

Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly - 2015 Regular Session
STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

MEASURE: HJM 19
CARRIER: Sen. Knopp

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact
Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/18/15

Action: Be Adopted.

Meeting Dates: 05/11, 05/18

Vote:

Yeas: 4 - Dembrow, Edwards, Olsen, Prozanski

Exc: 1 - Thomsen

Prepared By: Beth Reiley, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Urges Secretary of Energy and Congress to support siting of United States Department of Energy's Frontier Observatory for Research in Geothermal Energy at Newberry Geothermal Project.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Opportunity to create more jobs in Oregon
- Advantages of siting in Oregon

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Geothermal exploration began at the Newberry Volcano in central Oregon in the 1970's. Newberry Volcano is one of the largest and youngest volcanoes in the United States, consisting of over 400 individual volcanic vents, centered at the Newberry National Volcanic Monument and covering an area in excess of 600 square miles. In 2010, AltaRock Energy and Davenport Newberry announced plans to conduct a demonstration project at Newberry Volcano as part of the U.S. Department of Energy's Geothermal Technology Program. The purpose of the project is to create geothermal reservoirs and extract heat from the earth in locations where high temperatures can be reached by conventional drilling techniques in an effort to advance geothermal energy's potential in the U.S. The project is located on a Federal lease managed by the Bureau of Land Management and located outside the Newberry National Volcanic Monument, about 30 miles southeast of Bend.

The purpose of the United States Department of Energy's Frontier Observatory for Research in Geothermal Energy (FORGE) is to perform advanced research on enhanced geothermal systems (EGS) to develop large-scale, economically sustainable heat exchange systems. FORGE's mission is to enable cutting-edge research and drilling and technology testing, as well as to allow scientists to identify a replicable, commercial pathway to EGS. House Joint Memorial 19 would urge the Secretary of Energy and Congress to support siting the U.S. Department of Energy's Frontier Observatory for Research in Geothermal Energy (FORGE) at the Newberry Geothermal Project.