



October 12, 2022

County of Ventura Planning Division  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009  
Via email: Dave.Ward@ventura.org

Re: Alternatives Analysis for the Devil’s Canyon Road Site in the Southern California Gas Company Ventura Compressor Station Modernization Project Feasibility Study  
March 2022

SoCalGas received a copy of the County of Ventura’s (County) letter to California Public Utilities Commission President Alice Reynolds, providing clarification of Ventura County’s land use regulations evaluated in SoCalGas’ March 2022 “Feasibility Study of Potential Alternatives: Ventura Compressor Station Modernization Project” (Feasibility Study) as it relates to the Devil’s Canyon Road site. We appreciate the County’s review and input on the Feasibility Study and have addressed the points raised in the County’s letter as set forth below.

The Devil’s Canyon Road site is located on a parcel with a General Plan land use designation of Open Space and Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (NCZO) designation of Open Space (OS). The site also is within the boundaries of the Save Open Space and Agriculture Resources (SOAR) initiative. As noted in your letter, the OS zone’s primary purposes are the preservation of natural resources, outdoor recreation, limiting urban sprawl, and the managed production of resources. Consequently, “Public Service/Utility Facilities” are permitted within the OS zone through a discretionary Conditional Use Permit<sup>1</sup> and therefore no General Plan land use re-designation would be required, and the project would not implicate the SOAR initiative. The requirement for Public Service/Utility Facilities to obtain a Conditional Use Permit when located in the OS zone was noted in the main body of the Feasibility Study,<sup>2</sup> however, it was not included within Appendix A, Dudek Environmental Technical Report.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Ventura County Code, Section 8111-1.2.1.b.: “A Conditional Use Permit is a permit based on a discretionary decision required prior to initiation of particular uses not allowed as a matter of right. Such permits are subject to site plan review and may be conditioned in order to assure compliance with the requirements of this Chapter and with the purposes of the applicable zone. Such permits may be denied on the grounds of unsuitable location, or may be conditioned in order to be approved. Conditional Use Permits may be granted through a public hearing process by the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, or the Planning Director or designee....”

<sup>2</sup> See Feasibility Study, Alternative 4.A: Devil’s Canyon Road – Natural Gas, p. 75 (“Pursuant to Section 8105-4, Permitted Uses in Open Space, Agricultural, Residential and Special Purpose Zones, pipelines require a CUP subject to approval by the Planning Director and a Public Utility Facility requires a Planning Commission CUP approval.”)

To address this inconsistency, attached is a Supplement to Appendix A, Dudek Environmental Technical Report. Dudek applied Ventura County's land use designation as identified in the County's letter and adjusted the Land Use Designation score for the Devil's Canyon Road site in the Feasibility Study. This Supplement has also been posted to our website at [www.socalgas.com/ventura](http://www.socalgas.com/ventura) where the complete Feasibility Study is also available. As outlined in the Supplement, the ranking of the potential alternatives within the Environmental Considerations of the Dudek Environmental Technical Report, including the Devil's Canyon Road Site, does not change as a result of the adjusted point total.<sup>3</sup>

We appreciate the County's feedback. The public may contact our senior public affairs manager Maria Ventura directly at [projectinfo@socalgas.com](mailto:projectinfo@socalgas.com) or 805-681-7937 with additional questions.

Attachments:

Supplement to Appendix A, Dudek Environmental Technical Report  
County of Ventura Letter dated September 19, 2022

Copy: (via email)

Alice Busching Reynolds, President, California Public Utilities Commission  
Darcie L. Houck, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission  
Clifford Rechtschaffen, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission  
Genevieve Shiroma, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission  
John Reynolds, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission  
Sofia Rubalcava, Mayor, City of Ventura  
Mike Johnson, Councilmember, City of Ventura  
Alex McIntyre, City Manager, City of Ventura  
Matt LaVere, Supervisor, County of Ventura  
Dr. Sevet Johnson, Chief Executive Office, County of Ventura  
Sabrena Rodriguez, Board President, Ventura Unified School District  
Dr. Antonio Castro, Superintendent, Ventura Unified School District  
Pavel Escobedo Garcia, Principal, E.P. Foster Elementary School  
Dr. Cesar Morales, Superintendent, Ventura County Office of Education

---

<sup>3</sup> The Environmental Consideration rankings are: 1) Devil's Canyon Road- Hybrid; 2) Current Site – Hybrid; 3). Ventura Steel – Hybrid.

