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National News

GEA Urges Congress to Reject OMB Geothermal Budget Recommendations

On February 22, GEA sent a letter to key House and Senate Committees, urging members to reject OMB’s proposed changes to EPAct’s Geothermal Steam Act Amendment, and to reject OMB’s zero budget recommendation for the Geothermal Research Program in FY 08.

The OMB has proposed two significant changes to the Rishel Steam Act Amendments. The first change involves the funding source for BLM geothermal initiatives. The letter reads, “...For a temporary five-year period BLM was assured programmatic funding so it could hire and train staff, develop regulations and guidance, perform the NEPA and land-use planning analysis necessary as prerequisites to leasing and development decisions, and otherwise implement the new law as a priority. Thus, as an essential part of its reforms, EPAct dedicated the share of federal geothermal royalties to fund BLM’s activities implementing the laws geothermal provisions for a temporary, five-year period.”

OMB proposes to repeal this provision and substitute “user fees.” GEA told the Congressional Committee members, “The activities needed to implement the law could not be paid for by user fees because they are broad, programmatic activities conducted for the public interest and not for the specific benefit of an identified individual as required by OMB Circular A-25.” The letter continued, “as a result, if the directed funding provision of EPAct is repealed, BLM would either face a shut-down of their geothermal program or would have to request additional appropriated funds. This would result in the same cost to the federal Treasury while substantially disrupting BLM’s ability to achieve the goals of EPAct in a timely manner.”

The second change OMB proposes would repeal the share of royalties paid to local counties. The Rishel Amendments changed the distribution of federal geothermal royalties so that counties receive a 25% share. OMB has proposed to revert back to the old system in which local communities where geothermal development take place receive no share. GEA urged the Committees to reject this change, arguing “rural areas facing geothermal development typically have declining tax bases and high unemployment, limiting their ability to respond to the pressures of new development. While geothermal development has national economic and environmental benefits, it can have local economic and environmental impacts. To address these impacts, the Rishel Amendments changed the distribution of federal geothermal royalties.”

Finally, the letter charges that, “OMB fails to understand the overall context and mischaracterizes the law, claiming it makes DOE research unnecessary.” OMB has argued that the changes Congress made to the geothermal leasing law are a justification for zeroing out the federally-funded geothermal research program

at DOE. “Continued federal support for research to expand our scientific understanding of the earth’s geothermal resources and develop the technology needed to utilize them economically is essential if we are to achieve the potential benefits of this vast, underutilized energy source. EAct included specific authorization for a continued DOE geothermal research program, which we urge the Committees to support,” GEA stated.

The letter concluded, “We urge the Committee to oppose OMB’s proposal to repeal key provisions of the geothermal leasing provisions of EAct, as well as their proposed termination of the DOE geothermal research program. These are ill-considered proposals and should be rejected.”

The House and Senate Budget Committees, as well as the House Natural Resources Committee and Senate Energy Committee, will be taking action on the Administration’s budget proposal over the next few weeks. For a copy of the GEA letter, email GEA at research@geo-energy.org.

“Get steamed: Congress should fund geothermal research,” Salt Lake Tribune Editorial Urges

On February 19th, the Salt Lake Tribune ran the following editorial:

“They don't require the damming of free-flowing rivers. They don't emit greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. They don't produce nuclear waste, create the potential for a disastrous accident or pose a terrorist threat.

Geothermal power plants, by tapping the underground heat of the Earth and converting it to electricity, provide one of the cleanest, safest sources of renewable energy. And Utah is a prime location for geothermal energy development.

We're sitting on a gold mine, folks, a gold mine of hot water, steam, magma and super-heated bedrock. Some day, if we're willing to make the investment in research and development to allow it to be tapped in a profitable manner, geothermal energy could contribute mightily to our nation's energy supply.

And while the Bush administration acknowledged that fact by extending production tax credits for geothermal power plants through 2008, it is attempting to eliminate geothermal research funding for the second year in a row. The budget cut equates to \$25 million, just a drop in the \$2.9 trillion budget bucket for fiscal 2008. Last year, Congress had the sense to restore the funding, and we're hoping for a repeat performance.

The administration has its reasons, none of them valid. Craig Stevens, chief spokesman for the U.S. Department of Energy, says geothermal energy production is a "mature technology," and the power industry should be able to take it from here.

Yet geothermal power plants provide just a fraction, less than 1 percent, of the nation's electricity. That doesn't sound like a mature industry to us. Plants, wells and pipelines are expensive to build. It can cost \$110 million for a 50-megawatt plant to serve 50,000 people. And they're expensive to operate. Corrosive water can foul turbines, reservoirs must be managed, sludge must be disposed of.

More research is needed to make the process profitable, and the DOE's Geothermal Technologies Program has a lot of toes in the water. Federal researchers have been working hard to help solve the industry's problems, from plant operations to site exploration. Karl Galwell, executive director of the Geothermal Energy Association, said the research dollars will pay dividends.

We agree. Researchers are sure to hit some gushers. If Congress fails to restore the research funding, we should all be steamed.

Geothermal power plants provide one of the cleanest, safest sources of renewable energy on Earth.”

Nuclear vs. Geothermal: A Comparative Analysis

A recent article in Grist Magazine compares geothermal to nuclear energy, citing that “nuclear is being lavished with government largesse while geothermal goes almost entirely ignored.”

The article begins with a quote from DOE Secretary of Energy, Samuel Bodman (age 68):

"I would add that a tremendous amount of thought has gone into the requested level of funding and what can be achieved with it, particularly given these tight budgetary times. Now, more than ever, this nation cannot afford to waste taxpayers' dollars on programs that are not well-conceived or are unlikely to be effective ..."

"I'd like to see tangible results from these projects in my lifetime."

