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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Forest Service

Notice of Availability of the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Leasing of Geothermal Resources in 11 Western States and Alaska and Notice of Public Hearings

AGENCIES: Bureau of Land Management, Interior; and U.S. Forest Service, Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Leasing of Geothermal Resources in 11 Western States and Alaska and Notice of Public Hearings.

SUMMARY: In accordance with Section 202 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations implementing the NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), and applicable agency guidance, a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) has been prepared on the leasing of geothermal resources in 11 Western States and Alaska. The Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Department of Agriculture, the Forest Service (FS) are co-lead agencies for the PEIS, and the Department of Energy (DOE) is a cooperating Federal agency.

In accordance with the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L. 109-58, August 8, 2005), the agencies' goal is to make geothermal leasing decisions on pending lease applications submitted prior to January 1, 2005, and to facilitate geothermal leasing decisions on other existing and future lease applications and nominations for geothermal leasing on Federal lands. The planning area encompasses about 530 million acres of land with the potential for geothermal

development in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

DATES: To ensure comments will be considered, the BLM must receive written comments on the Draft PEIS within 90 days following the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. Public hearings will be held in 13 cities during June and July 2008. See the Supplementary Information section for meeting dates and locations.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following 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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information, including information on how to comment, contact Jack G. Peterson, Bureau of Land Management at (208) 373-4048, Jack_G_Peterson@blm.gov or Tracy Parker, Forest Service at (703) 605-4796, tparker03@fs.fed.us, or visit the PEIS Web site at http://www.blm.gov/Geothermal--EIS .

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