July 5, 2018

TO: Doug Smith, Chair  
    David W. Louie, Vice Chair  
    Laura Shell, Commissioner  
    Elvin W. Moon, Commissioner  
    Pat Modugno, Commissioner

FROM: Jodie D. Sackett, AICP  
Land Divisions Section

PROJECT NO. 02-232-(5) “CENTENNIAL SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT”
RPC MEETING: JULY 11, 2018
AGENDA ITEM 6: SUPPLEMENTAL MEMO – ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

BACKGROUND

The Centennial Specific Plan Project is currently scheduled for a Commission public hearing on Wednesday, July 11, 2018. Please see additional public correspondence attached.

SDJ:JDS  
7/5/18
28 June 2018

Department of Regional Planning for Los Angeles County
Room 150
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Members of the Department of Regional Planning for Los Angeles County:

In February 2014, I saw something I never expected to see in my lifetime, California condors! They were soaring off in the distance along the southeast side of the Tehachapi Mountains. We saw them from a high point on Tejon Ranch on a day I was given a special tour of the property. Since it was still early in a season following many years of severe drought, I was unable to see the magnificent display of wildflowers on the ranch, but from photos of the area it was obvious that Tejon Ranch can exhibit one of the world’s most spectacular floral displays following wet winters.

I have been a botanist for 48 years and have participated in extensive field studies in China, Japan and other Asian countries and in eastern North America (and less so in western North America) and have visited temperate areas of high biodiversity in South Africa, Australia and Madagascar and can easily say that none of those areas exceeds California in the uniqueness and importance of its flora and fauna. In nearly all of Asia, particularly in China, there are no areas that have escaped the influence of humans. The biodiversity of Madagascar is seriously threatened by a growing population and extreme poverty, which results in the over-exploitation of natural resources. Large areas of western Australia and some areas in South Africa are fairly well protected, but on a worldwide scale, those areas of exceptional biodiversity represent only a tiny portion of the earth’s surface, and none of them share any of the plants and animals that occur only in California, which is so unique that it has been given its own scientific designation as the California Floristic Province.

The 270,000 acres of Tejon Ranch may seem like a huge area, but it is only fraction of the 100 million acres of the state of California. To keep Tejon Ranch free from development would not only further California’s role as the leader for the environment in the United States, but it would preserve a unique, worldwide, biological treasure.

Benefits of Keeping Tejon Ranch intact
Preserving some of the finest native grasslands in Southern California and one of the finest spring wildflower displays in the world.
Insuring the connection and uninterrupted transition between ecologically significant habitats. Habitat connections are necessary given the reality of global climate change.
Preserving habitats for rare and common plant and animal species

Problems to be expected from development
Urban sprawl
Long commutes and more cars on California’s highways
Pollution and additional greenhouse gas emissions
Severed habitat corridors
Local extirpation of plants and animals
Loss of ability for plants and animals to migrate uninterruptedly

For those members of the Department of Regional Planning for Los Angeles County who have not visited Tejon Ranch, or who know little about its wildlife, I urge you to visit Tejon Ranch in a good wildflower year, or to search for photos of the area taken during the peak of wildflower bloom. This is not a special place for just California, but for the whole country and for the world. I hope you will do all you can to preserve intact this unique and one of the most beautiful and biologically significant parts of our country. Thank you for reading my message and for your consideration.

Respectfully,

David E. Boufford
Senior Research Scientist
Tel. +1 617-495-0794
E-mail: david_boufford@harvard.edu
June 26, 2018

Via Electronic Mail

Mr. Jodie Sackett
County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
Hall of Records, 13th Floor, Room 1348
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
jsackett@planning.lacounty.gov

Re: Centennial Project Final Environmental Impact Report

Dear Commissioners:

As an atmospheric chemist and air quality expert with 45 years of experience, who has extensively studied and described in more than 200 peer-reviewed journal articles the causes and impacts of poor air quality in Southern California communities, I am asking you to deny approval of the proposed Centennial project. Large-scale urban sprawl of this immense magnitude is not the way to meet the health-based ozone and fine particle air quality standards which continue to be routinely violated in this region, nor is it the way to reach the climate change mitigation goals of California.

The proposed Centennial project is a massive 5,800-acre development more than 60 miles away from downtown areas. It will worsen air pollution by putting more cars on roads for long trips, which will intensify already-terrible traffic conditions while increasing emissions of air pollutants such as nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide, heavy metals, carbon dioxide and respirable particulate matter (PM2.5). It will also lead to more ozone (O3) production through the photochemical reactions of NOx and VOCs emitted by these vehicles. Short- and long-term exposure to several of these pollutants have been shown to have adverse health effects in humans and have been linked with premature mortality, compromised birth outcomes and a host of respiratory impacts. In addition, increased daily vehicle trips will result in more emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), including NOx, carbon dioxide (CO2), and methane (CH4), which will, as noted above, counter California’s climate change goals.

The proposed project would be located at the boundary between the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB) and the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB). However, most vehicle trips
associated with the project would occur within the SoCAB, as potential residents would likely commute between Centennial and either Santa Clarita (>30 miles away) or Los Angeles (>60 miles away). This is a major concern because the SoCAB already suffers from high levels of air pollution. Despite decades-long efforts to reduce air pollutant emissions, the SoCAB still fails to meet federal (or state) air quality standards, specifically the national ambient air quality standards for 8-hour O₃, 1-hour O₃, annual-averaged PM₂.₅, or 24-hour PM₂.₅.