COMPARISON:

- New Projects Status: nuclear - 18; geothermal - 61.
- States Affected by New Development: nuclear - 12, geothermal - 12
- Future Potential: Nuclear - 23,000MW - 62,000MW by 2020; Geothermal - 30,725MW - 100,000MW
- DOE Requested Program Funding (FY 08): Nuclear - \$875 million; Geothermal - \$0
- PTC Provided: Nuclear - Full credit amount for next 6,000 MW on-line before December 31, 2020; Full credit amount for facilities on-line by December 31, 2008.
- States Producing Basic Energy Resources: Nuclear fuels - 8 states; Geothermal energy - 25 states
- Type of Power Provided: Nuclear - baseload; Geothermal - baseload
- Power sales in 2005: Nuclear - \$64 billion; Geothermal - \$1.1 billion

Types of DOE Support Provided	Nuclear	Geothermal
Market and Infrastructure Support:	Yes	No
Financial Support/Loan Guarantees	Yes	No
Licensing Support	Yes	No
Risk Insurance Support	Yes	No
Advanced Technology Development	Yes	No
International Market Support	Yes	No
Waste Disposal	Yes	No

To view the complete article, please visit <http://gristmill.grist.org/story/2007/2/16/17451/8580>.

Geothermal: Significant Potential, but Little Presidential Support, Recent Article Reports

A recent article begins, "Geothermal energy is increasingly being touted by scientists and researchers as one of the most efficient and environmentally friendly sources of power available." The article discusses the state of the industry, both in terms of current usage and potential. The article cites geothermal's potential as "even greater than once believed, at an estimated 13,000 megawatts over the next 10 years." The article goes on to discuss the Bush administration's lack of support for geothermal energy. Worldwide, according to the website, production of geothermal sources could produce 50,000 times more power than all potential reserves of oil and gas combined. To view the complete article, please visit <http://www.casavaria.com/sentido/environment/2007/07-0219-geothermal.htm>.

Cleaner Coal Is Attracting Some Doubts

A recent New York Times article recently discussed the fact that none of the nearly 150 planned developing coal plants “will be built to capture the thousands of tons of carbon dioxide that burning coal spews into the atmosphere.” A major new study by faculty members at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, scheduled for release soon, concludes in a draft version that it is not clear which technology — the so-called integrated gasification combined cycle or pulverized coal — will allow for the easiest carbon capture, because so much engineering work remains to be done.

The study leader, Ernest J. Moniz, said, “Clearly in a lot of discussions, I.G.C.C. has been anointed as the solution,” he said referring to integrated gasification combined cycle. He made his comments at a symposium organized by the Aspen Institute in Washington last fall. “We certainly don’t agree with that.” The TXU Corporation of Dallas is planning a fleet of huge new pulverized coal plants. *For more information, please visit <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/21/business/21coal.html?pagewanted=2> (log-in required).*

Bodman Speaks about Energy Initiative Coalition

The following are selected remarks made by Secretary Bodman at the Energy Initiative Coalition (headings added):

...It is only by fostering cooperation between this wide cross section of interests that the Energy Initiative Coalition will be able to achieve its goals of educating the public and helping to secure a future of sustained energy production in America. ...This will necessarily involve activities by varying groups -- both public and private -- across many different areas. ...I think it would be most useful for me to just say a few words about what President Bush and I envision the role of the federal government to be in promoting affordable, environmentally friendly energy sources.

Energy

Many people don’t realize that, including our 2008 budget, the Bush Administration has committed \$15 billion to developing cleaner, cheaper, and more reliable supplies of energy. These efforts are embodied in the President’s Advanced Energy Initiative -- which he announced last year. This is a focused plan to accelerate funding for the most promising clean energy technologies, including next-generation nuclear power, solar and wind technologies, near-zero emissions coal plants, and additional improvements in energy efficiency.

Global Climate Change

Among other benefits, the President’s Advanced Energy Initiative will help us address the issue of global climate change. The release of the UN’s IPCC report three weeks ago confirms that human activity is contributing to changes in our earth’s climate. There is no question that this is a serious challenge. ...The focus must continue to be on developing and deploying solutions that are technically and economically sound. Since President Bush took office we have invested nearly \$29 billion in international partnerships, climate science and in the development of clean energy technologies -- and much of that work was used to help formulate the U.N.’s recent report.

Private Investments in Energy

Having spent a good chunk of my career in the financial sector, I can honestly say that for the first time in my life we are seeing the venture capital community put sizeable amounts of money into energy. Already, they are investing billions of dollars each year and are poised to invest even more. This is real money; and it is going to significantly boost the future of clean energy in this country.

Technology

The thing I am slightly worried about is whether this nation will continue to have the scientists and engineers we will need to carry this work forward into the future. Some of the technologies I've been discussing are already with us; some are just around the corner. But other aspects of our energy challenges will take longer, and will have to be solved by men and women who are undergraduates or high school students today. So to complement the Advanced Energy Initiative I mentioned earlier, the President also proposed an American Competitiveness Initiative -- which would double America's investment in basic physical science research over the next ten years. This would accelerate the critical research that is taking place at our National Laboratories; and would also support an array of science and technology education programs. *To view the complete press release, please visit <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200702/s1852087.htm>.*

Company News

Geodynamics: Buys \$32m U.S. Rig for Geothermal Development

GEODYNAMICS has bought a \$32 million drilling rig in a bid to get its geothermal energy project in the state's Far North well under way by the end of the year. The Brisbane-based company said the Lightning rig had been bought from Texas-based LeTourneau Technologies and should arrive in Australia mid year. Once it arrives it would immediately start drilling Habanero-3 - the company's third geothermal well.

Once Habanero-3 is finished, the company would attempt to run a circulation test between that well and Habanero-1 in a bid to get firm data on the geothermal potential of the Cooper Basin site.

The geothermal energy process being pursued by Geodynamics and Adelaide company Petratherm involves pumping water into reservoirs 3km to 4km underground where it is superheated before returning to the surface where its energy can be harnessed.

