

NCEP Annual Meeting

Connecting Community & Developers

Commissioner Noemí Gallardo
10/30/24





About: CEC is lead entity for energy policy and planning for state.

Mission: Lead the state to a 100% clean energy future for ALL... Californians.

In partnership:

- Peer entities
- Publicly Owned Utilities
- Tribes
- Military
- Organizations
- Residents





Power Plant Permitting: Applications for Certification (50+ MW Thermal)

Requirements:

- CEQA and Warren Alquist Act
 - Tribal consultation
 - Notice for 6-mile radius
 - Language assessment
 - Review laws, ordinances, rules, statutes
- Public comment periods and public meetings
- Commissioners can take meetings with non-parties

Case Study:

- NRG had contract to replace 2 gas power plants in Oxnard, working class, majority-Latino area
- Power plants bookended local beach just miles apart
- Local activists, state and city officials contested gas; demanded cleaner alternative
- CEC said alternative possible; asked SCE for clean energy project instead >> NRG withdrew in 2019





Lessons Learned

- Who is in leadership matters
 - State officials should leverage power to enable others
 - Access to leadership matters
- Awareness of governance structures makes a difference
- Going to community provided opportunity for learning
- Policy direction matters (SB 350 Clean Energy & Pollution Reduction Act of 2015)

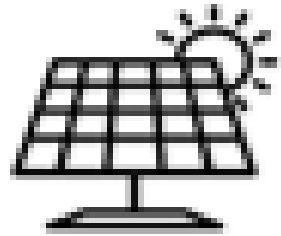




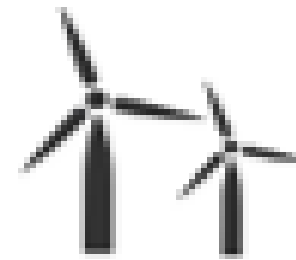
Certifying Clean Energy Projects

AB 205 Opt-In (2022): Condenses permitting to 270 days

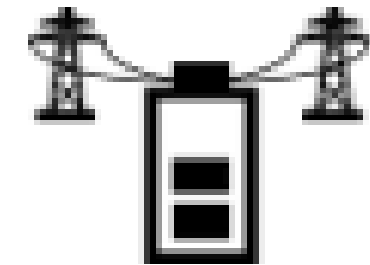
Solar photovoltaic power plant of at least 50 MW



Terrestrial wind power plant of at least 50 MW



Energy storage system of at least 200 MWh



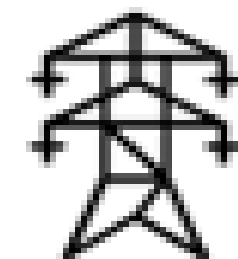
Non-fossil-fueled thermal power plant of at least 50 MW (i.e., jurisdictional facility)



Manufacturing/assembly facility for renewable energy/energy storage systems or components with at least \$250 million investment



Transmission from an eligible power plant or energy storage system to the first point of interconnection





Opt-In Requirements



- CEQA Review & Warren Alquist Tests
- Engagement
 - Staff holds pre-meetings with developer, local government, peer agencies
 - Tribal Affairs Director sends advanced notice to tribes
 - Public Advisor does additional engagement
- Community Benefits Agreement
- Prevailing Wage or Project Labor Agreement
- Net economic benefit to local government



Connecting Community & Developers

Status: 6 active apps totaling 15 GWs and 2 apps deemed complete

Case Study 1

- One project did engagement for local process; prior to Opt-In
- Spoke to wrong tribal rep; not Chairwoman >> tribe opposed
- Supervisors did ordinance against facility type
- County initiated lawsuit and tribe joined
- Developer struggled to secure CBA until unions engaged; strong opposition at first public meeting

Case Study 2

- Applied to state first
- Introduced project to commissioners; advised about lead organizations in area
- Outreached and doing town halls with various local community orgs
- Engaged tribe early and asked for guidance
- Already has CBAs and carved out \$5M for community
- Smooth first public meeting



Lessons Learned

- Developers aren't local
 - Remind them to be humble, respectful and thoughtful
 - Treat residents as experts
- Connecting developers early to local groups makes a difference
 - State can share known orgs but must be cautious of bias or pressuring agreements
- Communities may not be ready with priorities or prepared to negotiate agreements
 - Unions are active
 - Tribes aren't a monolith
- State should leverage public input to assess receptivity of public for project and benefits





Takeaways

- Be patient in nurturing culture to get to outcomes
- Define your values, then act based on those values
- Treat others as experts
- Leverage your power to enable others
- Heart work requires partnership



Thank You!

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