Proposed Seahawk Energy Storage

Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency

October 30, 2025

new leaf energy™

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New Leaf Energy

New Leaf Energy is a leading developer of renewable energy and energy storage systems. Established in 2022, New Leaf Energy was formed out of the development arm of California-based Borrego Energy, one of the most experienced clean energy companies with a 20+ year track record of successfully developing and delivering renewable energy projects across the United States.

200 team members

5 offices across the US

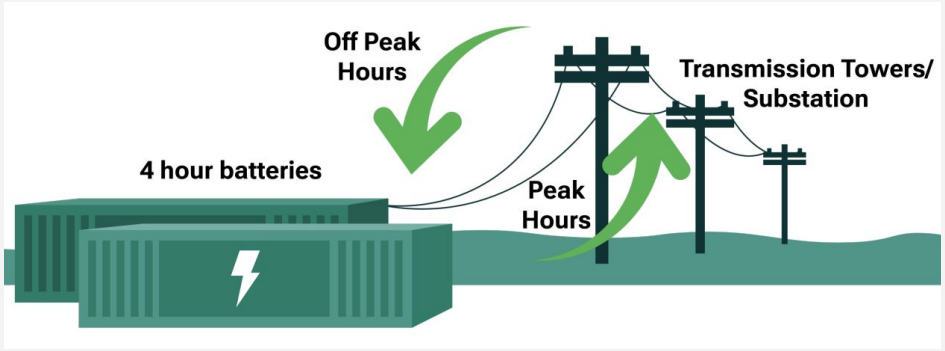
325 total projects developed

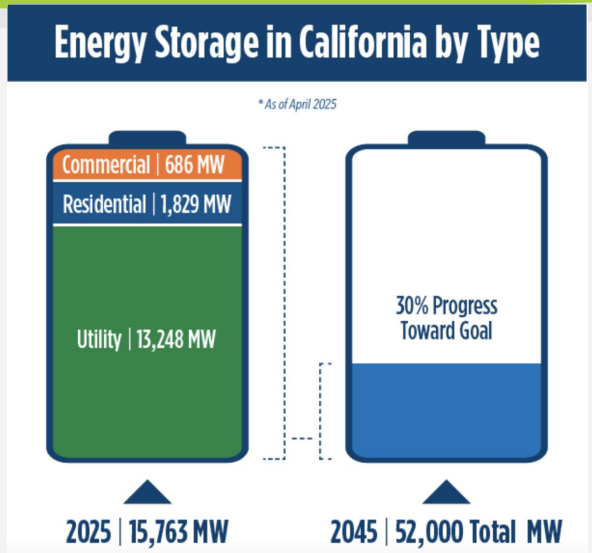
24 years of experience

1,750 MW solar energy developed

