

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## INTRODUCTION

### What is the Goldeneye Energy Storage project?

The Goldeneye Energy Storage project is a proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) that will safely deliver reserve power to the local electrical grid, helping to keep the lights on for households, businesses, and critical infrastructure in Skagit County during periods of peak demand. The project is designed to store power from the electrical grid (charge) when there is an excess of power being produced, and release power back to the electrical grid (discharge) when there is a shortage of power being produced. The facility will not generate any power, but only store and release power that was produced elsewhere, helping local communities avoid outages and service interruptions.

### Does the project support the region's ability to deliver reliable power through the clean energy transition?

Yes – the Goldeneye Energy Storage project will play a key role in supporting the community's increasing use of intermittent renewable sources of power as Washington continues its clean energy transition. BESS projects are designed to store excess energy during periods of peak renewable generation so it can be discharged to the grid during periods of peak demand for electricity.

### Does the project bolster the reliability of the grid beyond clean energy integration?

The Goldeneye Energy Storage project will also provide essential electric reliability benefits beyond clean energy integration, such as grid-wide voltage support, balancing load and generation throughout the system, improved management of power flow across existing transmission lines, local backup and emergency power supply, and instant delivery of power during critical winter and summer peak conditions.

Washington's electrical grid has become increasingly strained due to population growth, extreme weather events, the proliferation of electric vehicles, and other factors.

### Who is developing the project?

Development of the Goldeneye Energy Storage project is being led by Tenaska, an industry leader in developing safe, reliable assets for supporting local energy needs.

### What is the status of the project?

The Goldeneye Energy Storage Project submitted its application to the Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) in June 2024, initiating a thorough scientific review that includes multiple opportunities for public engagement. EFSEC is a state agency that provides a rigorous permitting process for major energy facilities in Washington – for more information, please visit [efsec.wa.gov](https://efsec.wa.gov).

### How many jobs will the project create?

Construction of the Goldeneye facility will create approximately 75-100. The project has signed an agreement with the Northwest Washington Building Trades Council to ensure the jobs are filled by members of the local union workforce.

### Will the project support future economic growth in Skagit County?

Yes – the availability of reliable energy ensures adequate power for supporting continued economic growth that creates jobs and further investments in the area.

### What is the expected impact of the Goldeneye Energy Storage Project on local tax revenue?

The project will generate several millions of dollars in tax revenue over its life-cycle. This answer will be updated once specific tax impact projections are complete.

## REGULATION AND OVERSIGHT

### Who is responsible for permitting the project?

As mentioned in the project status response, the Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) is responsible for overseeing a robust permitting process that includes multiple stages of technical review, and a full analysis of potential impacts under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). For more information, please visit [efsec.wa.gov](https://efsec.wa.gov).

### How does the EFSEC permit process work, and how can the public provide input?

There are seven major steps in the EFSEC certification process which are described in greater detail at [efsec.wa.gov](https://efsec.wa.gov). Each step has specific requirements the applicant and the Council must follow to ensure a comprehensive and balanced review of the project. Per RCW 80.50.090, there are several opportunities for public comment throughout the EFSEC process.

### Once operational, who will oversee the project to ensure compliance with laws and regulations?

If the project is approved to move forward with construction, EFSEC will play a key role in overseeing compliance and operation of the facility. EFSEC is the state's regulatory agency that determines compliance with state laws and the terms set in the Site Certification Agreement (SCA). EFSEC contracts with other state agencies for on-site inspections. The Council has the regulatory authority to enforce compliance with state laws and the conditions in the SCA through fines and other actions. EFSEC continues this oversight responsibility through restoration of the site after the project is decommissioned. The project license includes requirements that must be maintained as conditions of approval.

The project will also be overseen by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, whose mission "is to protect the people of Washington by ensuring investor-owned utility and transportation services are safe, equitable, available, reliable and fairly priced."

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) continued

### PROJECT SITING

#### Where is the proposed site location?

The proposed project site is located off Minkler Road near the existing Sedro-Woolley Substation in Skagit County, WA, allowing close access to the transmission system.

#### Why was this site chosen?

BESS projects must be placed near utility substations to ensure the system can deliver power where and when it's needed most, supporting grid reliability and efficiency as the region transitions to clean energy.

The proposed site location was chosen to allow for close access to the transmission system. The site features both Puget Sound Energy and Bonneville Power Administration transmission lines overhead. Next door to the site is a Puget Sound Energy substation. Substations are a form of high voltage industrial infrastructure that exist throughout our communities for the purpose of delivering electricity. The site's location next to this extensive electrical infrastructure will allow the facility to provide maximum support and value for the electric grid, while minimizing the overall project footprint and impact.

Like the existing Sedro-Woolley substation next door, the Goldeneye Energy Storage project will be heavily regulated to ensure seamless integration with the surrounding environment.

#### Will the project impact farming activity in this location?

No – this land is not actively farmed and hasn't been for many years. There are no existing water rights for agriculture on this parcel. The parcel is zoned as Ag-NRL, which allowed for "major utility developments" such as this under a special use permit at the time the project application was filed.

### OPERATION

#### Where can I find more information about the operation of BESS facilities?

The Goldeneye project website - located at [www.GoldeneyeEnergyStorage.com](http://www.GoldeneyeEnergyStorage.com) - and the project's Application for Site Certification (ASC) to EFSEC - located at [EFSEC.wa.gov](http://EFSEC.wa.gov) - contain introductory and detailed information about the operation of the proposed facility. The project website also includes an explainer video for members of the public to learn more about why BESS facilities are needed and how they operate.

#### How is a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) charged, and where does the energy come from?

The batteries are charged via the transmission system by excess generation, whenever that occurs. Excess generation can come from any source, but typically would come from an intermittent resource, such as solar, wind, or hydroelectric.

#### Who determines and controls the release of energy from the batteries, and where does this energy go?

The owner/operator of the project is responsible for discharge, and that comes after a request for dispatch from

the grid operator. The energy is deployed to the grid, where it is used at its nearest point of need.

#### Who will manufacture the batteries for the project, and will they be produced in the USA?

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 as well as a Biden Administration Ruling in 2023 encourages and incentivizes domestic lithium content and domestic manufacturing of battery cells. Subject to availability of fully tested domestic battery cells, Goldeneye will make best efforts to source competitively priced US assembled and manufactured battery modules. The specific battery manufacturer will be chosen at a later stage of the permitting process, prior to approval.

#### What is the expected operational lifespan of the Goldeneye Project?

The project will be in operation for 20 to 30 years. Following its lifespan, the project will follow a decommissioning plan which has been submitted to EFSEC as part of the application (available at [efsec.wa.gov](http://efsec.wa.gov)) and will be finalized prior to construction.

#### How does your company ensure the ongoing safety and reliability of the systems?

BESS facilities are inherently designed to support the reliability and stability of the bulk electric power system. This reliability translates to continuous power supply to residences and critical community institutions like hospitals and schools. We are committed to developing a BESS project comprised of equipment and a configuration that can reliably and safely serve this purpose. We prioritize ongoing safety and reliability through regular maintenance, monitoring and updates. Our team of safety experts stay informed of technological advancements and industry best practices to continuously improve our systems.

#### How is the site monitored, including areas outside the facility?

BESS facilities are monitored remotely 24/7, with the ability to shut down equipment on demand. Regularly scheduled on-site maintenance is performed by technicians on an ongoing basis. Regular on-site security checks will be conducted, and the facility will be monitored via video surveillance systems 24/7.

#### Who will purchase power from this project once operational?

If the project moves forward, it will contract with a public utility for the delivery of energy reliability services. That process is regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC).

### SAFETY

#### How will the project ensure the safety of the surrounding community and environment?

Safety is our top priority in the design, construction and operation of battery energy storage systems. The Goldeneye Energy Storage facility will be held to the highest standards for safety and environmental responsibility. The proposed project is at the

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beginning of a comprehensive permitting process that includes a systematic review of any safety concerns or environmental impacts under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

Advances in regulations, standards, and technology makes the batteries used in storage projects much more stable than previous generations of Lithium-ion batteries, ensuring this facility will operate safely for years. The creek and surrounding community will be protected by design features and rigorous response protocols developed in partnership with key stakeholders.

Overall, BESS facilities help improve air and water quality by storing excess power – often from renewables – for later use. This lessens the need for power generated from older, less-efficient fossil fueled sources. BESS facilities have no air emissions and don't use water during operation.

### **Will the project utilize the latest advancements in Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) battery technology?**

Yes, the Goldeneye Energy Storage project will be built with lithium iron phosphate (LFP) chemistry which improves upon previous generations of Lithium-ion technology and offers the highest standards in utility-scale BESS safety and reliability. Our BESS projects utilize state-of-the-art battery technology, supplied by an experienced manufacturer, that has demonstrated the equipment meets or exceeds all applicable safety codes and standards. We work with independent BESS safety experts on every aspect of the battery system to ensure it meets the latest industry standards, and all safety and technical requirements will be certified by an Independent Engineering firm, which will be necessary for financing parties and insurers.

LFP batteries were chosen for the project mainly due to higher resistance to thermal runaway and improved large scale fire testing and Underwriters Laboratory (UL) 9540 A Test Results. We looked at alternate battery chemistries which have higher energy density or higher capacity to store energy, but LFP chemistry was chosen due to its better safety profile.

### **How does LFP technology compare to other incidents related to Lithium-ion batteries?**

BESS facilities that utilize LFP battery technology have far more safety and monitoring features than household items with Lithium-ion battery chemistries, such as cell phones, cordless drills or laptop computers. BESS systems utilizing LFP batteries do not contain any fuel, lead, mercury, cadmium, chromium or other heavy metals.

### **Will the project comply with industry standards and regulations?**

Yes, the project will meet or exceed all applicable codes and standards. This will include rigorous testing and certification processes to ensure compliance with industry standards and regulatory requirements.

### **What about BESS safety incidents that I've seen on the news?**

There are countless BESS facilities operating safely throughout the country, and operators have learned from rare, yet well-publicized, malfunctions at older BESS facilities.

Advancements in siting, technology, operations, and maintenance—combined with updated standards—make BESS a safe and reliable energy solution. Malfunctions at these facilities are exceptionally rare and when they do occur, local first responders are trained and equipped to handle them safely.

For example, in the case of the Escondido, CA BESS fire in September 2024, no members of the public were harmed. Air quality was monitored by the fire department, police department, San Diego Hazardous Materials division, county Health Department and the local utility for the area, and remained safe throughout the incident. The division chief for the Escondido Fire Department reported that “There were no readings of toxic fumes even real close to where the fire was—even as close as five feet.”

Similarly, Interagency Safety Task Force was commissioned after an incident at a New York BESS facility in mid-2023. The Task force report concluded that soil/water samples and air quality samples collected at sites of battery fires showed no hazards.

### **Is there potential for batteries to leak?**

No – LFP batteries do not have free liquid inside them and are not prone to leakage, even in the rare case of a cell malfunction or fire.

### **Would the project be at risk in the event of a flood?**

No – this is accounted for in the design of the project and will be verified prior to project approval. Preventing the BESS facility from potential flooding that could occur in the area around Hansen Creek is a top priority and is addressed by ensuring all components will be elevated out of the 100-year floodplain. We have incorporated avoidance measures into the project design and will continue reviewing these plans with EFSEC and other stakeholders as the process moves forward.

### **Will the project negatively impact Hansen Creek?**

No – the project is intentionally designed to avoid impacting Hansen Creek which will be verified through the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) process managed by EFSEC. Specific measures include:

- A stormwater detention facility would be constructed as a part of the project, assuring that, during operation, stormwater flow to Hansen Creek remains the same or substantially similar to existing conditions.
- The project will be setback at least 200 feet from the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM) of Hansen Creek, assuring the existing riparian buffer area is preserved. During project operation, no maintenance activities will occur within the 200-foot buffer area.
- The proposed project transmission line between the project site and the Sedro-Woolley substation will be installed underground, which is a common construction practice. The transmission line will be placed a minimum of 10 feet below the scour depth of the creek and boring activities will occur outside of the 200-foot buffer, ensuring there will be no short-term or long-term impacts to the creek.
- By removing the existing structures and replanting the area with native vegetation, the project will improve the immediate riparian habitat at this site.

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The project team is coordinating with community stakeholders to identify and discuss additional project features that will benefit the local environment.

### Will the project create noise pollution?

No – BESS projects undergo rigorous steps to ensure they are in compliance with local sound standards and ordinances. The project has been designed to comply with noise receptor classifications and exterior noise level standards identified in Skagit County Code Chapter 9.50 (Noise Control) and Washington Administrative Code (WAC) § 173-60-040.

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

### In the unlikely event of a fire, how is the response managed and what resources are needed to address such incidents?

If a rare incident occurs at the facility, the response is managed to limit the fire to one enclosure only and prevent spread to other enclosures. To ensure this, before project operations begin all battery cells, modules, racks and the entire battery enclosure are required to undergo large scale fire testing to demonstrate that fire does not propagate to adjoining enclosure in the event of battery fire.

In the event of enclosure battery fire, the facility will be shutdown, cordoned off and enclosure fire will be observed and monitored by fire departments from a safe distance, with the assistance of outside experts who will arrive on site to help manage the response. First Responders may choose to use water for cooling adjoining unaffected enclosures.

### Who will monitor the BESS throughout its operational life? What safety measures are in place to ensure the security of the BESS?

Per NFPA72, which this project will comply with, all fire alarm systems must be remotely monitored at a UL listed central station. Additionally, there will be multiple entities monitoring the facility 24/7: The owner/operator of the project, battery manufacturer, a third-party battery safety monitor, and the off-take utility. Additionally, we will submit a detailed Emergency Response Plan once the final technology decision has been made and prior to issuance of permits. The facility will be secured with chain link fence or block wall, and code & operated gates. The facility will be remotely monitored via cameras. Further, the facility will have recognition-type occasional physical security rounds to deter intruders.

### Do we have to wait for the project to be approved before seeing emergency response plans and other critical safety plans?

No – these will all be made available to EFSEC and the public prior to project approval.

### Will there be water runoff in the event of a fire that could impact local environmental resources?

No – water use is no longer considered a best practice for enclosure fires and will not be used to extinguish fires in the case of an incident. A fire department may consider

using water to cool adjacent structures, which would be captured by the stormwater containment structures built by the project.

### What about air emissions impacts?

BESS facilities do not generate any air emissions or harmful radiation while operating. In the unlikely event of a fire, there can be a temporary impact of localized air quality similar to residential or commercial fires, however the project is designed to ensure safe dispersment levels at the fence line, posing no risk to the surrounding community or environment, which will be verified in the EFSEC permitting process prior to project approval.

### Could there be air emissions that require evacuation?

The decision to evacuate is based solely on first responder incident evaluation. Any evacuation requirements would be determined and communicated by local authorities. Under typical weather and wind conditions, evacuation would be highly unlikely. Prior to project construction, a third-party fire expert will complete a hazard mitigation analysis study that will carefully analyze the impacts to the surrounding area should a safety event occur. These findings are shared with first responders and are utilized as part of the emergency response training that is provided.

### How will the local fire department be prepared to respond to incidents at the facility?

The project team has engaged with the Skagit County Fire Marshal and Skagit County Fire District #8 prior to submitting the application to EFSEC to begin discussions and planning for emergency response. Before the Goldeneye Energy Storage facility begins operating, the project team will sponsor a manufacturer-led safety training for first responders. This training will be repeated biannually, ensuring that first responders are up to date with any technological advancements and changes in safety protocols. Continuous communication and updated safety plans will be maintained throughout the life of the project.

## OTHER QUESTIONS

### Are utility-scale BESS projects being considered for deployment in urban areas in and around Seattle?

Yes, utility scale BESS facilities have been proposed in both King County and Pierce County and will be needed throughout Washington to support grid resiliency as the state transitions to clean energy. PSE has stated that they are seeking to bring 1,500 MW of energy storage capacity online by 2030.

### What if I have more questions?

This document will be updated regularly as new questions are submitted by the public. You can visit [www.GoldeneyeEnergyStorage.com](http://www.GoldeneyeEnergyStorage.com) to submit your question or email us directly at [info@GoldeneyeEnergyStorage.com](mailto:info@GoldeneyeEnergyStorage.com).