

Salt Wells Energy Projects Draft EIS

Project Overview and Status

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Stillwater Field Office, Carson City, Nevada, has received Geothermal Plans of Utilization from Ormat Technologies, Inc. (Ormat), Vulcan Power Company (Vulcan) and a right-of-way application from Sierra Pacific Power Company (SPPC) for the development of five geothermal power plants and a 230 kV transmission line in Churchill County, Nevada. Collectively these three projects are termed the Salt Wells Energy Projects (Figures 1 and 2). The BLM is currently preparing an EIS to assess the potential environmental, economic and social impacts from the Salt Wells Energy Projects.

Project Status

The preparation of the draft EIS is ongoing. Cultural and biological data collection is in progress and all other baseline data collection has been completed.

Public Involvement

To help focus the scope and analysis of the EIS, the BLM has facilitated five meetings with project proponents and representatives from the following cooperating agencies:

- Churchill County
- City of Fallon
- NAS Fallon
- Nevada Division of Minerals
- Nevada Department of Wildlife
- US Bureau of Reclamation

The cooperating agencies are instrumental in identifying issues, providing relevant data, and in formulating alternatives. The agencies will continue to be involved throughout the EIS process. Additional communications with the cooperating agencies and the development of alternatives to address cooperating agency and public concerns have resulted in a delay of the project schedule.

Project Schedule

Draft EIS – December 2010
Final EIS – April 2011
Record of Decision – June 2011

Ormat Proposed Action

The Ormat geothermal power project proposes construction of 13 geothermal well sites, pipelines and associated roads as well as the Macari Switching Station, and the Carson Lake Power Plant and Substation (Figure 3).

Vulcan Proposed Action

The Vulcan geothermal power project proposes the construction of four geothermal power plants and substations within five proposed sites, 26 geothermal well sites, pipelines, roads, a 230kV transmission line, and the Bunejug Switching Station (Figure 4).

SPPC Proposed Action

The SPPC project includes the following components (Figures 5 and 6):

- Construction of a new Bass Flat Switching Station at the junction of the existing Fort Churchill to Austin 230 kV line and the ENEL 230 kV power line.
- Construction of a 230 kV transmission line from the proposed Pony Express switching station located near the existing ENEL geothermal plant to the Greenwave Substation.
- The SPPC transmission line would tie into the existing Fallon Substation via a proposed 60 kV fold from the proposed Greenwave Substation to an existing 60kV line north of Hammond Drive.

For Further Information:

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