



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office

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Sacramento, California 95825

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JUN 13 2008

CORRESPONDENCE 9

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STANISLAUS CO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
1010 10TH ST STE 6500
MODESTO, CA 95354

Dear Supervisors:

With publication of a Notice of Availability in today's *Federal Register*, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service have initiated a 90-day public comment period on a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for leasing Federal geothermal resources in the Western States and Alaska. The agencies are pleased to be taking this next step in an aggressive program to make geothermal energy resources available for responsible development to help meet the Nation's energy needs.

The PEIS has received strong support from the 12 States, local governments, industry, and conservation and environmental groups, and the agencies look forward to continuing to work with you during the public comment period. This involvement is always crucial to the ultimate success of land use planning.

In addition to laying the foundation for environmental analysis of future geothermal leasing under regulations published in 2007, the PEIS also provides site-specific environmental analysis of seven areas with pending geothermal lease applications for lands managed by the BLM and by the Forest Service.

The planning area encompasses about 530 million acres in the 12 States. The development scenario in the Draft PEIS estimates a potential for 5,500 megawatts (MW) of new electric generation capacity from Federal resources by 2015 through 110 new geothermal power plants, and an additional 6,600 MW from an additional 132 plants by 2025. The preferred Alternative analyzes leasing with stipulations, conditions of approval, and best management practices on all public lands with geothermal potential except those that are withdrawn or administratively closed to geothermal leasing. Leasing will be subject to existing laws, regulations, formal orders, stipulations attached to the lease form, and terms and conditions of the standard lease form.

Comments on the Draft PEIS will be accepted through September 11, 2008. Written comments on the Draft PEIS may be submitted by any of three methods:

- *e-mail* – geothermal_EIS@blm.gov
- *fax* – 1-866-625-0707
- *US Mail* – Geothermal Programmatic EIS, c/o EMPSi, 182 Howard Street, Suite 110, San Francisco, California 94105

Public meetings have also been scheduled in each State in the study area.

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July 8, 2008 – Anchorage, Alaska
July 9, 2008 – Fairbanks, Alaska
July 14, 2008 – Reno, Nevada
July 15, 2008 – Salt Lake City, Utah
July 16, 2008 – Tucson, Arizona
July 17, 2008 – Cheyenne, Wyoming
July 21, 2008 – Boise, Idaho
July 22, 2008 – Albuquerque, New Mexico
July 23, 2008 – Helena, Montana
July 24, 2008 – Denver, Colorado
July 28, 2008 – Seattle, Washington
July 29, 2008 – Portland, Oregon
July 30, 2008 – Sacramento, California

The hours for all meetings are 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., local time.

Any questions you may have about the PEIS may be addressed to Jack Peterson, Bureau of Land Management at (208) 373-4048, Jack_G_Peterson@blm.gov or Tracy Parker, U.S. Forest Service at (703) 605-4796, tparker03@fs.fed.us . In addition, Kermit Witherbee, the BLM national geothermal program manager, may be reached at (202) 452-0385 or Kermit_Witherbee@blm.gov .

Thank you for your continuing interest in and involvement with efforts to plan for responsible use of the many resources found on Federal public lands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Pool", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Pool
State Director