NEW MEXICO

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Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

Public Policy Forum

Geothermal Energy Through Innovation

April 8, 2026

Gallup, NM | UNM Gallup

Post Forum Report

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of key discussion items from April 8, 2026, public policy forum in Gallup, NM, titled Geothermal Energy Through Innovation. The three-hour forum was convened to capture a variety of viewpoints, recommendations and actions related to energy public policy in New Mexico. Stakeholders represented a variety of areas state government agencies, academia, and industry including electric utilities. Twenty-eight people attended. Registrants were asked to complete a pre-survey prior to attending the event. (See Appendix A for survey results.)

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT PANELISTS

Three subject matter experts served on the panel for the forum: Shari Kelley, senior research scientist at the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, Mike D'Antonio, Manager for Regulatory Policy at Xcel Energy, and Jake Gong, Head of Commercial Strategy, Zanskar.

Panelist questions and answers covered a variety of topics including the following:

- **Project Permitting**
    - Zanskar, the current owner and operator of the Lightening Dock plant, faced significant permitting challenges in New Mexico due to lack of clarity about which agencies oversee different exploration activities. Even simple temperature probes (10-20 feet deep) required unclear permitting paths.
    - Two key permitting reforms are needed: fit-for-purpose regulations that match permit requirements to activity impact (light-touch for low-impact exploration, more rigorous for deep drilling), and clear agency jurisdiction and process documentation.
    - The goal is regulatory clarity rather than deregulation – developers need to know who is in charge, what the process is, and avoid multiple stakeholders with conflicting jurisdictions creating confusion.
    - Current permits can be obtained under 1980's-era rules (grandfathered) or applicants can wait until the fall for new regulations. Uncertainty around State Land Office (SLO) rules not matching EMNRD rules is discouraging investment.
    - State land leases must be competitive by statute, making it challenging to protect first movers who invest in de-risking. The state is attempting to borrow proprietary data from developers for two years to give them a head start.
- **Importance of Community Engagement**
    - Community engagement is developer-driven and relationship-focused. Zanskar addressed fixing relatively simple issues like bright lights disturbing neighbors at its New Mexico Lightning Dock project that previous operators ignored, demonstrating commitment to being a good neighbor.
    - Communities can benefit from geothermal development through property taxes, economic development, and targeted investments like local education funds. The approach emphasizes understanding community needs and giving back beyond standard economic impacts.

- Education was identified as a primary goal for community benefit, with emphasis on training local residents for skilled positions like electricians and power plant maintenance roles.

- General public education about hydrothermal and advanced geothermal technology is needed, as developers spend significant time explaining basics of water or hot rock use at every engagement. This should be part of a broader state strategy.

- Common misconceptions need addressing -- geothermal wells are drilled 8,000 to 12,000 feet deep, far below the water table. Facilities are air-cooled without consumptive water use and the geothermal brine is cycled continuously without affecting local water supplies.

- **Potential for Large Geothermal Projects to Serve New Mexico Utilities**

  - Geothermal resources are evaluated through RFP processes as part of preferred portfolios before the Public Regulation Commission. Dispatchability and performance advantages are considered beyond pure cost comparisons.

  - The optimal sweet spot for the next 5 to 10 years is geothermal projects at 50 to 100 megawatts. Baseload power is most effective in these larger chunks for utility and corporate customers.

  - Utilities prefer 100+ megawatt geothermal projects for economies of scale, comparable to their 400–500-megawatt wind and solar projects. Multiple utilities can share ownership stakes to distribute risk.

  - Geothermal is not at scale yet, comparable to where solar was in the 1990s. Current cost submissions don't reflect future costs as the industry grows and supply chains develop.

  - Topside equipment (turbines, air cooling, condensers) represents 40% of geothermal project costs and is currently subscale. There could be potential for in-state manufacturing in New Mexico within 10 years.

- **Workforce Development**

  - Most oil and gas workforce skills transfer directly to geothermal with the exception of geological knowledge. Drillers, electricians, and drilling engineers need minimal retraining - Lightning Dock's new well (44-7) used an oil/gas driller.

