

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

715 P Street
Sacramento, California 95814
energy.ca.gov

CEC-70 (Revised 7/2022)



*APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
FOR THE:*

Morton Bay Geothermal Project

Docket No. 23-AFC-01

ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO INTERVENE FILED BY CALIFORNIA UNIONS FOR RELIABLE ENERGY

Upon consideration of the Petition to Intervene (Petition)¹ filed by **California Unions for Reliable Energy** (Petitioner) in the application for certification (AFC) of the Morton Bay Geothermal Project,² the California Energy Commission (CEC) committee designated to conduct proceedings in this matter (Committee)³ makes the following findings:

1. On August 3, 2023, the Petition was filed by:

California Unions for Reliable Energy

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¹ TN 251483.

² The AFC and all filed documents related to the Morton Bay proceeding are available via the “Docket Log (23-AFC-01)” link on the [Morton Bay proceeding’s web page](https://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/steam-turbine/morton-bay-geothermal-project-mbgp) at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/steam-turbine/morton-bay-geothermal-project-mbgp>. The AFC comprises many separate documents filed in the docket beginning April 18, 2023, e.g., Volume 1 is TN 249723.

³ On May 31, 2023, the CEC adopted an order appointing the following committee: Commissioner Noemí Gallardo as Presiding Member and Commissioner Andrew McAllister as Associate Member. (TN 250451.)

2. The Petition contains the information required by the CEC's regulations.⁴
3. The Petition states that Petitioner intends to participate in all topics relevant to the Committee's consideration of the Project, including in the topics of environmental setting, air quality, alternatives, biological resources, compliance with laws, ordinances, regulations and standards, cultural resources, efficiency, demonstration, facility design, geologic hazards and resources, greenhouse gas emissions, hazardous materials, land use, noise and vibration, paleontological resources, project description, project overview, project schedule, public health, public services, recreation, reliability, socioeconomics, soil and agricultural resources, traffic and transportation, transmission line safety and nuisance, transmission system design, tribal resources, visual resources, waste management, water resources, wildfire, cumulative impacts and worker safety, and may provide testimony, briefing, and cross examination of witnesses.⁵
4. No opposition to the Petition has been filed, and the deadline for such opposition was August 17, 2023.
5. Petitioner has demonstrated a bona fide interest in the Project and has demonstrated possession of information or expertise that may help the Committee in preparing a proposed decision.
6. Petitioner's stated interests are relevant to the above-captioned proceeding.
7. Intervention is granted at the Committee's discretion to the degree that it finds intervention reasonable and relevant. The Presiding Member or Committee may impose conditions on all intervenors' participation to promote the orderly conduct of the proceeding.

THEREFORE, the Committee **ORDERS** that the Petition be **GRANTED** and that Petitioner may participate on the following topic areas as requested:

- **environmental setting**
- **air quality**
- **alternatives**
- **biological resources**
- **compliance with laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards**
- **cultural resources**
- **efficiency**
- **demonstration**

⁴ Cal. Code Regs., tit. 20 § 1211.7, subd. (a).

⁵ TN 251483, pp. 4-5.

- **facility design**
- **geologic hazards and resources**
- **greenhouse gas emissions**
- **hazardous materials**
- **land use**
- **noise and vibration**
- **paleontological resources**
- **project description**
- **project overview**
- **project schedule**
- **public health**
- **public services**
- **recreation**
- **reliability**
- **socioeconomics**
- **soil and agricultural resources**
- **traffic and transportation**
- **transmission line safety and nuisance**
- **transmission system design**
- **tribal resources**
- **visual resources**
- **waste management**
- **water resources**
- **wildfire**
- **cumulative impacts**
- **worker safety**

The Committee further **ORDERS** that Petitioner's name be placed upon the Project's Proof of Service List as an intervenor. Petitioner may exercise the rights and shall fulfill the obligations of a party as set forth in all orders issued in the proceeding and California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1212. Deadlines and other matters shall not be extended or changed by the granting of the Petition.⁶

Petitioner's intervention is subject to modification at the discretion of the Presiding Member or the Committee. If Petitioner wishes to participate as an intervenor on topics other than those above, Petitioner must file a motion to intervene on those topics and is subject to any deadline imposed on the time to intervene. These limitations of Petitioner's participation as an intervenor do not affect Petitioner's ability to make public comments on other topics in the proceeding. The CEC

⁶ Cal. Code Regs., tit. 20, § 1211.7, subd. (d).

welcomes and values intervenor participation in its energy facility siting process. The Public Advisor's webpage [Public Participation in Siting Cases](https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/topics/power-plants/public-participation-siting-cases) can be found at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/topics/power-plants/public-participation-siting-cases>. Portions of the [CEC's regulations](https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/topics/power-plants/power-plant-siting-certification-title-20) relating to power plant siting cases (Title 20) can be found at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/topics/power-plants/power-plant-siting-certification-title-20>.