1,100 MWh energy storage developed

Role of Energy Storage Systems

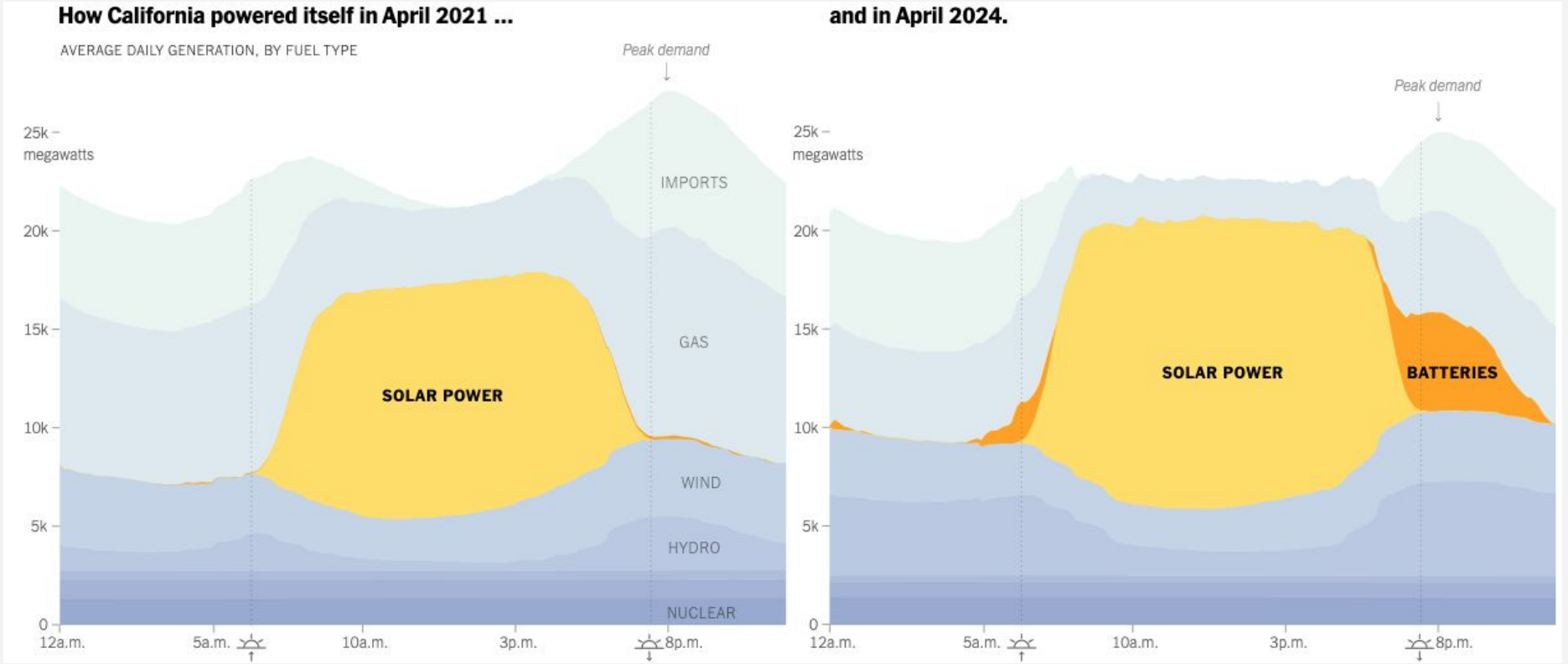




Energy storage systems are an essential component of a modern, resilient, and decarbonizing grid.
Battery energy storage systems (“BESS”) are large-scale, lithium-ion based modular units that store and release renewable electricity during periods of peak demand, helping to ensure grid reliability and keeping energy costs low.

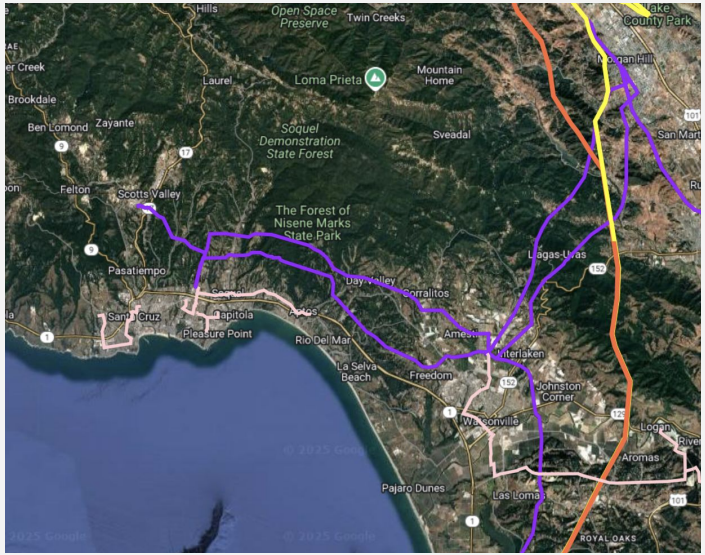
California has mandated a fully decarbonized grid by 2045, requiring 52GW of battery storage. Santa Cruz County is targeting 100% clean energy by 2035, and 3CE’s procurement plans rely on battery energy storage to meet this goal.

Energy Storage Impact on CA Grid (CAISO)