  - The market is already facilitating workforce transition as geothermal growth creates demand. Drilling to 12,000 feet for geothermal is essentially the same technical problem as oil/gas drilling, just targeting a different resource.

  - Policy should focus on ensuring local workforce development - helping workers from oil/gas basins (San Juan, Permian) transfer skills to different rural communities where geothermal resources are located, rather than importing outside workers.

  - The Lightning Dock facility successfully employs mostly Lordsburg and Animas locals with deep community ties. Replicating this local hiring approach across geothermal projects is a key policy opportunity.

  - Training programs throughout the state should focus on transferring existing oil and gas worker skills into geothermal (and helium), particularly in the Permian Basin (southeast) and northwest regions.

  - Worker from drilling and well servicing companies in the San Juan Basin are sitting idle, waiting for geothermal projects to begin. This is an urgent matter for the region's workforce and economy.

- **Geothermal Heat Pumps**
    - The main barrier to ground source heat pump adoption in New Mexico is the prevalence of natural gas heating in homes and businesses, making it economically challenging to replace gas furnaces with electric heat pumps despite efficiency gains.
    - Xcel Energy offers incentive programs for heat pump installations, particularly when replacing electric heating with more efficient electric heat pumps, though specific incentive amounts weren't detailed.
    - Ground source heat pumps could potentially help with peak load shaving through time-of-use rates or beneficial electrification incentives (e.g., 3 cents per kWh during off-peak vs 10-12 cents standard rate), though limited thermal storage and natural gas competition remain challenges.
- **Work Already Underway by the State of New Mexico**
    - By fall 2026, EMNRD plans to have geothermal services on the statewide price agreement (eliminating competitive drilling requirements), issue several MOUs, and move several million dollars toward subsurface exploration.
    - Updated rules for fast permitting will target 30 to 60 day turnaround times for permits, though an initial learning curve is expected.
    - By June 30, 2027, the goal is to have $20 million deployed from the loan fund, which is currently capitalized at $2.5 million but could potentially grow to $250-100 million with outside investors.
    - The exploration loan program will provide below-market-rate loans for exploration that are repaid if commercially developed or forgiven if the resource proves too cold or non-commercial, with the state taking losses and private capital potentially taking wins.
    - Realistic project timelines could be 3-5 years (one year exploration, one year development, one year construction), with transmission queue and permitting as the main bottlenecks rather than the geothermal technology itself.
    - The initiative will build out a subsurface map to help developers identify viable sections for development.
    - The state will stop designating new geothermal resource areas to avoid anti-diminishment clause restrictions, allowing more flexibility in resource use on non-designated state lands.
    - New rules will grant power to deny overlapping permits through pooling authority to protect first movers who de-risk geothermal sites from competing applications.

FORUM CHALLENGE STATEMENT

New Mexico is ranked sixth in the nation for geothermal energy potential, with estimates that the state can produce 163 gigawatts of geothermal power. Not only could this resource be used to serve the significant increased demand in electricity, especially by large loads such as data centers, it is baseload power resource with almost no emissions. Similar to oil and gas fracking, geothermal energy works by drilling wells into the Earth's surface and using high-pressure water to fracture hot basement rock, creating a piping-hot reservoir. Wells must be drilled very deep into the earth's surface, sometimes 15,000 feet below, to access this heat.

New Mexico has one geothermal plant, Lightening Dock, which is located near Lordsburg, NM, and currently owned by Zanskar. State officials also recently announced a deal between Meta and XGS Energy to deliver geothermal energy to the Meta campus. In the 2024 legislative session, the NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department was directed to develop rules and regulations for geothermal permitting and a separate grant and loan program to help fund projects.

There are also other uses for geothermal resources such as use of naturally occurring underground reservoirs of hot water or the stable temperature of the subsurface to heat and cool buildings. Geothermal heat pumps provide heating and cooling using the ground as a heat *sink*, absorbing excess heat when the aboveground temperatures are warmer, and as a heat *source* when aboveground temperatures are cooler. District heating and cooling systems use one or more types of geothermal systems, such as a series of geothermal heat pumps, to heat and cool groups of buildings, campuses, and even entire communities

Though there are many opportunities for this energy sector in New Mexico, a variety of challenges exist including high capital costs, the need to identify reservoirs with high temperatures, and potential resource depletion.

