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Geothermal Energy Association applauds Congressional focus on development of Geothermal Energy

Washington, D.C. (June 23, 2011) – Today, the Geothermal Energy Association (GEA) expressed support for the efforts of Congress to clarify timeframes and processes required for the processing of geothermal drilling permits on public lands. HR 2171 “(the) Exploring for Geothermal Energy on Federal Lands Act” supports greater geothermal development by clearly defining and enhancing the existing Categorical Exclusion (CX) policy by setting timelines that create accountability and remove uncertainty from the NEPA process.

Paul Thomsen, GEA Board President and Director of Policy & Business Development for Ormat Technologies remarked: “In order to unleash the nation’s vast geothermal potential we must streamline the permitting process.” GEA applauds Congress’ attention to developing this baseload energy resource through the introduction of HR2171 as well as HR1384, HR1142 and SB1149. “If permitting the work can be done efficiently, geothermal projects are projected to produce 624,000 construction jobs.”

According to the USGS, there may be as much as 90,000 MW of identified and undiscovered power generation potential in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

However, development of geothermal projects entails significant risks related to finding and developing the subsurface resource. Also, geothermal projects can take several years to develop. Together, these variables create significant barriers to achieving the full potential of U.S. geothermal energy resources.

GEA will address policy and permitting issues at its first ever National Geothermal Summit to be held Tuesday, August 16 and Wednesday, August 17 at the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino in Reno, Nev. The National Geothermal Summit will convene GEA members, companies, and individuals in the geothermal industry with industry experts sharing real life approaches to getting geothermal projects in the ground and online. Topics for the Summit include Outlooks for Washington and the Western States, Building New Transmission Projects in the Western States, New Renewable Energy Policy Developments in CA, and Moving Geothermal Forward on Public Lands. To view the latest agenda for the Summit please go to: <http://www.geo-energy.org/nationalgeothermalsummit/Agenda.aspx>.

For more information or to arrange an interview with Paul Thomsen or GEA Executive Director Karl Gawell, please contact Adam Daley at 646-695-7043 or adam@rosengrouppr.com.

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About the Geothermal Energy Association:

The Geothermal Energy Association (GEA) is a trade association composed of U.S. companies who support the expanded use of geothermal energy and are developing geothermal resources worldwide for electrical power generation and direct-heat uses. GEA advocates for public policies that will promote the development and utilization of geothermal resources, provides a forum for the industry to discuss issues and problems, encourages research and development to improve geothermal technologies, presents industry views to governmental organizations, provides assistance for the export of geothermal goods and services, compiles statistical data about the geothermal industry, and conducts education and outreach projects. For more information, please visit <http://www.geo-energy.org/>. Follow GEA on [Twitter](#). Become a fan on [Facebook](#).

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