As an intervenor, Petitioner is required to file and serve documents on other parties and to follow the CEC's procedures and orders regarding presenting witnesses and evidence. Petitioner is further required to review the rules regarding filings, the rules of evidence that apply at the Evidentiary Hearings, and the rules prohibiting off-the-record contacts with commissioners, their advisors, or the hearing officer(s) about the Project. Petitioner's failure to fulfill these responsibilities may result in the Committee limiting or precluding Petitioner's participation in the proceeding.

PUBLIC ADVISOR AND OTHER CEC CONTACTS

The CEC's Public Advisor assists members of the public with participating in CEC proceedings. For information on how to participate in this proceeding, please contact the Public Advisor at publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov, or (916) 957-7910. Requests for interpreting services, reasonable accommodations, and other modifications should be made as soon as possible and at least five days in advance. The CEC will work diligently to meet all requests based on the availability of the service or resource needed.

Direct questions of a procedural nature to the assigned Hearing Officers:

Morton Bay: Ralph Lee, (916) 776-3408, ralph.lee@energy.ca.gov.

Chad Oliver, (916) 891-8569, chad.oliver@energy.ca.gov.

Direct technical subject inquiries concerning the proceeding to the Project Manager, Eric Veerkamp, at STEPsiting@energy.ca.gov or (916) 661-8458.

Direct media inquiries to mediaoffice@energy.ca.gov or (916) 654-4989.

Availability of Documents

All documents filed in this proceeding will be posted in the docket by selecting the following link on the [Morton Bay proceeding's web page](https://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/steam-turbine/morton-bay-geothermal-project-mbgp) at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/steam-turbine/morton-bay-geothermal-project-mbgp>, or scan (use the camera on your mobile device and hold it over the QR code) the following QR code:



Automated Email Notifications

Any person may subscribe to receive an automated email when a document is filed in a proceeding. Parties who are on the Proof of Service List will receive these automated emails and do not need to additionally subscribe. The web page for the proceeding, listed above, provides a link to subscribe for automated email notifications, or you may [manage automated email subscriptions](https://www.energy.ca.gov/subscriptions) at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/subscriptions>, or scan the following QR code:



IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: August 24, 2023

APPROVED BY:

Noemí Gallardo
Commissioner and Presiding Member of the Morton Bay
Committee

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
STATE ENERGY RESOURCES
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:

MORTON BAY GEOTHERMAL PROJECT
APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION

Docket No. 23-AFC-01

PETITION TO INTERVENE BY
CALIFORNIA UNIONS FOR RELIABLE ENERGY

August 3, 2023

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PETITION TO INTERVENE BY
CALIFORNIA UNIONS FOR RELIABLE ENERGY

Pursuant to Cal. Code Regs., tit. 20, § 1211.7, California Unions for Reliable Energy (CURE) respectfully files this Petition to Intervene (“Petition”) in the Morton Bay Geothermal Project (“Project” or “MBGP”) Application for Certification (“AFC”) proceeding, Docket No. 23-AFC-01. Section 1211.7(a) grants “any person” the right to file a petition to intervene which sets forth “the grounds for intervention, the position and interest of the petitioner in the proceeding, the extent to which the petitioner desires to participate in the proceedings, and the name, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number of the petitioner.” The presiding member may grant intervention and impose reasonable conditions on an intervenor’s participation. (*Id.* § 1211.7(c)). “An intervenor is a party to a proceeding.” (*Id.* § 1211.7(c)).

This Petition is timely because the Presiding Member of the California Energy Commission Committee designated to conduct proceedings in this matter has not promulgated a scheduling order with a deadline to file a petition to

intervene or set an evidentiary hearing. In the absence of a scheduling order, the default deadline is 30 days before the first evidentiary hearing. (*Id.* § 1211.7(b)). The Committee has not yet set a date for an evidentiary hearing on this matter. An evidentiary hearing on application for certification cannot be set earlier than 90 days after the acceptance of the application. (*Id.* § 1745). Since the Commission deemed the application complete on July 26, 2023 (Order No. 23-0726-03b, TN# 251219), an evidentiary hearing for the Project cannot be set earlier than October 24, 2023. Absent a scheduling order that sets an evidentiary hearing or a specific deadline for intervention, a petition to intervene is timely if filed prior September 24, 2023. Therefore, this Petition is timely.

