

DOCKETED

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BESS San Juan Capistrano

I commented on this docket on 12/29/2024 opposing the project due to the recent fires at the Otay Mesa BESS facility. Just a couple weeks after commenting, the Monterey fire broke out at their BESS facility. At that point, I thought that there would be no way that this project would be proceeding. Well, here we are and the public to me seems under informed on the proposal. How are we letting this get this far?

There is a bad trend with these BESS facilities and toxic fires. In 2020, a 250 MW BESS in Otay Mesa, which at the time was the biggest BESS on earth but is the same size as proposed here in San Juan Capistrano, came online. 4 years later, it was on fire and now a year later is still offline as a result of the fire. In Monterey, same story, it was once the biggest BESS on earth and a few years later, it is on fire. Heavy metals were found in the water, soil, and all over the environment for dozens of miles. People have been disclosing adverse events in regards to their health because of the toxic plumes coming from these fires. These fires are not rare events. This project is not a reasonable proposition for us.

The site of the proposed BESS facility is risky and has faults. It is located in a designated a high fire zone. There are also geological concerns at the site with steep eroding hills and a creek and old frontage road bordering it. Additionally, it is centrally located within a residential area and a transportation corridor - within just about 1 mile you have schools (Saddleback college, Capo Valley high school, Niguel Hills middle school, Hidden Hills elementary school, George White elementary school, JSerra high school), not to mention, thousands of homes and hundreds of businesses. Located next to the railway, the 5 freeway, toll road, and adjacent to Trabuco Creek which drains to San Juan Creek which drains through Dana Point and San Juan into the the beaches. In the event of a fire, the toxic smoke would cause shutdowns of the rail, the freeway, evacuations hundreds of thousands. Although there isn't much firefighting that can be done to a lithium fire, toxic water would drain right into Trabuco creek and flow into the ocean. This to me just seems like such a nightmare to public and environmental health. Let's be smart, let's be environmentally conscious, let's listen to the people - the first responders, the scientists, the business owners, the teachers, the families, our children. We oppose this project.

This is truly an amazing natural area, bike paths, walking paths, aquatic plants and animals, in my youth I caught and released bass in that creek right next to the proposed site, historic swallows and other birds, and many animals - it's the collision point of Laguna Niguel, Dana point, San Juan Capistrano, Mission Viejo. Please be logical about this and let your heart and brain take priority over dollars! please let's be logical and let's do what is right.

The local community so conclusively opposes this project. The locals here are logical people who love this land and want to preserve the environment. These fires are not healthy, and they are not rare. We have verified recent events at the same sites in this state to the north and the south of us that showed how widespread the toxic plume spreads. Our local voice is being taken away. Please, CEC, stand up for the right thing and oppose this project. Thank you