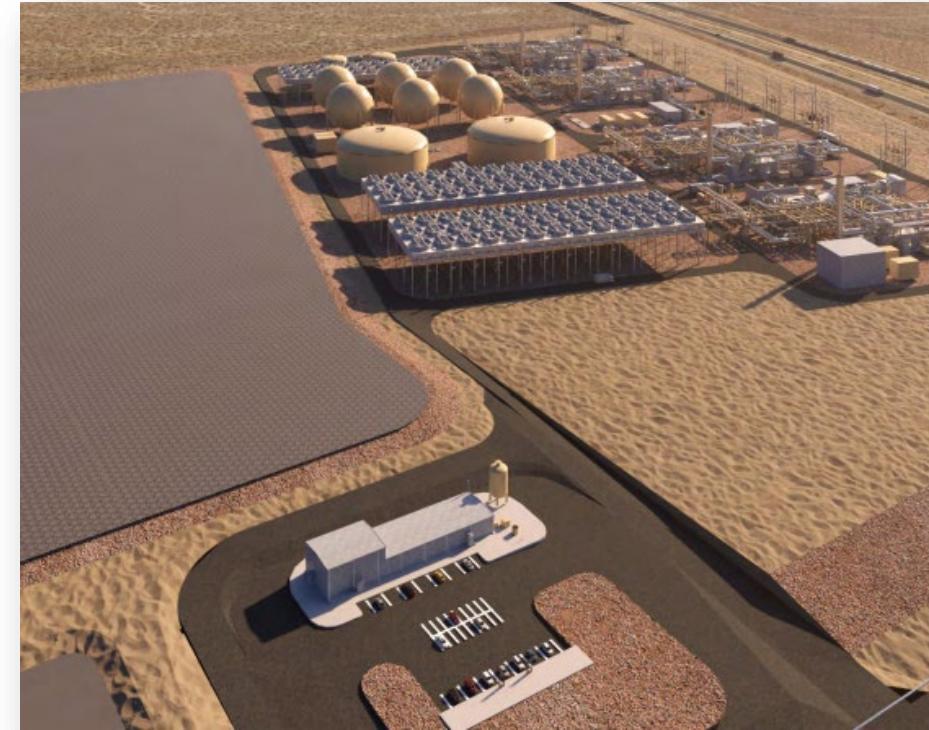




Public Hearing on Proposed Final Decision

Willow Rock Energy Storage Center

Docket Number 21-AFC-02



*Source: Project rendering in Applicant's Supplemental AFC
Volume 1, Part A, Cover Page*

Hearing Officer Reneé Webster-Hawkins
December 19, 2025
10:00 a.m.



Public Hearing Schedule

- Call to Order
- Hearing Officer Presentation on the Presiding Member's Proposed Decision
- Brief Statements by the Parties
 - Staff
 - Intervenor
 - Applicant
- Agency, Tribal, and Public Comment
- Commissioners' Remarks and Deliberation
- Closed Session if Necessary
- Final Decision
- Adjourn the Public Hearing



Source: Project Simulated Condition KOP 7 Dawn Road East at SR 14 Offramp (Berm Option)
Applicant's Supplemental AFC , Vol. II-Appen. 513A-514A

Hearing Officer Presentation





California Energy Commission (CEC) Commissioners & Willow Rock Committee



David Hochschild
Chair



Siva Gunda
Vice Chair



J. Andrew McAllister
Commissioner



Nancy Skinner
Commissioner



Noemí Otilia Osuna Gallardo
Commissioner

Commissioners assigned to the Willow Rock Committee
Presiding Member Commissioner McAllister
Associate Member Commissioner Gallardo



CEC's Permitting Authority: The Warren-Alquist Act

- CEC is the **exclusive permitting authority** for all thermal power plants 50 MW or greater. Public Resources Code §§ 25500 *et seq.*
- Applications for certification (AFCs) are **adjudicative proceedings** under the California Administrative Procedures Act. CEC Regulations §§ 1200 *et seq.* and 1700 *et seq.*
- CEC's decision makes **findings and conclusions** regarding the project's design, siting and operations:
 - Protection of environmental quality and assurance of public health and safety
 - Conformity with local, regional, state, and federal laws, ordinances, standards or regulations (LORS)
 - Public benefits
 - Enforceable Conditions of Certification
- CEC is **CEQA lead agency** under CEC's Certified Regulatory Program. CEQA Guidelines § 15251(j).

