

**DOCKETED**

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**CALIFORNIA  
ENERGY COMMISSION**



July 15, 2024

Renée L. Robin, J.D.  
Director, Permitting & Planning  
Engie North America LLC  
1360 Post Oak Blvd Ste 400  
Houston, Texas 77056

## **Data Requests Addendum for the Compass Energy Storage Project (24-OPT-02)**

Dear Renée L. Robin, J.D.:

California Energy Commission (CEC) staff confirmed receipt on April 11, 2024, of an Opt-In Application for Compass Energy Storage Project (project) (24-OPT-02). Compass Energy Storage LLC (applicant) proposes to construct, own, and operate an approximately 250-megawatt (MW) battery energy storage system (BESS) in the City of San Juan Capistrano. The approximately 13-acre project site is located within the northern portion of the City of San Juan Capistrano, adjacent to Camino Capistrano and Interstate-5 to the east. The BESS would be capable of storing up to 250 MW of electricity for four hours (up to 1,000 MW hours).

The CEC staff finished its initial review of the project application pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1877, which specifies the required contents of an application, and Public Resources Code, section 25545.4(a), which states, "within 30 days of the submission of the application, the commission shall review the application and make a determination of completeness." Based on this initial review, staff determined the submitted application is incomplete and filed a Determination of Incomplete Application and Request for Information for the Compass Energy Storage Project on May 13, 2024 (TN# 256338).

Staff conducted a site visit of the proposed Compass Energy Storage Project site located on private lands near Saddleback Church on May 21, 2024. The site visit was conducted with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) representatives Baron Barrera and Felicia Silva, Dudek biologist Tommy Molina, and the applicant's representative Renée Robin.

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As a result of the site visit and review of application materials, and consistent with Public Resources Code, section 25545.4(b), staff requests additional surveys for Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). Completion of these surveys is not intended to delay a determination of data completion, but rather to further inform staff on the potential use of the site by these species. Please provide copies of the data as it is collected for inclusion in staff's analysis.

All requested information is reasonably necessary to prepare an Environmental Impact Report as part of a CEC Staff Assessment and to support a decision on the application, including all the findings required in Chapter 6.2 of Division 15 of the Public Resources Code (Sections 25545 et seq.).

If you have any questions about the information identified as necessary, please email Renee Longman, project manager, at [renee.longman@energy.ca.gov](mailto:renee.longman@energy.ca.gov) or Lisa Worrall, co-project manager, at [lisa.worrall@energy.ca.gov](mailto:lisa.worrall@energy.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Drew Bohan  
Executive Director

Attachment

Attachment A: Data Requests Addendum

## **Attachment A: Data Requests Addendum**

### **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Staff conducted a site visit of the proposed Compass Energy Storage Project site located on private lands near Saddleback Church on May 21, 2024. The site visit was conducted with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) representatives Baron Barrera and Felicia Silva, Dudek biologist Tommy Molina, and the applicant's representative Renee Robin with ENGIE, North America.

During the site visit, staff toured the project footprint and buffer, inspected, and verified biological resource conditions, and took observations of native plants and wildlife. During the site visit, staff determined there was potential nesting habitat for Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*), a State Candidate species for listing, and foraging habitat in adjacent areas. Staff also noted the mowed field could support nesting habitat for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a State Species of Special Concern. The mowed field supports numerous ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*) burrows, and it is possible that burrowing owls could use these areas for breeding or wintering. Staff also noted the presence of western pond turtles (*Actinemys pallida*), a State Species of Special Concern, in the adjacent Oso Creek. Section 4.2, Biological Resources, of the applicant's Opt-In Application notes these three species as having no or low potential to occur on the project site and therefore the applicant dismissed them from further consideration (TN 255535-6, pp 4.2-17 to 4.2-19). Staff has the following information requests for Crotch's bumble bee and burrowing owl. Applicant can expect mitigation measures will be included in the staff assessment to address potential impacts to western pond turtles.

**DR BIO-11.** Staff requests that the applicant initiate surveys for Crotch's bumble bee (CBB) consistent with the CDFW Survey Considerations for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Candidate Bumble Bee Species (<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Survey-Protocols#377281281-invertebrates>) as soon as possible to ensure detections can be made prior to the end of the flight season. These surveys shall include both nesting colony surveys and foraging surveys in adjacent habitat. Surveys shall include habitat adjacent to Oso Creek, the existing pollinator garden and nursery, and all areas within 100 feet of project disturbance.

Completion of these surveys is not intended to delay a determination of data completion, but rather to further inform staff on the potential use of the site by this species. Please provide copies of the data as it is collected for inclusion in staff's analysis.

**DR BIO-12.** Staff requests that the applicant initiate surveys for burrowing owl (nesting or wintering sites) on the project site and within 500 feet of disturbance areas where suitable habitat is present. Surveys shall follow CDFW recommended

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protocols presented in the Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines (<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=83842&inline>).

Completion of these surveys is not intended to delay a determination of data completion, but rather to further inform staff on the potential use of the site by this species. Please provide copies of the data as it is collected for inclusion in staff's analysis.