

To: Board of Supervisors - Supervisors Crandell, Rasmussen, Sabatier, Owen and Pyska - 10/21/25

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on BOS agenda item 25-1027 regarding the previous Sonoma Clean Power (SCP) Community Choice Aggregate (CCA) and GeoZone proposals.

We have some comments/concerns specifically regarding the GeoZone, which we would like the BOS to consider before taking any action.

1) Outdated Geothermal Element

California state law now allows a county to petition for delegation if they have a geothermal element in their General Plan. Our current Geothermal Element was written in 2008, and based on older technology. While it is being updated, this may not be completed before the end of 2026.

2) Appropriate GeoZone Representation on the SCP Board of Directors

The previous SCP proposal offered Lake County and the cities two seats (15%), which would also be comparable to the amount of energy Lake County would consume compared to SCP's Community Choice Aggregate (CCA) as a whole.

We suggest looking into a different voting structure for the GeoZone, one similar to the current CCA but based on energy produced. This would ensure Lake County has an adequate voice should geothermal development begin.

3) Better incentives to Lake County communities

While geothermal expansion would produce well-paying jobs, Lake County should have better incentives as a whole. Based on the amount of geothermal production, there should be large proportional discounts on all power bills with incentives for those off-the-grid.

4) Need for strong regulations or zoning in place beforehand.

As most permitting was previously handled by the state, Lake County does not have a robust geothermal ordinance or plan. Currently, research wells are allowed in every zone in the county except those in the Geothermal Exclusion Zone. Power plants are allowed in Open Space, which includes parks.

We propose looking at Sonoma County's Renewable Energy Combining District (RE) which designates areas within the county that are suitable for the development of large, renewable energy facilities, while protecting sensitive resources and ensuring neighborhood compatibility. The intent is to protect important agricultural, biotic and resource lands for other uses, while still allowing renewable power production facilities where appropriate.

<https://permitsonoma.org/regulationsandlongrangeplans/regulationsandinitiatives/renewableenergy/renewableenergycombiningzone>

The GeoZone “Early Interest Area” includes the areas surrounding Clearlake up to Hwy 20, Lower Lake, Hidden Valley, Middletown, Cobb, Kelseyville and the areas in between - excluding the Geothermal Setback around the lake. These areas are heavily populated and include community growth boundaries, as well as numerous geothermal test wells that have been identified in the 2021 Glassley Report compiled for SCP.

The proposed GeoZone would allow development of enhanced geothermal systems (EGS) - using hydraulic fracking. The communities surrounding the Geysers have been forced to live with induced seismicity for decades. Additional environmental issues have included emissions, waste, groundwater contamination, noise, light pollution and water use, while subsidence has been a potential issue in other areas. The technologies may have changed, but the impacts are still unknown.

If Lake County is interested in joining the GeoZone, we are suggesting that Lake County take a step back and begin planning what that would look like, BEFORE joining.

Thank you for your time,

Holly Harris/Chuck Lamb
Clearlake Oaks residents