



April 22, 2023

Dear Reader:

The Department of Energy (DOE) invites comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment for the Apex – Integrated Sustainable Battery Active Material and Precursor Production Plant Project, Hopkinsville, Kentucky (DOE/EA 2205D). The Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) can be found on DOE’s National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) website at <https://netl.doe.gov/node/6939>.

DOE prepared the Draft EA in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality’s National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and DOE’s NEPA implementing procedures (10 CFR Part 1021). It evaluates the potential environmental impacts of DOE’s providing financial assistance to Ascend Elements Inc. (Ascend) under the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, more commonly known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Ascend’s plan involves the construction of a manufacturing facility producing lithium-ion battery materials in Hopkinsville, KY that is capable of establishing industrial scale U.S. production capacity of sustainable, low-cost precursor cathode materials by integrating the separation of critical cathode materials from spent lithium-ion batteries with the production of both precursor cathode materials and metal salts to support domestic production of cathode active materials. Once operational, the facility will produce enough material to supply over 250,000 electric vehicles annually. The facility will be constructed in Commerce Industrial Park II, in Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

The Draft EA evaluates the resource areas DOE commonly addresses in EAs and identified no significant adverse environmental impacts from DOE’s proposed action or Ascend’s proposed project. The Apex – Integrated Sustainable Battery Active Material and Precursor Plant will produce enough material to supply over 250,000 electric vehicles annually, enabling sourcing of critical battery materials from within the U.S. and reducing dependence on foreign material suppliers.

The Draft EA evaluates the resource areas DOE commonly addresses in EAs. The Apex Integrated Sustainable Battery Active Material and Precursor Production Plant project supports sourcing of battery materials for electric vehicles within the U.S. and will reduce dependence on foreign material suppliers.

A Notice of Availability will be published in the Kentucky New Era newspaper on April 22, 2023, to announce the beginning of a 30-day public review and comment period. As stated in the notice, comments should be marked “Ascend Elements Draft EA Comments” and sent to:

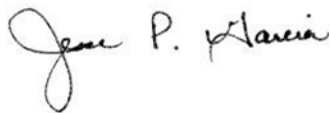
Mr. Jesse Garcia
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Individual names and addresses, including email addresses, received as part of the comment documents normally are considered part of the public record. Persons wishing to withhold names, addresses, or other identifying information from the public record must state this request prominently at the beginning of their comments. DOE will honor this request to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations, businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be included in the public record and open to public inspection in their entirety.

The public comment period ends on May 22, 2023. DOE will consider late submissions to the extent practicable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jesse P. Garcia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Jesse P. Garcia

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