

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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**Finding of No Significant Impact  
and  
Decision Record  
DOI-BLM-UT-C010-2021-0015-EA**

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**April 2022**

**Bailey Mountain Geothermal  
Exploration Project**

**Location:** Beaver County, Utah

**Cedar City Field Office**  
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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**Environmental Assessment**  
**DOI-BLM-UT-C010-2021-0015-EA**  
**Bailey Mountain Geothermal Exploration Project**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) (DOI-BLM-UT-C010-2021-0015-EA) analyzing the potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action and the No Action alternative for the Bailey Mountain Geothermal Exploration Project.

The Proposed Action includes construction, operation, and maintenance of the Bailey Mountain Geothermal Exploration Project in Beaver County, Utah, approximately 4 miles north of Milford. Ormat Nevada, Inc. (Ormat) intends to explore the geothermal energy production potential and assess the commercial viability of the geothermal resources in the leased areas. The proposed project would include the drilling and testing of up to 20 geothermal wells as well as construction and improvement of access roads (see Ormat's Operations Plan in Appendix A). The project is a site-specific action with surface disturbance totaling approximately 62.2 acres.

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Based on my review of the Environmental Assessment and supporting documents, I have determined that the Proposed Action is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required as per section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The following are considered in my evaluation of the effects of the Proposed Action:

**DEGREE OF EFFECTS**

**1. Degree of short- and long-term effects;**

Chapter 3 of the EA includes analysis of short- and long-term effects of the identified issues and discussion of reasonably foreseeable environmental trends and planned actions in relation to those issues. The Proposed Action is not expected to have significant short- or long-term effects.

**2. Degree of both beneficial and adverse effects.**

The EA considered both beneficial and adverse impacts of the Proposed Action and No Action alternatives, as documented in Chapter 3 *Affected Environment and Environmental Impacts*. The proposed Design Features in Appendix C of the EA would avoid or reduce impacts to the resources and prevent unnecessary or undue degradation to the public lands.

**3. Degree of effect on public health and safety.**

There are no human health and safety concerns within the Project Area. Health and Safety are addressed in Section 3.8 of the Environmental Protection Measures in the Operations Plan.

**4. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.**

The Proposed Action would not violate Federal, State, Tribal, or local laws protecting the environment as documented in Section 1.4 of the EA.

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Gloria Tibbetts  
District Manager  
Color Country District

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Date

**DECISION RECORD**  
**Environmental Assessment**  
***DOI-BLM-UT-C010-2021-0015-EA***  
***Bailey Mountain Geothermal Exploration Project***

**Introduction**

The Cedar City Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze impacts to the human environment related to an Operations Plan (see Appendix A of the EA) submitted by Ormat Nevada, Inc. (Ormat) to exercise its valid existing Federal geothermal leases (UTU-92126 and UTU-92127) by drilling up to 20 geothermal exploration wells with associated components on BLM-administered lands in Beaver County, Utah. The proposal also includes the application for a right-of-way (ROW) grant for the improvement and relocation of three off-lease access roads associated with the proposed project.

**Decision and Rationale**

The decision is to approve the Bailey Mountain Geothermal Exploration Project as outlined in Ormat's Operations Plan and described in Section 2.3 in the EA, including the design features and lease stipulations listed in Appendix C, and to issue the associated ROW grants. This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the Authorized Officer (43 CFR 3200.5).

The decision to approve the Proposed Action is made because it meets the purpose and need for the project as described in Section 1.1 of the EA and allows Ormat to evaluate the potential for exercising its valid existing Federal geothermal leases (UTU-92126 and UTU-92127) while avoiding or minimizing potential resource conflicts. The Proposed Action also conforms to the existing BLM land use plan and aligns with adopted state and local plans that are applicable to the area. The EA analyzed the Proposed Action and found no significant impacts, as documented in the Finding of No Significant Impact.

**Plan Conformance and Consistency**

The Proposed Action conforms with the *Cedar Beaver Garfield Antimony Record of Decision/Resource Management Plan* (CBGA RMP), approved in 1986 (BLM 1986). Applicable objectives are presented in Section 1.3 of the EA.

**Description of the Proposed Action**

The Proposed Action includes the authorization for drilling and testing of up to 20 geothermal wells on 20 well pads, as well as associated on-lease access road construction and improvement. It would also include the improvement of off-lease access roads and the relocation of two segments of the off-lease access roads. See Section 2.3 and Appendix A of the EA for details.

Appendix C of the EA contains the lease stipulations attached to leases UTU-92126 and UTU-92127 (applicable to project exploration activities) and design features required as part of the Proposed Action.

**Alternatives Considered in Detail**

The EA considered the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action in detail.

Under the No Action Alternative, the BLM would not approve Ormat’s Operations Plan and the ROWs for off-lease access roads would not be granted. The proposed well pads and access roads would not be constructed and associated surface disturbance would not occur. However, exploration and subsequent development on the geothermal leases could still occur under geothermal lease rights; potential impacts would be assessed through a separate NEPA analysis. Potential impacts would likely be similar to the impacts of the Proposed Action, but further details cannot be provided without speculation.

**Alternatives Considered but Dismissed from Further Analysis**

No unresolved conflicts with respect to alternative uses of available resources were identified. As a result, only the Proposed Action and No Action alternatives were considered.

**Public Involvement**

Information on the Proposed Action was posted on the BLM’s ePlanning site on February 19, 2021 (<https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2012220/510>). After publication of the preliminary EA, a 30-day public comment period was offered from February 22, 2022, to March 24, 2022. Seven comment submittals were received. The comments and the BLM’s responses are contained in Appendix D to the EA.

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Gloria Tibbetts  
District Manager  
Color Country District

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Date

**Protest/Appeal**

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the Authorized Officer and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) issues a stay (43 CFR 3200.5(b)). Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a notice of appeal must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer at Color Country District Office, 176 East DL Sargent Drive, Cedar City, Utah 84721. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of the Interior, 801 North Quincy St. Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22203 within 30 days after the notice of appeal is filed with the Authorized Officer.

If you wish to file a petition for stay pursuant to 43 CFR Part 4.21(b), the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal and shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,

- (2) The likelihood of the appellants success on the merits,
- (3) The likelihood of irreparable harm to the appellant or resources if the stay is not granted,  
and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

If a petition for stay is submitted with the notice of appeal, a copy of the notice of appeal and petition for stay must be served on each party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken, and with the IBLA at the same time it is filed with the Authorized Officer.

A copy of the notice of appeal, any statement of reasons, any petition for stay, and all pertinent documents must be served on each adverse party named in the decision from which the appeal is taken and on the Office of the Regional Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior, 6201 Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84138-1180, at the same time the original documents are filed.