAB NOTE: WHY DID GIBSON STOP MR. KIRKLAND FROM SPEAKING ABOUT ENERGY AND WHY DID GIBSON ASSERT THAT THE TOPIC IS NOT IN THE PERVUE OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS?**

We're already familiar with the entrenched geography of this debate: For some, Diablo Canyon must remain open because it provides high-quality jobs and carbon-free electricity in abundance. For others, it should be closed immediately because it's inherently dangerous and leaves a morally-dubious legacy of nuclear waste.

Both regulators and the public need to come to thoughtful judgments on this important matter, and there is serious work to do to get there. I submit that regulators need to get beyond their formal, process-driven decision making — and that community members should expand their conversation beyond the often-heard polar arguments of support or opposition.

For instance, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's overrule of Dr. Michael Peck's dissenting opinion seems largely process-driven: The NRC found a path to allow plant operation under the current license, without directly addressing Peck's concerns about structural reliability. We are due a clear explanation of why.

Furthermore, I believe the [NRC](#) needs to revisit its overall approach to risk assessment. Note that the investigation of hazards and threats is provided to the commission by the party being regulated. Also, the NRC's current "probabilistic" hazard analysis poses concerns about how to assess extremely rare events that have devastating consequences.

For community members, coming to a thoughtful public judgment on these issues is perhaps a greater challenge. The information to be considered is highly technical and spans several specialized scientific and engineering disciplines. Again, these complex data sets are developed and provided by PG&E. Clearly, a considered public judgment will require trust that the conclusions of the technical studies are valid — and importantly, that the uncertainties in these conclusions are understood. Establishing any level of trust will depend on a careful independent review of all the technical data. The Diablo Canyon Independent Peer Review Panel (IPRP) established by the California Public Utilities Commission is central to this important effort.

COLAB NOTE: IS GIBSON SUGGESTING THAT ,WE AS CITIZENS, ARE TOO DUMB TO UNDERSTAND THE ISSUE AND SHOULD BE SHUT UP?

Unfortunately, this important public process has not started with a positive step: PG&E chose to finalize its entire report and release it to the public before it sought any comment from — or even contacted — the peer review panel. It appears to me that PG&E's public relations staff advised them to get their story to the public before any detailed questions might be asked. So, we have a front-page story and [Ed Halpin's simultaneous opinion piece](#) assuring us that all is well.

Important questions need to be posed and answered before we accept any of these conclusions. For instance, Halpin tells us that PG&E conducted these studies with "state-of-the-art mapping technologies." Recall, however, that in designing the high-energy offshore 3-D surveys (which were ultimately rejected by the Coastal Commission), PG&E's approach was far from state-of-the-art, and driven in large part by cost and schedule.

I have no opinions — pro or con — regarding PG&E's conclusions. My IPRP colleagues and I do have some work to do. *My copy of the report (standing a foot tall and weighing 32 pounds) arrived just after the story and opinion pieces appeared in The Tribune.* **COLAB NOTE: THIS IS ONE OF THE SAME SUPERVISORS WHO WON'T EVEN REQUIRE THE COUNTY STAFF TO INLCUDE THEIR POWER POINTS IN THE AGENDA MATERIALS.**

I expect the result of the IPRP review to be thorough and that PG&E will respect the IPRP role. The results of our review of PG&E's techniques and conclusions need to be explained clearly to the public.

We need a carefully considered judgment on all issues of safety at Diablo Canyon. The stakes are too high to do otherwise.

San Luis Obispo County Supervisor Bruce Gibson is a seismologist who serves on the Independent Peer Review Panel.

Mr. Gibson's letter was first published in the San Luis Obispo Tribune Letters to the Editor on September 16, 2014.