

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Carson City District Office

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Project Creator: Edward Klimasauskas

Field Office: Stillwater

Lead Office: Stillwater

Case File/Project Number: NVN-091352

Applicable Categorical Exclusion

Categorical Exclusion Reference 516 DM 11.9:

B. (6) Approval of Notices of Intent to conduct geophysical exploration of oil, gas, or geothermal, pursuant to 43 CFR 3150 or 3250, when no temporary or new road construction is proposed.

NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-NV-C010-2012-0069-CX

Project Name: ORMAT Temperature Gradient Wells

Project Description: ORMAT Nevada, Inc. proposes to drill four temperature gradient wells in the Aqua Quieta project area located on the western side of the Stillwater Range. Access would be via overland travel. No new roads or pads will be constructed. Access to drill sites will be via tracked vehicles and ATVs. Wells will be drilled no deeper than 1,000 feet. No sumps or cellars will be excavated. Cultural surveys will be conducted for each drill site.

Applicant Name: ORMAT Nevada Inc.

Project Location: Agua Quieta

BLM Acres for the Project Area: <1

Land Use Plan Conformance: MIN-1; 1) Encourage development of energy and mineral resources in a timely manner to meet national, regional and local needs consistent with the objectives for other public lands uses.

Name of Plan: Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (2001)

Screening of Extraordinary Circumstances: The following extraordinary circumstances apply to individual actions within categorical exclusions (43 CFR 46.215). The BLM has considered the following criteria: (Specialist review: initial in appropriate box)

| <i>If any question is answered 'yes' an EA or EIS must be prepared.</i> | YES | NO |
|--|-----|-----|
| 1. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on public health or safety? (Range-Jill Devaurs) | | gd |
| 2. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); floodplains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (EO 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas? (Archeology, Recreation, Wilderness, Wildlife, Range by allotment, Water Quality) | | gv |
| 3. Would the Proposed Action have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA 102(2)(E)]? (PEC) | | ADK |
| 4. Would the Proposed Action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks? (PEC) | | ADK |
| 5. Would the Proposed Action establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects? (PEC) | | ADK |
| 6. Would the Proposed Action have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects? (PEC) | | ADK |
| 7. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the NRHP as determined by the bureau or office? (Archeology) | | pw |
| 8. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the list of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species? (Wildlife) | | gv |
| 9. Would the Proposed Action violate federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment? (PEC and Archeology) | | ADK |
| 10. Would the Proposed Action have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EA 12898)? ((PEC) | | ADK |
| 11. Would the Proposed Action limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007)? (Archeology) | | pw |
| 12. Would the Proposed Action contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and EO 13112)? (Range-Jill Devaurs) | | gd |

SPECIALISTS' REVIEW:

During ID Team review of the above Proposed Action and extraordinary circumstances, the following specialists reviewed this CX:

Planning Environmental Coordinator, Angelica Rose: *AR 8/13/12*
Public Health and Safety/Grazing/Noxious Weeds, Jill Devaurs: *JD 8-13-12*
Recreation/Wilderness/VRM/LWC, Dan Westermeyer: *DW 8-13-12*
Wildlife/T&E (BLM Sensitive Species), John Wilson: *JW 8-13-12*
Archeology, Jason Wright: *JW 8/23/12*
Soils, Jill Devaurs/Linda Appel/Chelsy Simerson: *la 8/13/12*

CONCLUSION: Based upon the review of this Proposed Action, I have determined that the above-described project is a categorical exclusion, in conformance with the LUP, and does not require an EA or EIS. A categorical exclusion is not subject to protest or appeal.

Approved by:

Teresa J. Knutson

Teresa J. Knutson
Field Manager
Stillwater Field Office

8/23/2012
(date)

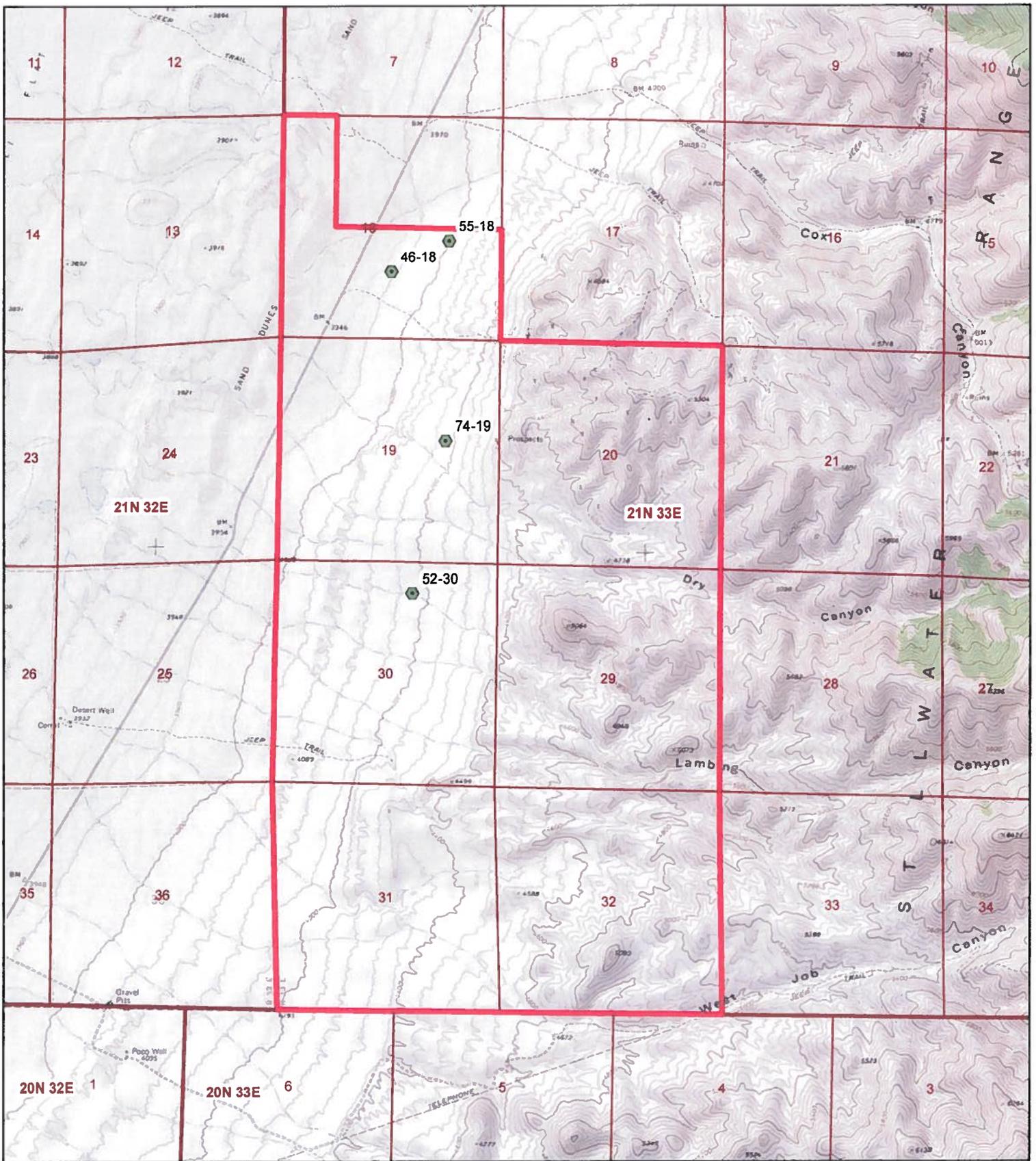


Figure 1.
Agua Quieta Proposed TG Hole Locations

NVN-089603