# Supplemental Technical Memorandum

Subject:	Supplement to Appendix A Environmental Evaluation of Potential Alternatives: Ventura Compressor Station Modernization Project
RE:	Ventura Compressor Station Modernization Project
Date:	October 10, 2022
Project Number:	13161.05

## 1 Introduction

Dudek has prepared this Supplement to address factual inconsistencies identified by the County of Ventura Resource Management Agency (County) regarding the “Feasibility Study of Potential Alternatives: Ventura Compressor Station Modernization Project” (Feasibility Study). The County submitted written correspondence to California Public Utilities Commission President Alice Reynolds, dated September 19, 2022, clarifying the County’s General Plan and zoning ordinance as they relate to the Devil’s Canyon Road site evaluated in the Feasibility Study.

As confirmed in the County’s correspondence, the Devil’s Canyon Road site has a General Plan land use designation of Open Space and a Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (NCZO) designation of Open Space (OS). The Ventura County Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) Initiative, which is included in the General Plan, applies to proposals to re-designate lands that are currently designated as Open Space, Agricultural Exclusive or Rural and also applies to proposals to amend the General Plan policies pertaining to these land use designations. No change in land use or zoning would be required for project implementation for either the natural gas or hybrid options at the Devil’s Canyon Road site.

The language in Section 5.4.1.1.5, Land Use Designation (Natural Gas Option) and Section 5.4.2.1.5, Land Use Designation (Hybrid Option) for the Devil’s Canyon Road site has been updated to correctly state the site’s existing land use and zoning designations would support a natural gas compressor station if a Conditional Use Permit is granted.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the County confirmed the primary compressor station site would not implicate the SOAR initiative as no change in land use or zoning would be required. The Devil’s Canyon Road site is now classified within the Environmental Analysis under the “within an industrial/manufacturing zone” as described in the Section 3.2, Evaluation Methodology of the Alternative Analysis, because although the area is zoned open space, the zoning designation allows the types of uses required for the operation of a Natural Gas Option or Hybrid Option compressor station through a conditional use permit. Therefore, the Scoring Rubric has been updated to reflect an operational land use score of 8 (increased from an original score of 6) for both the Natural Gas and Hybrid Options at the Devil’s Canyon Road site. This changes the total environmental score for the Devil’s Canyon site – Hybrid Option to 457 and for the Natural Gas Option to 408. However, this updated scoring did not change the overall ranking of the Alternatives based on the scoring rubric as depicted in the updated Table 50 in Section 1.

The revisions that follow were made to the “Environmental Evaluation of Potential Alternatives” prepared by Dudek and dated March 2022 (Appendix A of the Feasibility Study). Because the requirement for Public Service/Utility Facilities to obtain a Conditional Use Permit when located in the OS zone was noted in the main body of the Feasibility Study, amendments to the main body were not required. Amended text is identified below by section, heading, and page number. Additions to the text are shown with underline and text removed is shown with strikethrough.

<sup>1</sup> As noted in Appendix A, Dudek Environmental Technical Report, while the CPUC has preemptory powers as relates to discretionary permitting and therefore no local discretionary land use (e.g., rezone, land use) permits would be required on any of the site locations to the extent that CPUC’s preemptive jurisdiction applies, this analysis uses the land use criteria to assess the compatibility of siting a compressor station at a potential site.

## 2 Updated Text

Section 4 – Environmental Scoring and Ranking, Table 5. Environmental Scoring Rubric, Pages 36 and 37:

**Table 5. Environmental Scoring Rubric**

Topic Areas	Existing Site		Avocado Site		Ventura Steel Site		Devil’s Canyon Road Site		County Line Site	
	Natural Gas	Hybrid	Natural Gas	Hybrid	Natural Gas	Hybrid	Natural Gas	Hybrid	Natural Gas	Hybrid
<b>Operational Considerations</b>										
Aesthetics/Visual	8	8	0	0	6	5	8	7	0	0
Air Quality	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	0	5
CalEnviroScreen	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	3	5	3	5	3	5	3	5	2	4
Land Use Designation	1	1	6	6	9	9	<del>6</del> 8	<del>6</del> 8	6	6
Noise	4	4	9	9	7	8	8	9	4	6
Wildfire	8	8	2	1	0	0	2	1	3	2
<i>Subtotal</i>	26	32	23	28	29	35	30	35	17	25
<i>Subtotal (×10)</i>	260	320	230	280	290	350	<del>300</del> 320	<del>350</del> 370	170	250
<b>On-Site Construction Considerations</b>										
Air Quality	6	6	0	0	6	6	6	6	2	2
Cultural Resources	8	8	6	6	7	7	7	7	8	8
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	8	8	2	2	8	8	8	8	4	4
Natural Resources	9	9	8	8	9	9	4	4	6	6
Noise	3	3	9	9	9	9	9	9	7	7
Slope, Topo, and Grading	8	8	0	0	8	8	8	8	3	3
Traffic – Construction	6	6	7	7	9	9	9	9	2	2
<i>Subtotal</i>	48	48	32	32	56	56	51	51	32	32

**Table 5. Environmental Scoring Rubric**

Topic Areas	Existing Site		Avocado Site		Ventura Steel Site		Devil’s Canyon Road Site		County Line Site	
	Natural Gas	Hybrid	Natural Gas	Hybrid	Natural Gas	Hybrid	Natural Gas	Hybrid	Natural Gas	Hybrid
<b>Off-Site Construction for Routing Utilities Considerations</b>										
Air Quality	9	9	2	0	0	0	5	3	5	4
Cultural Resources	8	8	6	6	8	8	6	7	7	6
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	9	9	7	6	4	4	7	7	9	9
Natural Resources	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
Noise	9	9	9	9	0	0	9	9	0	0
Traffic-Roadway Construction	9	9	7	7	0	0	7	7	7	7
Utilities/Service Systems	9	9	4	4	1	1	3	3	4	4
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>37</i>	<i><del>35-36*</del></i>	<i><del>39-40*</del></i>	<i>38</i>
<b>Total Environmental Score</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>419</b>	<b><del>389-408</del></b>	<b><del>437-457</del></b>	<b><del>241-242*</del></b>	<b>320</b>

\* Note the changes in these values are due to errors in tabulation and do not reflect a change in the original scoring of the topic areas.

## Section 5.4.1.1.5 – Land Use Designation, Project Component Land Uses, Page 87

### Project Component Land Uses

As shown on the General Plan Land Use and Zoning maps in Attachment 3, the approximately 15-acre Devil's Canyon Road Site, MLV station, and the required access road are all located on privately held lands within Ventura County. The site selected for the compressor station is currently developed with oil extraction uses. The Devil's Canyon Road Site and all on-site project components are located on a portion of a much larger single parcel (APN 060031016, approximately 336 acres) that has an underlying County General Plan land use designation of Open Space (County of Ventura 2020; 2021) and County zoning of OS-160, requiring a minimum parcel size of 160 acres (County of Ventura 2008). Although largely extending off site, the Devil's Canyon Road Site's two required ancillary pipelines and MLV station would also be within land areas designated as Open Space and zoned OS-160 (County of Ventura 2008, 2020, 2021). According to the currently available aerial views, the proposed site for the off-site MLV station appears to be developed with an active avocado orchard. As previously discussed in Section 5.2.1.1.5, the open space designation is applied to parcels or areas of land that are essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use. The OS-160 designation allows for generally passive uses, including preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and areas requiring special management due to hazardous or special conditions (e.g., earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, high fire severity areas), among others (County of Ventura 2008, Section 8104-1.1). Oil and gas exploration and production is permitted with a conditional use permit (County of Ventura 2008, Section 8105-4). Section 8105-4 of the County's Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance includes a land use category called "Public Service/Utility Facilities" that allows public utilities in the OS zone with the approval of a discretionary Conditional Use Permit.

~~The selection of the Devil's Canyon Road Site is not consistent with existing land use and zoning for the on-site location to facilitate the types of operational uses required by the project. The types of operational uses required by the project could be conditionally allowed within the existing land use and zoning for the Devil's Canyon Road Site. In addition, the underlying land use of the compressor station site (Open Space) is included in the County of Ventura Measure C, SOAR Initiative—2050. However, the Devil's Canyon Road Site would not require a land use re-designation under the General Plan, and therefore, the project would not implicate the SOAR Initiative (County of Ventura 2016).~~

