

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
El Centro Field Office

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW AND DECISION RECORD

CX No: CA-670-2010-107

Lease/Serial/Case File No: GDP-670-10-1

Proposed Action Title/Type: Geothermal Drilling Permit for Production well 78A-6

Location of Proposed Action: *At Surface* - 593 ft N and 1014 ft E of SE section corner of Sec 6, T16S, R17E, SBBM&M
At proposed Production Zone - 1997 ft N and 740 ft W of SE section corner of Sec 6, T16S,

Legal Description: T.16.S. R.17.E SEC.6. SBB&M

Map: USGS Map- Ormesa Field, Imperial County, CA, showing total site and proposed wells

Applicant: Ormat Nevada Inc., 3300 E. Evan Hewes Highway, Holtville, CA 92250

Description of Proposed Action:

Ormat proposes to re-drill a new hole at well 78A-6. This hole will be drilled from its current depth of about 8500 to approximately 10000 feet. The well will then be tested to determine reservoir characteristics, after which temperature profile of the well will be measured. Finally, Well 78A-6 will be utilized to generate electrical power.

The hole will be drilled with a normal rotary drilling rig. The rig will be equipped with diesel engines, storage tanks, mud pumps, and other typical auxiliary equipment. During drilling, the top of the derrick will be approximately 176 ft above ground level. The hole will be drilled using a gel-based mud or gel and polymer drilling fluid to circulate the rock cuttings to the surface where they are removed. The mud will then be circulated. The cuttings will be captured in the containment basin and will subsequently be tested and transported to an approved landfill for disposal.

Approximately 9 to 18 workers will be on location at any given time. The drilling crews will not be living on location.

PART I - PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW

This Proposed Action is subject to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan (1980) And Eastern San Diego County Resource Management Plan (2009). The Proposed Action has been reviewed for conformance with these plans and is consistent with the type and degree of actions allowed under the plans.

PART II – NEPA REVIEW

A. Categorical Exclusion Review.

The action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment.

The permittee will also be required to follow all stipulations specified in permit, including Special Provisions, Plan of Operations, Reclamation Plan, NEPA Review, and any other restrictions or stipulations.

B. Departmental Exceptions Review.

The following Departmental List of Exceptions applies to individual actions. Departmental instructions mandate that environmental documents **MUST BE PREPARED** for actions for which one or more of the exceptions may apply.

Departmental List of Exceptions	Yes	No
1. Have significant adverse impacts on public health or safety.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Have adverse effects on unique geographic characteristics, historic or cultural resources, park, recreation or refuge lands, wilderness areas, wild or scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers, prime farmlands, wetlands, floodplains, or ecologically significant or critical areas, including those listed on the Department's National Register of Natural Landmarks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Be directly related to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

7. Have adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Have adverse effects on species listed or proposed to be listed on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have adverse effects on designated critical habitat for these species.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Require compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10. Threaten to violate a Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

I certify that none of the Departmental exceptions listed in the above Part B (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) apply to this action. E.E. (initialed by preparer)

Preparer(s) (name & title)
Efe Erukanure, Geologist

Initials
E.E.

Date
05/25/2010

Reviewed by: 
Environmental Protection Specialist Date

PART III - DECISION

It is my decision to approve the proposed action as described in Categorical Exclusion (CX) number CA-670-2009-17. I find this action conforms to BLM (516 DM 11.9) Categorical Exclusion F 10 with no exceptions. I further find this action in conformance with applicable land use plans, laws and regulations and that it will not cause unnecessary or undue degradation. Conditions of approval, if attached, are incorporated by reference as the decision, in addition to the original land use authorization, of the Bureau of Land Management regarding this action.

Approved by:  5/26/10
Field Manager, El Centro Field Office Date