



## WEEKLY UPDATE July 20 - 27, 2025

The July 15 San Luis Obispo County Supervisors meeting started off as a cruise in paradise. Almost the entire agenda was on consent, with none of those 23 items causing controversy. In fact, one item, a resolution recognizing Scott Yoo in his 20th Season as Music Director with the Mozart Festival Association, came with a beautiful mini concert from a talented quartet that is part of the festival. The vibe didn't last long, however, as the last item on the agenda was a hearing full of frustration.

### Cannabis Tension From Neighbors

Imagine living in a beautiful area east of Templeton with bucolic rolling hills, the occasional small vineyard or farm and quiet surroundings. Now, imagine getting a new neighbor – a cannabis farm. Suddenly you are worried about the odor of marijuana, the traffic from all sorts, the noise from fans and diminishing groundwater levels in your vicinity.

It's in County jurisdiction and the county planning department has issued it a permit. What can you do but appeal the permit to the Board of Supervisors.

Now, imagine you are an investor who wants to get into the legal cannabis business. You find a property in a valley, out of sight from the neighbors. It has a small vineyard and an orchard and is zoned for agriculture. You procure the property, and in 2018, hire expert consultants and follow all regulations and requirements. After nearly seven years of interactions with planning authorities, you are ultimately awarded a permit in 2025.

Neighbors are upset and file an appeal.

Now, imagine you are a County Supervisor tasked with hearing the appeal in a judicial fashion, meaning that you are required to consider the points made by the appellant and not whether you approve or disapprove of the concept.

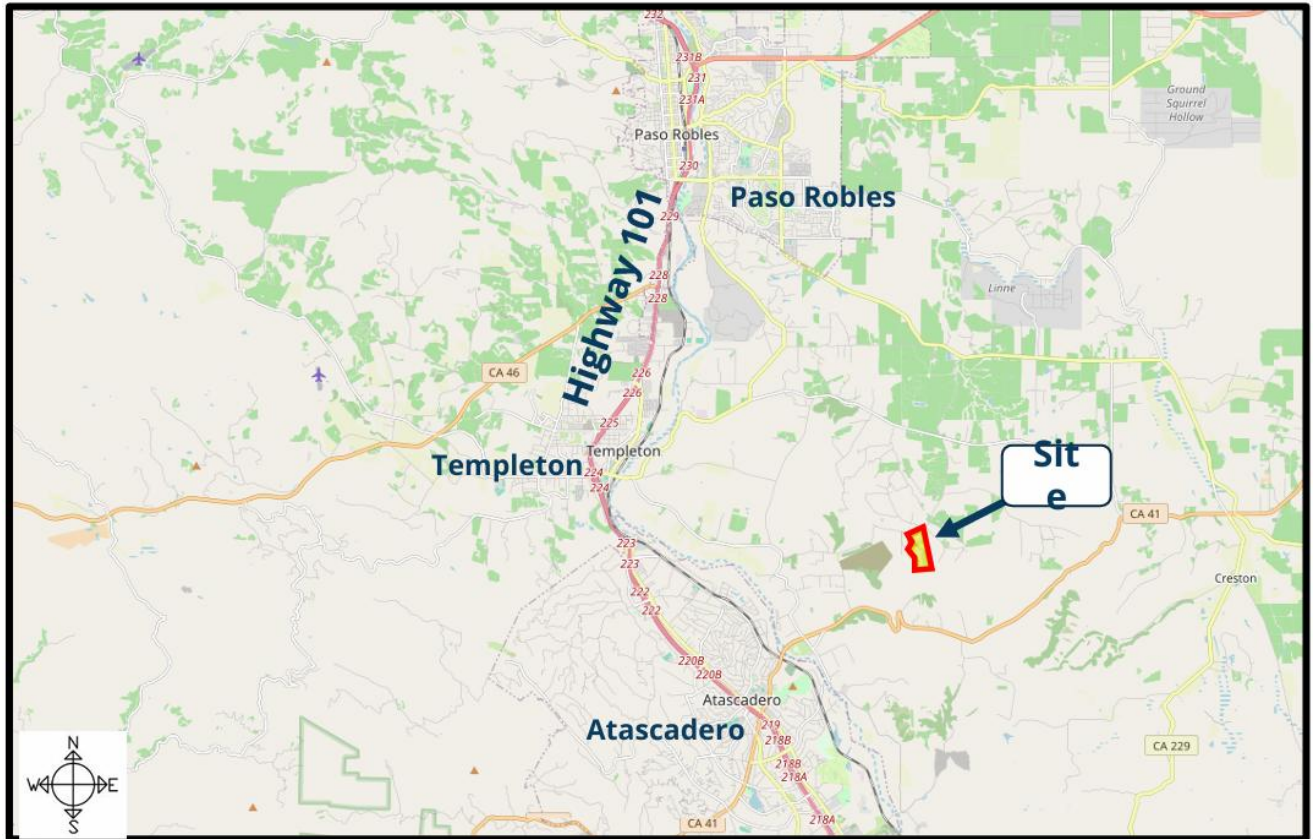
The appellants show up with lots of justified passion and emotion among the dozen or so people seeking to overturn the permit. At one part of the hearing, there is confusion about the time rules for speakers, with a vocal bit of consternation taking place before everybody could be accommodated. Their points are compelling, but in the long run, you find that they don't rise to the level that you can overturn the planning department's decision that the investor/cannabis grower met the requirements set forth in the law and in the applicable planning and building codes.

This is the scenario that played out at the July 15 Board of Supervisors meeting, when the Board voted to deny the appeal. The appellants say they will litigate, but it's not clear who they will sue and on what grounds. It's possible that the grower would have sued, had the appeal been upheld.

Either way, it was a tough day to be a County Supervisor.

This case does bring to light the bigger question of where cannabis farms should be allowed, and where they become inappropriate. What sorts of impact to neighboring properties matter? The appellants strongly suggested that this operation should be located in an industrial setting, not in what they described as a neighborhood. Since it's an entirely indoor operation, neighbors are legitimately concerned by noise levels from fans that need to run at all times for odor suppression. They are also worried about light pollution and security – all valid concerns.

