

**DOCKETED**

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<b>Project Title:</b>	Willow Rock Energy Storage Center
<b>TN #:</b>	249431
<b>Document Title:</b>	Willow Rock Energy Storage Center Status Report No 7
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<b>Organization:</b>	Ellison Schneider Harris & Donlan LLP
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**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
Energy Resources Conservation  
and Development Commission**

In the Matter of: )  
 )  
Application for Certification for the ) Docket No. 21-AFC-02  
Willow Rock Energy Storage Center )  
 )  
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**WILLOW ROCK ENERGY STORAGE CENTER  
STATUS REPORT NO. 7**

Pursuant to the *Committee Scheduling Order* (“Scheduling Order”) docketed August 31, 2022,<sup>1</sup> GEM A-CAES LLC (“the Applicant”) hereby submits this status report to inform the Committee regarding the progress of the Application for Certification (“AFC”) proceeding for the Willow Rock Energy Storage Center (“Willow Rock”).<sup>2</sup>

On February 27, 2023, CEC Staff docketed Data Requests Set 4. The Applicant is preparing responses to these data requests and will be responding within the timeframe provided for by Section 1716 of the Commission’s Regulations. The Applicant has also been in close coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife with respect to survey protocols, scope, and requirements for the Mojave Ground Squirrel and Crotch’s Bumble Bee. Spring biological resources protocol surveys are expected to commence before the end of March.

Project optimization, focused on the evaluation of some data collection activities related to geological conditions, also remains ongoing. Geological suitability necessarily dictates the nature and scope of project optimization. As discussed in Status Report No. 1,<sup>3</sup> docketed in September of 2022, the Applicant is continuing to explore the possibility of acquiring additional acreage as part of project optimization activities. Of course, if additional acreage is deemed beneficial, those parcels will be subject to the appropriate environmental review and surveys, and any affected AFC sections and technical reports updated accordingly. The Applicant will continue to provide schedule and expected project optimization response updates in its Status Reports.

The Applicant also appreciates and is generally supportive of the filed comments of the Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department, and will continue to work closely with Kern County as both a critical and valued stakeholder in this proceeding.

Dated: March 24, 2023

Respectfully Submitted,


ELLISON, SCHNEIDER HARRIS & DONLAN LLP

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<sup>1</sup> TN#: 245754.

<sup>2</sup> TN#: 244313.

<sup>3</sup> TN #: 246209

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