## Section 5.4.1.1.5 – Land Use Designation, Evaluation and Score, Page 88

### Evaluation and Score

All the Devil's Canyon Road – Natural Gas Option's operational components are located within parcels with County zoning that ~~does not support~~ would conditionally allow the industrial and/or manufacturing uses proposed by the Project. Additionally, although the primary compressor station site is within an area governed by the SOAR initiative, SOAR would not be implicated because no change in land use or zoning would be required. No portion of the site is adjacent to any sensitive receptors. The nearest industrially zoned land use parcel is approximately 0.25 miles to the east of the compressor station boundary (APN 068001001), while the nearest sensitive land use is a residentially zoned parcel (APN 0690141135) in the City of Ventura, approximately 0.54 miles from the Devil's Canyon Road Site (County of Ventura 2021). The proposed staging area is located within a parcel zoned for industrial uses; however, this feature would not be required during project operation and is therefore not incorporated into this land use analysis. ~~Additionally, Although~~ the primary compressor station site is within an area governed by the SOAR initiative, SOAR would not be implicated because no change in land use or zoning would be required. The site would remain designated and zoned as Open Space and could allow a compressor station use with a conditional use permit even though the site is not zoned industrial. Based on the above analysis and using the scoring criteria for a site that is within an "Non-Industrial/manufacturing zone and not adjacent to sensitive receptors," the Devil's Canyon Road – Natural Gas Option received a score of ~~6~~ 8 points.

## Section 5.4.2.1.5 – Land Use Designation, Page 96

The Devil’s Canyon Road – Hybrid Option would require the installation of approximately 40 electrical poles and associated overhead electrical conduit to connect to an existing subtransmission line; however, the location and underlying land use(s) of the electrical interconnect are not primary considerations for the land use criteria as described in Section 3.1 and as such, do not significantly influence the score for this site. All the Devil’s Canyon Road – Hybrid Option’s operational components are located within parcels with County zoning that ~~does not support~~ would conditionally allow the industrial and/or manufacturing uses proposed by the Project. Additionally, the primary compressor station site ~~is within an area governed by~~ would not implicate the SOAR initiative ~~because no change in land use or zoning would be required.~~ No portion of the site is adjacent to any sensitive receptors. The nearest industrially zoned land use parcel is approximately 0.25 miles to the east of the compressor station boundary (APN 068001001), while the nearest sensitive land use is a residentially zoned parcel (APN 0690141135) in the City of Ventura, approximately 0.54 miles from the site (County of Ventura 2021). The site would remain designated and zoned as Open Space and could allow a compressor station use with a conditional use permit even though the site is not zoned industrial. Using the scoring criteria for a site which is within an “Non-Industrial/manufacturing zone and not adjacent to sensitive receptors,” the Devil’s Canyon Road – Hybrid Option received a score of ~~68~~ 8 points.

## Section 5.6 – Ranking of Alternatives, Pages 116 and 117:

Upon completion of the rubric scoring, the final tallies for each of the alternative sites and technology options were compared. The final scoring range for the alternatives is shown in Table 50.

**Table 50. Alternative Ranking Based on the Environmental Scoring Rubric**

Alternative Sites	Technology Options	Operational Considerations Ranking (×10)	On-Site Construction Considerations Ranking	Off-Site Construction for Utilities Considerations	Total Score
Option 4: Devil’s Canyon Road Site	B. Hybrid	<del>350</del> <u>370</u>	51	<del>35</del> <u>36*</u>	<del>437</del> <u>457</u>
Option 1: Existing Site	B. Hybrid	320	48	61	429
Option 3: Ventura Steel Site	B. Hybrid	350	56	13	419
Option 4: Devil’s Canyon Road Site	A. Natural Gas	<del>300</del> <u>320</u>	51	37	<del>389</del> <u>408</u>
Option 1: Existing Site (Planned Project)	A. Natural Gas	260	48	61	369
Option 3: Ventura Steel Site	A. Natural Gas	290	56	13	359
Option 2: Avocado Site	B. Hybrid	280	32	32	344
Option 5: County Line Site	B. Hybrid	250	32	38	320
Option 2: Avocado Site	A. Natural Gas	230	32	35	297
Option 5: County Line Site	A. Natural Gas	170	32	<del>39</del> <u>40*</u>	<del>241</del> <u>242*</u>

\* Note the changes in these values are due to errors in tabulation and do not reflect a change in the original scoring of the topic areas.