A combination of unique topography (the SoCAB is surrounded by high mountains and the coast), adverse meteorology that results in low mixing layers and limited dispersal, and the emissions from millions of vehicles on the road due to daily commuters and the goods movement industry make the SoCAB the worst area of O₃ pollution in the nation. According to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), in 2012 mobile sources contributed almost 90% of the region’s total NOₓ emissions. Obviously, we cannot control the topography or meteorology of this area, but we can (and must) change our behavior to reduce vehicle emissions if we are serious about improving air quality in Los Angeles County.

Approving developments like Centennial will only exacerbate a wide range of health effects due to air pollution in this region. If LA County is truly committed to keeping its residents healthy, and to combating climate change, then we need to redefine how we design and plan our cities and move away from the massive urban sprawl and resulting adverse air quality impacts inherent in this Centennial project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,

Arthur Winer, PhD
Distinguished Emeritus Professor, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health
Director Emeritus, UCLA Environmental Science and Engineering Program
Associate Director Emeritus, UCLA Institute of Environment and Sustainability
Dear Regional Planning Commission,

I am very strongly opposed to the Centennial Development. It is a 12,000 acre community that would include 20,000 homes. The project will ruin the habitats of protected species and contribute to urban sprawl that increases the region’s car dependence, worsening air quality and generating more greenhouse gases. The area is home to many endangered species including the California condor, San Joaquin kit fox and bald eagle. 99% of California native grasslands are already gone forever, you must not allow this project to be built and destroy what little remains.

Respectfully,

Claudia Zimmerman
4259 Stern Ave.
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
Dear Regional Planning Commission,

I am very strongly opposed to the Centennial Development. It is a 12,000 acre community that would include 20,000 homes. The project will ruin the habitats of protected species and contribute to urban sprawl that increases the region’s car dependence, worsening air quality and generating more greenhouse gases. The area is home to many endangered species including the California condor, San Joaquin kit fox and bald eagle. 99% of California native grasslands are already gone forever, you must not allow this project to be built and destroy what little remains.

Respectfully,

Julie Zimmerman
4259 Stern Ave.
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
Dear Regional Planning Commission,

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Respectfully,

David Shluker
11739 Addison St.
Valley Village, CA 91607
Dear Regional Planning Commission,

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Respectfully,

Eva Shluker
11739 Addison St.
Valley Village, CA 91607
Dear Regional Planning Commission,

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Respectfully,

Marcus Zimmerman
4259 Stern Ave.
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
Mr. Jodie Sackett  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Hall of Records, 13th Floor, Room 1348 320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012 jsackett@planning.lacounty.gov

May 20, 2018

Dear Mr. Sackett

I am writing again to show my support for the Centennial project by Tejon Ranch (Specific Plan No. 02-232 / Centennial Specific Plan).

This project has been in the planning stages and thus under continuous refinement and improvement for a dozen or more years. In it's current form it is a carefully thought-out and a much needed addition to the growing Antelope Valley but also to the residents of the more distant communities such as Frazier Park.

The project will be a mix of villages and neighborhood centers encouraging walking and biking with extensive parks, greenbelts and hiking trails, preserving almost half of the entire project site as designated Open Space.

In addition to the estimated 25,000 construction jobs created during build out, the included commercial and institutional land use areas will produce on-site employment and decrease work-related commuting. The additional employment opportunities will be provided by the planned 4 fire stations, a sheriff station, public library, one K-5, 5 K-8, and 1 high school, and the land set aside for medical facilities, and estimated 20,000 permanent jobs.

Centennial will create an environmentally and economically sustainable community by including a wide array of housing, business park and office, commercial, schools, parks, natural open space, cultural and public, all of which will be a welcome neighbor to the Frazier Mountain area.

I am asking the Regional Planning Commission to approve Centennial and allow the developers to move expeditiously to the next stage.

Candace Huskey

Candace Huskey  
500 East End  
Frazier Park, CA  93225

(661)333-3383

hskybrwn@frazmtn.com
June 5, 2018

Dear Supervisors,

Please oppose the Centennial Specific Plan!

This plan will destroy the habitat of many California native plants and animals and turn thousands of acres of beauty into urban sprawl. This cannot keep happening!

California and Los Angeles County must stop encroaching on these wild lands. We do not have the water or resources to support these developments. Our roads are clogged and traffic is a nightmare creating more and more pollution to these lands and plants and animals. They must have space too! You cannot over development all these wild areas. California does not need to accommodate more and more people which we cannot support, when our current standard of living is being threatened and undermined daily. California will be ruined if you do not do your jobs and protect it. The current residents, animals, plants must all be taken into account and protected. If you keep filling up the boat with all this development you will be instrumental in the destruction of California.

We cannot afford to lose more precious native habitat to development we don’t need or want! We need natural lands not more building. There are lots of other states that need people to live there, with lots of resources. You cannot ruin California to accommodate every developer and person who wants to live and take from California. We are an important state and we must be protected. Please do so and vote no on the Centennial Specific Plan.

Thank you.

Chris Van Hook
337 Via de la Paz
Pacific Palisades, Ca. 90272.