County staff say that the water usage will be metered quarterly, with a hard cutoff if the growers exceed their allotment. The grower says that they are displacing the water usage currently attributed to the vineyard by two to one, and that the fans are especially designed to be quiet.



The proposed cannabis farm, called “Eden’s Dream” is located east of Templeton.

At this point, it seems the grower can proceed, but if the neighbors go forward with a lawsuit, the grower may be stalled until the conclusion. Should a lawsuit take place, its outcome will likely have a big influence on any future cannabis endeavors in San Luis Obispo County.

A fascinating tangent to this issue is that most of the legal commercial growers in SLO County complain that they are barely making a profit. That this particular project can hope to return enough on the investment to be worthwhile seems inconsistent with the rest of the local industry.

## **Paso Groundwater Basin – the Saga Continues**

The Paso Basin JPA efforts continue through the end of July, with the next meeting scheduled for Aug 1. At that meeting, protest Prop 218 “votes” will be counted. If a simple majority prevails, the JPA will not proceed – at least in the currently proposed form.

By now, it's old news that the SLO County Farm Bureau has weighed in, offering a professional opinion that the project has strong merit. To date, they appear to be the only big community organization supporting the effort.

It's not entirely clear how many groups oppose the JPA. One group has made an outreach to all Irrigated Ag overlayers (the land owners who got notices of the formation) encouraging protest votes. The same group has had some interaction with the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association seeking legal help.

There are still a few unknowns about the process:

- What happens if people who were entitled to a 218 vote did not get to do so due to mistakes in the process of identifying who was eligible?

- How has the organizational effort been funded to date, and when will it become self-sufficient?

- What will happen if the project is rejected by a majority of rate payers?

- Why is Supervisor Gibson so involved when he doesn't represent any of the basin that will be covered by the JPA?

- How will the "votes" be counted?

On the last question, it certainly would behoove the organizers to hold the counting process open to oversight from impartial members of the public. The vote should take place in one setting, with all correspondence opened at the same time in front of witnesses that can honestly verify the results.

The most glaring part of this entire process has been the mishandling of information. There is severe mistrust within the Paso Basin community, with far too much hyperbole and too many misconstrued "facts". Whatever the outcome, it's apparent that the mistrust will linger for a long time. Perhaps the only bonus from this process is that a whole new best example textbook case of how not to create a water basin JPA has been accomplished.

## **Phillips 66 Property Appeal Postponed**

The California Coastal Commission has appealed the October '24 SLO County Planning Department permit granted to Phillips 66 for the remediation and clean-



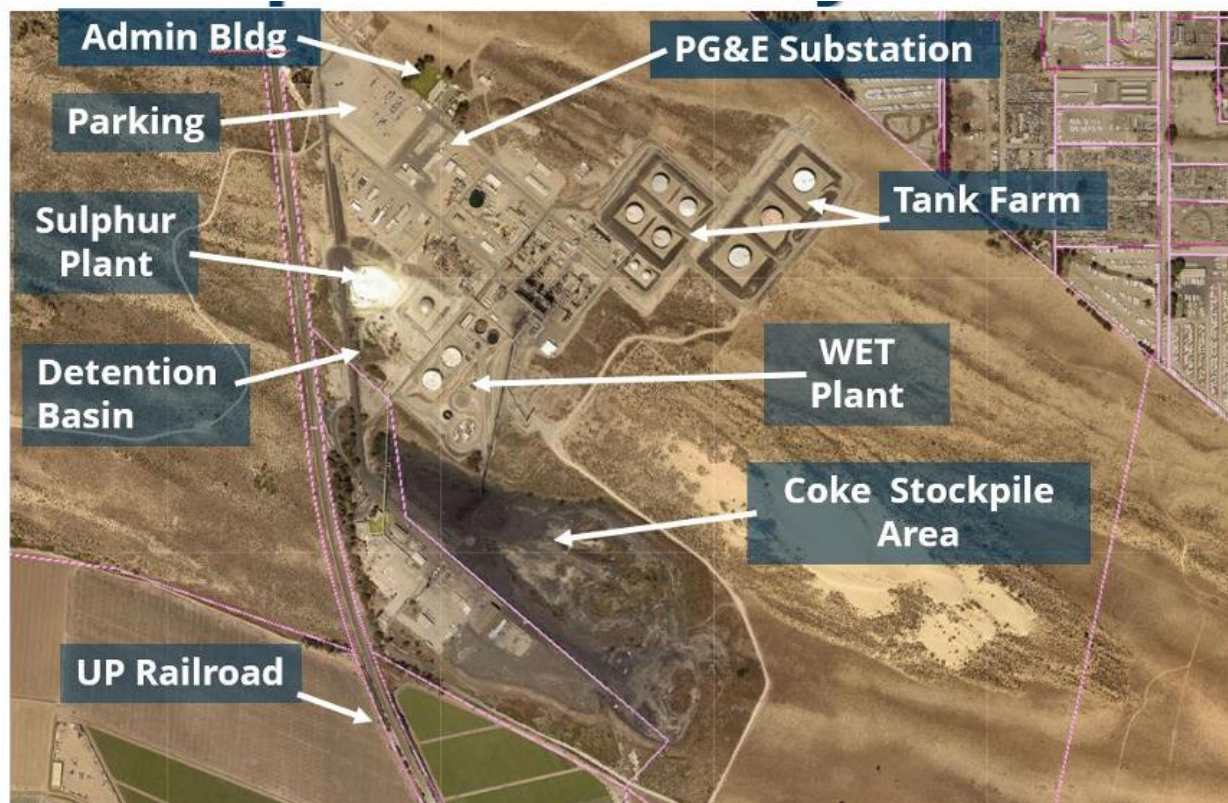
up of its former refinery in south county. The appeal was set to be heard on July 15, but has been continued until Aug 19.

Aside from the loss of an important refinery in California, we should all be concerned with what could be the kind of heavy-handed tactics that have, in the past, come from this unelected, but very powerful commission.

