

DOCKETED

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CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION715 P Street
Sacramento, California 95814energy.ca.gov

CEC-70 (Revised 7/22)

*IN THE MATTER OF:*

Black Rock Geothermal Project

DOCKET NO. 23-AFC-03

NOTICE OF HEARING ON GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES**California Energy Commission Business Meeting****Agenda Item 6****May 31, 2023****9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.****Remote Access Only via Zoom™**<https://zoom.us/> Meeting ID: **938 6923 0237** Passcode: **mtg@10am**

[See the Attendance Instruction section of this notice for more information.]

On April 18, 2023, Black Rock Geothermal, LLC, an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of BHE Renewables, LLC (BHER), filed an Application for Certification (AFC) to construct and operate a geothermal electrical generating facility, the Black Rock Geothermal Project (BRGP), in unincorporated Imperial County at the Salton Sea Known Geothermal Resource Area.

Public Resources Code sections 25502 and 25519 require a two-step process for an applicant to receive a certification from the California Energy Commission (CEC) to construct and operate a thermal powerplant. The first step is to file a Notice of Intent (NOI) and the second step is to file an AFC. For geothermal plants, the NOI step may be bypassed if an applicant can reasonably demonstrate the proposed site is capable of providing geothermal resources in commercial quantities (Public Resources Code section 25540.2(a)).

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the CEC will hold a hearing at its May 31, 2023, business meeting to consider whether, based on the entire record, the proposed site is reasonably capable of supplying geothermal resources in commercial quantities and that the project is exempt from the NOI process.

Agenda

The agenda for the May 31, 2023, business meeting is posted at:

<https://www.energy.ca.gov/event/meeting/2023-05/energy-commission-business-meeting-0>

Executive Director Recommendation

On May 8, 2023, the CEC's executive director filed a memorandum that among other things, recommended that the CEC find the site capable of producing geothermal resources in commercial quantities, and that under the Public Resources Code section 25540.2(a), the project is exempt from the NOI process.

California Code of Regulations, title 20, section 1804 subdivision (a) defines commercial quantities of geothermal resources to mean "enough geothermal steam or hot water resources from a sufficient number of wells to support a reasonable conclusion that a proposed powerplant will be able to achieve the applicant's estimated gross capacity over the life of the project."

The purpose of this hearing is for the CEC to consider the executive director's recommendation, evidence in the record, information presented at the hearing and issue a determination through an order on whether the site is reasonably capable of providing geothermal resources in commercial quantities or take other action on the matter.

Supporting Evidence in the Record

The executive director's recommendation is based on the following evidence filed into the proceeding's docket, (23-AFC-03) consistent with California Code of Regulations, title 20, sections 1809(b) and (c).

Docket 23-AFC-03: <https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/Lists/DocketLog.aspx?docketnumber=23-AFC-03>

- 1) TN 250205, Geothermal Resources Evaluation Testimony, Charlene Wardlow and Jesus Salera, California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division, May 18, 2023.
- 2) TN 250040, Numerical Reservoir Simulation of the Salton Sea Geothermal Resource for Power Generation, May 2023.
- 3) TN 249911, Morton Bay Geothermal Project, Previous Resource Adequacy Report
 - a. Salton Sea Unit 6 Project, Geothermal Resource Evaluation Michael Woods Department of Conservation.
 - b. Salton Sea Unit 6 Project, Geothermal Resource Evaluation, Steve Baker, California Energy Commission, November 13, 2002.
 - c. Obsidian Energy, Geothermal Resources for Salton Sea Unit 6 Powerplant Development, April 2002.

Technical Experts at the Hearing

The following experts are available to present information related to commercial quantities of geothermal resources or answer technical questions from the commissioners.

- 1) CEC Staff, Dr. Abdel-Karim Abulaban
- 2) The applicant's geotechnical consultants
- 3) Representative from California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division, Jesus Salera

Hearing Procedures. The procedures for the business meeting are set forth in the agenda and in California Code of Regulations, title 20, sections 1101-1105.

Attendance Instructions. For information on how to participate at the business meeting for this item and to obtain all backup materials and presentations related to this hearing, go to the CEC's business meeting website at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/proceedings/business-meetings>.

Public Comment. Public comments are welcomed at the business meeting during announced times. Comments will be limited to two minutes or less per speaker and one speaker per entity depending on the proposed agenda and number of commenters. Written comments may be submitted electronically at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/steam-turbine/black-rock-geothermal-project-brgp>. Written comments may also be submitted by email. Include docket number 23-AFC-03 and "Hearing on Geothermal Resources" in the subject line and email to docket@energy.ca.gov. All comments are due by May 30, 2023.

Written and oral comments, attachments, and associated contact information (including address, phone number, and email address) will become part of the public record of this proceeding with access available via any internet search engine.

A paper copy may be mailed to:
California Energy Commission
Docket Unit, MS-4
Docket No. 23-AFC-03
715 P Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Public Advisor. The CEC's Public Advisor assists the public with participation in CEC proceedings. To request assistance, interpreting services, or reasonable modifications and accommodations, call (916) 957-7910 or email publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov as soon as possible but at least five days in advance of the workshop. The CEC will work diligently to meet all requests based on availability.

Media Inquiries. Email mediaoffice@energy.ca.gov or call (916) 654-4989.

Availability of Documents. Documents and presentations for this meeting will be available at <https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/Lists/DocketLog.aspx?docketnumber=23-AFC-03> and <https://www.energy.ca.gov/event/meeting/2023-05/energy-commission-business-meeting-0>