As previously discussed in Chapter 4, Environmental Scoring and Ranking, the scores in the “Operational Considerations” category were multiplied by a factor of 10. The scores were weighted because operational considerations would have long-term implications for the environment over the life of the modernization project and thus should be considered as more consequential, whereas short-term construction activities are temporary. The factor of 10 was determined to be appropriate by considering the duration of construction impacts in the context of the life of the project. The duration of site construction activities would vary according to site-specific considerations described in Section 2, Alternative Options, and the average length of construction activity for all 10 development scenarios would be 3.8 years. The anticipated useful lifespan of the modernization project is estimated to be 40 years. As such, increasing the numeric scoring for the “Operational Considerations” category by a factor of 10 was determined to adequately capture the environmental consequences of short-term construction vs. long-term operational impacts.

As shown in Table 50, the alternative with the greatest point total is the Devil’s Canyon Road – Hybrid Option, with a score of ~~437~~ 457. This is followed in ranking by the Existing Site – Hybrid Option and the Ventura Steel – Hybrid Option. These three sites and technologies scored within ~~18~~ 38 points of each other. Overall, the Hybrid Option at each site scored higher than the Natural Gas Option at that same site.

### 3 State Regulations

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) decisions, as well as California courts, have confirmed the CPUC’s preemptory powers. As such, no local discretionary (e.g., rezone, land use) permits would be required because the CPUC has preemptive jurisdiction over the siting, construction, maintenance, and operation of natural gas facilities in California. Dudek notes this information was correctly stated under Footnote 3 in Section 3.2.5, Land Use, Land Use Ranking Criteria Definitions of the Environmental Analysis on page 21 of the document. As such, no changes have been made.

### 4 Conclusion

Based on the County’s clarification that a compressor station would be a conditionally allowed use within the OS zoning, the land use scores for the Devil’s Canyon Road site were increased from 6 to 8 for both the Hybrid and Natural Gas option. While the total scores for this site increased by 20 points, this updated scoring did not change the overall ranking of the Alternatives based on the scoring rubric as depicted in the updated Table 50 in Section 1. Devil’s Canyon Road site – Hybrid Option is still ranked first, followed by the Existing site – Hybrid Option, and the Ventura Steel Site – Hybrid Option. Therefore, the overall conclusions in the March 2022 Evaluation do not change.

Page Intentionally Left Blank



September 19, 2022

President Alice Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**SUBJECT:** Clarification Regarding the Alternatives Analysis for the Devil's Canyon Road Site in the Southern California Gas Ventura Compressor Station Modernization Project Feasibility Study dated March 2022

President Alice Reynolds:

The County of Ventura (County) Planning Division coordinates with State agencies and neighboring jurisdictions to review and comment on projects that could affect the unincorporated area of Ventura County. This letter is provided regarding the Feasibility Study of Potential Alternatives in the Ventura Compressor Station Modernization Project (Feasibility Study), published in March 2022 by the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). The Feasibility Study included analysis of the County's zoning ordinance and the Ventura County Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) Initiative, as it pertains to the Devil's Canyon Road Site that is not consistent with the County's actual land use rules. This letter clarifies that the County's existing General Plan and zoning ordinance authorize the development of public utilities at the Devil's Canyon Road Site. In addition, the project would not implicate, let alone be inconsistent with, the SOAR Initiative.

## **Project Characteristics**

According to the Feasibility Study, compressor stations are required to provide the pressurization needed to move gas through transmission pipelines which is then stored or used for consumer uses or electricity generation. The existing Ventura Compressor Station was originally constructed in 1923 with the current equipment installed in the 1980's. In 2021, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) requested that SoCalGas prepare a feasibility study to replace the existing facility. As part of this study, SoCalGas was required to identify and evaluate alternative sites. Ten sites were evaluated and five were dismissed as they did not meet all of the evaluation criteria. The Devil's Canyon Road location was included in the final five to be further reviewed. The site is located at 600 West Shell Road near the City of Ventura in unincorporated County (Assessor's Parcel Number 060-0-310-165); further, the site is located within a highly disturbed area previously used for oil production.