The courts have dealt the Coastal Commission several losses recently, including one seeking heavy restrictions on the Pismo Dunes related to off road vehicle operations. It is not clear if the legal system has become more sensitive to property rights and common sense, or if the commission has reached the point of absurd overreach.

Either way, we can only hope that the commission does not attempt to bigfoot the restoration plan, demanding dedicated public space, bike trails and expensive accommodations - all paid for by a company that has already been forced to shut down its California operations due to excessive costs and regulations.

Below is a map of the current facility:



Below is a listing of the remediation efforts that Phillips 66 has planned. Note that these steps were reviewed by the SLO County Planning Department and found to be within the scope of Coastal Zone regulations and sufficient for closure,

- Removal of structures to ground level
  - Segregation, stockpiling of demolition materials
  - Loading & hauling by truck & rail to offsite disposal sites
- Duration: ~ 8 Months, overlapping belowground work

Belowground remediation with limited belowground demolition:

- Site characterization soil testing to assess remediation needs
- Soil remediation where needed
- Grading, soil backfill, and hardscape surface replacement
- Duration: Majority in first 3-4 years
  - Some work continuing up to 10 years
- Future re-use of site is not proposed with this Project

The postponement of the appeal hearing might suggest that negotiations are underway between the Coastal Commission and Phillips 66. It's always nice when two conflicting parties can reach common ground, but we hope that a piece of private property doesn't get usurped by a bunch of bullies threatening years of countless legal maneuvers all funded by taxpayer dollars.

Stay tuned. It is a sure bet that there is a lot more to come.

## **Last Week**

After a three-week period that includes the July 4 Independence Day break, the SLO County Board of Supervisors reconvened on July 8 with a light agenda.

## Internal Audits Find Little Scandal, but Room for Improvement

The first significant item of business was to 1) receive, review, and file the FY 2023-24 Internal Audit Division Annual Report, Employee Procurement Card Fraud Investigation Final Report, and CliftonLarsonAllen LLP Procurement Card Assessment; 2) approve the attached Multi- Year Audit Plan; and 3) provide direction as necessary. The 15 page Audit Report uses 8 of the first pages explaining the methodology and parameters of the actual audit, and doesn't get down to audit results until page 6 with a report of progress:

Report on FY 2023-24 Audit Plan			
Category	Audit Name	Type of Engagement	Engagement Status
<b>Mandated</b>	Annual Cash Shortages and Overages Report (Countywide)	Assurance	Completed
	Food and Nutrition Services Reporting Validation (DSS)	Consulting	Completed
	State Worker's Compensation Insurance Fraud (District Attorney)	Consulting	Completed
	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Grant Audit (DSS)	Assurance	Completed
<b>In Progress</b>	Cannabis Tax Compliance Audits (3 establishments)	Assurance	In progress
	Cash and Internal Controls Audit - Health Agency Public Guardian	Assurance	In progress
	Cash and Internal Controls Audit - Planning Department	Assurance	Completed
	Countywide Procurement Card Process Assessment	Assurance	In progress
<b>Follow-up</b>	Cash and Internal Controls Audit - Child Support Services	Assurance	Completed
<b>Discretionary</b>	Cannabis Tax Compliance Audits	Assurance	Completed
	Cash and Internal Controls Departmental Audits	Assurance	Carried forward
	Concessionaire Audit	Assurance	Carried forward
	Countywide IT Audit	Assurance	Carried forward
	Countywide Special Pay Audit	Assurance	Carried forward

The next page goes into some detail about the Whistleblower Hotline and how it refers reports to related departments or agencies and conducts follow-up investigations as necessary. In FY 2023-24, the Whistleblower Hotline received 46 reports, a 130% increase from the prior year's 20 reports. 50% of the reports received were referred to other County departments. All but two of the reports were received directly through the Whistleblower Hotline. 20 of the 46 reports received were submitted anonymously. Three of the reports were investigated by the District Attorney's office.

The Whistleblower Hotline Results are illustrated here:

### FY 2023-24 Whistleblower Reports by Type



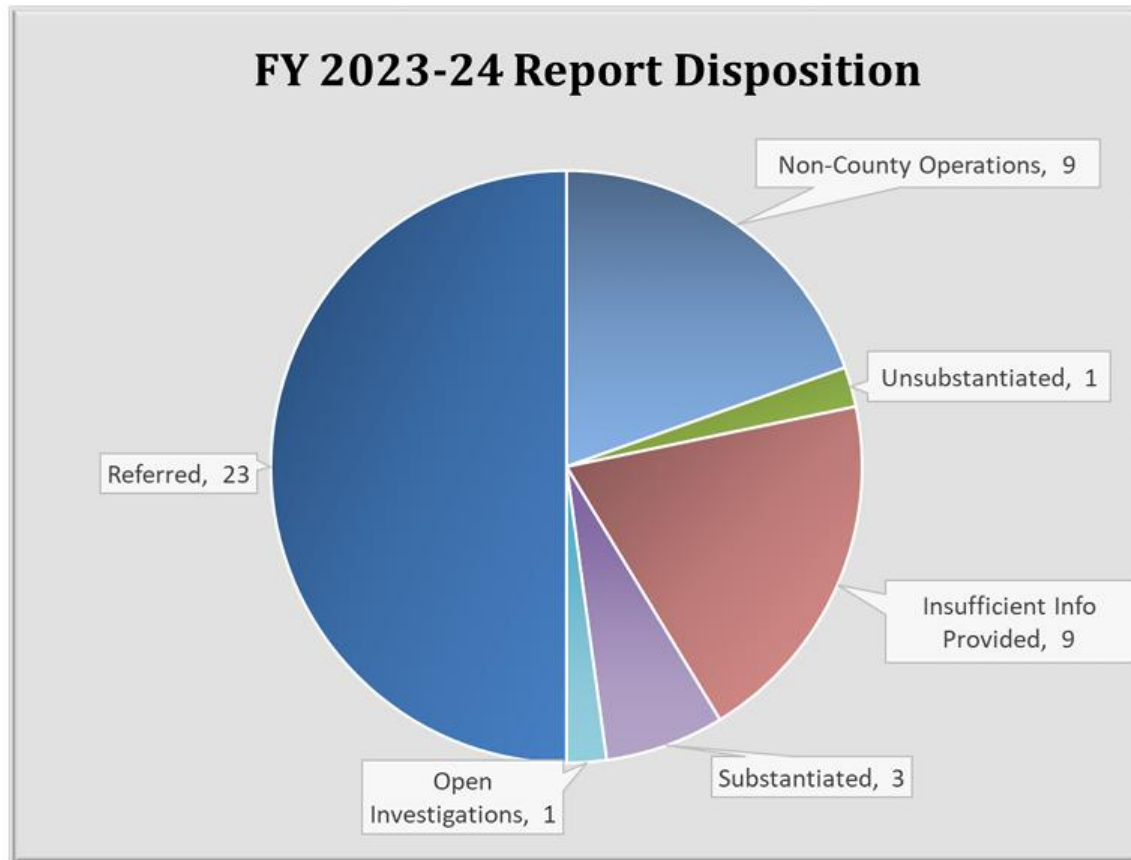
Reports related to employee misconduct that were not related to alleged fraud, waste, or abuse were referred to Human Resources. The remainder of the reports were either referred, not related to County operations, unsubstantiated or did not contain sufficient information to investigate.

