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| Document Title: | Staff Status Report #6 for the Willow Rock Energy Storage Center |
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M e m o r a n d u m

To: Commissioner Andrew McAllister, Presiding Member
Commissioner Noemi Gallardo, Associate Member

Date: January 24, 2025

From: California Energy Commission
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**Subject: STAFF STATUS REPORT #6 FOR THE WILLOW ROCK ENERGY
STORAGE CENTER (21-AFC-02)**

In its *Second Revised Committee Scheduling Order* filed December 11, 2024 (TN 260601), the Willow Rock Energy Storage Center AFC Committee (Committee) on the Willow Rock Energy Storage Center project ordered the parties to “continue submitting monthly status reports no later than the 26th day of every month” and further clarified that “[s]tatus reports shall inform the Committee whether the case is progressing satisfactorily and bring potential delays and other relevant matters to the Committee’s attention.”

California Energy Commission staff (staff) continues to coordinate with partner agencies, including the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) and the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), to gather information necessary for our analysis of the application. Staff is continuing conversations with potentially affected California Native American tribes.

On January 13, 2025, staff met with DSOD to discuss whether the project's compensation reservoir meets the requirements of a jurisdictional dam under Water Code sections 6002 and 6003. Staff is continuing conversations with DSOD and the applicant, and awaiting additional information from the applicant, regarding the reservoir.

Staff filed Data Request Set 6 (TN 261072) regarding biological and water resources on January 13, 2025, the day discovery closed. Per the Second Revised Committee Scheduling Order, applicant’s responses to all data requests are due no later than January 27, 2025. Staff will then review all responsive filings to ensure that complete, satisfactory responses have been provided.

Staff is preparing the Preliminary Staff Assessment (PSA) and is currently on schedule to meet the PSA publication date, March 13, 2025, as outlined in the Second Revised

Committee Scheduling Order (TN 260601). On January 23, 2025, applicant notified staff by email that they will be submitting a revised Cultural Resources Report within the next four to six weeks. Staff needs the analyses and results of these excavations as soon as possible in order to incorporate the results into the PSA. Tribal representatives have requested to review the results of the applicant's Phase II excavations, the results of which will inform the ongoing consultation with staff regarding the identification, evaluation, and potential mitigation measures to cultural and tribal cultural resources. In addition, the applicant will provide missing information about historic built environment resources in the report documenting the archaeological resources. The timeline for receiving the necessary information to finalize the PSA, addressing the Lahontan RWQCB's requested information, DSOD information, and coordinating with partner agencies, including the Lahontan RWQCB, CDFW, and DSOD could collectively impact the PSA schedule.

Staff will continue to follow the directives of the Second Revised Committee Scheduling Order and provide regular updates to the Committee.