Alameda County Planning Commission

℅ Bruce Jensen, Senior Planner

Alameda County Planning Department

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Hayward CA 94544-1215

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to you in support of eliminating as permitted uses any new or expanded oil and gas exploration and production activities in the Alameda County General Plan and the East County Area Plan, and removing oil and gas exploration, production, and extraction as permitted uses from the Alameda County Zoning Ordinance, all as recommended by county staff in your public hearing on February 17, 2015.

Now is the time for Alameda County to take action to ensure that the county will be protected from the many hazards associated with oil and gas operations, especially the hazards from enhanced recovery methods, such as hydraulic fracturing, commonly in use in California today.

Oil and gas operations use thousands of gallons of water per well, which typically cannot be returned to the water cycle. There are numerous instances of improper disposal of waste water in unlined pits that contaminate soil and surface water. State regulatory agencies have not provided adequate protection for residents. The Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources recently admitted that 2,500 wells in the state have been illegally contaminating protected aquifers. During this time of historic drought, we cannot afford this misuse of our precious water.

Alameda County is taking positive steps toward increasing our renewable energy resources, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Preventing future oil and gas operations in the County is consistent with taking action to mitigate climate change caused by the use of fossil fuels.

Oil and gas operations are not good neighbors to farms, ranches, vineyards, homes, schools, businesses, and other inhabited places. The air pollution produced around wells adversely affects the health of children and adults who live or work nearby, and can damage nearby crops and livestock. The noise pollution, increased dust and traffic negatively impact the quality of life close to oil and gas operations.

We urge you to protect the environment, and the health and safety of animals and people in Alameda County by adopting the changes to the General Plans and Zoning Ordinance as recommended by county staff on February 17, 2015.

Sincerely,

cc: Alameda County Board of Supervisors

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