

# The Drill Down – A Month of Possibility

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U.S. DEPARTMENT  
of **ENERGY**

Hydrocarbons and  
Geothermal Energy Office

## THE DRILL DOWN

May 27, 2026

*Estimated reading time: 4 minutes*

American naturalist Edwin Way Teale said that “all things seem possible in May.” Over at the Office of Geothermal (OG), we are living this quote with an abundance of geothermal possibilities. From funding opportunities to new project selections, OG is leveraging those possibilities to pave the path for more geothermal on our nation’s grid.

OG is hard at work reviewing applications for our [\\$171.5 million Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) for enhanced geothermal systems demonstrations and exploratory drilling— full applications were due May 14. With all this possibility, it could be easy to become astounded. But not us! We are preparing for even more geothermal innovation and opportunity on the horizon.

While reading this month’s newsletter, I hope you are as inspired by these new frontiers for geothermal as I am—they’re literally groundbreaking. As always, we are pleased to be partnered with all of you in discovering and achieving all that is possible for the future of geothermal energy.

Warmest thoughts,



**Lauren Boyd**

Office of Geothermal Director

**Trivia Question:** What U.S. state flower thrives on the slopes of volcanic craters?

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## OG's Latest



*A volcano's lava flow Photo credit: Unsplash*

**Check Out Our New OG Project Spotlight on DEEPEN!**

OG funded the DE-risking Exploration of geothermal Plays in magmatic Environments (DEEPEN) project to help de-risk drilling to tap into geothermal resources in magmatic environments. Dive into the deep end on the [OG website](#) to learn more.



*Part of “Core Memory” by Peggy Weil displayed in the Museum of Modern Art (NY) lobby. Photo credit: Jonathan Dorado*

## **Art Piece Displays the Geothermal World Beneath Our Feet**

A trailblazing piece of digital art by Peggy Weil, [Core Memory](#), brings two "underscapes" to an immersive 24-foot screen: the Salton Sea Geothermal Field in California, where temperatures reach up to 390°C (734°F), and glacial ice from the Greenland Ice Sheet. The Salton Sea cores were part of a DOE-funded project and are stored at the University of Utah's Energy & Geoscience Institute's sample library.

## **Headlines Around DOE**

**CMEI Requests Public Feedback on Initiative to Drive Industrial Innovation**

DOE Office of Critical Minerals and Energy Innovation (CMEI) [announced](#) a request for information (RFI) on how to facilitate cooperation between private-sector investors and DOE-supported technology developers. Responses to this RFI will inform the design of a new program concept: the Industrial Technology Capital Connector.

## **HGEO Announces \$11.3 Million Initiative to Train Next-Gen Energy Workforce**

DOE's Hydrocarbons and Geothermal Energy Office (HGEO) and Office of Indian Energy (IE) announced [The Partnerships for Academic-Industry Career Training \(PACT\) Initiative](#), with up to \$11.3 million available to institutions of higher education to train the next generation of America's energy workforce. PACT will facilitate development of hands-on training and credentialing programs in skillsets supporting production of natural gas, oil, coal, and geothermal energy by establishing regional academic-industry consortia.

## **Energy and Mineral Development Program (EMDP) FY2026 Funding Opportunity**

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, Division of Energy and Mineral Development (DEMD) has announced the [Energy and Mineral Development Program \(EMDP\) NOFO](#). This competitive funding opportunity supports Tribes in evaluating energy or mineral resources and related projects on Indian land. DEMD encourages all eligible Tribal governments and Tribal Energy Development Organizations to review the opportunity and consider applying.

## **\$50 Million to Support Tribal Energy**

DOE's Office of Indian Energy announced a [\\$50 million funding opportunity](#) to support Tribal-led community-scale energy project planning and development, and large-scale energy project planning. The opportunity includes three topic areas, all of which could include geothermal. Applications are due July 24, 2026.

## Looking Ahead

### World Geothermal Congress

June 8–11, 2026 | Calgary, Canada

OG and national laboratory staff will attend this year's World Geothermal Congress (WGC) in Calgary, Canada. WGC is held every three years to convene geothermal experts and stakeholders from around the globe to share discussions, networking, and innovative ideas.



### American Rock Mechanics Association (ARMA): 60th U.S. Rock Mechanics/Geomechanics Symposium

June 21–24, 2026 | Tucson, Arizona



Join staff from OG at this year's ARMA symposium! This annual event focuses on technical updates for theoretical advances and applied research in rock mechanics and geomechanics.

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## In Case You Missed It

### **BLM Streamlines Permitting for Small-Scale Geothermal Exploration**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has approved a new [categorical exclusion](#) (CE) that streamlines the permitting process for small-scale geothermal exploration projects, particularly those that will disturb only up to 10 acres of land.

### **OG Selects \$14 Million Enhanced Geothermal Systems Demonstration Project**

The [\\$14 million project](#), led by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, will leverage the significant thermal resources in the Appalachian Utica Shale to assess the efficacy and scalability of EGS in the eastern United States. This project is part of OG's [EGS Pilot Demonstrations](#) initiative.

## **Grid Modeling Studies Opportunity Update**

OG selected [eight projects](#) to receive a total of up to \$9.5 million for regional grid modeling studies that quantify the potential contribution of firm geothermal power to the grid. The initiative will provide a deeper understanding of geothermal energy's economic and reliability benefits, fostering informed decision-making for future energy policies and funding.

## **Multistate Initiative to Expand Geothermal Power**

Led by the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), OG's [Geothermal Power Accelerator](#) is working with participating states to expand the use of geothermal power on the nation's grid. Work includes strategy sessions and policy discussions to help shape targeted state actions.

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## **Geothermal in the News**

- [Why Geothermal Could Be the Energy Breakthrough Everyone Agrees On](#) | Bloomberg Television
  - [Can the U.S. Harness Old Oil and Gas Wells to Produce Geothermal Energy?](#) | Canary Media
  - [Zanskar to Supply 100 MW of Geothermal Power to Amazon Data Centers](#) | ThinkGeoEnergy
  - [New Leasing Rule Clears Path for Geothermal Development on State Trust Lands](#) | Albuquerque Journal
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**Trivia Answer:** The Yellow Hibiscus! The Hawai'i state flower, Hibiscus brackenridgei, can be found in the island's mineral-rich soil of its volcanic regions, like those on the island of Oahu. Check out the United States Botanical Garden in Washington, DC to see it on display in their "[America's State Flowers: An America250 Celebration](#)" exhibit running now until October 12, 2026.

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