

Exhibit D – California Coastal Commission Site Visit Letter

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY

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June 4, 2015

Ryan Hostetter
San Luis Obispo County
Department of Planning and Building
976 Osos St., Room 200
San Luis Obispo, Ca 93408-2040

Re: **Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery Rail Spur Extension Project**

Dear Ms. Hostetter:

Thank you for your help facilitating Coastal Commission staff's site visit to the Phillips 66 Santa Maria Refinery last week and for arranging to have San Luis Obispo County's environmental consultants participate. We found the visit to be very productive and informative and in particular, the Commission's two staff biologists, Dr. Jonna Engel and Dr. Laurie Koteen, found the field evaluation and open discussion of the site's vegetation communities to be particularly valuable. Much of that evaluation and discussion was focused on the characterization and classification of vegetation within the project's proposed footprint and the recommendations included in Commission staff's November 24, 2014, comment letter on the Revised Draft EIR. As you recall, these recommendations included suggestions that (1) the classification of dune vegetation within the proposed project site be corrected to reflect the California Department of Fish and Wildlife vegetation classification guidelines and (2) the corresponding analysis of project impacts to sensitive biological resources be amended to reflect the recognized rarity and imperiled status of dune vegetation within the proposed project footprint.

Based on the discussion during the recent site visit, it is our understanding that these recommendations have been followed and that the Final EIR for the project will reflect that a substantial area of sensitive dune scrub vegetation is present within the proposed project footprint and that this habitat is to be considered an environmentally sensitive habitat area based on its rarity and susceptibility to disturbance or degradation. Commission staff supports this change and believes it was corroborated by our field evaluation of the site. We look forward to reviewing the supporting analysis, vegetation mapping, and technical materials that are also to be included in the EIR's biological resources section on this topic and to continuing to work closely with you and your colleagues moving forward.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me (415) 904-5502.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cass Teufel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail on the "l".

CASSIDY TEUFEL
Senior Environmental Scientist
Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency Division