

SAN JOAQUIN CROSS VALLEY LOOP PROJECT ROUTE #2 and #6

BOB'S VIEWS

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Over 100 years ago my maternal grandparents Abe and Bertha Dinkins purchased from Bertha's stepfather, Jason Barton, thirty acres north of Woodlake in a community called Elderwood. On these thirty acres they planted citrus and thus began a long time family farming enterprise.

Around this same period, my paternal grand-parents Herold and Marie Hengst homesteaded property on the North Fork of the Kaweah River in Three Rivers and started a cattle and hog enterprise.

Over the years more acreage was added in the Elderwood area. Various crops were grown including citrus, grapes, cotton, beans, peas, pasture, oats, barley, corn, alfalfa, cattle, hogs, and sheep.

Some years after my parents Harold and Wilma were married, they sold the Three Rivers North Fork property and bought property from the Sentinel Butte Corporation. Part of this property was planted to grapes, citrus and avocados, but it was later converted to range land for raising cattle. This and other Hengst family property is what we are concerned about in the proposed Edison alternative #2 and #6 Cross Valley Loop.

In looking at the proposed route, the devil himself could not have chosen a more destructive route to the Hengst property.

First the right of way starts on the east boundary of the Sentinel Butte property and continues west for approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, then it moves north over $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, then west for $\frac{1}{8}$ of a mile.

The next Hengst family property the right of way crosses starts west of Rd. 204, crosses over $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of plums, taking out a 15 HP pump and well as well as $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of 8" mainline pipe used to irrigate the plums and other crops. The lines then cross Millwood Drive and Cottonwood Creek and continue on Hengst property crossing a wagon wheel well, a 100HP pump, and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of 10 inch pipeline . The lateral or wagon well irrigates 230 acres of plums, oranges and pomegranates. It is the loss of this well that will effectively put Hengst Farms out of business.

Let me explain how a wagon wheel well is dug. First, a 36" well is drilled about 100 ft. down to decomposed granite. It is cased with concrete pipe and then while a pump is pumping the water, a man is lowered into the well and jackhammers an 8 foot room from which he proceeds to drill many horizontal holes with an air or hydraulic powered drill several hundred feet, thus increasing the yield of the well. This type of well can no longer be constructed at any price because of OSHA restrictions.

It is because my father had this well constructed in 1959 that we are now able to irrigate the 230 acres previously mentioned. Without this well most of the acreage would revert to dry land farming with a loss of income in the millions over the next thirty years or more.

The proposed lines proceed west and then north along Road 194, making a turn near our 40 acres of oranges with pulling access needed. Facilitating this turn will require the removal of many orange trees. Access roads will need to be built as well on some of our property. Sacrificing three major pieces of Hengst property is asking a lot of our family to contribute to this project. We are only a portion of the people affected by either the Proposed Route #1 or Alternate Route #2 and #6. I know there many people with similar concerns.

That is why Alternate Route #3A is so desirable. With a small jog around the Stone Corral Vernal Pools, it would be the most environmentally friendly of any one of the proposed routes in addition to protecting many farming operations and businesses. Thank you for listening.