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| Docket Number: | 20-LITHIUM-01 |
| Project Title: | Lithium Valley Commission |
| TN #: | 248825 |
| Document Title: | Order Dissolving the Blue Ribbon Commission on Lithium Extraction in California |
| Description: | Order No.: 23-0215-03f |
| Filer: | Liza Lopez |
| Organization: | California Energy Commission |
| Submitter Role: | Commission Staff |
| Submission Date: | 2/16/2023 6:28:16 PM |
| Docketed Date: | 2/16/2023 |

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
STATE ENERGY RESOURCES
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:

***Blue Ribbon Commission on Lithium
Extraction in California***

Docket No.: 20-LITHIUM-01

**Order Dissolving the Blue Ribbon
Commission on Lithium Extraction in
California**

I. BACKGROUND

On January 1, 2021, Assembly Bill 1657 (AB 1657, E. Garcia, Chapter 271, Statutes of 2020) took effect and required the California Energy Commission (CEC) to establish a Blue Ribbon Commission on Lithium Extraction in California (Commission), also commonly referred to as the Lithium Valley Commission. AB 1657 directed the Commission to review, investigate, and analyze certain issues and potential incentives regarding lithium extraction and use in California, and required the Commission to submit a report to the Legislature documenting its findings and recommendations.

Commission members were appointed pursuant to AB 1657 to fill specific membership roles representing a variety of interests, including industry, community organizations, tribal communities, environmental organizations, and state and local agencies. Of the 14 Commission members, the CEC was responsible for the appointment of nine members, with the remaining appointments made by the California Public Utilities Commission, the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency, the Senate Committee on Rules, the Speaker of the Assembly, and the Governor.

The following members were appointed to the Commission:

- Silvia Paz, Alianza Coachella Valley, and Commission Chair
- Ryan Kelley, County of Imperial Board of Supervisors, and Commission Vice Chair
- Steve Castaneda, South Bay Irrigation District
- Rod Colwell, Controlled Thermal Resources
- Roderic Dolega, Ford EV Purchasing
- Miranda Flores, California Natural Resources Agency
- James C. Hanks, Imperial Irrigation District
- Arthur “Richie” Lopez, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
- Luis Olmedo, Comite Civico del Valle, Inc.

- Alice Busching Reynolds, California Public Utilities Commission (replacing Martha Guzman Aceves)
- Frank Ruiz, Audubon California's Salton Sea Program
- Manfred Scott, Quechan Indian Tribe
- Tom Soto, Latimer Partners, LLC.
- Jonathan Weisgall, Berkshire Hathaway Energy

The Commission held its first meeting on February 25, 2021, and since that time, held over 23 public meetings over a nearly two-year period. These publicly noticed and conducted meetings provided the Commission an opportunity to learn from representatives of industry, academia, community-based organizations, and public agencies, as well as members of communities and Tribes. On November 17, 2022, the Commission took action to finalize the *Report of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Lithium Extraction in California* (Report) and adopted 15 recommendations. The Report was developed to meet the requirements of AB 1657 and was submitted to the Legislature on December 1, 2022. The last meeting of the Commission occurred on January 20, 2023, during which a quorum of the members recommended that the CEC dissolve the Commission.

II. CEC FINDINGS

The CEC hereby adopts the following findings:

- The work of the Commission has been valuable to the California Legislature and the CEC because its Report provides foundational information about lithium, its role in the global economy and California's clean energy transition, standard methods of extraction and an overview of the recovery of lithium from geothermal brine, background and context for recovery of lithium from geothermal brine in the Salton Sea region in Imperial County; and its Report presents issues of concern raised by community members and Tribes.
- The work of the Commission has been valuable to the people of California and to the communities of the Salton Sea region because its public meetings provided a forum for exchanging ideas and raising concerns; and its Report presents those concerns, while identifying lithium extraction as having the potential for creating economic transformation of the Salton Sea region and for contributing to California's success in decarbonizing the economy and combating the climate crisis.
- The Commission, having submitted its Report to the California Legislature pursuant to the requirements of AB 1657, has fulfilled the purpose for which it was created.
- With the submittal of its Report to the California Legislature, the Commission has no further mandate.

III. CONCLUSION AND ORDER

Therefore, with recognition of the significant expertise, time, and resources volunteered by the Commission members, the CEC **ORDERS** the following:

The Blue Ribbon Commission on Lithium Extraction in California is dissolved as of February 15, 2023. The CEC directs the Executive Director to take any further necessary actions on behalf of the CEC to effectuate the dissolution of the Commission.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned Secretariat to the CEC does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an order duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the CEC held on February 15, 2023.

AYE: Hochschild, Gallardo, Gunda, McAllister, Monahan

NAY: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

Dated: February 16, 2023

SIGNED BY:

Liza Lopez
Secretariat