

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
 PO Box 3044  
 1400 Tenth Street, Room 113  
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** California Energy Commission  
 715 P Street, MS-48  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**Project Applicant:** Aspen Environmental Group

**Project Title:** Non-Lithium LDES Technical Support

**Project Location – Specific:** 8801 Folsom Blvd Ste 275

**Project Location – City:** Sacramento 95826      **Project Location – County:** Sacramento

**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The California Energy Commission (CEC) is seeking to promote non-lithium long duration energy storage (NLLDES) to reduce the strain on energy infrastructure, to increase energy capacity, and to make energy supply more resilient. Additionally, the state approved the Long Duration Energy Storage program as part of the FY 2022/2023 approved state budget and awarded the CEC \$140M for this year and approved an award of \$140M for FY 2023/2024 contingent on the approved budget. These funds are to be used to demonstrate emerging NLLDES technologies and assist in the transition to commercial status of these non-lithium-ion technologies. The purpose of this contract is to assist CEC staff in three areas: (1) preparing and issuing grants for the development of NLLDES projects; (2) preparing grant applications seeking to obtain Department of Energy (DOE) grants to fund additional NLLDES projects; and (3) preparing miscellaneous technical studies, assessments, and providing other support services in connection with NLLDES.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** California Energy Commission

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Aspen Environmental Group

**Exempt Status:** *(check one)*

- Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number  
Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15306
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
- Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

The activity is covered by the Common Sense Exemption in that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Here the project involves preliminary activities such as providing reviews of LDES projects, preparing technology assessment reports, and supporting the preparation, evaluation, and management of grant funding opportunities. The project also includes preparation of US Department of Energy applications and preparation of other miscellaneous support studies.

The project does not involve any physical impacts since all work will be conducted on computers. Agreement tasks do include providing preliminary CEQA project assessments and environmental impact analyses for potential future NLLDES projects, but the project does not commit to funding any of the recommendations flowing from the agreement. Any potential locations of future storage would require compliance with CEQA before the CEC could fund said future projects.

The project meets the Categorical Exemption 14 CCR 15306 in that all activities consist of basic data collection, research, and resource evaluation activities and do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

This project consists of information gathering, report preparation, and other computer-based technical support for the LDES program leading to actions which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted or funded. This project does not involve impacts on any particularly sensitive environment; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5; and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

**Lead Agency**

**Contact Person:** Kevin Mallon **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-931-9884

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

**Signature:** Kevin Mallon **Date:** 3/14/2023 **Title:** Energy Commission Specialist I

**Signed by Responsible Agency**

**Signed by Lead Agency**

**Signed by Applicant**

**Date received for filing at OPR:** \_\_\_\_\_