Quarterly Whistleblower Hotline reports are available on the Auditor Controller website.

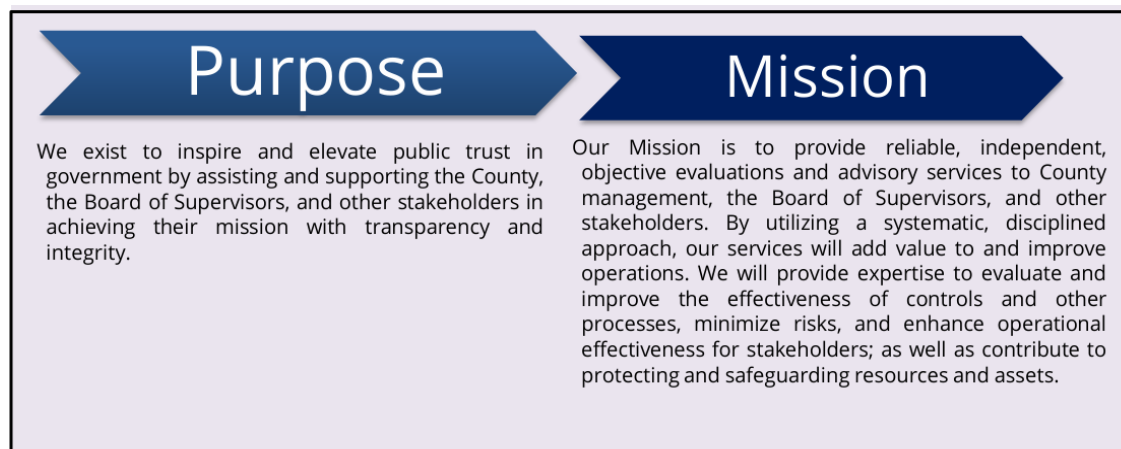
According to the Auditor, in addition to matters originating from the Whistleblower Hotline, the Internal Audit Division also aided with the investigation of an internal report alleging the misappropriation of County funds by a county employee. Details for that investigation are attached as special attachments to this report. Two of the FY 2023-24 Whistleblower reports resulted in employee terminations and resulted in enhanced internal controls and policy definition at the department level.

The following graph illustrates the breakdown of whistleblower reports:





While this report is generous in detail about who will be audited, how and when it will happen and why it happens, it is a little light on actual findings. The following illustrates the mission statement of the Auditor Controller:



In another report (19 pages this time), the firm of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP was retained by the County of San Luis Obispo to perform risk assessment procedures and provide consultation services for a Procurement Card Process Assessment.

Again, the report was heavy with legalese and somewhat light on actual details detailing

the findings.

The scope period for the procurement card process assessment is the most recent six fiscal years, spanning from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2024, and covered the following expenditures:

Department	Spend During Scope
Health Agency	\$2,377,934.04
County Fire	1,889,064.26
Sheriff Coroner	1,843,567.59
Social Services	1,163,210.52
Public Works	1,073,511.13
Parks & Golf	914,640.93
Administration	902,292.25
Central Services	901,658.80
Information Technology	780,948.03
Human Resources	611,248.76
Library	606,593.01
Facilities Management	593,923.80

Department	Spend During Scope
Airports	\$510,148.53
District Attorney	382,897.33
Probation	325,269.38
Planning and Building	292,732.97
Assessor	267,446.20
Clerk Recorder	221,368.23
Child Support Services	141,820.11
Auditor Controller Treasurer Tax Collector	122,992.41
Veterans Services	116,863.15
Agriculture Comm	68,894.90
Farm Advisor	67,875.28
County Counsel	49,562.79

**Total Spend During Scope Period** **\$16,226,464.40**

The following departments were selected for detailed process review and sample transaction testing:

	Department	# of Cardholders During Scope Period
1	County Fire	36
2	Sheriff Coroner	10
3	Health Agency	63
4	Social Services	29
5	Public Works	22
6	Administration	18
7	Central Services	11
8	Information Technology	15
9	Library	18

According to the firm, based on the above procedures performed, they identified the following observations in the processes performed at the various departments interviewed:

**-While most individuals interviewed understood the SLO County procurement card policy, there were certain instances in which the policy was not properly followed.**

**-Certain departments set additional expectations for their cardholders that the SLO County may benefit from adopting countywide.**

**-Insufficient documentation or information was included with the supporting documentation for some purchases. In some instances, while a detailed receipt was included, a reasonable explanation of the nature and purpose of the purchase and how it related to business of SLO County was lacking.**

**-Prohibited transactions were identified as a result of this audit.**

**-Department-specific requirements were not always followed.**

In the sample of 61 transactions reviewed, the firm noted observations in 22 instances. 20 of those instances were SLO County policy violations and two were department-specific requirements not being met but not SLO County policy violations. The following graph illustrates each observation:

### SLO County Policy Violations:

Description	Instances
Not enough information provided	9
Evidence of split transaction	7
Personal online account used	1
No approval documented on purchasing card log	1
No itemized receipt retained	1
No prior approval for prohibited transaction documented	1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>20</b>

### Department-Specific Requirements Not Met:

Description	Instances
No internal requisition form completed	1
No record of receipt of goods	1
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>

While no serious misuse was identified, the firm did seem to land on a theme of inconsistency among requirements throughout the county procurement programs and offered 18 recommendations to strengthen accountability and transparency.

