

## RESOLUTION NO. 21-188

### RESOLUTION OF THE MENDOCINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ESTABLISHING COUNTY MEMBERSHIP IN THE SONOMA-LAKE-MENDOCINO GEOTHERMAL OPPORTUNITY ZONE

WHEREAS, the Sonoma Clean Power Authority (SCPA) established the structure for a Geothermal Opportunity Zone (“GeoZone”) on October 7, 2021; and

WHEREAS, SCPA has invited the County of Mendocino to join the GeoZone to partner in exploring opportunities to accelerate the development of renewable energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, SCPA is a local government entity governed by representatives from the Counties and Cities of Mendocino and Sonoma Counties and an electricity provider serving customers in Mendocino County; and

WHEREAS, a world class geothermal resource exists in Sonoma, Lake, and Mendocino Counties with significant potential to provide clean baseload renewable energy that operates 24 hours per day 365 days per year; and

WHEREAS, Mendocino County recognizes that new more water-efficient technologies for generating geothermal power are needed; and

WHEREAS, Mendocino County wishes to explore geothermal power projects which provide benefits to its local community and do not exist solely to benefit people outside of Mendocino County; and

WHEREAS, the County of Mendocino recognizes the high cost of electricity in California and supports opportunities to reduce energy cost through promoting technology development, identifying efficiencies of scale, and leveraging state and federal grant funding; and

WHEREAS, the County of Mendocino owns and controls property which may have development potential for baseload renewable energy projects; and

WHEREAS, the County of Mendocino recognizes the long permitting and development timelines for geothermal power projects; and

WHEREAS, the County of Mendocino is well acquainted with the potential consequences to the environment and community of new resource development and expects to be directly engaged in the selection of projects with the aim of mitigating adverse impacts; and

WHEREAS, the County of Mendocino shall retain its full rights to review and approve any project located within its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the County of Mendocino has an interest in sharing information and working collaboratively together with the SCPA and the Counties of Sonoma and Lake; and

WHEREAS, the County of Mendocino wishes to join the geothermal opportunity zone as set forth in this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF MENDOCINO  
HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

1. The above Recitals are true and correct and incorporated by this reference.
2. The County of Mendocino joins the Sonoma Lake Mendocino Geothermal Opportunity Zone (“GeoZone”) established by SCPA. The boundary of the GeoZone in the County of Mendocino will initially include the full territory of Mendocino County. The GeoZone shall be used to explore the potential development of geothermal energy resources within its boundaries. These activities may include identifying potential sites for new geothermal energy production and for the research of new and emerging geothermal technology, collaboratively sharing information among the Counties, soliciting developers to propose new geothermal and other clean power resources, exploring a programmatic environmental impact report to reduce development risks and timelines, seeking federal and state funds and changes in policy to support geothermal development, and facilitating the use of the renewable energy output by customers in the Counties.
3. Activities shall not include any final commitment to develop geothermal energy resources at any site, which shall only be made by the Counties, and other applicable regulatory agencies after necessary environmental and similar review.
4. County staff is hereby authorized to take such administrative actions necessary to implement the GeoZone.
5. For the reasons set forth above, the adoption of this Resolution is not a “project” requiring environmental review pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15060, subdivision (c)(3) and §15378, subdivisions (a) and (b)(2), (b)(4) and (b)(5). Alternatively, the actions are statutorily exempt from CEQA review pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15262 and exempt under the “common sense” exemption identified in State CEQA Guidelines § 15061, subdivision (b)(3). None of the exceptions to the use of the “common sense” exemption as identified in Government Code § 15300.2 exist.
6. This Resolution shall be effective immediately.

The foregoing Resolution introduced by Supervisor Haschak, seconded by Supervisor Williams, and carried this 7<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2021, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors McGourty, Mulheren, Haschak, Gjerde, and Williams  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared said Resolution adopted and SO ORDERED.

ATTEST: CARMEL J. ANGELO  
Clerk of the Board

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DAN GJERDE, Chair  
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

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Deputy

I hereby certify that according to the provisions of Government Code section 25103, delivery of this document has been made.

*APPROVED AS TO FORM:*  
CHRISTIAN M. CURTIS,  
County Counsel

BY: CARMEL J. ANGELO  
Clerk of the Board

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Deputy