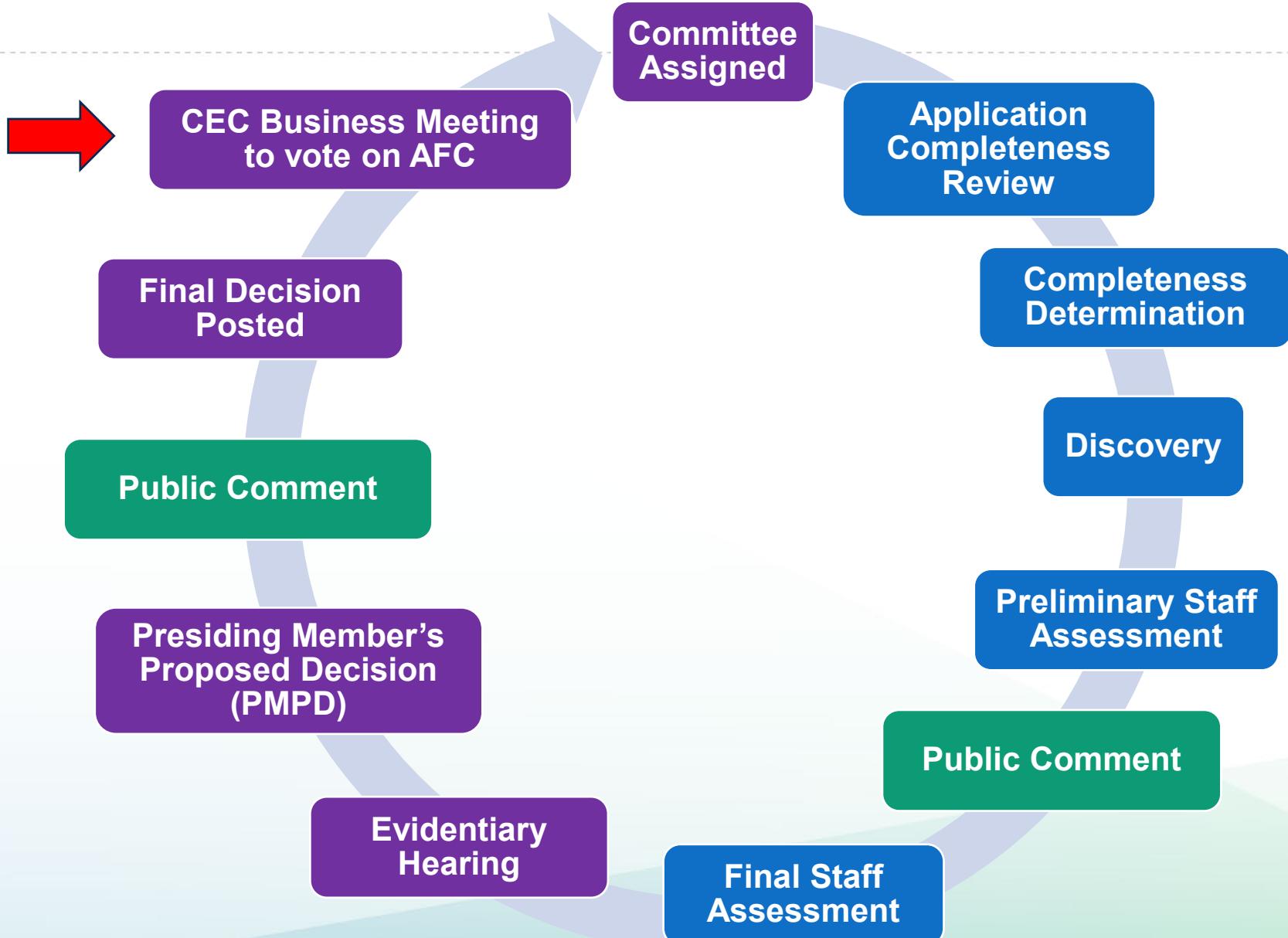


CEC's Permitting Authority: Key Procedures Applicable to AFCs

- CEC Staff, Applicant (Gem, LLC/Hydrostor), and Intervenors (Center for Biological Diversity and California Unions for Reliable Energy) are **independent parties**.
- **Evidentiary proceedings** are convened to receive specific written and oral testimony and evidence into the record.
- **Ex parte rule** prohibits communications between decisionmakers and Parties or Interested Persons while proceeding is pending.
- CEC Staff conducts public noticing, agency coordination, and tribal consultation on the AFC.



Application for Certification (AFC) Process





Topics Addressed in PMPD

PMPD considered all evidence in the record and proposes findings of fact and conclusions of law on:

- Project Description
- Project Alternatives
- Compliance Monitoring Plan
- Engineering Assessment
 - Facility and Transmission
 - Design
 - Efficiency
 - Reliability
 - Safety and Nuisance
- Public Health and Safety
- Environmental Analysis
- Local Impact Analysis
- Override Findings
- Conditions of Certification
- Agency and Public Comments



Key Issues for Commission's Consideration

In the PMPD

- Biological Resources
- Dam Safety Program
- Cavern Construction and Worker Safety
- Overriding Considerations for Unavoidable Impacts to Visual Resources
- Local Agency and Public Comments

Corrections in the Errata

- Clarification of local land use review, comment and approval
- Corrections to citations to the record
- Scrivener's and digital production errors