Those recommendations can be read in detail at:

<https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/file/getfile/170891>

In a third report by the Auditor Controller, new policies that are being adopted were presented. These policies are driven by the above audit recommendations and by a case of an individual county employee who was prosecuted and convicted for misuse of the county procurement programs. According to the Auditor Controller, the new policies are as follows:

#### **#1 - Mandatory Separation of Duties for Procurement Card Purchases**

Additional signatures may be required for high-risk purchases such as portable technology or high-dollar purchases (and departments may institute additional sign-off requirements).

Electronic signature tools (such as Adobe) will be leveraged to make signature captures efficient for department processing and will also provide a permanent electronic log of signatures for review by Internal Audits.

## **#2 - Continuous Monitoring of Procurement Card Transactions**

Going forward, electronic scans of all individual transaction invoices will be required with Purchasing Logs provided to the ACTTC for payment. This will allow the ACTTC to efficiently and independently review any transactions flagged by the analytical tool.

## **3 - Expanded User and Approver Training Programs.**

Ongoing training is a critical element to support compliance with all fiscal policies, particularly given staff turnover in Departments. Procurement Card policy guidance currently exists only in the form of the 2003 written policy document. Capabilities for on-demand video training curriculum, with Q&A and course completion logs, are being explored by Central Services' Purchasing division and ACTTC, with the support of Human Resources Learning and Development Center, with the goal of developing a variety of training and policy reinforcement tools. Additionally, the ACTTC will add Procurement Card policy overviews to the annual fiscal training session delivered to Department fiscal staff.

In another item, the Board heard a request to 1) retroactively authorize the Health Agency Director to apply for a California Board of State and Community Corrections Proposition 47 Grant Program grant in the amount up to \$7,695,550 for the period of October 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029 to fund a comprehensive substance use disorder and mental health treatment program and support



community-based housing, reentry, and recovery services for justice involved individuals; and 2) authorize the Health Agency Director or designee to sign all other documents required for the Proposition 47 Grant Program application.

While such programs are usually quite helpful in finding and funding solutions to local challenges, it is just a bit unnerving that little oversight seems to be given to so many multimillion-dollar programs. Are they effective? What are the stats on how well they are performing? Are they good value for the taxpayers that ultimately provided those funds from their own earnings? Is this the highest and best use for other peoples' money?

## **Has the County Planning Commission Been Deemed Irrelevant?**

The Board revisited a previous issue raised and granted a continuance a couple months ago regarding a family wishing to build a small hotel on their lot in Cayucos. They had gone through the Planning Commission process and by following all requirements, were granted, in October of last year, the permit necessary to build. Then the real headaches started. A few locals appealed the permit, which took it to the Board .

While none of the points that they raised in the appeal were significant enough to negate the permit, Supervisor Gibson (a Cayucos resident) dove right in with several “requests” for adjustments to parking and aesthetic design along with clarification on exactly who might be occupying the property.

So, despite meeting all requirements eight months ago, the family finally was granted their permit on July 8. This situation is emblematic of how government often spins out of control when individual officials take it upon themselves to write the rules as they see fit. It makes one wonder why there is a Planning Commission at all. Or, why didn't Supervisor Gibson have his appointee on the Planning Commission work with the applicants in the original process so that the eight month delay and the expense of plan revisions could be avoided?

The big question in this very subjective process is if this project was in Shandon or Nipomo, would it have received the same level of micromanaging? Anytime the cost of housing is discussed, this should be raised as a prime example of why building anything new in SLO County is so stinking expensive.

Imagine the frustration, expense and delays involved with designing a project to meet all county standards, getting the permit and starting to plan out the construction phase. Suddenly, its all stop because a few people filed an appeal. Six months later, the Board of Supervisors (on a 3-2 vote) sends you back to the drawing board, not because your project is nonconforming to county and Coastal Zone standards, but because one Supervisor doesn't care for your project. He gives you two months to revise your design to his and a few locals subjective preference – regardless of how much it will cost to make the changes.

Below are renderings of the original project as approved by the planning Commission and underneath that the with the modifications as requested (required?) by Supervisor Gibson.



As Supervisor Moreno has attempted to address on multiple occasions, our county allows anybody to file appeals in the Coastal Zone for free or very little cost, yet it

costs a lot of staff time to respond, and if the appeal is meritless (as they often are) they become an easy (and expensive) form of harassment for the applicant.

## **Coastal Commission Remarks**

Below are COLAB SLO remarks from Greg Haskin regarding the operating permit for the Diablo Canyon Power Plant delivered to the California Coastal Commission at their July 9 meeting held at Pismo Beach:

**COLAB SLO is a 501 C6 nonprofit organization representing a coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business throughout San Luis Obispo County. We are here today to strongly endorse a 20-year operating permit for The Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant.**

**Aside from the obvious need for a clean, reliable source supporting our sometimes-insufficient state electrical grid, the power plant plays a key economic role for the residents of San Luis Obispo County.**

**As the largest private employer in the county, PG&E contributes to the wellbeing not only of over 1500 employees and their families, but to the many local services and products that those families depend on. These are well paid jobs, and without a long-term future, many employees will begin to drift off for more stable employment. In five years, without the long-term permit, they will either be unemployed, displacing other job seekers or gone.**

**The plant pays an estimated \$43 million in personal and corporate income tax to the federal government and about the same amount to Social Security. It pays over \$9 million to local school districts and about \$8 million in county taxes. These are significant funds to a community struggling to keep the local economy strong enough to pay the bills.**