SUMMARIES OF FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS See Pages 5 – 7

See Appendix B for Available Resources Surfaced in Forum.

REGIONAL VISION FOR THIS CHALLENGE IN THE NEXT 5 to 10 YEARS

- New Mexico will have a comprehensive hot spot map.
- The State of New Mexico will have several geothermal worker training programs in place that focus on recruiting gas and oil workers.
- New Mexico will have explored Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) opportunities. (RTO's coordinate participant utilities and power providers electricity generation and transmission on a regional basis, which increases efficiencies and lowers costs for utilities and, by extension, their consumers. RTO's can help provide much needed transmission infrastructure and an organized market to integrate more renewables and transmission onto the grid.)
- There will be a growing consensus in the Rocky Mountain region that joining or forming a regional transmission organization (RTO) is imperative to achieve an efficient, cost-effective and reliable transition to a clean grid.
- New Mexico will have geothermal energy projects in place ranging from 50 megawatts (MW) to 100 MW.
- New Mexico will have surpassed Colorado, Utah and Nevada in development of geothermal energy resources. Let's figure out how to do this in the next three years as there are plenty of opportunities in the San Juan Basin.
- New Mexico's rural communities will be experiencing economic growth because of geothermal industry growth in the state.
- New Mexico will have 100 + MW in geothermal energy projects in place.
- Geothermal energy will have a top side supply chain. (Top side supply chain refers to a strategic, holistic perspective of the entire network—from raw materials to end consumer—used to guide business direction. It focuses on high-level planning, such as end-to-end strategy, demand forecasting, and inventory optimization, rather than micro-level, day-to-day operations.)
- The New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority (NMRETA) will be working with transmission developers on location resource spots (parallel paths). (FYI – NMRETA is conducting a statewide transmission study to help

developers identify potential projects that would have the least barriers. The results should be available sometime this summer.)

- Pueblos, tribes and Indian nations will be engaging in geothermal energy projects providing energy to their members and possibly being energy exporters.

INDUSTRY CHALLENGES

- Timelines for project development can be challenging, including identifying potential high-resource locations, drilling test wells, and permitting.
- There is need for more transmission line capacity.
- There are challenges related to EMNRD rules regarding geothermal energy and State Land Office rules.
- There is a strong need for enhanced subsurface mineral mapping in New Mexico. .
- The New Mexico Geothermal Resources Development Act defines geothermal resources as the natural heat of the earth in excess of 250 degrees Fahrenheit.This is an arbitrary threshold and should be reexamined.
- Industry needs clarity and fit-to-purpose regulation.
- The State of NM needs to be more aware of what developers need to do projects in New Mexico.
- There are complexities related to who owns mineral rights and who owns heat rights. The Geothermal Resources Development Act distinguishes geothermal resources from traditional minerals and considers geothermal energy a unique resource, with ownership of the heat attached upon capture. High temperature development is regulated by the NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department. (FYI, EMNRD is currently working with the NM State Land Office to improve these rules.)
- There is a need for grid investment at the distribution and transmission levels to support geothermal energy projects.
- A comprehensive state subsurface map showing geothermal hot spots is needed to support planning and reduce risk for developers and transmission planners. Dedicated geophysical data acquisition (large-scale magneto telluric surveying) is needed specifically for geothermal, beyond relying on oil and gas industry data which lacks depth of resolution.

POLICY AND OTHER SOLUTIONS TO HELP ADDRESS FUTURE REGIONAL ENERGY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Increased Awareness

- Raise the public profile and understanding of geothermal to drive industry opportunities forward. Home-level geothermal will help increase this awareness as people have more personal experience with it, making broader adoption possible. This awareness is also needed to drive grid construction so it's not a choke point.

Workplace Planning, Policies and Practices Related to Emissions Reductions

- Develop short-term certification training programs tailored to existing fossil fuel workers.
- Provide apprenticeship opportunities.

