

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
STATE ENERGY RESOURCES
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:

***OPENING AN INFORMATIONAL
PROCEEDING ON LITHIUM VALLEY
VISION***

Docket No.: 24-OIIP-02

**ORDER INSTITUTING
INFORMATIONAL PROCEEDING**

I. INTRODUCTION

Assembly Bill 1657, (AB 1657, E. Garcia, Chapter 271, Statutes of 2020) was enacted with the vision to increase possibilities for the Salton Sea region, with both the potential for the area becoming a competitive source of lithium supply that could satisfy more than one-third of the worldwide demand and investing in local and regional economic and community investment opportunities. Pursuant to AB 1657 the California Energy Commission (CEC) convened a Blue Ribbon Commission on Lithium Extraction in California (Commission), also commonly referred to as the Lithium Valley Commission. The Commission was tasked to review, investigate, and analyze specific topics relating to lithium extraction in California and submit a report to the Legislature documenting its findings and recommendations.

The legislative report was submitted to the Legislature on December 1, 2022.

II. AUTHORITY AND ASSIGNMENT OF LEAD COMMISSIONER

Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 25210 and California Code of Regulations, Title 20, sections 1220(b) and 1222(b), informational proceedings allow the CEC to hold hearings and take other actions to gather and assess information needed to assist it in formulating policies and to obtain public comment and opinion. This proceeding will provide a forum for the CEC to gather necessary information from the public, peer agencies and other participants to help better define the Lithium Valley Vision and develop a Lithium Valley Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Noemí Otilia Osuna Gallardo shall be the Lead Commissioner for this Order Instituting Informational Proceeding (OIIP).

III. NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THIS PROCEEDING

Through this OIIP, the CEC seeks to collect information and perspectives on a broad Lithium Valley Vision. Using the recommendations in the Commission's report as a starting point, the OIIP will seek to:

1. Define the Lithium Valley Vision;
2. Identify the entities currently implementing Commission recommendations and establish a coordinated approach between those entities to fulfill and track progress on the completion of the Commission recommendations;
3. Determine how the Lithium Valley Vision ties into the state's climate and green energy goals;
4. Identify how infrastructure needs create barriers to reaching those goals; and
5. Explore whether new legislation is needed to fulfill the Commission's recommendations.

The OIIP seeks to establish a record of input from multiple perspectives, including those of local residents, environmental justice and environmental groups, industry, and academia, and the public. Input will also be sought from federal, state, and local entities, as well as California Native American tribes. CEC staff will use the input received through the OIIP to develop recommendations for a Lithium Valley Strategic Plan to serve to better align efforts towards a shared vision for Lithium Valley and the larger state lithium economy.

This proceeding may include extensive public engagement, including workshops, working groups, and outreach to communities and community-based organizations who cannot easily participate in regulatory proceedings. This OIIP will facilitate information exchange with interested participants. The CEC may also launch phases within the informational proceeding to further focus the proceeding's scope and to address new or emerging issues.

IV. HEARINGS AND WORKSHOPS

The Lead Commissioner will issue notices at least 14 days before the first hearing and 10 days in advance of any subsequent hearings and workshops and will identify at that time when written comments or testimony will be due, as well as the manner of the filing. Public comment will be allowed at all workshops and hearings. The CEC aims to hold the first hearing in the Spring of 2024 and it is currently planned as a hybrid workshop. Additional details will be included in the public notice. The CEC may hold additional hearings in this proceeding as necessary.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The CEC encourages public participation in this proceeding. Any person participating in a hearing or workshop shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to make comments. Petitions to intervene are not necessary.

To foster public participation in this proceeding, the Executive Director, in conjunction with the Public Advisor, shall ensure that information regarding this order and notices of hearings and workshops are distributed to all interested persons and posted on the CEC website. Those interested in receiving notices of workshops and hearings in this proceeding can subscribe at [CEC Subscriptions](https://www2.energy.ca.gov/listservers/index_cms.html), https://www2.energy.ca.gov/listservers/index_cms.html to sign up for the Lithium Valley subscription topic under Commission General Topics. There will be opportunities for providing written comments before and during these hearings, the details of which will be specified in the notice issued for each hearing.

For additional information about how to participate in this proceeding, please contact the CEC's Office of the Public Advisor, Energy Equity, and Tribal Affairs at (916) 957-7910, or via email at publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov. Media questions should be directed to the CEC's Media Office by email at mediaoffice@energy.ca.gov.

VI. CONCLUSION AND ORDER

The CEC therefore institutes an informational proceeding to accomplish the purposes specified above, designates Commissioner Noemí Otilia Osuna Gallardo as Lead Commissioner of this proceeding, and directs the Executive Director and staff to collect and evaluate the information needed under guidance of the Lead Commissioner.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned Secretariat to the CEC does hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an order duly and regularly adopted at a meeting of the CEC held on February 14, 2024.

AYE:

NAY:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Dated:

Kristine Banaag
Secretariat