



Department of Energy

Golden Field Office
1617 Cole Boulevard
Golden, Colorado 80401-3393

March 7, 2003

DOE/EA-1460

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT For the IN SEARCH OF TRUTH CANBY DISTRICT HEATING PROJECT CANBY, MODOC COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy, Golden Field Office

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the In Search of Truth (I'SOT) Canby District Heating Project, Modoc County, California, to evaluate potential environmental impacts of project construction and operations for three years.

DOE would provide partial funding, through its National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), to I'SOT for the development and field verification of a small-scale, geothermal district heating system. Local district heating projects have the potential for widespread application, but achieving cost effectiveness in small development projects presents a number of challenges. To address these challenges, DOE is supporting the small-scale field verification of innovative geothermal direct-use system concepts to (1) determine and validate the economics, performance, and operational characteristics of local geothermal projects in different regions. and (2) evaluate the ability of such systems to provide distributed heating in order to facilitate their increased application in the western United States.

The proposed geothermal direct-use system would be located on property privately held by members of I'SOT in the town of Canby. The system would be capable of supplying space heating and potable hot water for homes and other buildings in the I'SOT community. NREL will take this opportunity to monitor and evaluate the technical and economic performance of the proposed district heating system. This information will be used to advance the design and use of small-scale geothermal technologies.

The EA addresses the construction and operation of the local, geothermal direct-use system for a three-year performance period, as well as the discharge of the geothermal effluent to the Pit River. Alternate pipeline routes were investigated. The originally proposed discharge pipeline route was modified to avoid wetlands and minimize impacts to biological resources. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board has approved discharge of the geothermal fluids to the Pit River. State and local approvals obtained following a California Environmental Quality Assurance review include California Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources and the Modoc County Planning Department.



DOE's Proposed Action is to provide a portion of the funds required to construct and operate the I'SOT District Heating Project. This funding would be provided through an NREL subcontract with I'SOT, Inc. and would be administered by NREL. The direct-use system would be managed by I'SOT, Inc.

All discussions and findings related to this site and the proposed action are contained in the attached Final EA and the attached Mitigation Action Plan (MAP). The Final EA and MAP are hereby incorporated by reference.

COPIES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ARE AVAILABLE FROM:

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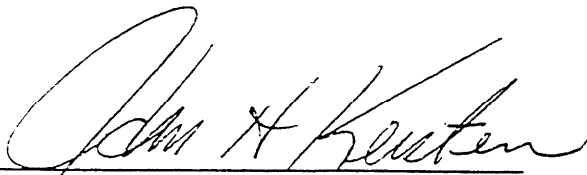
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE DOE NEPA PROCESS CONTACT:

Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW.
Washington: D.C. 20585
(202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756

DETERMINATION:

DOE determines that providing partial funding for the construction and first three years of operation of the I'SOT District Heating Project at Canby, California does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act. All mitigation measures identified in the EA and cited in the MAP as conditions required for Federal funding shall be incorporated into the NREL subcontract to I'SOT, Inc. The preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required, and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Issued in Golden, Colorado, 7th day of March 2003.



John H. Kersten
Manager