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Docket Number:	24-OIIP-02
Project Title:	Informational Proceeding on Lithium Valley Vision
TN #:	255766
Document Title:	Potential Topic Areas for Future Workshops
Description:	N/A
Filer:	Erik Stokes
Organization:	California Energy Commission
Submitter Role:	Commission Staff
Submission Date:	4/17/2024 4:10:27 PM
Docketed Date:	4/17/2024

Lithium Valley Topic Areas for Future Informational Proceeding Workshops

The Lithium Valley Informational Proceeding will consist of a series of workshops, conducted by the CEC in coordination with the County of Imperial (County), to gather information and perspectives on the most important topics related to Lithium Valley development. The information gathered at these workshops will inform the actions of state policymakers, provide transparency for the public, and build collaboration across partners.

The CEC is seeking public input on topics and questions that should be addressed in future workshops. Below is a list of potential workshop topics with specific questions that may be addressed. Which of the following topics are most important and which additional topics should be considered?

Potential Topic Areas:

Infrastructure: The development of new infrastructure and repair of current systems (e.g. - transportation, power, health facilities, etc.) will be critical to allowing lithium-based industries to thrive and the community to benefit from new industrial activity in the region. This topic area could address the following questions:

- What are the current infrastructure needs for communities in the Salton Sea region? What are the key infrastructure investments needed to support the community as the lithium industry drives population growth and facility expansion and how should those infrastructure needs be prioritized?
- What types of resources will local governments need to help ensure the success of an emerging industry, a growing economy, and an expanding population?
- What are the infrastructure needs of lithium recovery firms and the larger business ecosystem that could develop around the lithium resource? How should those infrastructure needs be prioritized?
- What are the “win-win” infrastructure projects that could benefit communities and industry?
- What opportunities are there for innovation in infrastructure technology and design that provide greater services and benefits to residents and businesses? For example, pre-fabricated housing; modular wastewater treatment systems, electric transport.
- What specific federal or state funding is needed to meet the infrastructure needs of the region?

Growing a Lithium-Based Economic Ecosystem: Lithium recovery will be at the core of Lithium Valley; however, related industries will also grow along with ancillary businesses. Much of the job growth in the region could likely come from industries indirectly linked to lithium recovery, like battery manufacturing and recycling. This topic area could address the following questions:

- Which additional industries and businesses could develop in the Salton Sea region based off economic activity and investment in Lithium Valley?
- What should be considered to help ensure more segments of the battery value chain will be sustainable and viable to co-locate in the Salton Sea region?

- What other incentives or policy tools are needed to attract, grow, and manage other industries and businesses, such as battery manufacturing, to the region?
- What is the role for Opt-in Permitting in attracting industries like battery manufacturing to the region?
- To create a more diverse portfolio in the region, what other clean energy technologies should the state consider supporting for the region?
- What are market opportunities for other critical minerals recovered as part of geothermal activities?
- Is a statewide plan needed to better support the success of the Lithium Valley Vision and other lithium hot spots in the state? If so, what should be considered in the statewide plan to ensure success of a lithium-based economy and meet California's climate goals?

Education and Workforce Development: To ensure that local residents are able to access the job benefits created by new industries and businesses in Lithium Valley, it is important that there are high quality workforce and job training programs. This is an area where many partners have already made significant progress and this workshop would bring those efforts together to understand strengths and remaining gaps. This topic area could address the following questions:

- What types of training are needed for jobs in lithium recovery and lithium related businesses and industry? What training or education programs still need to be developed in the Salton Sea region?
- What are the main barriers keeping local residents from accessing current workforce and educational programs?
- What are the opportunities and the unique needs of adult residents who may be transitioning to lithium-related industries from other types of employment?
- What should be considered to help ensure local youth maximize, if they choose, the opportunities created by the emerging industries and businesses, including entrepreneurship?

Technological Innovation and Market Access: Lithium Valley will be on the cutting edge in the lithium space. This topic would address the areas in which new technology innovation is most needed or could best ensure Lithium Valley is a global leader. This topic area could address the following questions:

- What technology advancements, such as dry electrode coating, can further enable battery manufacturing to be sustainable and viable in the Salton Sea region?
- What role could Lithium Valley play in state-wide, national, and global markets for lithium-based technologies?
- How can we ensure that Lithium Valley products are competitive in global markets?

Community Benefits, Leadership and Transparency: Community voice and leadership will be essential to ensuring that residents benefit from the development of Lithium Valley. It is vital that residents are informed and aware of the latest developments so that they can effectively engage with their elected

leaders and participate in decision-making processes. This topic area could address the following questions:

- What are preferred practices for community outreach, engagement and education in the Salton Sea region?
- How can the State, County, and other entities best ensure that all residents, including tribes have access to information about Lithium Valley?
- Which mechanisms should be considered to help to ensure the Lithium Valley delivers benefits to residents?
- How should the state and County work with local government, tribes and community organizations to ensure effective communication and collaboration?
- Which entities would be best suited to fund and carry out health studies related to the impacts of Lithium Valley on the Salton Sea region?
- For non-state participants involved or affected by Lithium Valley efforts, which state entities would you like to know more about what they're doing? What jurisdiction do state agencies have in connection with Lithium Valley and the Salton Sea Region?
- How do we measure progress and success towards the Lithium Valley Vision? What metrics should be considered?

Water Usage: In an arid region such as the Salton Sea region, water use decisions are critical for any economic or community development plans. This topic area will dive into the water component of Lithium Valley and specific questions could include:

- What type of studies should be conducted related to water use, impacts and quality in Lithium Valley and are there good models that could be utilized in the Salton Sea region?
- Which entities would be best suited to fund and carry out studies related to water?
- Which frameworks and values should be used to evaluate current and potential uses (i.e. agriculture, Salton Sea, lithium, etc.) for limited water resources?
- What are the new or emerging technologies and practices that could improve water use and conservation in the Salton Sea region?

Sustainability, Circular Economy, and Recycling: Understanding the full life cycle of lithium products, the components of lithium recovery/processing, and the long-term viability of the lithium resource in the Salton Sea region, can help in efforts to mitigate environmental impacts and provide additional economic opportunities for the region. This topic area could address the following questions:

- What are best practices to maintain a long-term lithium battery ecosystem in the region?
- What should the state and local government consider for the siting of wells to increase the sustainability of lithium recovery?
- What role could lithium battery recycling play in ensuring a long-term lithium ecosystem?
- What are potential pathways to create a commercial market for brine filter cake and other waste products produced by lithium recovery?
- What types of R&D opportunities exist to upcycle brine filter cake into higher-value products?

- What type of funding gaps exist that are needed to support R&D and innovation for industry?

Environmental Impacts and Restoration: Lithium Valley will occur in a region with unique environmental characteristics and concerns. This topic area will address questions related to how the development of lithium-related industries can mitigate environmental harm and aid in the restoration of natural environments in the Salton Sea Region

- What are the environmental values guiding existing efforts by lithium developers in the Salton Sea region?
- What are the current safeguards in place to protect natural environments?
- How can the State, County, and other entities improve environmental permitting processes to support development in the Salton Sea region?
- What additional information or research is needed to understand potential environmental impacts of lithium recovery and related industries?