

DOCKETED

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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)
)
_____)

**WILLOW ROCK ENERGY STORAGE CENTER
STATUS REPORT NO. 17**

Pursuant to the Committee Order docketed August 11, 2023,¹ 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 (“Project”).

PROJECT OPTIMIZATION

The Applicant is preparing a Supplemental AFC that incorporates the revised Project Description and continues to target a filing date in the first quarter of this year. The Applicant has been coordinating closely with California Energy Commission Staff to exchange information regarding the optimized Project in advance of the submission of the Supplemental AFC.

Following *Status Report No. 16*, the Applicant has the following milestones to report:

- Execution of Large Generator Interconnection Agreement with the California Independent System Operator and Southern California Edison Company for the Project.
- Continued participation of the Project in additional offtake contracting initiatives, including ongoing discussions through shortlisting in procurement processes with load-serving entities.
- Continued geotechnical work to support cavern construction at an optimized location.
- Review of construction and operations plant design plans to optimize the Project.
- Review of plans for adaptive reuse of cavern rock adjacent to the facility as well as offsite to regional businesses to meet market demand for concrete aggregate products.
- Review of plans for preferred pathway for 19-mile generation tie line and several alternate route options.
- Review of results of biological resources surveys following guidance from California Department of Fish and Wildlife relating to appropriate species survey protocols.

¹ TN#: 251599.

- Preparation of conceptual mitigation plans for compliance with Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act and California Fish and Game Code.
- Review of results of cultural resources surveys and continued engagement of tribal entities listed by the Native American Heritage Commission.
- Continued efforts for retail water supply service to support both construction and operation, including submission of the initial deposit for water service.
- Continued environmental impact analysis and drafting of sections for the Supplemental AFC.

The Applicant will continue to file Status Reports on or before the 26th of each month with an update regarding the Project's status.

Dated: January 26, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,

ELLISON, SCHNEIDER HARRIS & DONLAN LLP

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