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World demand for lithium is expected to grow as much as tenfold in the next decade driven largely by increasing demand for lithium-ion batteries in electric vehicles and energy storage. The Salton Sea geothermal resource area is well-positioned to become a competitive source of this critical mineral which could potentially unleash billions of dollars of new economic infrastructure development.

To explore the opportunities and challenges surrounding lithium recovery from geothermal brines in the Salton Sea geothermal region,

Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 1657 in September 2020 creating the Blue Ribbon Commission on Lithium Extraction in California, known as the Lithium Valley Commission.

The Lithium Valley Commission is charged with investigating and analyzing a range of related issues collaboratively with other government agencies and members of the public. The Commission must submit a report of findings and recommendations to the state legislature by October 1, 2022.

## Lithium Valley Commission Meetings

The Lithium Valley Commission holds public meetings to complete regular business and discuss specific topic areas through guest expert presentations, moderated discussions, question-and-answer periods and public comment. Staff from the California Energy Commission (CEC) provides operational support to the Lithium Valley Commission.

Meetings are typically conducted on the last Thursday of each month and usually include discussions of one or more of the following topics

identified for analysis in AB 1657 as well as findings and recommendations being considered for inclusion in the report to the legislature:

- Lithium extraction methods
- Furthering geothermal development
- Market opportunities for lithium extraction
- Environmental impacts
- Importance of incentives
- Economic impacts
- Workforce development
- Benefits of/to geothermal plants
- Overcoming challenges to lithium extraction
- Legislative regulatory recommendations



## Lithium Valley Commissioners

The 13-member Lithium Valley Commission includes of a range of industry, government and community representatives appointed by the Energy Commission and others as the law requires.

- **Chair Silvia Paz**, Alianza Coachella Valley  
*Appointed by Governor Newsom*
- **Vice Chair Ryan E. Kelley**, County of Imperial  
Local city or county government representative  
*Appointed by the CEC*
- **Steve Castaneda**, South Bay Irrigation District,  
Sweetwater Authority  
*Appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules*
- **Rod Colwell**, Controlled Thermal Resources  
Economics and incentives representative  
*Appointed by the CEC*
- **Roderic Dolega**, Ford EV Purchasing  
National vehicle manufacturer representative  
*Appointed by the CEC*
- **Miranda Flores**, California Natural  
Resources Agency  
*Appointed by the Secretary of the  
California Natural Resources Agency*
- **James C. Hanks** - Imperial Irrigation District  
Local public electric utility representative  
*Appointed by the CEC*
- **Arthur Lopez**, Torres Martinez Desert  
Cahuilla Indians  
Local tribal community representative  
*Appointed by the CEC*
- **Luis Olmedo**, Comite Civico Del Valle, Inc.  
Disadvantaged and low-income  
communities representative  
*Appointed by the CEC*
- **Frank Ruiz**, Audubon California's Salton  
Sea Program  
Local environmental organization representative  
*Appointed by the CEC*
- **Manfred Scott**, Quechan Indian Tribe,  
General public representative  
*Appointed by the CEC*
- **Thomas Soto**, Diverse Communities Impact Fund  
*Appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly*
- **Jonathan Weisgall**, Berkshire Hathaway Energy  
Lithium extraction industry representative,  
*Appointed by the CEC*

## Stay Connected with the Lithium Valley Commission

CEC staff assists and provides coordination support for Lithium Valley Commission activities.

For information and access to documents, points of contact and to subscribe to the email list for the Lithium Valley Commission visit:

[www.energy.ca.gov/LithiumValleyCommission](http://www.energy.ca.gov/LithiumValleyCommission)

To request assistance, contact [LithiumValleyCommission@energy.ca.gov](mailto:LithiumValleyCommission@energy.ca.gov).

For information about interpreting services or other reasonable modification and accommodations, contact (916) 957-7910 or [publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov](mailto:publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov).



Governor  
Gavin Newsom

Executive Director  
Drew Bohan

Commissioners  
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Siva Gunda, Vice Chair  
Karen Douglas, J.D.  
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Patricia Monahan

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