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Otay

Mesa pollution permit gets hearing

By [Morgan Lee \(/staff/morgan-lee/\)](#) 10:53 A.M. DEC. 16, 2013

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SAVE COMMENTS 15



The California Public Utilities Commission held a rare public meeting in San Diego Thursday, where they heard more than an hour and a half of public comments, largely focused on proposed natural gas power plants on the edge of Mission Trails Regional park and Otay Mesa. — Peggy Peattie

The Environmental Protection Agency will hold a **public hearing** (<http://www.f.com/share.php?u=http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2013/dec/16/epa-hearing-pio-pico-fact-sheet.pdf>) Tuesday evening on revisions to a pollution permit

applications for proposed power plants in Otay Mesa. You can see the permit (<https://www.com/share.php?u=http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2013/dec/16/epa-hearing-pio-pico-permit.pdf>)



The developer of the Pio Pico Energy Center has applied for a federal pollution permit used by regulators to ensure that natural gas turbines will not significantly degrade air quality in the area.

15 COMMENTS

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EPA officials will only be considering comments about an analysis of the plant's potential emissions of fine particulate matter. Fine airborne particulates are a health concern because they can penetrate deep into lungs, contributing to various respiratory ailments.

Broader concerns about pollution from the plant were collected last year by the EPA, including comments from a public hearing. The agency's Environmental Appeals Board ordered revisions to particulate matter calculations, based on a challenge by environmentalists.

EPA Hearing

Where: San Ysidro Middle School, Multi-Cultural Center

4345 Otay Mesa Road

San Ysidro, CA

When: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Dec. 17

Environmental groups planned to stage protests outside the hearing. They say Pio Pico would add to already significant pollution in the area from a busy cross-border trucking route and the adjacent Otay Mesa Energy Center (<http://www.calpine.com/power/plant.asp?plant=247>), an even larger gas-fired plant owned and operated by Houston-based Calpine.

The plant is located in an industrial zone, though not far from a juvenile detention center and residential neighborhoods in Mexico flanking the U.S. border.

Authorization to build Pio Pico under a \$1.6 billion contract with San Diego Gas & Electric was rejected in March by the California Public Utilities Commission, which has the ultimate say on reliability and cost issues. Consumer advocates said approval would have undermined California's clean energy goals and heaped unnecessary costs on utility customers.

But plans for Pio Pico were resurrected in June, days after the retirement of the San Onofre nuclear plant that once supplied 20 percent of San Diego's electricity. SDG&E asserts that the Pio Pico, located near the border with Mexico, would be needed to make up for San Onofre. Opponents of the plant believe power supplies still far exceeded demands -- even after San Onofre plant went offline in January 2012.

SDG&E has lobbied for Pio Pico as a necessary tool for ensuring consistent power supplies as more and more solar and wind farms are tied into the grid.

Pio Pico Energy Center is controlled by the private equity Energy Investors Funds, or EIF, which bundles power plant projects for third-party investors.

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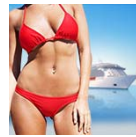
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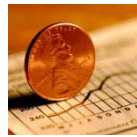
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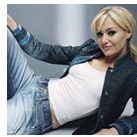
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
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



 **David Owen** · Top Commenter · Keyboardist at Professional Musician
 Natural Gas would be a necessary bridge fuel until renewables can carry the load. Those opposed need to stop dreaming and buckle down with the hard math. Solar alone will not power CA anytime soon.
<http://www.ccst.us/publications/2011/2011energy.php>
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 **Martha Sullivan** · Top Commenter · Lead Utopian at Marthatopia
 Did you READ the links I posted, David? I realize change due to technological advances can be hard to adapt to, but the time is here.
 Reply · Like · 17 hours ago

 **David Owen** · Top Commenter · Keyboardist at Professional Musician
 Martha i did read your links. I am not convinced solar can replace coal and natural gas in America. Your opposition is to reality and science not fossil and nuclear.
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 I DO want to address your attention to some excellent current analysis on why we no longer need to seriously jeopardize our safety and compromise our health with 20th Century nuclear and fossil fuel energy technologies --
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 **Martha Sullivan** · Top Commenter · Lead Utopian at Marthatopia
 Real ENVIRONMENTALISTS aren't split. Pro-nuke environmentalism is an oxymoron.
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 No Martha. Real environmentalists aren't afraid to learn the basics of radiation and they agree with consensus of National Academy of Sciences and World Health Organization. James Hansen is a real environmentalist. You do not define environmentalism.
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 And CATC is now backing nuclear energy.
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 Ok. 1/3 renewable by 2020 would be a great feat for California. That does leave 2/3 to other sources. Significantly. The reason James Hansen and now Armond Cohen are advocating Nuclear is because they see the developing world as unlikely to reject their own hydrocarbons. :) thanks for the link.
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