
4.1 LAND USE

Proposed Action

Direct Impacts

The proposed project would be within the Salt Wells geothermal leasing area and would be consistent with the conditions of the BLM lease. It would also be consistent with BLM leasing of geothermal resources on BOR lands. Although geothermal development in this area could be inconsistent with the designated uses for the surrounding lands as specified in the Churchill County Master Plan, almost no private land subject to these use designations is found around the lease area.

Portions of Sections 17, 20, 29, and 32 are on BOR land. Before the project commences, access to this area would be coordinated with BOR and their operation and maintenance contractor, the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District, and the Nevada Department of Wildlife.

Indirect Impacts Based on a Reasonably Foreseeable Development Scenario

Future actions based on the reasonable development scenario could result in indirect impacts. Although all lease areas may contain existing valid surface uses (such as easements, rights-of-way, and range improvements), it is assumed that these uses are largely nonexclusive, so compatible rights could be granted. Additionally, the BLM and any necessary environmental reviews that would take place prior to ground-disturbing activities would identify and provide mitigation measures for impacts on land use. Future actions would be subject to the BLM's standard lease stipulations.

Geothermal development in this area would not conflict with multiple use management objectives of the BLM and BOR, which have concurred that development of geothermal resources in this area would not conflict with its management objectives for withdrawn lands in the area. Several areas proposed for leasing include portions of the Carson Lake and Pastures area. The federal government has retained the right to lease portions of land outside this area. Nevertheless, leasing the remaining land within these sections could result in development that is incompatible with adjacent sensitive land uses.

Although geothermal development in this area could be inconsistent with the designated uses for the surrounding lands as specified in the Churchill County Master Plan, almost no private land subject to these use designations is found around the lease area. Subsequent NEPA analysis would determine the actual impact to land use.

No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would have no land use impacts.