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| **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** Megan Taylor |
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**Heller to Energy: Pick Nevada for Geothermal Laboratory**

*Senator Leads Bipartisan Nevada Delegation Letter to Secretary Perry*

 **Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) today urged Department of Energy Secretary Rick Perry to strongly consider the Fallon Frontier Observatory for Research in Geothermal Energy (FORGE) project in the department’s ongoing facility competition.

Last year, the Department of Energy announced the Fallon, Nevada project was one of two candidates being considered by the government to establish a new headquarters for geothermal energy research. Given Nevada’s role as a leader in renewable energy technologies combined with the state’s geothermal makeup, Nevada is uniquely situated for this project. The Department of Energy is expected to make a final decision early next year between the Fallon, Nevada project and another project located in Utah.

In a letter sent to Secretary Perry, signed by all members of the Nevada congressional delegation, the letter argued Nevada is “perfectly suited to host this one-of-a-kind research laboratory.”

“Our state is arguably the world’s intellectual epicenter for geothermal technology development and technical training. Nevada is home to a world class university and community college programs dedicated to training geologic specialists,” **the delegation members wrote.** “Nevada is the second-most heavily geothermal installed state in the nation, and has the greatest untapped geothermal potential of any state. Furthermore, we have development underway that will expand our geothermal generation portfolio nearly fivefold.”

The groundbreaking Fallon, Nevada project proposal consists of a team that includes Sandia National Laboratories, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, the University of Nevada-Reno, the U.S. Geological Survey Menlo Park Science Center, the U.S. Navy Geothermal Program Office, Ormat Nevada, GeothermaEx/Schlumberger, and Itasca Consulting Group.

The Fallon FORGE site lies within and adjacent to the U.S. Naval Air Station Fallon.

**The delegation members continued,** “This technology represents a revolution for the industry, and presents an enormous opportunity to expand the market share of clean, domestically produced, baseload power in the U.S. electricity mix…As the scientists and researchers at FORGE produce technology breakthroughs, the existing education and economic infrastructure for geothermal in Northern Nevada will provide the strongest possible conditions for these innovations to proliferate into the commercial market.”

 **The letter reads in full**:

*The Honorable Rick Perry*

*Secretary*

*U.S. Department of Energy*

*1000 Independence Avenue, SW*

*Washington, D.C. 20585*

*Dear Secretary Perry:*

*As members of the Nevada Congressional Delegation, we are expressing our support for the Fallon Frontier Observatory for Research in Geothermal Energy (FORGE) team project proposal for the Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) FORGE facility competition. This team, consisting of Sandia National Laboratory, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, University of Nevada-Reno, the U.S. Geological Survey Menlo Park Science Center, the U.S. Navy Geothermal Program Office (GPO), Ormat Nevada, GeothermaEx/Schlumberger, and Itasca Consulting Group has proposed to site their FORGE facilities adjacent to the Naval Air Station Fallon in Churchill County, Nevada.*

*Nevada is perfectly suited to host this one-of-a-kind research laboratory. Our state is arguably the world’s intellectual epicenter for geothermal technology development and technical training.  Nevada is home to a world class university and community college programs dedicated to training geologic specialists.  Nevada is the second-most heavily geothermal installed state in the nation, and has the greatest untapped geothermal potential of any state. Furthermore, we have development underway that will expand our geothermal generation portfolio nearly fivefold.*

*Enhanced geothermal systems, or EGS, promise to open up vast swaths of previously unsuitable lands for geothermal power. This technology represents a revolution for the industry, and presents an enormous opportunity to expand the market share of clean, domestically produced, baseload power in the U.S. electricity mix. Nevada innovators already hold the global lead on EGS demonstration, with the first commercial scale EGS facility in the United States located in Lyon County. As the scientists and researchers at FORGE produce technology breakthroughs, the existing educational and economic infrastructure for geothermal in Northern Nevada will provide the strongest possible conditions for these innovations to proliferate into the commercial market.*

*We appreciate your careful consideration of the Fallon FORGE Team’s proposal.  We are confident Nevada has the array of assets and talent necessary to make FORGE a success.  Please do not hesitate to contact our offices with any questions.*

*Sincerely,*

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