"It's without doubt the most exciting land rig ever to grace this country's shores," chief executive Adrian Williams said.

"It's a rig that was specifically built for oil and gas purposes, but is also ideally suited to our deep geothermal work.

"After drilling work is completed, the company plans to run a six-week production test between Habanero 1 and 3. This will provide data to further evaluate the underground heat exchanger and enable the formal proving of reserves.

"Drilled with an 8 inch hole in the granite (as opposed to the previous 6 inch test wells), the new well will also become the first well for our HotRock40 project, a 40 megawatt commercial scale project designed to demonstrate the huge potential of the Cooper Basin's hot rocks."

Dr Williams said the company was aiming to have a proven reserve figure by the end of the year.

Longer term, it aimed to be delivering 40MW of electricity into the national grid by 2010.

Dr Williams said various funding options for the rig were being canvassed.

It will be operated by the Easternwell group, also based in Brisbane.

Geodynamics also announced it had completed a \$12 million share placement yesterday, issued at \$1 per share. Geodynamics shares closed 7.5c higher at \$1.24. *To view the complete press release, please visit <http://www.geodynamics.com.au/IRM/content/home.html>.*

Ormat Technologies' Power Purchase Agreement with Nevada Power Company Receives Approval of Nevada Regulators

RENO, Nevada, Feb. 20 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Ormat Technologies, Inc. (NYSE: ORA) today announced that two 20-year Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) signed between Nevada Power Company, a subsidiary of Sierra Pacific Resources and two of its subsidiaries, that were previously announced in a press release issued on August 3, 2006, received the approval of the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada. Under these PPAs, Ormat's Buffalo Valley Project in Lander County and Carson Lake Project in Churchill County will produce between 18 MW and 30 MW each for Nevada Power. The two new power plants are expected to begin commercial production by the end of 2009. Sierra Pacific Power will receive the energy from these two power plants until a transmission line between Sierra Pacific Power and Nevada Power is completed in 2011. *For more information, please visit <http://www.ormat.com/news.php?did=134>.*

Petratherm: \$5m in Federal Australian Funds for Geothermal Energy Project

The Australian Federal Government is providing \$5 million to help develop geothermal energy in South Australia's Flinders Ranges. The project is run by the company Petratherm and produces electricity from steam that comes off hot sedimentary rocks about four kilometers underground. Industry Minister Ian Macfarlane says the grant is part of the Government's renewable energy development initiative.

"What we hope to see from this is that this project will be able to commercialize the technology and then that electricity will be able to be sold into the grid, further backing up the availability of electricity, particularly in South Australia," he said. "It is baseload power, it is the only renewable energy that can supply power on that basis and therefore we're keen to develop it. *To view the complete press release, please visit <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200702/s1852087.htm>.*

Climate Change News

EPA Reports a Rise in Greenhouse Gases

Emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the United States increased more than 16 percent from 1990 to 2005, including a spike in carbon dioxide emissions from cars, trucks, and coal plants, according to a US Environmental Protection Agency draft report released recently. The report found that greenhouse gas emissions went up by 0.8 percent in 2005 over the previous year, which US officials noted was slightly lower than the average annual growth of such emissions over that 15-year period. But at least one environmentalist said the data underscore the continuing dangers of increasing greenhouse gas emissions, which scientists say contribute to global warming. After seeking 30 days of public comment, the EPA report will be submitted in April to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, along with reports from other nations. *To view the article, please visit http://www.boston.com/news/world/articles/2007/02/21/epa_reports_a_rise_in_greenhouse_gases/.*

January Weather Hottest by Far

Spurred on by unusually warm Siberia, Canada, northern Asia and Europe, the world's land areas were 3.4 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than a normal January, according to the U.S. National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.C., breaking the 2002 record by a substantial 0.81 degrees. "That's pretty unusual for a record to be broken by that much," said the data center's scientific services chief, David Easterling. "I was very surprised." The temperature of the world's land and water combined -- the most effective measurement -- was 1.53 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than normal, breaking the old record by more than one-quarter of a degree. Ocean temperatures alone didn't set a record. Meteorologists aren't blaming the warmer January on global warming alone, but they said the higher temperature was consistent with climate change. *For more information, please visit <http://www.newsday.com/news/science/wire/sns-ap-hot-january.0,3669220.story?coll=sns-ap-science-headlines>.*

Glacier Loss Threatens Peruvian Water Supply

The ice atop Cordillera Blanca, Peru's "White Mountain Range" and the largest glacier chain in the tropics, is melting fast because of rising temperatures and peaks are turning brown. The trend is highlighting fears of global warming and, scientists say, is endangering future water supplies to the arid coast where most Peruvians live.

Glaciologists consider the health of the world's glaciers an indicator of global warming and they warn that what is happening in the Andes signals trouble ahead. "To me it's the rate of ice loss that's a real concern, because when melting accelerates, the ice cannot replenish itself," said Lonnie Thompson, a leading glacier expert at Ohio State University.

In Peru, home to 70 percent of Earth's tropical glaciers, the Andes Mountains have lost at least 22 percent of their glacier area since 1970 and the melt is speeding up, according to Peru's National Resources Institute, INRENA, a government agency. *Reported by EESI.*

International Leaders Seek Breakthrough in Climate Change Deadlock

On February 14-15, leading US politicians - including Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), Sen. Joe Biden (D-DE), Sen. Larry Craig (R-ID), Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-VT), Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-ME), and Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) - met in the US Senate with political leaders from around the globe to seek a breakthrough in the international climate deadlock. The two-day forum, put together by Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE), serves as a lead up to address climate change issues before this summer's G8 summit in Germany. Environmentalists in the United States believe this forum is a good indication that US policies are beginning to shift towards rejoining international efforts to quell climate change; however, many still see the Bush administration's attitude toward international agreements to be an obstacle.

