

Cabrillo Port Liquefied Natural Gas Facility EPA Proposed Permit for Air Emissions

U.S. EPA has requested public comment on its proposed Clean Air Act permit. As a new source of air pollution, the Cabrillo Port must obtain this permit before construction of the Port may commence.

Background & Talking Points

- The Clean Air Act (“CAA”) requires that new sources of air pollution obtain a permit prior to construction. The CAA permit contains terms and conditions to control air emissions from the source. The most stringent permit conditions are applied to sources in geographic areas that do not meet (or “attain”) air quality standards – i.e., “nonattainment” areas. Both Ventura County and Los Angeles County are in nonattainment for ozone air quality standards.
- In Ventura County, owners or operators of new sources emitting greater than 25 tons per year of ozone precursor pollutants (NO_x or ROC), must obtain Emission Reduction Credits (“ERCs”) to offset and reduce these emissions in the area. Sources also must utilize “best available control technology,” or BACT, to minimize their air emissions. Similar requirements apply in Los Angeles County for new sources emitting greater than 10 tons per year of NO_x or ROC.
- These requirements ensure that new sources of air pollution do not further degrade the already poor air quality in Ventura County and Los Angeles County and that they can continue to make progress towards achieving air quality standards.
- The EPA estimates that the Cabrillo Port emissions will include 163.34 tons per year of NO_x and 50.22 tons per year of ROC. Independent experts believe this is likely an underestimate of emissions. However, even by EPA’s estimates, Cabrillo Port would be the largest smog-producing polluter in Ventura County.
- Although these emissions are initially generated offshore, multiple peer reviewed studies demonstrate that emissions in the project area will blow onshore and contribute to the ozone nonattainment problem in both Ventura County and Los Angeles County.
- For almost two years, EPA maintained that Cabrillo Port should be permitted in accordance with Ventura County’s stringent requirements for new sources in the ozone nonattainment area.
- However, after considerable lobbying from BHP Billiton and pressure from Bush administration political appointees, EPA has reversed its position and concluded that the Cabrillo Port does not need to comply with the rigorous nonattainment area permit conditions – EPA’s proposed permit does not require BHP Billiton to obtain ERCs to offset and reduce emissions or to utilize BACT. As a result, both Ventura County and Los Angeles County will be the recipients of significant levels of air

pollution that are have not been accounted for in their air quality planning and will interfere with their ability to achieve ozone air quality standards.

- EPA's position here does not comport with the reality that Cabrillo Port emissions will travel to areas that are nonattainment for ozone. EPA should permit the Cabrillo Port in keeping with its initial conclusion that it must comply with Ventura County's nonattainment area permit conditions.
- Cabrillo Port is not being held to the same air quality standards that would apply to any other on or offshore facility. If the draft permit is issued by EPA in the current form, Ventura County and Los Angeles County will suffer degraded air quality that may impact the community's health and environment.

Take Action to Protect Your Air Quality

The public has an opportunity to take action to protect their local air quality in two ways: 1) attend a public hearing on June 4, 2006 and testify before EPA; and 2) submit written comments to EPA, via email or mail, by August 3, 2006. After all comments are received EPA will make a final decision whether or not to issue or deny the CAA permit.

Public Hearing: Monday, June 5, 2006
1:00 – 4:00 p.m., and 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Oxnard Performing Arts and Convention Center
800 Hobson Way
Oxnard, CA 93030

Written Comments: must be received by August 3, 2006

Email to cabrilloportpermit@epa.gov, or mail to:
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The proposed permit and supporting information is available at
<http://www.epa.gov/region09/liq-natl-gas/index.html>

Three comments to tell EPA about the proposed air permit:

- 1) I want to live in a community that has healthy air that meets state and national air quality standards, and I do not right now.
- 2) EPA is permitting the Cabrillo Port in manner that will increase onshore air pollution, such as smog. This will move my community further away from our air quality goals, and threaten our health and our environment.
- 3) EPA should permit this Port consistent with requirements for new sources of pollution in areas that do not meet ozone air quality standards, such as LA and Ventura County.

