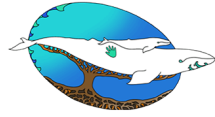


| DOCKETED | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Docket Number: | 24-OPT-02 |
| Project Title: | Compass Energy Storage Project |
| TN #: | 259683 |
| Document Title: | Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples Comments- Opposition-Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) San Juan Capistrano |
| Description: | N/A |
| Filer: | System |
| Organization: | Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples |
| Submitter Role: | Public |
| Submission Date: | 10/24/2024 7:18:41 PM |
| Docketed Date: | 10/25/2024 |

*Comment Received From: Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples
Submitted On: 10/24/2024
Docket Number: 24-OPT-02*

**Opposition to Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
Project in San Juan Capistrano**

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



SACRED PLACES INSTITUTE
FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

California Energy Commission

PROJECT MANAGER

Renee Longman

STEPsiting@energy.ca.gov

[916-937-3538](tel:916-937-3538)

PROJECT OWNER

Compass Energy Storage LLC

DOCKET NUMBER

24-OPT-02

CAPACITY

250-megawatt

LOCATION

San Juan Capistrano

TECHNOLOGY

Battery Storage System

PROJECT STATUS

Under Review

PROJECT TYPE

Opt-in

Re: Opposition to Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project in San Juan Capistrano

Dear California Energy Commission,

Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples (SPI) is writing to express our firm opposition to the proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project in San Juan Capistrano by Compass Energy Storage LLC. Our concern is deeply rooted in the potential environmental, cultural, and public safety risks associated with the proposed facility, especially considering its proximity to Putuidem, a sacred site for the Acjachemen people.

Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples (SPI) is a California Indigenous-led, grassroots environmental justice organization based in the unceded ancestral homelands of the Tongva people, also known as Los Angeles, California. Our mission is to build the capacity of Native Nations and Indigenous Peoples to protect sacred lands, waters, and cultures. Through all our work, we support Native Nations and their ability to re-establish relationships with their ancestral homelands and waters. Our focus is on creating systems that prioritize Indigenous knowledge and protocols, grounded in intergenerational respect, reciprocity, and connection.

Putuidem is not only a historical location but also a place of deep spiritual and cultural significance to the Acjachemen people, who have maintained their connection to these lands since time immemorial. It is where our ancestors lived, prayed, and thrived, and it holds immeasurable value to our community. Any development near this area threatens to desecrate a site that is sacred not just to us but to future generations. The construction of a facility that utilizes lithium-iron batteries, known to pose fire risks, further heightens our concerns. The risk of toxic gas emissions, explosions, and fires near a cultural site as revered as Putuidem is unacceptable.

Moreover, the BESS facility's opt-in application to bypass local oversight through the California Energy Commission limits the ability of our local tribal communities to engage meaningfully in the planning and decision-making process. This exclusion not only undermines local control but also disregards the critical need for consultation with Indigenous communities, especially when sacred sites and public safety are at risk.

We urge the California Energy Commission to prioritize meaningful consultation with the Acjachemen people and to consider the long-term cultural, spiritual, and environmental impacts this project may have on Putuidem and the surrounding communities. Preserving our sacred lands and ensuring the safety of nearby residents should be paramount.

Thank you for considering our perspective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ciara Morning Star Belardes', is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Ciara Morning Star Belardes
Director of Education and Community Outreach
Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples