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The Honorable Chris Lopez
Chair, Monterey County Board of Supervisors
168 West Alisal Street
Salinas CA 93901
Via Electronic Mail

Dear Chair Lopez and Members of the Board of Supervisors,

In response to the Jan. 22, 2025, letter from you and the board, please accept this update on the current status of the Moss Landing 300 site and our ongoing recovery efforts.

Site Status

I want to emphasize our appreciation for the work of first responders, including the North County Fire Protection District (NCFPD) and Chief Mendoza, along with the collaborative engagement we have had since the incident occurred with the County, U.S. EPA, state agencies, and elected officials. As a result of the quick response from these entities to partner with our onsite operations team, no injuries were sustained during either the initial incident or the ongoing response efforts. We appreciate the support of all parties as we continue with our recovery and remediation efforts.

In terms of site facilities, the natural gas-fueled power plant has restarted and resumed normal operations. The two other battery storage facilities on our site, Moss 100 and Moss 350, were safely, manually taken offline as part of the initial response and will remain offline until we have had sufficient time to evaluate them in light of the Moss 300 event.

Similar to how we handled restart activities when we experienced the prior overheating incidents, any restart of the Moss 100 and 350 facilities would be done in consultation and coordination with all appropriate regulatory bodies. We do anticipate that Moss 300 will be a total loss due to the extensive damage caused by the fire, and we are actively working with U.S. EPA, Chief Mendoza,

independent experts, and State and County officials to develop a plan to safely and efficiently decommission the Moss 300 facility.

As you know, last month we experienced a short duration flare-up at the site. Per response protocols, we notified the NCFPD which responded to provide support during the event. NCFPD, U.S. EPA, and a private fire brigade that is now at the site 24/7, worked with our team and determined to monitor the event without the need for evacuations or road closures. The fire burned out overnight, and site conditions have remained stable since then.

Given the nature of this situation and the damage to the batteries, additional instances of smoke and flare-ups could continue to be a possibility until we can decommission the Moss 300 facility. As an initial step, we have started “de-linking” batteries in an area of the Moss 300 building that has been cleared for this work by a structural engineer, NCFPD, and U.S. EPA. This will create a safer, more stable condition by removing the electrical connection between battery modules and the racks. Together with U.S. EPA, we developed special procedures to safely perform these activities, and workers completed special training prior to commencing work. We began this work on February 22 and, as of this writing, have been able to complete de-linking for approximately 85% of the accessible battery modules.

Environmental Quality

Environmental monitoring, which began when the fire was discovered, has not detected anything hazardous related to the fire. Specifically:

- Air – Extensive air monitoring conducted by U.S. EPA, the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD), and CTEH, an independent air testing expert, has not detected any hazardous compounds and all particulate matter readings are within expected air quality index (AQI) bands deemed safe for the public. Air monitoring continues 24/7 at the perimeter of the plant site, as well as through MBARD’s permanent community monitoring system, and through temporary stationary monitors and mobile monitors that can be dispatched to other locations in the community on an as-needed basis.
- Water – The Marina Coast Water District confirmed that the drinking water supply is safe and was not impacted by the fire. On site, we have segregated all firefighting water and stormwater that has come in contact with the Moss 300 building. Although testing shows that water is safe and free of hazardous compounds, we are working with a contractor to dispose of that water offsite in compliance with all applicable requirements, and none of that water will be discharged.
- Soil – The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) conducted soil sampling up to four miles away from the plant site and confirmed that the data indicates there are not elevated metals associated with the fire in soil for the general public.

Cause Analysis

At this time, the cause of the fire remains unknown. We have begun a thorough, methodical investigation into the cause and have retained multiple outside experts to assist in this effort. Investigations like these take time, as our teams examine hundreds of thousands of data points to determine the origin of this event. We will continue to be transparent with this board, local officials, regulatory agencies, and the public on the findings of our investigation. Following completion of the cause investigation, we plan to work with Chief Mendoza and the appropriate regulatory agencies to evaluate any necessary changes to our emergency response plans for these facilities and will submit those to the County when finalized.

Community Assistance Programs

We partnered with the Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC) to establish the Moss Landing Fire Relief fund to support households within the evacuation zone or those who were otherwise instructed to evacuate by the Sheriff's Department. Impacted households are eligible to receive a \$750 gift card to defray the impacts of the evacuation order. CFMC and its partners, the United Way and the Castro Plaza Family Resource Center, hosted three in-person distribution events in the community and have distributed gift cards to approximately 435 families.

We also established an application-based assistance program for businesses that were impacted by the fire, including those within the evacuation zone or operating out of the Moss Landing Harbor. We have received approximately 50 claims, and our third-party administrator met with several business owners during an in-person claims submission event held at the harbor on February 5. We are working hard to quickly review and process claims so that we can get assistance funds into the hands of business owners; we have already distributed payments to several claimants.

We remain committed to continuing to work with the Board of Supervisors, the County, U.S. EPA, and other regulatory agencies as we move forward with our recovery efforts to safely decommission the Moss 300 site and ensure continued public health and safety.

Sincerely,



Brad Watson