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PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Planning
Community Development
Administrative Operations

November 20, 2015

Dear Sustainable Freight Action Plan Pilot Project Review Team,

Kern County is a center of excellence and leadership in renewable energy development in all types of energy including solar and wind and oil production. County wide over 10,000 MW of renewable energy has been permitted with 2/3 installed in wind, solar, alternative fuels and geothermal. It is also the home to the Kern County Dairy Digester Cluster. The cluster adjacent to I-5 and near State Highway 99, composed of approximately 100,000 animals, provides a tremendous opportunity to advance the learning and experience of the early stage dairy biogas industry.

We are writing this letter to express our interest in and support of California Bioenergy LLC's (CalBio) submission to the Sustainable Freight Action Plan's request for Pilot Project Ideas. The Planning and Community Development Department is committed to work with CalBio and the dairies comprising the cluster on the permitting and CEQA process.

Dairies in Kern County have a by right to build a manure-based digester with electricity generation capacity of up 10 MW with only a building permit. Kern County designed our zoning ordinance to support this type of innovation and we are proud that the cluster's first project at the Old River Dairy and the next two projects, at the Lakeview Farms Dairy and the Carlos Echeverria & Sons Dairy, are designed to produce electricity for export to the PG&E grid. CalBio now proposes to utilize a portion of the biogas for use as renewable compressed natural gas (R-CNG) for trucking freight. It is these types of innovative approaches to renewable energy siting that Kern County supports for the future of jobs and new business opportunities in the area.

CalBio has provided to the County the Pilot Project Ideas' submission as an outline of the initiative to add the fuel component, which will be used by feed trucks, milk trucks and other vehicles. As proposed the plan is to build a centralized gas cleanup facility using biogas from digesters at each of the local dairies. The Old River, Lakeview, and CE&S dairies would be the first contributors, augmented by the subsequent dairy projects. The Pilot Ideas submission proposes both to build a fueling station and to inject the biomethane into the pipeline. The County permitting issues include:

1) The design and laying of low-pressure PVC pipeline, collecting the gas and bringing it to the central facility. (A draft map, from CalBio, highlighting the location of the dairies and a possible location of the low-pressure pipeline, is provided.)

2) The site and construction of the gas clean up facility, converting the biogas to pipeline grade gas and/or for vehicle fuel use.

3) Interconnecting the methane output from the gas clean up facility into the utility high-pressure pipeline.

4) Siting, building and operating of a fueling station, also currently planned to be located on the I-5 corridor.

We believe the Kern County Dairy Biogas Cluster, composed of some the state's largest dairies, can be a center of innovation and learning, which in turn can help the state reach ARB's dairy-based greenhouse gas goals while working in partnership with this important agricultural sector.

The Planning and Community Development Department, in conjunction with other county departments, looks forward to working with CalBio on this new approach to providing alternatives fuels for the trucking industry.

I can be reached at (661)862-8866 or Loreleio@co.kern.ca.us to answer any questions you may have about this matter.

Sincerely,

Lorelei H. Oviatt AICP
Director

cc: Scott Denney, Division Chief