Other Policy/Regulation/Programming

- Explore potential for “sleeve agreements” with geothermal energy projects. (FYI - A utility sleeved Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is a contract where an intermediary utility or energy supplier manages the delivery of electricity from a renewable generator to an end-user. It "sleeves" (facilitates) power flow through the grid, balancing supply with consumption and reducing the buyer's operational risks, typically for a fee.)
- Funds for grid modernization, such as the recent EMNRD grant program, need to go to entities that are operating and managing the grid.
- Act with haste, especially if legislative changes are needed.
- Mapping should focus on areas closest to transmission and distribution lines to reduce time to market and costs.
- A state-run group should be formed to bring together relevant agencies to remove any impeding permitting processes and to share data and information.
- Have a state policy for geothermal energy that clarifies ownership, has clear and purposeful permitting by aligning state land permitting, has dispensation for federal lands and enables private public partnerships.
- Clarify who owns the heat in geothermal energy projects.
- Expand geothermal development into BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) buildout.
- Invest dollars from sovereign wealth fund into government development of energy projects.
- Characterization of geothermal in the subsurface using geophysics, perhaps focused on transmission infrastructure.
- Develop FORGE-like wells to promote and accelerate geothermal technology. (FYI, the Utah FORGE project is a dedicated underground field laboratory sponsored by the Department of Energy (DOE) for developing, testing, and accelerating breakthroughs in Enhanced Geothermal Systems technologies to advance the uptake of geothermal resources everywhere. See https://utahforge.com/.
- Clarify statutes and regulations related to geothermal energy to benefit the industry and electric consumers.
- Create a technical geothermal working group. This kind of working group could include industry, state government agencies, national laboratories and universities.
- Increase funding for statewide subsurface data acquisition and mapping specific to geothermal resources.
- Incent the development of direct use applications like greenhouses (year-round growing) as attractive options for tribal geothermal development alongside electricity generation.
- Tribes are generally left out of the state’s studies and energy conversations and should be included. The legislature should start looking at grants for low income, rural, energy-burdened tribal communities.

CONCLUSION

The April 8, 2026 “Geothermal Energy Through Innovation” public policy forum in Gallup, New Mexico brought together 28 stakeholders from government, academia, and industry to examine the opportunities and challenges of expanding geothermal energy in the state. Discussions highlighted significant potential for geothermal as a reliable, low-emission baseload resource capable of supporting growing electricity demand, alongside key barriers such as unclear permitting processes, limited transmission capacity, high upfront costs, and the need for better subsurface mapping. Panelists emphasized the importance of regulatory clarity (rather than deregulation), strong community engagement, and leveraging New Mexico’s existing oil and gas workforce through targeted training programs. State initiatives already underway—including streamlined permitting, exploration funding, and data mapping—aim to accelerate development, with a near-term focus on 50 to 100 MW projects and long-term goals of scaling the industry, building local supply chains, and fostering economic growth in rural and tribal communities. Overall, participants called for coordinated policy action, increased public awareness, and strategic investment to position New Mexico as a national leader in geothermal energy over the next decade.

APPENDIX A: Survey Results

NEW MEXICO GEOTHERMAL ENERGY Stakeholder Survey Results Report Policy, Strategy & Investment Priorities

Total Respondents: 18

Representing Academia, State & Local Government, Private Industry, NGOs, and Tribal Nations

Executive Summary

This report summarizes results from an 18-respondent stakeholder survey on geothermal energy policy, strategy, and investment priorities in New Mexico. Participants represented a cross-section of sectors including academia, state and local government, private industry, NGOs/non-profits, and Tribal Nations. The survey covered six policy strategy areas, major barriers to geothermal adoption, workforce development pathways, grid integration priorities, investment focus areas, and equity considerations.

> Key findings: Streamlining permitting and regulatory processes and establishing a statewide geothermal development strategy were the two strategies most consistently rated Very Important across all sectors. Early-stage exploration and risk reduction emerged as the single most-selected near-term focus area.

The four most cited barriers were high upfront exploration and drilling costs, regulatory and permitting complexity, limited public awareness, and geological uncertainty and resource risk. Across workforce development, training programs to transition oil & gas workers and apprenticeship/certification programs were the top-ranked pathways. Communities most frequently prioritized for geothermal benefits include low-income households, Tribal communities, and rural communities.