One suggestion put forth by forum participants includes developing a special fund to facilitate the transfer of low-carbon technologies to developing countries. Ander Wijkman, the European Parliament's climate rapporteur, suggested that the fund should be established as a complement to the Kyoto Protocol's existing Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Chinese and Indian delegates were the most supportive, emphasizing that rapid development of low-carbon power generation is crucial for economic development without increasing emissions. Ultimately, the forum is expected to formulate a policy statement that will be used to guide negotiations at the G8 summit this year. *Reported by EESI.*

European Commission Proposes Jail Sentences for Heavy Polluters

Under plans announced by the European Commission, environmental offenses would be dealt with by criminal rather than civil courts, meaning those found guilty of dumping toxic and nuclear waste or trading illegally harvested timber or endangered animals could be imprisoned. Emission of hazardous substances into the air, water or soil would also be treated as criminal acts.

The E.C. proposals include appropriate sentences for various offences and argue that a prison sentence is a much more effective disincentive than administrative sanctions such as fines or restrictions on future operation. Member states would have to ensure that particularly serious environmental crimes are punishable by a maximum of at least five years imprisonment and fines for companies of at least 750,000 Euro. These cases would include crimes that have resulted in death or serious injury of a person or a substantial damage to air, soil, water, animals or plants or when the offence has been committed by a criminal organization. The sanctions would also be expected to allow courts to permanently shut down companies or force offenders to clean-up any damage they have caused. The proposals are likely to face fierce resistance when they come before the Council of Ministers. *For more information, please visit http://www.greenbiz.com/news/news_third.cfm?NewsID=34585.*

Companies Find Climate Solutions Lead to Profits

More companies, cities and regional governments than ever are managing to reduce their carbon footprints while strengthening operational performance, shows a new edition of the report Carbon Down Profits Up released recently. In many cases these organizations have made significant cost savings as a result of their actions.

Amongst the headline findings are that:

- > The 137 leading corporations, cities and states selected for coverage in the report are drawn from 20 countries and have reduced carbon emissions by an average of 14%. This is nearly three times the percentage cut required of participating economies under the Kyoto Protocol.
- > The 27 corporations reporting on the cost savings from their actions reduced emissions further, by an average of approximately 18%
- > Successful cities and regions reported saving US\$64bn of taxpayer money through carbon reduction.

For more information, please visit <http://theclimategroup.org/index.php?pid=892>.

US Companies Face Record Number of Global Warming Resolutions

A group of leading US investors announced the formation of a Climate Watch List, a list of 10 companies that have been identified as lagging behind their industry peers in their responses to climate change. As part of this effort, investors have filed shareholder resolutions with the 10 companies – and 26 other US businesses – aimed at improving their focus and attention to the business risks and opportunities from climate change.

The Climate Watch companies include influential electric power companies, oil producers, coal companies and other businesses that investors believe are not adequately dealing with potential climate-related business impacts, whether from physical changes, emerging climate regulations, or growing global demand for climate-friendly technologies and services.

The resolutions are among a record 42 global warming resolutions filed with U.S. companies as part of the 2007 proxy season – nearly double the number of climate-related resolutions filed just three years ago. The resolutions, seeking greater disclosure from companies on their responses and strategies to climate-related business trends, were filed by state and city pension funds and labor, foundation, religious and other institutional shareholders. The filers collectively manage more than \$200 billion in assets. *To view the complete article, please visit http://www.ceres.org/news/news_item.php?nid=267.*

Europeans Agree to Cut Emissions Sharply if U.S. and Others Follow Suit

Seeking to persuade other nations to curb greenhouse gas emissions, European Union ministers pledged to raise their own targets if industrialized countries like the United States made similar efforts. European governments would be ready to cut emissions 30 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, from a current pledge of 20 percent, but only if other heavy polluters joined in, said Sigmar Gabriel, the German environment minister, who led a meeting in Brussels that formally endorsed the European targets. Germany, the biggest European economy, was already prepared to cut its emissions even further if there was a broader agreement, Mr. Gabriel said, noting that the German Parliament had supported a 40 percent target. *For more information, please visit http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/21/business/worldbusiness/21warm.html?_r=1&oref=slogin (login required).*

Governor Gregoire, King County Executive Ron Sims, and State Senator Poulsen Announce Strong Climate Policy Initiatives

A broad coalition of Washington groups including marked a recent announcement by Governor Gregoire, King County Executive Ron Sims, and State Senator Erik Poulsen as strong and timely responses to the climate crisis. The groups called on legislators to move critical climate policy legislation this year, and look forward to working with a broad cross-section of stakeholders toward legislation next year that will put Washington in the forefront of climate leadership nationally. The announcements share a common commitment to reduce global warming pollution to more sustainable levels over time. Governor Gregoire's climate policy charts the course to a healthy future by committing to significant, steady reductions in global warming pollution, reduced fossil fuel imports, and expanding jobs in the burgeoning clean energy sector. The Governor's executive order called for a stakeholder process and analysis to develop more comprehensive climate policy legislation for 2008. The Governor also called for a reduction in fuel imports of 20% from current levels by 2020, saving the state nearly \$2 billion on its annual fuel bills and decreasing our dependence on fossil fuels. And she aims to more than triple clean energy jobs in the state by that time. *To view the complete press release, please visit <http://www.uspirg.org/news-releases/global-warming-solutions/global-warming-solutions/governor-gregoire-king-county-executive-ron-sims-and-state-senator-poulsen-announce-strong-climate-policy-initiatives>.*