NY Times 2024

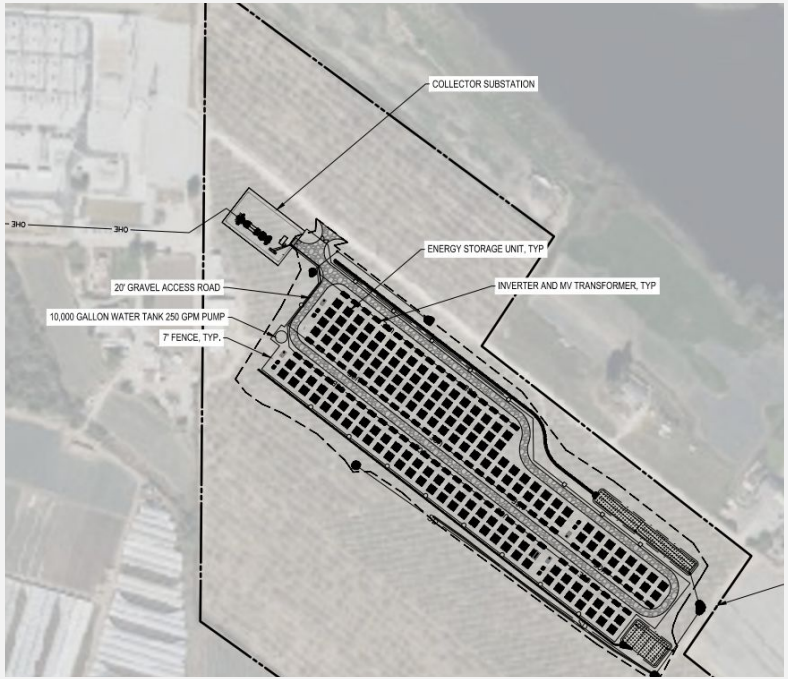
Why PG&E's Green Valley Substation?



Most of Santa Cruz County is served by two 'radial' transmission lines from the PG&E Green Valley substation. In 2013, PG&E proposed a large-scale project to address this grid vulnerability, which included building two new transmission lines from the Green Valley substation north to Santa Cruz.

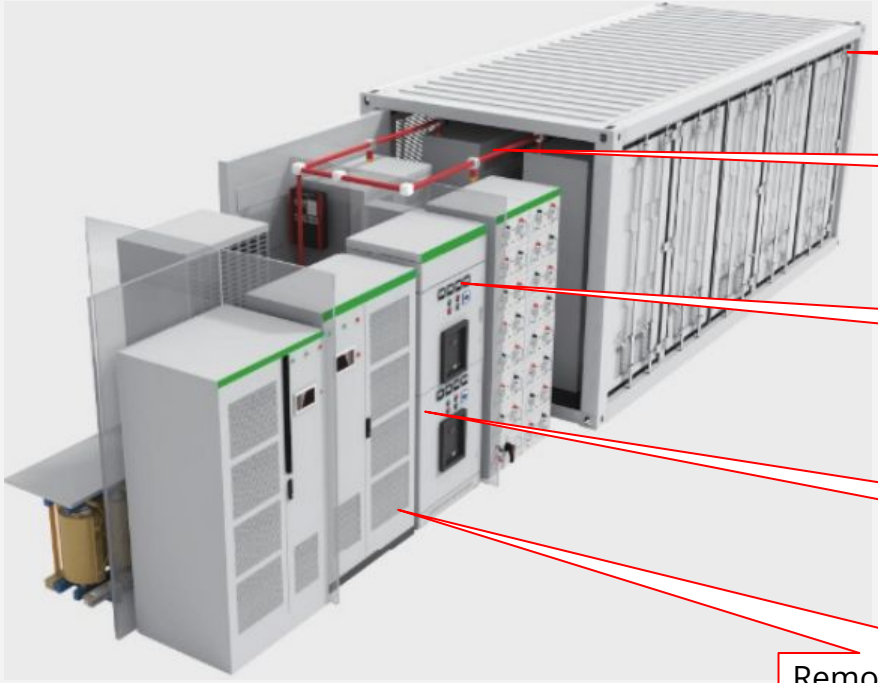
PG&E did not move forward with the project, but the grid vulnerability remains and is one reason why the County is exposed to recurring power outages.

Proposed Seahawk Energy Storage Project



The proposed Seahawk energy storage project will meet or exceed all BESS safety and fire codes including the updated 2026 NFPA 855 and recently signed SB283 (Laird) bill. All water runoff will be captured and tested before release.

Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Components



Purpose-built, double walled, sealed steel container

Aerosol-based fire suppression system

LFP battery modules, enclosed and separated

Thermal management and HVAC systems

Remote monitoring, alarm and shut-off capabilities

BESS safety video

Seahawk Energy Storage: Community Benefits

- The Seahawk project will deliver 200MW of clean energy to the Watsonville area supporting commercial and residential loads*.
- The non-project acreage (~33 acres) will be put under long term ag conservation easement to preserve agricultural land.
- The project will provide local union jobs and tax benefits to the County for the projected 20-year term of operation.
- NLE will establish a $2M Community Benefit Fund to support local initiatives.
- NLE will develop an Emergency Response Plan with local Fire services and will provide training and funding for specialized equipment.
- The project is adjacent to a designated Disadvantaged Community (DAC) which the CPUC prioritized for siting new clean energy projects.