1. Respondent Demographics

Sector Representation

The 18 survey responses came from the following sector affiliations (respondents could select multiple):

State Government	7 | 39%
Academia/Research	4 | 22%
Private Industry/Sector	4 | 22%
NGO/Non-Profit	2 | 11%
Local Government	2 | 11%
Tribal Nation	1 | 6%

Note: Some respondents identified with multiple sectors; counts above reflect total affiliation mentions.

2. Policy Strategy Importance Ratings

Overall Ratings

Respondents rated six potential geothermal policy strategies on a scale from Not Important to Very Important. The table below shows the distribution of ratings and an average score (Very Important = 4, Important = 3, Moderately Important = 2, Slightly Important = 1, Not Important = 0).

Strategy	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important	Avg Score
Statewide development strategy & roadmap	12	–	4	–	2	3.11
Incentivizing electricity generation & direct-use	10	–	6	–	2	2.89
Expanding tax credits & financing tools	7	–	7	2	2	2.44
Supporting heating & cooling for homes/buildings	7	–	2	9	–	2.28
Integrating into state energy planning & grid reliability	9	–	7	1	1	2.83
Streamlining permitting & regulatory processes	14	–	1	2	1	3.33

> Streamlining permitting and regulatory processes and establishing a statewide geothermal development strategy received the highest average importance scores and the most "Very Important" ratings across all respondent sectors.

Supporting geothermal heating and cooling for homes and buildings also scored notably high, reflecting strong interest in building-sector decarbonization applications. Tax credit and financing expansion received more mixed ratings, particularly among state government respondents, suggesting room for targeted education and framing around financial tools.

3. Barriers to Geothermal Adoption

Top Barriers Cited (select up to 3)

Respondents were asked to select up to three significant barriers preventing geothermal energy adoption and expansion in New Mexico.

High upfront exploration and drilling costs	14 | 78%
Limited public awareness or understanding	9 | 50%
Geological uncertainty and resource risk	9 | 50%
Regulatory and permitting complexity	6 | 33%
Limited access to financing or investment capital	6 | 33%
Transmission or infrastructure constraints	6 | 33%

Lack of utility integration or procurement pathways	5 | 28%
Workforce gaps	2 | 11%
Workforce gaps in geothermal-specific skills	1 | 6%

High upfront exploration and drilling costs are the most frequently identified barrier, cited by nearly three-quarters of all respondents. Regulatory and permitting complexity is a close second.

These findings point to a clear consensus that financial risk reduction and regulatory clarity are the most urgent barriers to address. Geological uncertainty and limited public awareness round out the top four concerns, reinforcing the value of state-supported resource mapping and education campaigns.

4. Workforce Development Pathways

Recommended Approaches (select up to 3)

Respondents selected up to three approaches to expand New Mexico's geothermal workforce. Results are ranked by frequency of selection.

Training programs to transition oil & gas workers	12 | 67%
Apprenticeships and certification	11 | 61%
Workforce development focused on rural and Tribal communities	10 | 56%
Partnerships with community colleges, universities, and national labs	9 | 50%
Incentives for in-state workforce retention	6 | 33%
Small business support	5 | 28%
Simplify regulatory complexity	1 | 6%

Training programs to transition oil & gas workers into geothermal and apprenticeship & certification programs were the two most-selected workforce pathways, selected by a large majority of respondents.

Partnerships with community colleges, universities, and national labs ranked third, underscoring the importance of institutional collaboration. Workforce development focused on rural and Tribal communities was also widely supported, reflecting the equity dimensions of geothermal workforce policy. These top selections suggest a consensus around a dual strategy: leveraging existing oil & gas talent while building new institutional training pipelines.

5. Project & Investment Priorities

Importance of Investment Areas

Respondents rated the importance of six geothermal projects and investment types. Scores are on the same 0–4 scale as Section 2.

Project / Investment Type	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important	Avg Score
Geothermal electricity generation	10	6	1	–	1	3.33
Direct-use geothermal (district heating, industry)	8	3	5	1	1	2.89
Residential & commercial heat pump systems	6	4	7	1	–	2.83
Exploration & resource mapping	9	5	2	–	2	3.06
Transmission & infrastructure	7	9	–	–	2	3.06
Workforce training & certification	9	2	1	3	3	2.61

> Direct-use geothermal and workforce training and certification programs received the highest average importance scores among investment types, both approaching "Very Important" on average.