State News

Alaska: Naknek Geothermal Energy Studied

The Naknek Electric Association has revived its research into local geothermal resources. The cooperative plans to drill two test holes at locations near Naknek to better determine the local geothermal resource. "Ten years ago, we really did a lot of work in our area on geothermal," said Donna Vukich, the cooperative's general manager. "The cost of diesel was so inexpensive back then, we backed off." Vukich said the cooperative has proposed a 25-megawatt electrical generating plant and an extensive distribution network consisting of 424 miles of electrical transmission lines. In addition, the plan would route 24 miles of transmission line under Lake Iliamna. The proposed transmission grid would deliver electricity to 25 villages. The cooperative has contracted with the Anchorage-based Denali Drilling to drill two test holes about 200-250 feet in depth. Three employees from the company will be on site for the drilling. Some of the necessary equipment has already been shipped by barge. Naknek Electric Association reports that generating electricity from geothermal energy could decrease electricity costs by 70 percent and displace 3.5 million gallons of diesel fuel now used to generate electricity. It would also provide the electricity necessary for economic development. Vukich said local canneries have expressed interest in expanding their local operations if cheaper electricity is available. The initial cost for the proposed generating plant and 450 miles of power line is \$200 million. Over the past decade, the cooperative has invested about \$400,000 in geothermal research and exploration. *To view the complete press release, please visit <http://www.adn.com/news/alaska/rural/story/8658800p-8550642c.html>.*

California: McCarthy to Push Renewable Energy Bill

Congressman Kevin McCarthy told The Californian's editorial board that he's writing legislation promoting renewable energy sources. McCarthy is taking his time writing the legislation, he said, in order to craft a solid piece that won't get immediately dumped at the committee level. The district covers most of Kern County, much of San Luis Obispo County and parts of San Bernardino and Los Angeles counties, and some of these areas use geothermal energy. McCarthy has been appointed to the House Committee on Agriculture, among other things, that will take up the farm bill this year. *For more information, please visit <http://www.bakersfield.com/102/story/101034.html>.*

California: More Renewable and Efficient Energy than Other States

A recent article discusses California's status as a renewable-friendly, low per-capita electricity usage state, and the history behind it. Today the state uses less energy per capita than any other state in the country, defying the international image of American energy gluttony. Since 1974, California has held its per capita energy consumption essentially constant, while energy use per person for the United States overall has

jumped 50 percent. California has managed this through a mixture of mandates, regulations and high prices. While the average American burns 12,000 kilowatt-hours a year of electricity, the average Californian burns less than 7,000 -- and that's counting renewable energy sources. California has managed to cut its contributions to global warming, too. Carbon dioxide emissions per capita in California have fallen by 30 percent since 1975, while U.S. per capita carbon dioxide emissions have remained essentially level.

Several reasons are cited for California's electricity status. One is California's natural geological advantages. Further, electricity there is expensive, so people use less of it. Thanks to its use of pricey renewables and natural gas and its spurning of cheap coal, California's rates are almost 13 cents a kilowatt hour, according to the Energy Information Administration. Besides high prices, California has long-standing mandates. In 1974, the state enacted its first building standards for energy efficiency. Next, California adopted an innovative approach to utility regulation called decoupling so that the utilities' profits were no longer linked to simply increasing sales. *To view the article, please visit <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/16/AR2007021602274.html>.*

Colorado: CU-Boulder, NREL, CSU And Mines Sign Renewable Energy Agreement

The University of Colorado at Boulder and its three partners officially signed the Colorado Renewable Energy Collaboratory agreement at the state Capitol Feb. 21, paving the way for extended cooperation in developing new renewable energy technologies. The agreement calls for increasing the production and use of energy from renewable resources, supporting state and national economic growth with renewable energy industries and building renewable energy economies in Colorado and the United States. CU-Boulder created an Energy Initiative in 2006 to focus the attention and resources of the campus on issues that must be addressed to allow a successful transition from an economy based on fossil fuels to one based on renewable and sustainable energy. *For more information on the initiative, go to the Web at <http://ei.colorado.edu/>.*

Colorado: New Report Shows Economic and Environmental Benefits of Renewable Energy

Recently Governor Bill Ritter joined clean energy advocates to announce a new Environment Colorado Research and Policy Center report entitled "Energy for Colorado's Economy." The report shows substantial increases in economic and environmental benefits if Colorado were to double its use of renewable energy, such as wind and solar power, to 20% by 2020. "This report shows we can fulfill the Colorado Promise," said Gov. Bill Ritter. "By doubling our use of renewable energy to 20 percent, Colorado's gross domestic product will increase by \$1.9 billion."

The economic boon would come from increased manufacturing, installation, and operation of renewable electricity production. The report compares economic and environmental benefits of three alternative polices on electricity production, including: "business-as-usual" with fossil fuel production, Amendment 37 which set a 10% renewable energy standard, and the 20% goal currently being considered by the Colorado state legislature. The Environment Colorado report found job creation was 4.3 times higher, wages paid was 2.2 times higher, and an increase in gross domestic product was 1.9 times higher for a 20% renewable energy standard than under Amendment 37. The report shows that a 20% renewable energy goal would also result in significant reductions of soot, smog, and mercury pollution. *To view the article, please visit <http://www.environmentcolorado.org/envco.asp?id2=30943&id3=DO&>.*

Utah: Renewable Energy Could Mean Extra Cash For Farmers

Governor Jon Huntsman Junior wants the State Legislature to pay for research into the use of renewable energy sources on Utah's farms and ranches. A spokesperson for the Utah Department of Agriculture says renewable energy sites could be a possible second source of income for farmers. That's why they are looking into the viability of experimental wind and solar farms. According to Utah Clean Energy, a farmer

can earn two to four thousand dollars per year for each megawatt produced by a wind turbine. State officials say there are 23 experimental renewable energy sites in use across the state. Interested parties can attend next week's Intermountain Harvesting Energy Summit at the Utah State Fairpark. *Information is available online at www.harvestenergy.org.*