*Equivalent to ~1000-acre solar plant

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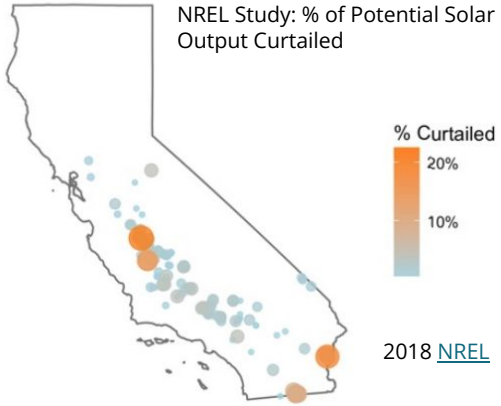
Seahawk Energy Storage: Clean and Reliable Energy

- The Seahawk project will provide critical infrastructure to implement the County's Climate Action Plan and help strengthen local grid reliability.
- Energy storage systems help avoid rolling blackouts by storing clean energy for use during peak demand periods.
- CAISO plans[1] for substantial deployment of new energy storage projects over the next 10 years for grid reliability and resilience.
- The CPUC has mandated procurement of energy storage across the state to replace capacity from retiring assets and has prioritized siting of these clean energy resources in disadvantaged communities[2] .
- New battery safety laws recognize significant growth of energy storage for the California electric grid (Laird SB38, SB283).



NREL Study: % of Potential Solar Output Curtailed

2018 NREL

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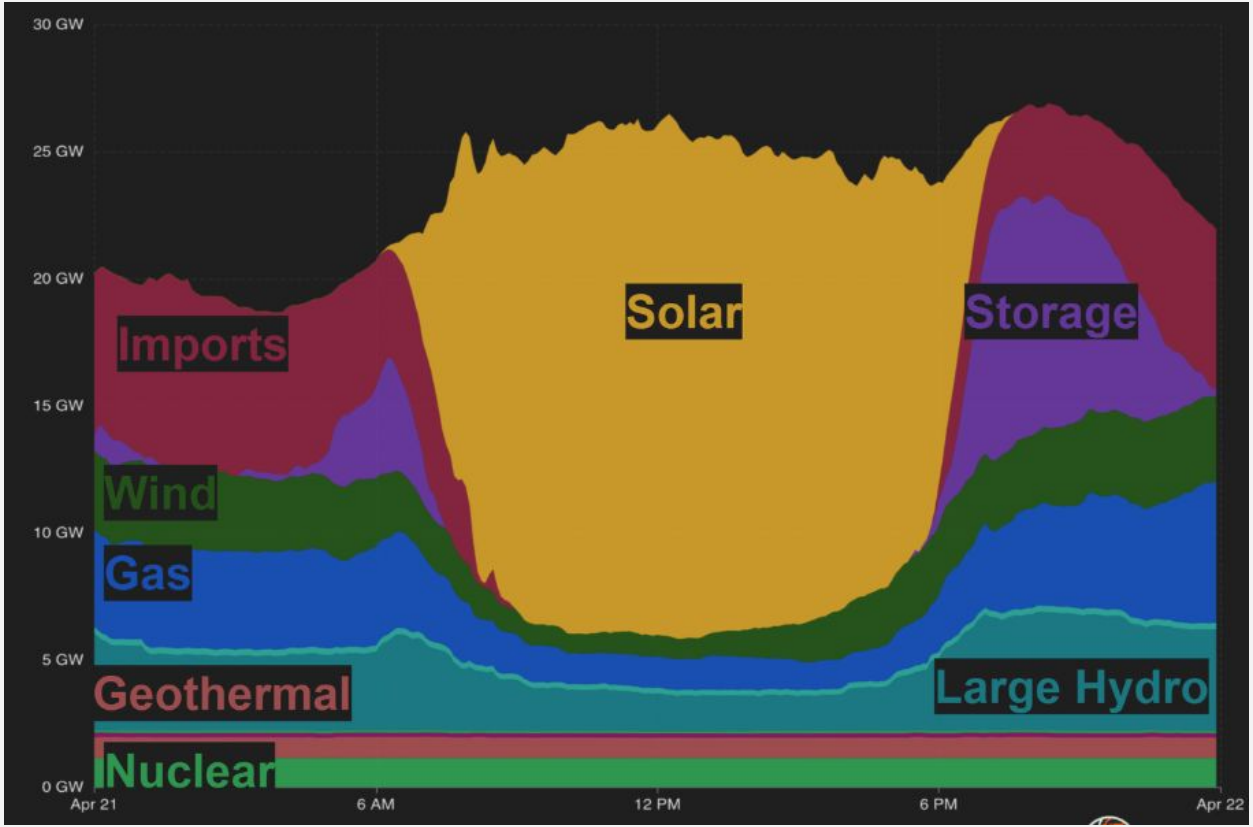
[1] 2021 CPUC Integrated Resource Plan
[2] 2021 CPUC Preferred System Plan

