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Comment Received From: Amanda Quintanilla

Submitted On: 6/4/2025

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Proposed Compass Energy Storage Project (24-OPT-02)

Dear Executive Director Bohan and Commissioners,

My name is Amanda Quintanilla and I have lived in Southern Orange County for over 50 years. I am in strong opposition to the Proposed Compass Energy Storage Project (24-OPT-02). More importantly, I am opposed to any Battery Energy Storage System in South Orange County, especially in our open spaces and mitigated lands. Finding another in South Orange County is not an option.

Health risks: As a Registered Nurse, I am concerned regarding the health risks from Lithium battery fires that emit toxic gases that are hazardous, which can cause severe debilitating health issues. These fires will emit toxic gases and will be a public health risk to the surrounding communities, especially during windy conditions such as the Santa Ana winds. The Wildfire Risks are extremely high in this location which is surrounded by dry vegetation. The steep terrain will not provide easy access to extinguish these fires. This will endanger businesses, homes, and schools.

Former San Clemente Mayor Chris Hamm, and President of the Orange County Professional Firefighters spoke on May 29th at the California Energy Commission, CEC, stating that firefighters are not equipped to handle these toxic fires and this is a powerful statement. He also spoke about the health risks to our firefighters. As a result of exposure and long-lasting effects, firefighters had to stop working. This had ruined their careers.

Transportation: As someone who fought the toll roads with the Not My Toll Road, a grassroots movement, through San Juan Capistrano and San Clemente, I am concerned about the impact on Transportation issues along the I-5 due this project. In addition, I am concerned about Railroad Safety for the railroad right-of-way for the passenger rail and commercial rail service of the LOSSAN Rail Corridor that includes Amtrak, Metrolink, OCTA, and the freight operators by BNSF Railway.

Environmental impacts: I am deeply concerned about the environmental impacts on species such as the Pacific Pocket Mouse, Arroyo Toad, the Light-footed Ridgeway, the Belding's Savannah Sparrow, and the Arroyo Toad. Also, the plant species such as Braenton's Milk Vetch, California Sage Brush, and possibly the Brodiaea Fili folia.

If there are any fires, the runoff will adversely affect the project's proximity to the Oso and Arroyo Creek watershed that will further exacerbate potential water quality issues, contaminating the San Juan Creek Watershed, which flows to the Ocean just a few miles away. Our creeks will be easily contaminated with heavy metals and absorbed into the region's soil, adversely impacting our local ecosystem that would

head to our ocean.

Geological concerns: There are geological concerns regarding the unstable land that is comprised of Capistrano Formation and Monterey Formation, which are unstable.

"Capistrano Formation, named for the town of San Juan Capistrano, is located in southern California, specifically the northern extent of the Peninsular Ranges, which stretch from the Los Angeles Basin to Baja California. It crops out along the coast from Dana Point to San Clemente, and inland for seven miles." Wikipedia.org The cities of Dana Point, Laguna Niguel, San Juan Capistrano, and San Clemente have these types of unstable land.

Monterey Formation "generally consists of thinly bedded diatomaceous siltstone to shale that is soft to moderately firm and locally indurate. The locally diatomaceous nature of the Monterey Formation materials are characterized by low dry unit weight. The Capistrano formation commonly overlies the Monterey Formation creating bedrock that is difficult to distinguish from one another. The Capistrano Formation generally consists of clayey siltstone to silty claystone and local fine-to-medium grained sandstone." City of Laguna Niguel.

A whole community of Colina Sur that is adjacent to this property was not able to be developed as the result of this unstable land. There have been other landslide issues in Laguna Niguel going back to 1998. Building a Battery Energy Storage System in this location is not recommended.

Additional concerns: When listening to some of the public comments for the June 3rd CEC for the Compass Energy Storage Project, people suggested placing a Battery Farm at San Onofre because they have energy lines, is horrific.

San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, SONGS, is a decommissioned nuclear power plant, but it still stores more than 3.5 million pounds of nuclear waste in steel canisters surrounded by concrete. The plant was shut down in 2013 due to a small leak of radioactive steam, and its owner, Southern California Edison. They have been dismantling it in recent years.

The main cause of battery farm fires is thermal runaway, which is a chain reaction of overheating and self-ignition that can spread rapidly among battery cells. Thermal runaway can be triggered by various factors, such as internal cell defects, external short circuits, mechanical damage, overcharging, overheating or poor ventilation. Once thermal runaway starts, it can be very difficult to stop or contain. The high temperatures and pressures generated by the burning batteries can cause explosions and release flammable and toxic gases. Exposure to Hydrogen fluoride is lethal if inhaled and causes irreversible health effects after an hour of exposure.

A thermal Runaway which can cause explosions at SONGS where they store more than 3.5 million pounds of nuclear waste would be like a Chernobyl type explosion and it would be catastrophic.

In addition, please do not include the Prima Deshecha Landfill site since there are plans to expand this landfill in 2023 and that is currently under review. More importantly, the landfill site abuts the City of San Clemente Open Spaces and mitigated lands, which have conservation easements. Not to mention our open spaces are protected.

According to a SC Times article, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano Comment on Expansion of Nearby Landfill, “The cities of San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano” both of which neighbor the Prima Deshecha Landfill “voiced their perspectives on the landfill’s upcoming expansion late last week by submitting letters to Orange County Waste & Recycling (OCWR), the facility’s owner and operator.

San Clemente expressed concerns related to impacts on air quality, hazardous materials, noise and more; San Juan Capistrano mentioned fire protection services, impacts to cultural resources significant to local Native American tribes, and traffic.

Both cities broached overlapping topics and requested to be included in the phases of the expansion to come.

“Given the project’s proximity to (Forster Ranch and Talega) there is increased interest concerning the potential for these impacts to affect residents in these areas,” wrote Dave Rebensdorf, San Clemente utilities director.

Other locations: Locations for Compass Energy Storage facility in San Juan Capistrano, San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS), the Prima Deshecha landfill, and in San Clemente will have detrimental effects.

Please DENY Proposed Compass Energy Storage Project (24-OPT-02).

Sincerely,

Amanda Quintanilla