International News

Australia: Survey of Hot Dry Rocks

A recent article discusses the prospect for HDR development in Australia. According to the article, while advances have been made, the technology, development has not yet been completed. Yet, from a business view, hot rocks are attracting hundreds of millions of dollars in preliminary work. "Initial estimates indicate the hot dry rocks beneath the Eromanga and Cooper basins could meet all of Australia's energy needs for 800 years, if all of that hot rock could be exploited," Energy Minister Geoff Wilson says. The article goes on to cite several hurdles to development, including economically producing geothermal so that it competes with coal, finding the right temperatures at the right depths, and dealing with technical issues. *To view the complete article, please visit <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,21245930-3122,00.html>.*

South Australia: \$5 million Federal grant offer for Petratherm's Paralana Project

The Australian Government will provide a \$5 million grant to an innovative new geothermal energy project in the Flinders Ranges in South Australia. Resources Minister, Ian Macfarlane, and Environment and Water Resources Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, announced the grant to Petratherm Ltd through the Howard Government's Renewable Energy Development Initiative. The grant will enable the energy exploration company, Petratherm, to further develop its ground-breaking approach of using geothermal energy at its Paralana site in the Flinders Ranges. The project will create more than 200 jobs in its initial stage. Mr. Macfarlane said the new technique, known as 'Heat Exchanger Within Insulator', is a creative departure from existing approaches. Heat is collected from hot sedimentary rock layers at shallower depths of 3-4 kms, rather than harder granites at much greater depths. *For more information, please visit <http://www.petratherm.com.au/asx/downloads/5FedGovtMediaRelease.pdf>.*

New Zealand: Company Plans US\$1.4 Billion Spend on Geothermal, Wind

Contact Energy Ltd., New Zealand's second-largest publicly traded company, plans to spend as much as US\$1.4 billion on wind and geothermal projects to meet rising demand and reduce the impact of potential emission charges on its gas-fired plants. The company, will make the investment during the next five years and has preliminary government support to accelerate consent hearings for the projects, Chief Executive Officer David Baldwin said. Shares in Contact, the country's most widely held stock, jumped the most in a year. Contact, half owned by Australia's Origin Energy Ltd., sells about a third of the electricity used in New Zealand, where the government may impose charges to discourage gas and coal-fired power production. New geothermal plants will allow Contact to make better use of its steam fields and may defer a planned gas-fired plant. Contact runs dams and gas-fired plants and makes about 16 percent of its power at three geothermal power plants near Taupo on the North Island. Two new plants at Te Mihi and Tauhara would add about 260 megawatts of new generation capacity by 2012 and would allow the progressive retirement of the Wairakei plant, the nation's oldest geothermal generator, a company representative said. *To view the article, please visit <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601081&sid=aOdzOO.owtN0&refer=australia>.*

Notices and RFPs

Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area DEIS Available for Comment (Comment Period Ends April 17)

The Bureau of Land Management-El Centro Field Office recently released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) covering the Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area in Imperial County, California. The document will be available on the BLM website for general review. The document is available for a 60 day public comment period, ending on April 17, 2007. *To view the DEIS, please visit http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/info/fed_reg_archives/2007/february/Truckhaven_DEIS_available.print.html.*

GHG Reduction and Pollution Prevention - Region 10 (Due March 9)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10, seeks proposals for the Regional Geographic Initiative (RGI). RGI supports projects that use integrated, collaborative, or community-based approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or prevent pollution by promoting the availability of energy efficiency, renewable energy, or carbon sequestration. Project implementation must take place in Region 10 which includes AK, ID, OR and WA. \$400K expected to be available, up to 4 awards anticipated. Responses due 3/9/07. *For more info, please visit <http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do?mode=VIEW&oppId=12229>. Refer to Sol# EPA-R10-RGI-2007. (Grants.gov 1/11/07)*

Sustainable Development Technology Canada seeks Clean Energy Technologies (Due March 14)

Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC), a Government of Canada foundation that finances and supports the development and development of clean technologies is accepting Statements of Interest (SOI) for its eleventh round of funding. Projects will be considered for technology solutions designed to improve sustainability for all Canadian economic sectors including energy exploration and production, power generation, energy utilization, transportation, agriculture, forestry and waste management. SDTC actively seeks applications for technology innovations that deliver clean water, clean soil, clean air, and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The deadline for proposals is March 14, 2007. *For more information, please email applications@sdtc.ca or call www.sdtc.ca.*

Sustainable Development Technology Canada seeks Clean Energy and Transportation Technologies (Due March 15)

Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC), a Government of Canada foundation that finances and supports the development and development of clean technologies is accepting Statements of Interest (SOI) for its eleventh round of funding. Projects will be considered for technology solutions designed to improve sustainability for all Canadian economic sectors including energy exploration and production, power generation, energy utilization, transportation, agriculture, forestry and waste management. SDTC actively seeks applications for technology innovations that deliver clean water, clean soil, clean air, and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. The deadline for proposals is March 14, 2007. *Please visit www.sdtc.ca for more information.*

Update on PG&E Renewable RFO (Notice of Intent to Bid Due March 19)

The CPUC is expected to vote on the proposed decision on February 15, 2007. PG&E will file an updated Solicitation Protocol on March 2, 2007. Pending this decision, the tentative schedule for the RFO is as follows:

2007 Renewables RFO Schedule (tentative)

Event	Date
PG&E Issues RFO	March 12
Notice of Intent to Bid Due	March 19
Bidders Conference	Week of March 19th
Deadline for Submission of Bids	May 18
PG&E selects Shortlist	June 29
Execution of final Agreements	Q3-Q4 2007

The key differences between the 2007 RPS Solicitation and the 2006 Solicitation are as follows:

- Updated time of delivery (TOD) factors will be applied.
- The power purchase agreements (PPAs) will include an expanded Dispatch Down Period to ensure inclusion of all situations where curtailment is necessary due to, including but not limited to: California Independent System Operator (CAISO) orders, CAISO System Emergencies, anticipated System Emergencies, CAISO-defined over-generation, forecasts of over-generation, and orders by Participating Transmission Owners.
- Collateral requirements will be reduced during project development.
- Participants whose projects have delivery points that are outside of the CAISO-controlled grid are requested to provide two separate prices: one for delivery onto the CAISO-controlled grid and one for delivery outside the CAISO-controlled grid.
- Terms will be conformed to changes in the RPS statute pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 107, which became effective on January 1, 2007.
- The two forms of As-Available PPA (one with EIRP and one without) will be combined into one.
- Redundancy in evaluation protocols will be eliminated.