Energy Storage Impact on CAISO

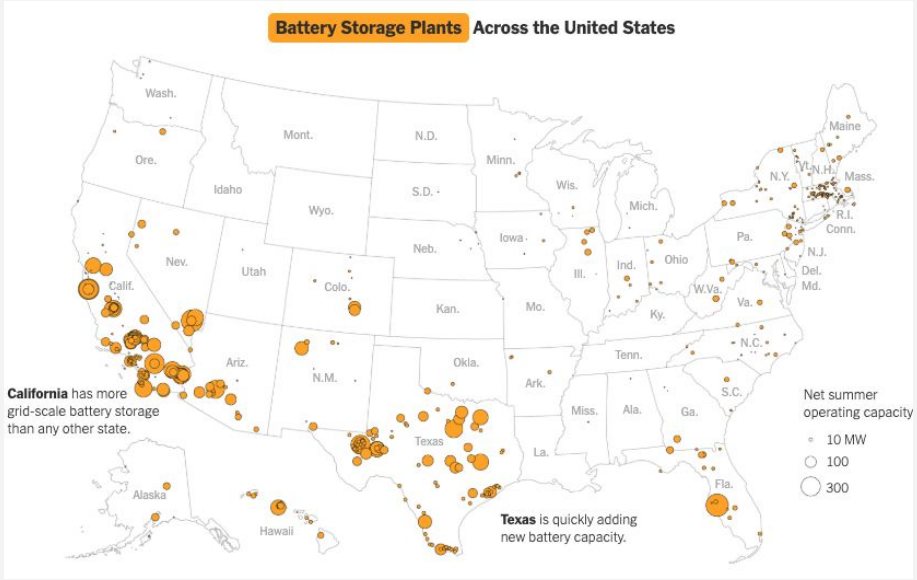


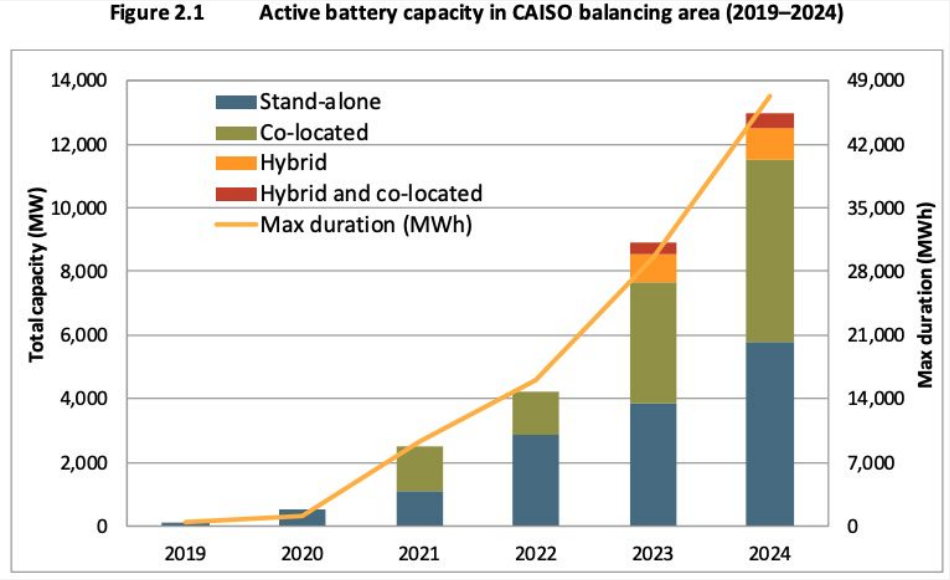
In April 2025, battery storage delivered 10GW of clean energy to the CAISO grid.

That was enough to meet almost one-third of California's evening peak electricity demand.

Grid Status IO

Energy Storage Impact in CAISO





Energy storage is already having a significant impact on California's grid.

California leads the US in deployed battery capacity, with 13 gigawatts (GW) online representing nearly 15% of CAISO's nameplate capacity. CA is now the global leader for large-scale renewable integration.

CAISO Special Report 2024