**Further, PG&E has a robust and much appreciated presence throughout our community in terms of support and participation for nonprofits and service providers.**

**The investment made in the plant and its infrastructure should not be dismissed. The cost of building enough generation to replace Diablo Canyon is astronomical, and the time required to do so would present an enormous**

**challenge to maintaining a power grid that serves the present and future needs of our state.**

**The Diablo Canyon Power plant is our neighbor and is much liked in San Luis Obispo County. It's a tremendous asset to the whole state, supplying clean power whether the wind is blowing or the sun is shining, with no new investment required. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has examined every inch of the facility and found it to be safe. It has an excellent safety record over its 40 years of service.**

**We respectively ask you to prioritize the permitting process to ensure another 20 years of clean reliable power generation, and to help maintain a key economic driver to the San Luis Obispo economy.**

At the same session when these remarks were delivered, Supervisor Paulding also addressed the Commission with a statement in support of the Diablo permit extension. He indicated that his past opposition to an extension was for safety concerns, but with the recent Nuclear Regulatory Commission report on the safe conditions at Diablo, he was persuaded to support the extension.

About 30 people made remarks on that day during the public comment period of the meeting. There was a half dozen speakers in favor of the Diablo extension, two or three opposed and several complaining about both the Oceano Airport and the proposed new south entrance to the Pismo Dunes.

## Next Week

The next scheduled meeting of the San Luis County Board of Supervisors is Aug. 5, and the agenda has yet to be published. One forthcoming item of interest within county business is before the County Planning Commission, scheduled for July 24. It is a hearing to consider a "request by Shear Edge Development Avila, LLC for a Development Plan/ Coastal Development Permit (C-DRC2021-00028) to authorize a conversion and addition to the historic Avila Schoolhouse into an eight-room (and manager unit), approximately 5,200 square feet, two-story with basement level Bed and Breakfast Facility and approximately 285 square foot cabana as an ancillary support building.

The project meets the Secretary of Interior Standards for rehabilitation and includes a common area and outdoor patio, site grading for on-site improvements (parking and circulation), removal of three trees, and right-of-way and infrastructure improvements and appurtenances. The project includes a request for exceptions to the Special Use Standards for a Bed and Breakfast Facility.

The proposed project is within the Residential Multiple-Family Land Use Category and is located at 190 San Antonia Street, within the community of Avila Beach. The site is in the San Luis Bay Coastal Planning Area of the Coastal Zone”.

This is the kind of project that can attract a lot of concern, both from neighbors and from environmentalists. Obviously, the project is a long way from starting construction, but it will be a test of the planning system.

## **EMERGENT TRENDS - SEE PAGE 20**

### **‘Green’ Regulations Could Be the End of the Road for California Drivers**

### **Misleading: Gov. Newsom Claims CA is 67% Clean Energy Despite State Agencies Reporting Otherwise**

## **COLAB IN DEPTH SEE PAGE 26**

### **What California Could Be if Our Politicians Loved the State and its People**



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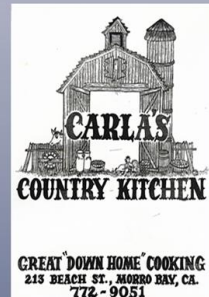
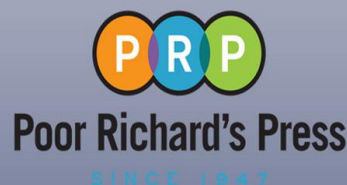
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# **‘Green’ Regulations Could Be the End of the Road for California Drivers**

**This is not really about fuel; it’s about control**

**By Mike Garcia, July 16, 2025 12:11 pm**

Remember the California dream? Golden sunshine, endless opportunity, and a car to take you there. For many, that dream now sputters to a halt at the gas station, with prices that feel like a punch to the gut. We’re told it’s a complex global issue and that greedy oil companies are at fault. Meanwhile, across most of the country the average gasoline prices have dropped to the lowest levels in roughly four years—suggesting that California’s far higher prices are self-inflicted. Indeed, a significant part of this pain is homegrown, a direct result of state policies like the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS). And with recently implemented new rules, the already crushing burden on California families and businesses could send prices soaring towards an unthinkable eight dollars per gallon. This isn’t just about fuel; it’s about our ability to live and thrive.

At its core, the LCFS forces fuel producers to reduce the “carbon intensity” of their products or buy credits from those who do. If their products create “too much” carbon, they must buy “credits” from producers of lower-carbon alternatives. It sounds technical, but the outcome is simple: these costs are passed directly to the consumer every time they fill their tank. While government estimates suggest the LCFS currently adds around 10 cents per gallon, independent projections for the future are far more alarming. Some analyses, such as from the University of Pennsylvania, project the new LCFS rule could add up to \$1.50 in additional cost per gallon of gas within the next 10 years. This isn’t just a line item; it’s a direct hit on family budgets, small businesses, and our state’s economic vitality, all in the name of a top-down mandate.

The worst part is that the LCFS ruling will come as a one-two punch. On July 1, California drivers faced yet another policy squeeze. That’s when the California Air Resources Board’s (CARB) more stringent LCFS mandates officially began — and on the same day, the state’s excise tax on gasoline jumped from 59.6¢ to 61.2¢ per gallon. California families, brace yourselves.

Don’t think that some elected officials didn’t speak up, but unfortunately efforts to protect Californians from this July 1 surcharge were defeated. Senate Republicans introduced Senate Bill 2 to stop the price hike, but Democrats blocked it—despite

warnings that the added costs would devastate family budgets and disproportionately affect the poor. With the tax increase and regulatory tightening coinciding, misguided Senators in Sacramento are committing political malpractice for drivers who can least afford it.

Proponents of the LCFS, including a spokesman from CARB, have downplayed its financial impact, suggesting it adds only a few cents to the price of gasoline. They call higher estimates “misinformation.” But math is real, and it doesn’t lie. Californians witnessing sky-high prices and independent projections forecasting cost increases have every right to be skeptical. These policies don’t exist in a vacuum; they compound other taxes and regulations that make California one of the most expensive places to fuel a vehicle. We must evaluate these programs not only by their stated intentions, but also by their real-world consequences on the people they are supposed to serve.