Source: HYDROSTOR - ZEVSTAR PARCEL ACQUISITION, FEBRUARY 2023 PHOTO LOG,
Photo 4, Applicant's Supplemental AFC, Vol. II-Appen. 513A-514A



Brief Statements by the Parties



*Source: Rendering With Architectural Berm, Applicant's Supplemental AFC,
Hi Res Figures V1 File 1 of 2*



Agency and Public Comment



Agency and Public Comment

Zoom App/Online

- Click “raise hand”

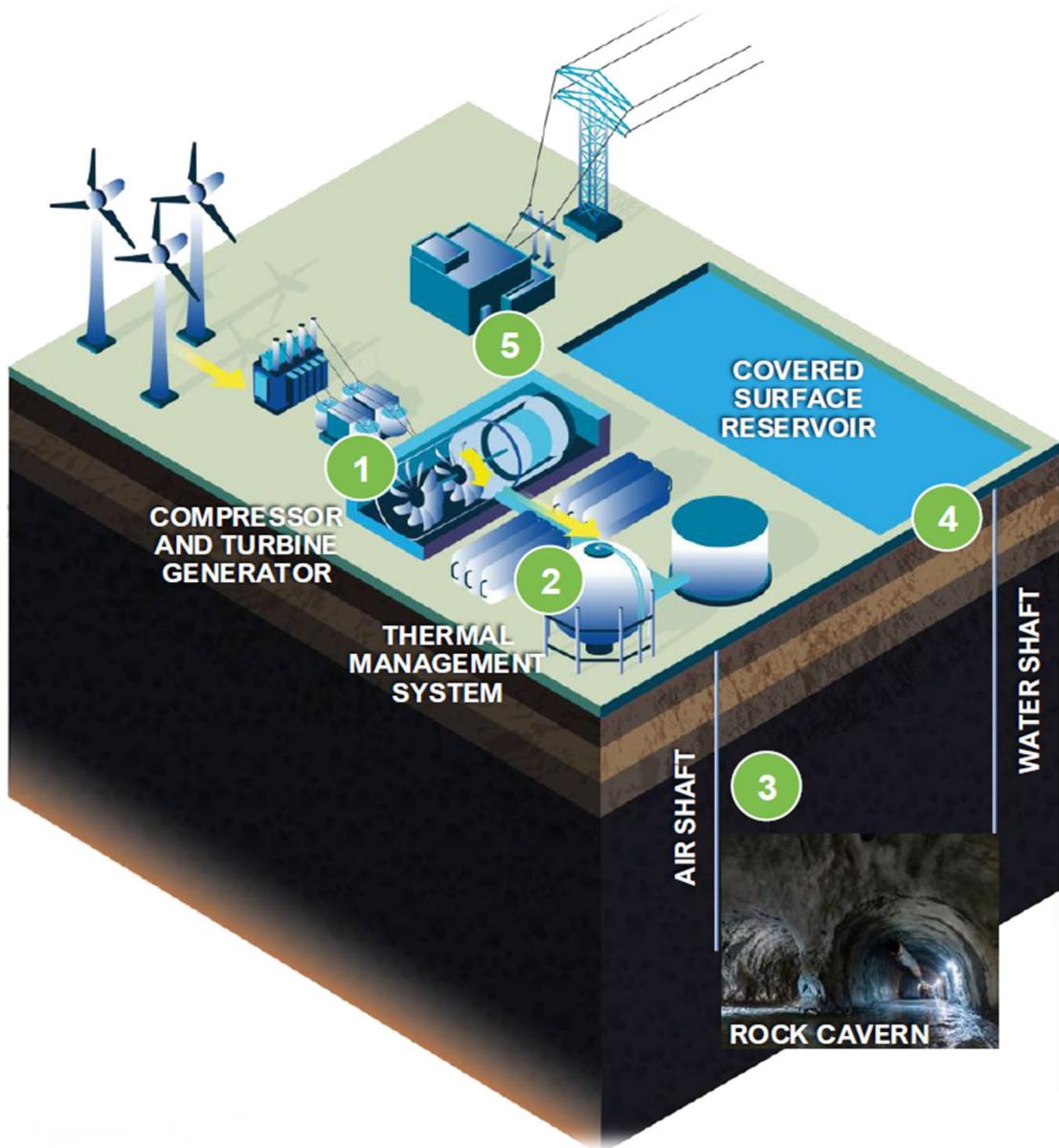
3-MINUTE TIMER

Telephone

- Press *9 to raise hand
- Press *6 to mute/unmute

When called upon

- CEC will open your line
- Unmute on your end
- Spell name and state affiliation, if any
- 3 minute or less per speaker, 1 speaker per entity



Commissioners' Remarks and Deliberation

Source: Hydrostor Technology Overview, Presentation at Informational Hearing, November 6, 2024



Motion for Final Decision



Source: Project rendering in Applicant's Supplemental AFC Volume 1, Part A, Cover Page

Adjourn the Public Hearing