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Concerns with Lithium-ion BESS for Compass Energy Storage Project

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

From: [LINDA CARTYRAY](#)
To: [Energy - Docket Optical System](#)
Subject: Docket No. 24-OPT-02-Compass Energy Storage Project
Date: Friday, May 30, 2025 8:12:41 AM
Attachments: [BESS.docx](#)

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Written comments regarding Compass Energy Storage Project attached.
Thank you.

I want to address a pressing concern associated with the lithium-ion Battery Energy Storage Systems, or BESS, project scheduled for San Juan Capistrano.

These systems pose a significant risk.

Chief among them is the potential for **thermal runaway** - a chain reaction that can lead to fires or explosions. Once ignited, these fires are extremely difficult to extinguish and can burn for hours, sometimes releasing toxic gases like hydrogen fluoride.

Another concern is **environmental impact**. The production, use, and disposal of lithium-ion batteries involve hazardous materials. In the event of a fire or chemical leak, groundwater and soil can be contaminated, posing long-term health risks to nearby residents and wildlife.

There are also an estimated 1,000 horses in the SJC area. Imagine trying to relocate these equine communities. Some of these organizations that would be affected offer therapeutic horse therapy for children/adults with disabilities, those that are dealing with trauma and many veterans working with horses as they deal with PTSD.

Finally, **emergency response systems** often aren't fully prepared to deal with BESS-related incidents. Many first responders lack the specialized training and equipment needed to handle these complex emergencies safely.

Recent incidents in California have highlighted the potential hazards associated with lithium-ion battery energy storage systems.

For instance,

Moss Landing Storage Fire

On January 16, 2025, a significant fire erupted at the Vistra Energy lithium-ion battery storage facility in Moss Landing, Monterey County. The blaze led to the evacuation of approximately 1,500 residents due to concerns over toxic smoke emissions. The fire smoldered for several days. This incident marked the fourth fire at the facility since 2019.

Gateway Energy Storage Fire

In May 2024, a fire broke out at the Gateway Energy Storage facility in Otay Mesa, San Diego County. The fire lasted five days. Evacuation orders were issued for the surrounding area.

Valley Center Energy Storage Fire

A fire occurred at the Valley Center Energy Storage Facility in northern San Diego County in September 2023. The incident prompted evacuations and a shelter-in-place order for nearby homes and businesses.

These incidents underscore the significant risks associated with BESS for surrounding communities and why the proposed project in San Juan Capistrano should be terminated immediately.

Thank you