The LCFS is not really about fuel; it’s about control. It aims to make gas so expensive consumers will desperately pursue alternatives. What are these alternatives? Often, they are unreliable solar and wind energy, which currently provide less than 5% of world energy and only produce electricity, a fraction of our total energy needs. These sources are intermittent by nature and require massive mining operations for their materials and extensive land use, creating their own significant impacts on our surroundings. Labeling them “renewable” ignores the non-renewable resources consumed in their production and disposal. True progress comes from innovation and allowing all energy sources to compete on merit, not from government dictators that pick winners and losers. This is especially true when the “winners” can’t reliably power our lives or our economy.

The LCFS and its recent tightening are not just policy tweaks; they are a direct assault on the living standards of Californians. We are being asked to sacrifice our prosperity for an ideology that values an abstract notion of “green” over the concrete needs of people. It’s time to tell Sacramento that we reject this path. Demand an end to these costly mandates. Let’s champion policies that empower Californians, not impoverish them. The road to \$8/gallon gas is paved with these kinds of regulations. It’s time to choose a different route, one that leads to a more prosperous future for all of us.

## **Misleading: Gov. Newsom Claims CA is 67% Clean Energy Despite State Agencies Reporting Otherwise**

**Nuclear energy has historically provided a stable share of California's clean energy supply**

**By Evan Symon, July 14, 2025 4:11 pm**

According to new data released on Monday by the California Energy Commission (CEC), 67% of the state's total energy now comes from clean sources, with hydro and nuclear energy both playing a larger than anticipated role in keeping that figure up.

The CEC found that, in 2023, 43% of all energy produced in California came from renewable sources including solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass. Meanwhile, 12% in total came from nuclear sources and another 12% came from hydro power. As only 41% of the state's energy was from clean sources a year before, a full 16% of California's energy production has shifted away from fossil fuels, making the state on track for 100% clean energy by their 2045 goal.

However, as the announcement noted, these figures are only estimated, with many variables being in place place, like weather, demand, and state water levels all playing a part.

"It's important to note that year-to-year percentages may vary due to weather and water conditions, which can impact resources like wind, solar, and hydroelectric power, as well as total consumer demand for electricity," said the CEC announcement. "While nuclear energy has historically provided a stable share of California's clean energy supply, this could shift in the coming years as the availability of nuclear power changes. At the same time, California continues to add new clean energy capacity each year, supporting steady progress toward its long-term goals."

When it comes to electric generation, the CEC pushed forward a different story to tell for 2023. According to that report made earlier this year, the state is only at 56% renewable power, or 58% when energy imports are taken into place. In comparison, fossil fuels, mostly natural gas, are actually closer to 44%, or 42% after imports are factored in. And even these figures are a bit high, as the earlier report notes that hydroelectric production saw a boost in 2023 thanks to California having a wetter year than usual.

However, as the Governor’s announcement on the figures pointed out, they can get away with saying California is at 67% clean energy now by zeroing in on retail electricity sales, instead of overall production.

“The state released new data showing California’s continued progress toward a clean energy future with 67% of the state’s retail electricity sales in 2023 coming from renewable and zero-carbon electricity generation — compared to just 61% the previous year and around 41% a decade ago,” said Governor Gavin Newsom’s office on Monday.

#### A misleading 67%

In reality, total generation with imports had California sitting at 58% clean energy in 2023, but when it came to retail electricity sales, it was at 67% clean energy. While the state wasn’t wrong about the 67%, they failed to note that it was for one specific metric. The CEC report on Monday also failed to note their earlier total report. Nonetheless, the 67% figure was praised by Governor Newsom and others.

“As the federal government turns its back on innovation and commonsense, California is making our clean energy future a reality. The world’s fourth largest economy is running on two-thirds clean power – the largest economy on the planet to achieve this milestone,” said Newsom. “And for the first time ever, clean energy provided 100% of the state’s power nearly every day this year for some part of the day. Not since the Industrial Revolution have we seen this kind of rapid transformation.”

“California has achieved yet another major milestone on our journey to a clean energy future. The latest numbers show how our state is demonstrating that clean energy is mainstream and is here to stay,” added CEC Chairman David Hochschild.

A total growth of clean energy was also noted.

“More than 9 out of 10 days so far this year have been powered by 100% clean energy for at least some part of the day in California. In 2025, California’s grid has run on 100% clean electricity for an average of 7 hours a day,” the Governor’s office said. “Data compiled by the California Energy Commission shows clean energy has powered the equivalent of 51.9 days in the state – nearly 30% of the year to date running on 100% clean electricity. That already surpasses the amount



of “clean energy days” last year – and represents a 750% increase in clean energy days since 2022.

“California continues to move at a rapid pace on bringing clean energy online. Since 2019, a record 25,000 MW of new energy resources statewide have been added to the grid, with most of that being solar and battery storage. This aligns with the Governor’s roadmap to the state’s clean energy future released in 2023, which called for 148,000 megawatts (MW) of new clean power by 2045.”

However, as the Globe has noted, the clean energy push has also been stressing California’s energy system and will do so for years to come. California’s are paying thousands more per year on average to have more green energy, with fossil fuel plant closures coming at rates that clean energy is struggling to replace. In addition, dam closures have helped shrink California’s energy capacity, with only high water levels in recent years helping mask the energy losses.

And that’s on top of California’s lone remaining nuclear plant, Diablo Canyon, only recently getting a life extension to 2030. As the plant covers 9% of the state’s total electric output, and is considered green energy, the state is literally racing against the clock to try and make up for it by the time the plant closes. Right now, Diablo Canyon is a bridge source of clean power that is due to be cut off by the end of the decade – all of which isn’t really mentioned in the CEC report on Monday. Instead, nuclear and hydro are simply major sources of clean energy that they are happy to note.

At best, the 67% is misleading. Total generation for clean energy is actually much lower, with two of the main clean energy sources looking at lower production totals in the coming years.