For continued updated information regarding PG&E's 2007 Renewables RFO please save the following link:

http://www.pge.com/suppliers_purchasing/wholesale_electric_supplier_solicitation/renewables2007.html

California Energy Commission Request for Proposals (Due March 28)

The purpose of this RFP is to support the Commission's PIER Program Energy Systems Integration area by developing Advanced Power Electronic Interface technologies to facilitate the expanded use and reduced cost of distributed energy resources. Through this RFP, the Commission is implementing a collaborative initiative with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory to develop standardized, highly integrated, and modularized power electronics-based interconnection technologies that will allow DER systems to "plug and play" with the electric power system. Request for Proposals # 500-06-504 solicitation files are now online. Deadline to submit proposals are March 28, 2007, no later than 5 p.m. *For more information on funding solicitations go to:* <http://www.repartners.org/grants.htm>.

Rural Business Opportunity Grant (Due March 30)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture requests proposals for Rural Business Opportunity Grants. This program promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs through support of economic planning for rural communities, technical assistance for rural businesses, and training for rural entrepreneurs or economic development officials. \$1.5 million expected to be available, average grant \$50K. Responses due 3/30/07. *For more info, go to:* <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbog.htm>. Refer to Sol# RBS-RBOG2007. (Grants.gov 12/18/06)

LADWP Calls for Renewable Energy Developers to Bid (Proposals Due April 10)

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) is seeking proposals for 2,200 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of energy per year from renewable energy resources. The RFP is aimed at boosting the City of Los

Angeles' renewable energy sales to 20% of the energy supplied to customers by 2010. The additional 2,200 GWh of renewable energy would increase L.A.'s total renewables to 15% from its current 6%. Proposals are due April 10 at 2 p.m. A pre-proposal conference for prospective bidders is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 9 a.m. at LADWP's John Ferraro Building headquarters, A-Level Auditorium, 111 N. Hope St., Los Angeles. *For further information:* <http://www.ladwp.com/ladwp/cms/ladwp001370.jsp>.

Nominations Sought for Individual “Shaping the Future of the Utility Landscape” (Due May 31)

The Knowledge2007 Utility CIO of the Year award program will recognize a CIO who has demonstrated exceptionally innovative leadership through effective use of technology in support of the strategic initiatives of his/her organization. Nominate a deserving leader who is shaping the future of the utility landscape. Submit your abstract TODAY and help shape the program. Award nominations must be submitted no later than May 31, 2007. Winners will be announced November 14, 2007 at Knowledge2007 in Austin, Texas.

Nominations are being accepted in two award categories

- Large Utilities (those with more than one million customers)
- Small Utilities (those with less than one million customers)

The individual or organization making the nomination may be a peer, superior or subordinate of the nominee and does not have to be a member of the information technology department.

For more information, please visit www.knowledge2007.com.

Upcoming Events

GEA/EESI Geothermal Briefing, March 1, Washington DC

On March 1 from 9:30 to 11am, GEA and the Earth and Environmental Study Institute (EESI) will host a briefing in 2203 Rayburn House Office Building on new developments in and potential for geothermal energy. Confirmed speakers include Bernie Karl of Chena Hot Springs Resort, Roy Mink of U.S. Geothermal Power, Karl Gawell of GEA, Jeff Tester of MIT, and Paul Thomsen of Ormat. *For more information, please email Alyssa at* research@geo-energy.org.

NREL to Host “Bonus” Seminar on Geothermal Energy, March 1, Washington DC

According to recent reports, NREL will host a "bonus" seminar on March 1, discussing the future of geothermal energy. Jeff Tester, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), will present an analysis on the impact of enhanced geothermal systems (EGS) in the 21st century. *Please visit the Energy Analysis Web site toward the end of the month for more details at* <http://www.nrel.gov/analysis/seminar/>.

Financing Renewable Energy Projects, Mar 1 - 2, Berlin, Germany

The European renewable energy markets are in growth mode, affording investors and developers great opportunities. Political initiatives are fueling the development of the renewable energy industry, and investors are now looking to capitalize on the growing demand for green power markets. The event will take place at the Kempinski Hotel Bristol. *More information is available at* <http://www.c5-online.com/renewableenergy/pr10>.

Power-Gen Renewables Conference, March 6 – 8, Las Vegas, Nevada

With the passing of the Energy Bill coupled with critical initiatives to reduce our dependence on oil imports, one thing is clear - the future of renewable energy is NOW. In its 4th year of partnership, PennWell Corp. and the American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE) present the industry's premier event covering the most important trends and issues impact the industry's progress. Bringing the wind, solar, biomass and fuels, hydro and geothermal sectors together for three days of information exchange and fast-track networking, POWER-GEN Renewable Energy & Fuels attracts the biggest names in renewables to discuss technical, strategic, regulatory, structural and economic issues. *For more information, please visit <http://pgre07.events.pennnet.com/fl/index.cfm>.*

GeoExchange Conference and Trade Show, March 7-9, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

GeoExchangeBC is pleased to announce confirmation of the 2nd Biennial International GeoExchange Conference and Trade Show. Scheduled for March 7-9, 2007 at the Hilton Vancouver Metrotown in Burnaby, British Columbia, this event will feature regional and international speakers, an expanded trade show, informative site tours and a proposed geoexchange system designer training course coinciding with the conference. *Call for papers now being accepted. Check back for regular updates: <http://www.geoexchangebc.ca/announcement.aspx>*

