



# Despite strong opposition, South Coast Air Quality Management District approves West Coast's largest oil refinery

## **CBE and other community organizations are now intensively evaluating legal options.**

The substandard environmental review and permitting by the AQMD fails to adequately disclose impacts and protect the public, and this major fossil fuel expansion undermines LA's and California's sustainability plans for climate, health, safety & Environmental Justice protections. It risks major impacts to communities from Canada, to North Dakota, Oregon, Washington, and all the way to Los Angeles. [See CBE NoTesoro webpage for documents, letters from Mayors, CBE comments, calls to action, and more.](#) Every Mayor of cities surrounding the facility has sent a letter questioning the environmental review's completeness, and now the [City of Carson just sued for a Temporary Restraining Order](#). Pacific Northwestern Mayors & officials have also sent a letter regarding the upstream impacts.

**The expansion will combine the Tesoro Wilmington refinery with the former BP Carson refinery next door,** expand crude processing, and build unprecedented new crude storage at the combined Tesoro/BP Wilmington / Carson refinery (3.4 million barrels). It increases air pollution and hazards (production increases in 22 heaters, more than 12 new flare connections, closing Wilmington cracker but increasing Carson Cracker production, more gas & diesel). The EIR also failed to evaluate its own [new study](#) which shows that VOC & benzene emissions from LA refineries, including Tesoro, are severely underestimated. ([Also see CBE decoding factsheet.](#)) Tesoro's LA refinery already had an explosion of a sulfur tank last August, which could not be explained by the AQMD. This explosion required shutdown of streets, and a shelter-in-place for a quarter mile around.

**The SCAQMD Final EIR (Environmental Impact Report) refuses to evaluate dangerous new crude oils at the refinery and other expansion risks, with international impacts.** Tesoro's CEO repeatedly disclosed new crude oil plans to its investors. The new crudes and other parts of the refinery expansion increase risks due to higher VOCs, benzene, corrosion, risks of fire, explosion, hazardous material release, water pollution, climate impacts. These fracked crude oils would come by rail [dubbed "bomb trains"] mostly from the N. Dakota Bakken fields to Vancouver Washington (where nearby trains blew up next to an elementary school), then would be loaded on ships to LA. Fracked crude releases toxics to air and water, is highly volatile, and releases high Greenhouse Gases during extraction. Multiple crude trains exploded, spilled across the country, dozens were killed. US DOT found Bakken crude particularly dangerous. Neighbors in Vancouver & Portland oppose Tesoro's Vancouver Terminal that would connect to this project. Strip-mined, asphalt-like tar sands crude from Canada which create toxic lakes and rivers, with explosive diluents added for transport, can also be included. Tesoro's plans increase risks to indigenous and other communities in Canada, North Dakota (where Tesoro is reported to connect its pipelines to [Dakota Access Pipeline](#)), communities along the rail route in Oregon & Washington, down to refinery neighborhoods of Wilmington, Carson, and W. Long Beach in Los Angeles, and to the global climate.



## Write to the AQMD CEO who approved the Project in Protest!

The SCAQMD needs to know  
when they make big mistakes!



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Wayne Nastri, Executive Officer, South Coast Air Quality Management District**

Jillian Wong, Planning and Rules Manager

Danny Luong, Senior Enforcement Manager

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cc. AQMD Governing Boardmember Joe Buscaino, c/o Jacob Haik, Deputy Chief of Staff, [jacob.haik@lacity.org](mailto:jacob.haik@lacity.org)

Re: **Protest of Tesoro LARIC Project Approval**

**Dear Mr. Nastri,**

**I write in protest of your approval of the Tesoro LARIC (Los Angeles Refinery Integration and Compliance) project Environmental Impact Report (EIR).**

In finalizing the EIR and permitting, you approved fatal errors, such as the draft's failure to evaluate Tesoro's admitted crude oil switch, with its public health, climate disruption, and explosion hazards. The California Environmental Quality Act requires an accurate project description and evaluation of potentially significant impacts in the draft and final environmental report. **Instead, your Final EIR reads like a Public Relations letter drafted by Tesoro.**

A large body of evidence submitted to the AQMD by CBE, Earthjustice, Eastyard, CFASE, SAFER, SoCal 350, and many others, showed overwhelmingly that the Draft EIR failed as an informational document. Your own joint study showed that Tesoro's VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) and benzene emissions are severely underestimated!

Tesoro could have entirely prevented any "delay" if it had disclosed the crude oil switch plan four years ago, when it had acknowledged the plans to its own investors. What you have done is worse – to cover for the oil industry.

We expect better of the Air District, which is charged with protecting the public health and safety, especially in communities that are heavily impacted by the oil industry. We expect you to fully evaluate the severe climate impacts of these oil industry expansions which are counter to LA's and California's climate and sustainability goals.

Sincerely,

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**Please send your letter to the AQMD as soon as possible, and send a copy to CBE.** For more info contact: Alicia Rivera ([alicia@cbecal.org](mailto:alicia@cbecal.org)), Ashley Hernandez ([ashley@cbecal.org](mailto:ashley@cbecal.org)) or Julia May ([julia@cbecal.org](mailto:julia@cbecal.org))

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**CBE**