# **What California Could Be if Our Politicians Loved the State and its People**

**Powerful people don't want to hear that they've made 'trillion-dollar mistakes'**

By Katy Grimes, July 14, 2025

Just imagine if the California Governor and California Legislature loved California as much as the people do. Imagine if they also loved the state's abundant natural resources, rather than imposing harsh restrictions and locking them away.

California is rich in natural resources which once powered the state: natural gas deposits in the Monterey Shale formation; geothermal energy, abundant rivers and waterways such as the San Joaquin River Delta and hydroelectric dams; the Pacific coastline; 85 million acres of wildlands with 17 million of those used as commercial timberland; mines and mineral resources, vast farming and agricultural lands, and hunting and fishing.

But California politicians and appointed agency officials, under pressure from radical environmental organizations and lobbyists, decided to ignore the energy producing natural resources, and instead move to an all-electric grid, and the only approved "renewable energy:" solar and wind energy.

And they punish those who seek to restore all of this abundant natural energy.

The only conclusion is that California's politicians are not working for the people of the state; they are working on behalf of the "green" lobby, deceitful philanthropists, corrupt and connected corporate interests, and even foreign entities.

At times when much of California has been on fire, Gov. Gavin Newsom shamelessly blames climate change.

"The hots are getting hotter, the dries are getting drier," Gov. Newsom claims, "something happened to the plumbing of the world. Climate change is real and exacerbating this."

Gov. Newsom is lying with impunity.

“Supplying 80% of the world’s primary energy, coal, oil and natural gas make up the lifeblood of modern civilization,” Vijay Jayaraj writes at Watts Up With That and RealClearMarkets. “Yet, there continue to be calls for the abandonment of these fuels without any feasible, scalable replacement in sight.”

“Consensus” on climate change has become a form of bullying, intimidation and censorship—which is exactly what Julie from Canada tried to do here,” I wrote in 2024, answering a climate cultist’s vitriolic email. “It has been used to bludgeon and attack the character of anyone who questions the very shallow claims. It is a cult completely divorced from science and reality. And the larger problem with these climate change cultists is they lack humility, and any interest in self-reflection.”

In an interview with Vickie Davis, Lies are Unbekoming Substack reported, “international frameworks infiltrate local decision-making, turning city councils and neighborhood associations into pawns of a global agenda. ...shifting wealth from the middle class to a technocratic elite through tools like carbon trading and green bonds, as outlined in her book’s analysis of Agenda 21’s goals. Her message was simple yet urgent: what looks like progress is often a mask for control, and the stakes are nothing less than our democratic sovereignty.” (read the entire interview [here](#))

Explaining how dishonest it is for “green” lobbyists “to claim that electricity from wind and solar can replace fossil fuels, when currently most of the energy used in the world is not even in the form of electricity,” Jayaraj continues:

“Electricity represents only about 20% of global final energy consumption. That means four-fifths of the world’s energy use comes from fuels that power ships, planes, trucks and industrial furnaces. Oil fuels vehicles, natural gas provides heat for homes and industry, and coal is critically important for the manufacture of steel from iron.

Demand for hydrocarbons is expected to exceed that of electricity for many decades.”

In 2024, 1,600 actual scientists wrote a letter to the California Air Resources Board: “There is ‘NO Climate Crisis’” the scientists said in the letter. In fact, the scientists find that “California is in no danger of unusual drought: The annual precipitation in California has fluctuated greatly over the last 150 years, with only a slight decrease.”

The CO2 Coalition’s letter was particularly timely with Gov. Gavin Newsom taking his climate change road show to the Vatican in May 2024 where he was invited to speak by Pope Francis at a Summit of mayors and governors. The Summit, which was held May 15th to May 17th, covered “the impact of rising temperatures” in local communities, and “climate resilience.”

Dr. Jim Enstrom, one of the letter’s signers, told the Globe that one of the most prominent signers was 2022 Nobel Laureate John Clauser, who described the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as “one of the worst sources of dangerous misinformation,” and was disinvited to speak before the U.N.’s International Monetary Fund (IMF) on July 25, 2023. “The physicist believes that objective science on climate has been sacrificed to politics. The preeminence of politics is all the worse, he said, because so much money has already gone to climate,” the CO2 Coalition said.

“We’re talking about trillions of dollars,” he said, adding that powerful people don’t want to hear that they’ve made “trillion-dollar mistakes.”

Gov. Gavin Newsom already finds himself in a similar place – that of multi-million to billion dollar mistakes – with his very public attacks on California’s oil and gas industry.

Governor Newsom Takes Action to Phase Out Oil Extraction in California by 2024, Newsom announced. “California will work to end oil extraction as part of nation-leading effort to achieve carbon neutrality. Action will halt issuance of fracking permits by 2024,” Newsom said. Additionally, Governor Newsom requested that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) analyze pathways to phase out oil extraction across the state by no later than 2045.

Remember Newsom’s climate gift:

Gov. Newsom signed a package of “sweeping legislation” in September 2022 to achieve statewide carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, by establishing an 85% emissions reduction target, capping oil wells, slowing oil and

gas permitting, making it impossible to increase refining capacity, and entirely phasing out oil and gas starting in two years.

That “sweeping set of laws” Newsom touted was 40 new climate change bills regulating California businesses and its people.

Chevron is leaving the state, and Phillips 66 and Valero are closing refineries because of the governor’s destructive regulations and policies against the oil and gas industry.

As governor, Newsom is sending California into energy poverty, rather than promoting economic and energy prosperity by attempting to annihilate the oil and gas industry.

A 2025 report from the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) Institute for Applied Economics – Oil and Gas in California: The Industry, its Economic Contribution and Major User Industries – found that California’s oil and gas industry provides 536,770 total jobs in California and 148,140 Californians are directly employed by its individual companies—along with the \$338 billion total economic contribution to California’s economy. Those numbers are something we all should feel proud of.

Oil and gas delivers \$23 billion in annual wages and benefits to oil and gas workers in the Golden State, and \$53.4 billion in wages to all workers supported by the industry.

This isn’t at all about climate change – that’s just the regulatory “catch-all.” The “green” agenda is about power and control. It is evil, not virtuous.

###



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