



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Bruneau Field Office
3948 Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705



SCOPING INFORMATION DOCUMENT

2025 Bruneau Field Office Competitive Geothermal Lease Sale

DOI-BLM-ID-B020-2025-0002-EA

This information document summarizes a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposal to consider offering 109 parcels totaling 50,126 acres within the Bruneau Field Office (see Figure 1 below) in a competitive Geothermal Lease Sale. These parcels were nominated by the public. The BLM is required to hold a competitive lease sale at least once every two-years if there are nominations pending (43 CFR § 3202.13).

Background

The BLM is considering offering 109 parcels, comprising approximately 50,126 acres of land within the area administered by the Bruneau Field Office. These nominated parcels amount to approximately 3 percent of acres available for geothermal leasing within the Bruneau Field Office. The nominated parcels are located within the Snake River Plain, in rural areas. Land uses include livestock grazing and agriculture, utility and road rights-of-way (ROW), and wildlife habitat.

The purpose of this report is to inform interested and affected parties of the proposal and to solicit comments to assist with the NEPA review of the proposal. Analysis of the proposal is ongoing and will be documented in an Environmental Analysis (EA), with an estimated completion date of September 2025. Comments received in response to this solicitation will be used to identify potential environmental issues related to the proposed action to meet the purpose of and need for the project.

A geothermal lease typically grants the lessee access to geothermal resources in the lease area for a period of 10 years. The terms of the lease require the lessee to show a certain level of diligence toward developing the geothermal resources within the lease area or the lease may be terminated. Once an area is developed for productive use of geothermal energy, the lease allows the lessee use of the resource for 35 years with a right of renewal for another 55 years.

A lessee's right to explore and drill for geothermal resources at some location in the lease is implied by issuance of the lease. If leases are issued and lease operations are proposed in the future, BLM would conduct additional project specific NEPA analysis when a Geothermal Drilling Permit (GDP) or other exploration, development or production project application is

submitted. In addition to the stipulations and notices attached to the parcel, conditions of approval and best management practices may be applied.

Preliminary Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose is to respond to lease nominations made by the public to lease federal geothermal resources through a competitive leasing process.

The need for the action is BLM's responsibility to respond to the nomination of public lands for geothermal leasing under the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970, as amended, and the National Energy Policy Act of 2005 to promote the development of geothermal energy on the public domain.

Preliminary Proposed Action and Alternatives

Under the Proposed Action, the BLM would offer federal minerals associated with 109 nominated lease parcels, totaling 50,126 acres in Owyhee County, Idaho, for competitive leasing. The BLM Authorized Officer retains the authority to either lease or defer these parcels based on the analysis of potential impacts presented in this EA.

Preliminary Issues

The BLM has identified potential issues for analysis related to the proposal. The preliminary issues related to these resources include, but are not limited to, vegetation, wildlife, recreation, and livestock grazing.

Public Input Requested

Federal actions must be analyzed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations to determine potential environmental consequences.

The purpose of this document is to inform interested and affected parties of the proposal and to solicit comments to assist with the NEPA review of the proposal. As previously mentioned, the BLM will document our analysis of the proposal in an EA. Comments received in response to this solicitation may be used to identify potential environmental issues related to the proposed action or alternatives to the proposed action as we prepare the EA.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will also use this public participation opportunity under the NEPA to assist the agency in satisfying the public involvement requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. 470(f)) pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). The information about historic and cultural resources within the area potentially affected by the proposed action will assist the BLM in identifying and evaluating impacts to such resources in the context of both NEPA and Section 106 of the NHPA. The BLM will consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration.

We invite Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as tribes and other stakeholders interested in, or affected by the proposed action to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, to request participation in the development of the environmental analysis as a cooperating agency.

The BLM invites comments from the public on the proposed action, preliminary issues, and alternatives. Comments made on this proposal would be **most helpful if they are received by** January 15, 2025, and are directly relevant to the proposal and project area.

Submit comments through the project eplanning website at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2035812/510> , or via email to BLM_ID_BruneauOffice@blm.gov. Please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization. Issues that are outside the scope of the proposal will not be addressed at this planning level.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Contact

The primary contact for this proposal is Carlie Swa, Rangeland Management Specialist, 208-384-3300, or email BLM_ID_BruneauOffice@blm.gov.

Attachment:

Figure 1: Proposed Geothermal Leasing Map

Figure 1. Proposed Geothermal Leasing Map

