

California approves 400MW battery storage project under accelerated clean energy programme

June 2, 2026



California has approved a major new battery energy storage project that will add 400MW of capacity to the state's electricity network, further strengthening grid resilience and supporting the transition to a cleaner energy system.

The California Energy Commission (CEC) approved the Potentia-Viridi Battery Energy Storage System through its Opt-In Certification programme, making it the third large-scale clean energy project approved under the state's accelerated permitting framework within the past year.

Developed by Levy Alameda, a subsidiary of Clearway Energy Group, the project will be located in eastern Alameda County and is designed to store excess electricity generated during periods of high renewable energy production and release it back to the grid when demand increases.

Supporting grid reliability

Once operational, the facility will provide 400MW of battery storage capacity and up to 3,200 megawatt-hours (MWh) of stored energy.

The project will charge during periods of excess solar generation or lower electricity demand and discharge energy when the grid requires additional support, helping to balance supply and demand while reducing reliance on conventional generation sources.

For project professionals, the development highlights the increasingly central role battery storage is playing in modern energy infrastructure programmes. As renewable generation continues to expand,

large-scale storage projects are becoming critical assets for maintaining grid stability and supporting long-term energy transition objectives.

Construction to begin in 2027

Construction is expected to begin in May 2027 and continue for approximately 18 months.

The delivery phase is projected to support an average workforce of 97 people per month, peaking at around 127 workers during the most intensive construction periods.

Once operational, the facility will support 18 full-time positions throughout its estimated 35-year operational lifespan.

The project also includes community investment commitments through agreements with local organisations, providing nearly \$1 million in direct funding over the coming decades.

Accelerated delivery model

The approval demonstrates the growing importance of streamlined permitting frameworks in accelerating critical infrastructure delivery.

California's Opt-In Certification programme was established to provide a consolidated approval pathway for eligible clean energy developments while maintaining environmental review, public consultation and stakeholder engagement requirements.

CEC Commissioner Noemi Gallardo said:

"The Opt-In Certification programme proves that California can permit critical clean energy infrastructure fast while maintaining rigorous environmental review, public transparency, tribal consultation and community engagement."

For project leaders, the programme illustrates how process innovation can play a significant role in meeting infrastructure delivery targets. While technology often receives the most attention, the ability to accelerate approvals without compromising governance has become an increasingly important factor in successful project delivery.

Growing clean energy pipeline

The Potentia-Viridi project follows two other major approvals under the programme.

In April 2026, the CEC approved the Soda Mountain Solar Project, comprising 300MW of solar generation alongside a 300MW battery storage facility capable of storing 1,200MWh of electricity.

Meanwhile, the Darden Clean Energy Project in Fresno County, approved in 2025 and currently under construction, will add 1,150MW of solar generation and 1,150MW of battery storage with 4,600MWh of storage capacity.

Combined, the three projects represent:

- 1,450MW of new solar generation
- 1,850MW of battery storage capacity
- 9,000MWh of electricity storage capability
- More than 2,300 construction jobs
- Over \$3 million in direct community investment

Lessons for project delivery

The programme offers an example of how governments are increasingly seeking to balance speed, sustainability and stakeholder engagement in major infrastructure delivery.

As countries around the world pursue ambitious energy transition goals, project approval timelines are becoming just as important as engineering and financing considerations.

For project managers, the California model highlights the growing value of integrated delivery frameworks that combine regulatory certainty, community engagement, environmental oversight and accelerated decision-making to bring critical infrastructure online faster.

With energy storage now recognised as a cornerstone of modern power systems, projects such as Potentia-Viridi demonstrate how battery infrastructure is moving from a supporting technology to a strategic asset within national and regional energy portfolios.