I. POSITION AND INTEREST STATEMENT

CURE is a coalition of unions whose members' environmental and economic interests are affected by the Project. Union members live in communities that suffer the impacts of projects that are detrimental to human health and the environment. Unions have a corresponding interest in acting to minimize the impacts of projects that would degrade the environment, and in enforcing environmental laws to protect their members.

The Project also affects the union members' longer term economic and environmental interests. CURE's coalition members construct, maintain and operate conventional and renewable power plants, energy storage facilities, and other industrial facilities in California where the coalition members live, work, and recreate. CURE is equally committed to building both a strong economy and a healthy environment. Environmental degradation jeopardizes future jobs by

causing construction moratoriums, depleting limited air pollutant emissions offsets, consuming limited freshwater resources, and imposing other stresses on the environmental carrying capacity of the state. This in turn reduces future employment opportunities. In contrast, well designed projects that reduce environmental impacts improve long-term economic prospects.

Finally, CURE's members are concerned about projects that cause serious environmental harm without providing countervailing economic benefits. The Commission's siting process requires the Commission to determine whether the Project will have a substantial adverse impact on the environment. The Commission's process also provides for a balancing of the Project's socioeconomic and environmental impacts. CURE's ultimate position and participation in this proceeding will be determined based on all the factors the Commission considers when determining whether to approve the application.

II. GROUNDS FOR INTERVENTION AND EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION

The Commission has granted CURE's intervention in all prior siting cases and small power plant exemption cases in which CURE has sought intervention since the enactment of Assembly Bill 1890. The Commission rejected the only challenge to CURE's participation in those cases, finding CURE's interests "undeniably relevant" to the proceedings. (In the Matter of Application for Certification for the High Desert Power Project, Docket No. 97-AFC-01, Order Granting Petition to Intervene at 2 (Dec. 24, 1997). Most recently, the Commission granted CURE's intervention in the Willow Rock Energy Storage Center proceeding. (In the Matter of Willow Rock Energy Storage Center, Docket No. 21-AFC-02,

Committee Order Granting Petition to Intervene Filed by California Unions for Reliable Energy, TN # 245943 (Sept. 9, 2022)). The same decision should be reached here.

CURE has participated in permit proceedings for power plant projects throughout California. In those cases CURE identified deficiencies in the project description and environmental setting that prevented adequate assessments of impacts to the environment and public health. CURE also identified underestimated, unanalyzed, and unmitigated impacts related to construction air emissions, operational air emissions, public health, greenhouse gas emissions, biological resources, cultural and tribal resources, energy use, geology and soils, hazards, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, public services, transmission system engineering, recreation transportation, utilities, wildfire, cumulative impacts, and alternatives, among other topics. For those projects, CURE provided evidence, including expert testimony, regarding potentially significant impacts and feasible mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than significant.

If granted intervention, CURE intends to participate fully in all phases of this proceeding. CURE intends to participate in all topics relevant to the Commission's consideration of the Project including, but not limited to, environmental setting, air quality, alternatives, biological resources, compliance with laws, ordinances, regulations and standards, cultural resources, cumulative impacts, efficiency, demonstration, facility design, geologic hazards and resources,

greenhouse gas emissions, hazardous materials, land use, noise and vibration, paleontological resources, project description, project overview, project schedule, public health, public services, recreation, reliability, socioeconomics, soil and agricultural resources, traffic and transportation, transmission line safety and nuisance, transmission system design, tribal resources, visual resources, waste management, water resources, wildfire, and worker safety. CURE reserves the right to participate in other topics should CURE identify any issues which warrant participation. CURE may participate in all aspects of this proceeding, including, but not limited to, discovery, workshops, testimony, briefing, and cross-examination of witnesses.

III. CONTACT INFORMATION

All filings in this proceeding should be served on CURE's representative at:

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601 Gateway Blvd., Suite 1000
South San Francisco, CA 94080
Tel: (650) 589-1660
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IV. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, CURE respectfully requests that the Committee grant its petition to intervene in this proceeding and allow CURE to participate as a party without limitation.

Dated: August 3, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed By

/s/ Andrew J. Graf

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