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**Opposition to Compass Energy Battery Farm in San Juan
Capistrano**

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



May 22, 2025

Armand C. Angulo
California Energy Commission
Equity and Public Participation Manager
Office of the Public Advisor, Energy Equity and Tribal Affairs

Dear Mr. Angulo,

The Shea Center stands deeply opposed to the proposed Compass Energy Project for a lithium battery storage facility in San Juan Capistrano.

We are a 47-year-old nonprofit serving children and adults with disabilities through therapeutic horse-related programs and reside on 8 acres in San Juan Capistrano. We also have extensive programs for combat veterans with PTSD. We are less than one mile south of the proposed location of the facility.

Population

The location proposed for this facility is located in a densely populated area of Orange County, California. **The 20-mile radius population surrounding the proposed site has a population in excess of 1.2 million people.**

The five-mile radius population surrounding the proposed battery farm site is more than 441,000 people.

Directly in the one-mile path, due south of the proposed location for the battery farm toxic fumes, heavy metals and pollution from fire are these people:

The City of Laguna Niguel – 64,000+ residents
A number of private homes along Camino Capistrano
A senior affordable housing project – 75 units
JSerra Catholic High School – 1000 students plus faculty and staff

Fairmont Schools San Juan Capistrano – 360 students plus faculty and staff
The Shea Center – 1100 weekly visitors with children and adults with disabilities, plus staff and volunteers, and 35 horses
San Juan Capistrano Equestrian Center – 300 horses and humans
Rio Vista Stables – 100+ horses and humans
Rancho Sierra Vista Stables – 300+ horses and humans
The Capistrano Villas – 7000 community residents

Evacuation challenges

Should there be a call to evacuate as has happened with other types of lithium battery storage fires, there would be a dire situation to evacuate more than 1000 horses and 10,000+ people from just the one-mile south of the battery site location. There are already extreme traffic challenges with the schools and community members let alone a genuine emergency caused by the inevitable fire of a battery storage facility.

A Very Real Risk of Starting a Community Fire Disaster

The property proposed for the Compass Energy Battery Farm sits at the north end of San Juan Capistrano in the shadow of the foothill which is undeveloped and is an extreme fire hazard during warm and dry weather. Think of this dry open space filled with abandoned orchards and brush like the fuse to a stick of dynamite and the proposed Compass Energy Battery Farm is the match to that fuse.

A catastrophic fire event at the facility – which **WILL** happen – not **IF** it will happen – could be the precipitating event that leads fire to the homes, businesses, churches and schools within multiple communities. The fire risk is extreme and inevitable should this facility be allowed to be built. The Santa Ana winds blow due south from the proposed Compass Energy Battery Storage Site towards homes, schools, horse facilities, housing for seniors and a memory care facility for older adults. And the City of San Juan Capistrano lies directly in the path of the fire as does the City of Laguna Niguel which overlooks the proposed facility location.

The Environmental Disaster of a Lithium Battery Fire in San Juan Capistrano

San Juan Capistrano is less than 3 miles from the Pacific Ocean. We have migrating whales, dolphins and fisheries off this Orange County coast line. The proposed Compass Energy Battery Storage Site sits on Trabuco Creek – a waterway of the U.S. and a direct

channel to the Pacific Ocean. The area just due south of the facility is also a sensitive environmental area.

A fire at a lithium battery storage facility can release a wide range of pollutants, including highly toxic gases and particulate matter. These pollutants are primarily composed of metallic compounds, with lithium being the most dominant, as well as hydrocarbons, hydrogen halides, and soot particulates. Additionally, heavy metals like nickel, manganese, and cobalt, which are components of lithium-ion batteries, can be released as nanoparticles.

The Pollutants Released by Lithium Battery Fires

Metallic Compounds:

A significant component of Li-ion battery chemistry, lithium is released as a dominant metallic compound in the emissions. These heavy metals are also present in the cathode materials of Li-ion batteries and are released as nanoparticles in the fire.

Gases and Particulates:

- **Hydrocarbons:** Burning of battery components can release various hydrocarbons.
- **Hydrogen Halides:** These gases, such as hydrogen fluoride (HF), can be released from various components, including electrolytes, separators, and electrode binders.
- **Soot Particulates:** These are produced during combustion and can be respirable.
- **Fluorinated Phosphates:** Gases like phosphorus pentafluoride (PF₅) and phosphoryl fluoride (POF₃) can form from fluorine-containing compounds in the battery.
- **Other Toxic Gases:** Carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO₂), hydrogen chloride (HCl), hydrogen cyanide (HCN), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and acrolein are also potential pollutants.

Potential Impacts:

- **Health Hazards:**

These pollutants can cause a variety of health problems, including respiratory issues, skin irritation, and neurological damage.

- **Environmental Impacts:**

Heavy metals released from the fire can contaminate soil and water, posing risks to ecosystems and food webs.

- **Property Damage:**

The heat and smoke from the fire can cause structural damage to buildings and surrounding property.

If the California Energy Commission is committed to not only renewable energy, but SAFE energy for our communities, then **it will not approve the application for the proposed Compass Energy's Battery Storage Facility in San Juan Capistrano as the risk is too great.** These facilities have no place near such densely populated communities or sensitive environmental locations.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dana Butler-Moburg', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Dana Butler-Moburg

CEO

The Shea Center

26284 Oso Road

San Juan Capistrano CA 92675

949-240-8441 x102

dbutler@sheacenter.org

www.sheacenter.org

Attachments