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Comments: I support renewable energy, including geothermal energy, but I am not convinced that this project has not been fully evaluated for its environmental impacts. Because the project is near sensitive wilderness, steep terrain, and important streams, it should undergo a more complete environmental review before any lease is issued. There should also be the ability to comment on a draft EIS.

My main concerns are:

- * The project could affect local streams, groundwater, and fish habitat.
- * Drilling and construction could require new roads, heavy equipment access, and year-round traffic in a fragile area.
- * The project could disturb wilderness character, wildlife habitat, and the scenic quality of the area.
- * The project should not allow fracking in exploratory wells.
- * Water for drilling and operations should not be taken from local streams; if water is needed, it should be brought in from municipal sources.
- * Strong protections should be required for spills, blowouts, well failures, and site cleanup.
- * The project should include clear financial responsibility, including a substantial bond, so cleanup and restoration are fully covered if something goes wrong.
- * Any lease should be limited in time and should not remain open indefinitely.

A full Environmental Impact Statement should be prepared before any lease is finalized, and it should clearly spell out what activities will and will not be allowed. At a minimum, each leasing project should require a closed-loop geothermal system, no new roads in sensitive areas, no fracking, no local stream withdrawals, and full restoration of the site if the project does not proceed safely or successfully.

I support clean energy, but only if it can be developed without unnecessary harm to water, wildlife, wilderness values, and nearby communities.