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CFROG working to protect and strengthen environmental protections of the Ojai Valley Area Plan
General Plan Update comes to Oak View

Monday, July 18, at 7 p.m., the Ventura County Planning Department will host a workshop at the Oak View Community Center, 18 Valley Road, Oak View, to receive input from Ojai Valley residents regarding changes to the Ventura County General Plan. Citizens for Responsible Oil and Gas (CFROG) is participating in the General Plan update process to preserve and strengthen the Ojai Valley Area Plan to ensure all oil and gas projects are approved with strong public-health, safety and environmental protections. These efforts will have an ongoing impact across the county for oil and gas projects over the next 20 years – the life of the General Plan.

“The Ojai Valley has special restrictions on development in the current area plan because of unique air quality and transportation limitations. The bowl like valley traps pollutants and the two lane roads run at capacity during rush hours,” said John Brooks, President of CFROG. While CFROG will focus on impacts from oil and gas projects, he emphasizes a strong area plan will prevent negative impacts from all types of development. “There is a concern that developers will be able to pressure the Board of Supervisors to alter the method of calculating traffic flow to allow more cars.”

Brooks also points to recent cases where Ventura County planning decisions allowing oil and gas projects in Upper Ojai have circumvented air emission rules in the OVAP. “The air quality rule that says any project that sends more than 5 pounds of pollution into the air per day shall be considered as having a *significant adverse impact*,” said Brooks. “CFROG believes an effort will be made in the General Plan update process to increase the threshold to 25 pounds per day which will damage the air we breathe.”

This planning document is the “constitution” for planning decisions in the unincorporated areas of Ventura County. It covers a wide range of issues, including water, air, land use, economy, jobs, open space, culture, walkability, traffic, parks, agriculture, housing, commercial, trails, wildlife corridors, and oil and gas industry activities, to name a few.

“As these initial general plan update hearings are held it’s vital that those in favor of current environmental safeguards or even improving those safeguards, show up and make your concerns known,” said Brooks.

Other county Planning Department workshops on the General Plan are scheduled throughout the county. View the schedule and R.S.V.P. HERE. <http://www.cfrog.org/calendar>

The county Web site for the General Plan is HERE. <http://vc2040.org/>

CFROG is a 501c3 environmental watchdog organization working to ensure all oil and gas activity in Ventura County only occurs when public health/safety and the environment are protected.