The Feasibility Study identifies the Devil's Canyon Road site as being located on a 336-acre parcel with a General Plan land use designation of Open Space and Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (NCZO) designation of Open Space (OS). On page 199, the Feasibility Study identifies the OS zone as allowing for "*generally passive uses, including preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and areas requiring special management due to hazardous or special conditions (e.g., earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, high fire severity areas), among others.*" It then states that the "*the selection of the Devil's Canyon Road Site is not consistent with existing land use and zoning for the on-site location to facilitate the types of operational uses required by the project. In addition, the underlying land use of the compressor station site is included in the County of Ventura Measure C, SOAR Initiative—2050.*" On page 200, the final Evaluation and Score section for Devil's Canyon Road also states that the operational components would be located on parcels with zoning that does not support industrial and/or manufacturing uses and that the site is further constrained by inconsistencies with the SOAR Initiative.

### **Analysis of County Regulations**

Land uses in unincorporated Ventura County are governed by the General Plan and zoning ordinances. The SOAR Initiative, which is included in the General Plan, applies to proposals to re-designate lands that are currently designated as Open Space, Agricultural Exclusive or Rural, and also applies to proposals to amend the General Plan policies pertaining to these land use designations.

#### **Public Service/Utility Facilities Use Category in the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance**

NCZO Section 8105-4, includes a permissible land use category called "Public Service/Utility Facilities" that allows public utilities in the OS zone. The OS zone has eight main purposes, primarily for the preservation of natural resources, outdoor recreation, and limiting urban sprawl/confining urban development, and the managed production of resources including but not limited to forest lands, rangelands, recharge of groundwater basins, and areas containing major mineral deposits. Because a natural gas compressor station operated by SoCalGas would be a public utility, it is expressly allowed in the OS zone.

(Continued on Next Page)

The Table below shows an excerpt from NCZO Section 8105-4 and that “Public Service/Utility Facilities” are allowed within the OS zone through a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

	OS	AE	RA	RE	RO	R1	R2	RPD	RHD	TP	TRU
<b>PUBLIC SERVICE/UTILITY FACILITIES (27)</b>											
Small Utility Structures (17)	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E		E	
Excluding Office And Service Yards (28)	CUP										
Public Service/Utility Offices And Service Yards, When Located On Lots Containing The Majority Of The Agency's Facilities (28)	CUP			CUP							

Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources Initiative

The SOAR Initiative was most recently adopted by Ventura County voters in 2016. It generally only applies to proposals to re-designate land that is currently designated as Open Space, Agricultural Exclusive or Rural in the General Plan, and to proposals to amend the policies applicable to these General Plan designations to allow for more intensive land uses within these designated lands.

As stated above in the zoning analysis, the compressor station, as a public utility, is expressly allowed in the OS zone. There is also currently “vertical consistency” between the site’s OS zone and its existing Open Space General Plan land use designation. The Devil’s Canyon Road Site would not require a land use re-designation under the General Plan, and so the project would not implicate the SOAR Initiative. Consequently, the project would be consistent with the existing General Plan which includes the SOAR Initiative.

**Analysis of State Regulations**

While the County’s General Plan and NCZO authorize a compressor station as a "public service/utility facilities," it is also necessary to look to the California Public Utilities Code (PUC) to determine if there are preemptions of local authority for a compressor station that would be owned and operated by SoCalGas. A "public utility" is defined by the PUC Section 216(a)(1) to include "every common carrier, toll bridge corporation, pipeline

corporation, gas corporation, electrical corporation, telephone corporation, telegraph corporation, water corporation, sewer system corporation, and heat corporation, where the service is performed for, or the commodity is delivered to, the public or any portion thereof." Moreover, according to PUC Section 216(b) carriers and corporations that fall within the definition of a "public utility" are "subject to the jurisdiction, control, and regulation of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)." SoCalGas falls under the state definition of a public utility and is subject to the jurisdiction, control, and regulation of the CPUC, therefore the project could be authorized by the CPUC without authorization by the County. Section 5.2.1 in the Feasibility Study also discusses the overarching authority of the CPUC to preempt the need for local discretionary permits.

### **Conclusion**

The Feasibility Study inaccurately characterizes the regulatory environment, local zoning conditions, and the SOAR Initiative with respect to the alternative analysis for the Devil's Canyon Road Site. Local regulations could allow the compressor station on the Site. Moreover, the CPUC is the lead agency in permitting a SoCalGas compressor station and therefore a local land use permit would not be required for this project.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me at 805-654-2481 or [Dave.Ward@ventura.org](mailto:Dave.Ward@ventura.org).

Sincerely,



---

Dave Ward, AICP  
Planning Director  
County of Ventura Planning Division