Utah Geothermal Working Group Meeting, March 14-15, Salt Lake City, UT

The event will include topics such as Geothermal Development Activity in Utah, New Federal Rules for Geothermal Leasing and Permitting, Utah State Legislative Update – New incentives for renewable energy development, Review of Activities of the Geothermal Utility Working Group, Renaissance Geothermal Project, Blundell Geothermal Plant Expansion, and Raft River Geothermal Project, among others. *For more information and to RSVP, contact Jason Berry at Utah Department of Natural Resources, State Energy Program – jasonberry@utah.gov, (801) 538-5413, or Robert Blackett, Utah Geological Survey – robertblackett@utah.gov, (435) 865-9035.*

Energy Markets and Regulation, Mar 15- 16, Washington, DC

Law Seminars International presents a conference on energy markets and regulation that provides basic and updated information for professionals. *For more information, please visit <http://www.lsinews.com/07endccentral.htm>.*

Renewable Energy Options: The Role of Extension Agents in the 21st Century Economy, March 19-20, Denver CO

Colorado State University is sponsoring a national renewable energy conference next month for cooperative extension agents and is seeking vendors interested in exhibiting. “Renewable Energy Options: The Role of Extension Agents in the 21st Century Economy” will be held in Denver March 19-20. The two-day conference will educate extension agents about the renewable energy options available in rural areas and ways they can help develop those businesses in their communities. Vendors will be able to speak directly with agents who know what farmers, ranchers and communities have to offer, as well as the obstacles that may prevent them from making proactive business decisions. *For more information, please visit <http://www.coopext.colostate.edu/WR/energy.htm>.*

Wall Street Green Trading Summit VI , Apr 16 - 17, New York City

Speakers from investment banking, hedge funds, venture capital, insurance, and the brokerage community will present on the trading opportunities in alternative energy, project finance, carbon market developments, REC trading and demand response programs at this annual event in New York. Attend either in person or via webcast. *For more information, please visit <http://www.hedgeconnection.com/wsgts>.*

Accelerating Development/Deployment of Asia Pacific Clean Technologies, Apr 17-18, Melbourne, Australia

The AustralAsian Cleantech Forum in Melbourne is the premier international platform for knowledge exchange and commercial interaction for the full range of investors, companies and government involved in the Cleantech market in the Asia Pacific. The 3rd AustralAsian Cleantech Forum will provide unparalleled networking with key decision makers that are leading the growth of the Cleantech industry. *For more information, please visit <http://www.cleantechforum.com/index.php?page=Home>.*

RENEXPO Central & South East Europe, Apr 19 - 21, Budapest, Hungary

The event will highlight present renewable energy technologies and products as well as the latest developments in energy efficient construction and renovation. The exhibition serves to provide a platform at which major players from the renewable energy and energy efficient construction and renovation sectors can convene, network, and exchange knowledge. Target countries include Hungary, Bulgaria, Austria, Slovakia, Romania, Ukraine, Croatia, and Slovenia to name a few. *For more information, please visit <http://www.renexpo-budapest.com>.*

RENEXPO India 2007, Apr 25 - 26, New Delhi

Over 500 business leaders and CEOs, representing non-conventional energy sources will once again convene to explore possibilities for the transfer of technologies. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), together with the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources and the Government of India, have invited delegates from India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The event, presented by REECO India, will be held at the Hotel Le Méridien. *For more information, please visit <http://www.renexpo-india.com/>.*

Geothermal Resource and Finance Workshop, May 10, San Francisco, CA

GEA announces plans for a workshop bringing together professionals in the geothermal community to discuss the issues and strategies involved in identifying and developing geothermal resources in the United States and to discuss approaches and considerations for financing geothermal projects. The event is scheduled for May 10th at the Hyatt Regency (Embarcadero). *Those interested in being sponsors for the event or making presentations, please contact Karl Gawell at 202-454-5264 or email karl@geo-energy.org.*

SMU Geothermal Conference: “Geothermal Energy Utilization Associated with Oil & Gas Development,” June 12-13, 2007, Dallas Texas

In the 1970's and 1980's Oil and Gas companies diversified into geothermal exploration because of the similarities in the industries. Most of these companies left geothermal when the price of oil dropped in the late 1980's or because of failed exploration projects. Today, the Oil and Gas Industry can use a known producing field and not have high exploration costs to expand their portfolio into geothermal. Plus they benefit from the additional years of experience by the Geothermal Industry. To facilitate this happening,

the first ever conference titled Geothermal Energy Generation in Oil and Gas Settings was held on March 13-14, 2006 at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. *For more information about this event, please contact Maria Richards, SMU Geothermal Lab, mrichard@smu.edu, or 214-768-1975. You can also visit the website at <http://www.smu.edu/geothermal>.*

GEA Trade Show/GRC Annual Meeting, September 30-October 3, Reno, Nevada

REGISTRATION FOR THE GEA TRADE SHOW IS NOW OPEN. The show will be held at John Ascuaga's Nugget Hotel & Casino in Reno, Nevada, September 30 - October 3, 2007. To see the floor plan, sponsorship opportunities, or register for an exhibit space go to: <http://www.geo-energy.org/tradeShow/invitation.asp>

For more information about the GEA Trade Show contact Daniela Stratulat at 202-454-5263 or email Daniela@geo-energy.org.

For information about the GRC Annual Meeting contact GRC at 530-758-2360 or email grclub@geothermal.org.



GEA Update

A newsletter for GEA Members written by Alyssa Kagel and Karl Gawell.

For more information contact GEA at: 209 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Washington, D.C. 20003. Phone: 202-454-5261; Fax: 202-454-5265; E-mail: research@geo-energy.org