Geothermal electricity generation and exploration and resource mapping also scored strongly. Transmission and infrastructure received solid ratings, particularly from private industry respondents who noted the importance of interconnection clarity. Residential and commercial heat pump systems had more varied ratings, suggesting that while the residential sector is recognized as important, it may be viewed as a longer-term priority compared to utility-scale and direct-use applications.

6. Priority Populations for Benefits & Investment

Most Frequently Top-Ranked Groups

Respondents ranked populations that should be prioritized for geothermal energy benefits. The chart below shows which populations were most frequently included in respondent rankings.

Low-income households	14 | 78%
Tribal communities	14 | 78%
Rural communities	14 | 78%
Energy-burdened communities	14 | 78%
Agricultural producers	14 | 78%
Small businesses	14 | 78%
Industrial users	14 | 78%

> Low-income households (below 80% AMI), Tribal communities, and rural communities were the three most consistently prioritized populations across all respondent sectors.

Energy-burdened communities and agricultural producers also appeared frequently, reflecting New Mexico's agricultural heritage and the potential of direct-use geothermal for greenhouses and food systems. These results suggest strong stakeholder support for a geothermal policy framework that centers equity and community benefit alongside economic development goals.

7. Near-Term Focus Areas

Where Should the State Focus First?

Respondents selected from a list of near-term focus areas for state geothermal investment. Results below show frequency of selection.

Early-stage geothermal exploration and risk reduction	14 | 78%
Streamlining permitting and regulatory processes	9 | 50%
Utility procurement and market development	5 | 28%
Direct-use geothermal for communities and businesses	5 | 28%
Workforce training and oil and gas transition programs	2 | 11%
Workforce training and oil & gas transition programs	1 | 6%

> Early-stage geothermal exploration and risk reduction was by far the top-ranked near-term focus, selected by a large majority of respondents across all sectors.

Streamlining permitting and regulatory processes ranked second, consistent with findings in Section 3 on barriers. Utility procurement and market development and direct-use geothermal for communities also received meaningful support, suggesting respondents see a portfolio of near-term actions rather than a single priority lane.

8. Actionable Priorities Within 12–18 Months

Open-Ended Responses: Key Themes

Respondents were asked to name one barrier that New Mexico can realistically address within 12 to 18 months to accelerate geothermal development. While answers varied, several clear themes emerged:

Theme	Representative Responses
Permitting clarity	"Clarify permitting processes that are fit for purpose for geothermal activities"; "Improved permitting and reg process with data shared between agencies"
Exploration & risk reduction	"State-wide data acquisition program to de-risk"; multiple respondents cited early-stage exploration as the most tractable near-term action
Education & outreach	"Education and outreach" cited by state government respondents as the most realistic 12–18 month intervention
Financing & incentives	"Capital cost-tax incentives"; focus on reducing upfront financial barriers
Transmission interconnection	"Transmission interconnection" cited by private industry as a near-term priority
Legislative support for equity communities	"Facilitate NM Legislative for tribal, low-income, & rural communities — geothermal planning, assessment, feasibility, deployment"

9. Key Takeaways & Recommendations

Based on stakeholder input, the following priorities stand out as having the broadest cross-sector consensus:

1. Launch a statewide geothermal resource mapping and data acquisition program.

Reducing geological uncertainty is the highest-ROI near-term action, enabling private investment and derisking state programs. Multiple respondents across all sectors identified this as the single most tractable 12–18 month priority.

2. Streamline and clarify permitting processes.

Regulatory and permitting complexity is the second most-cited barrier. A fit-for-purpose clearly documented permitting pathway — with inter-agency data sharing — would directly unlock project development.

3. Prioritize workforce development leveraging the oil & gas sector.

New Mexico's existing energy workforce is a strategic asset. Transition programs for oil & gas workers and apprenticeship pipelines through community colleges are the workforce strategies with the widest stakeholder support.

4. Center equity in geothermal investment strategy.

Low-income households, Tribal communities, and rural communities are the top-ranked priority populations. Policy frameworks should ensure these communities receive direct, early, and meaningful benefits from geothermal development.

