



BLM FACT SHEET

U.S. Department of the Interior • Bureau of Land Management • Washington, D.C., Office • 1849 C Street N.W. • Washington, D.C.

Renewable Energy: Geothermal

The BLM has the delegated authority for leasing public lands — including U.S. Forest Service lands — with geothermal potential in 11 Western States and Alaska. The BLM presently manages 818 geothermal leases, with 59 geothermal leases in producing status, with a total capacity of 1,500 megawatts of geothermal energy on public lands. This amounts to over 40 percent of U.S. geothermal energy capacity and supplies the electrical needs of about 1.5 million homes. The BLM's geothermal leases provide not only electrical power generation but also alternative heat sources for direct-use commercial endeavors.

In May 2007, the Department of the Interior published regulations on geothermal energy development on public lands requiring more competitive leasing, offering simplified royalty calculations, and providing for the administration of geothermal leases. Geothermal leases generate over \$12 million in Federal royalties each year, with 50 percent shared with the states and 25 percent shared with local counties.

Competitive lease sales since 2007 have netted over \$76 million in bonus bids for geothermal lease parcels in Colorado, Idaho, Oregon, Utah, Nevada, and California. A competitive auction of public lands in Nevada held in August 2008 was the largest geothermal sale ever in terms of dollars bid, bringing in a record \$28.2 million for a total of 105,211 acres. The development and production of the geothermal resources on these lands will bring the Nation closer to meeting its targets for electrical energy production from renewable resources.

A Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) relating to the authorization of geothermal leasing was completed in October 2008, and the Record of Decision was signed in December 2008. The Record of Decision amended 114 BLM resource management plans and allocated about 111 million acres of Bureau-managed public lands as open for leasing. An additional 79 million acres of Forest Service lands are also available for leasing.

Since the completion of the Programmatic EIS, the BLM has competitively leased over one million acres of Federal lands, generating over \$76 million in bonus bids for geothermal lease parcels. The overall lease sales include 67 parcels in Utah, totaling 241,490 acres; 11 parcels in Oregon, totaling 41,362 acres; 13 parcels in Idaho totaling 17,580 acres; 18 parcels in California, totaling 21,835 acres; 1 parcel in Colorado, totaling 799 acres; and 262 parcels in Nevada, totaling 737,785 acres.