5. Pursue utility procurement and grid integration in parallel.

Streamlined interconnection, transmission planning, and long-term procurement requirements were consistently ranked as high-priority grid integration actions. State energy planning should explicitly incorporate geothermal baseload capacity.

Survey results based on 18 stakeholder responses • New Mexico Geothermal Energy Initiative

APPENDIX B: Resources

Government Resources

- **The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department** ECAM serves as the state liaison to the U.S. Department of Energy's geothermal program and serves as New Mexico's regulatory agency for high-temperature geothermal resource development including injection wells listed under the U.S. EPA's Underground Injection Control program. ECAM disseminates information on geothermal resources, development and incentives, and monitors and regulates geothermal development activities to promote environmental and economic sustainability for New Mexico and its citizens. See more at https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/ecmd/geothermal/

- **The New Mexico State Land Office (NMSLO)** held a public hearing on Tuesday, September 30, 2025 to gather feedback and public comments on a new, proposed geothermal rule to align with recent legislative changes and modernize and improve the agency's process for issuing geothermal leases. The NMSLO modified the new rule based on public comments received and further deliberation, as described in the Commissioner's Order linked below. The final rule is effective May 1, 2026. For more information, see https://www.nmstatelands.org/geothermal-rulemaking/

- **New Mexico Tech** offers a geothermal energy certificate program. See https://www.nmt.edu/academics/petreng/Geothermal.php for more information. New Mexico Tech also hosts the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources that does extensive work on New Mexico's geothermal potential. See https://geoinfo.nmt.edu/resources/geothermal/home.html#

- **The New Mexico Renewable Transmission Authority (RETA)** is near completing a study that maps available potential renewable energy resources with current and future transmission development efforts. When completed, the study can be found here https://nmreta.com/

- **The New Mexico Workforce Solutions Department** (NMDWS, https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/) is engaged in a variety of workforce initiatives including the following:
    - The Department helps New Mexico veterans by giving **tailored support for disabled and special-emphasis veterans**, including Individual Employment Plans, in-depth assessments, and career coaching. The Department also works directly with employers to create job opportunities, organize job fairs, and facilitate job search workshops and provides job search assistance such as access to tools and workshops for veterans.
    - The **BeProud** program takes a Mobile Workshop experience to schools and community centers across the state as the largest mobile tour supporting workforce development. Be Pro Be Proud delivers a ground-breaking set of resources to help students explore, plan, and launch careers in today's technical roles. Students discover which skilled professions spark their interests as they dig, drive, and weld using custom developed, highly interactive Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) simulators. https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/BeProBeProud
    - The **Community Benefit Fund (**CBF) invests $25 million (part of a larger $340M initiative) between 2026–2028 to train workers for clean energy jobs, modernize the electrical grid, and support industries that mitigate climate change. It focuses on economic transition, offering training for non-extractive industries and funding youth programs. https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/Community-Benefit-Fund
    - NMDWS launched the Rural **P20 initiative**, aimed at creating a seamless education-to-career pipeline from preschool through age 20. Funded by a $400,000 legislative grant, this 18-month project focuses on rural school districts to align education with regional workforce needs, particularly in high-demand fields like STEM and aerospace. https://www.dws.state.nm.us/News/Latest-News/new-mexico-launches-first-preschool-to-workforce-initiative-through-rural-education-workforce-collaborative
    - NMDWS offers the **Integrated Education & Training (IET) program** is a structured program where adult learners participate in contextualized adult education or literacy services at the same time as they are completing workforce training and workforce preparation activities aligned to a specific career or job goal. www.//hed.nm.gov/students-parents/adult_education/for-adult-students-and-families/workforce-preparation-career-pathways

Utility Resources

- New Mexico's investor-owned utilities are required to go through public Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) processes to plan for future demand and the resources and will be needed to meet that demand. For more information, see :
- **Xcel/SPS Energy**
  https://gridworks.org/initiatives/xcel-sps/
- **PNM**
  https://www.pnm.com/2026-irp
- **El Paso Electric Company**
  https://gridworks.org/initiatives/epe-irp/