



# In Case You Missed It

*Mammoth Community Water District President Thomas Smith authored an opinion piece for the Desert Sun taking a close look at the impacts clean energy production could have on the region's natural resources. Recent findings near the Town of Mammoth Lakes reveals the need for monitoring and mitigation measures to ensure the safety of the environment and water supply.*

*Published November 29, 2015*

## **Scrutinize Clean Energy Impacts on Resources**

*By: Thomas Smith, President of Mammoth Community Water District*

“California’s deserts have long been considered a hub for clean energy, and with an aggressive new state mandate to increase renewable energy to 50 percent by 2030, clean energy development is expected to increase even more. As nearly every region of the state implements actions to address climate change, we must also study the unintended consequences of clean energy projects on other natural resources...



“Recent U.S. Geological Survey studies have found an increase in tree deaths in areas near geothermal operations, as well as rising soil temperatures and hydrogen sulfide concentrations that can be attributed to geothermal production. In addition, analysis of the Mammoth Lakes groundwater basin suggests that geothermal operations could be impacting the quality and quantity of the region’s water.... These findings could mean that fractured rock connects groundwater aquifers to the deeper geothermal zones, and as a result, geothermal pumping potentially could degrade water quality, diminish groundwater supplies in an already difficult drought, and impact other environmental resources...

**“Californians need every tool possible to meet new clean energy standards and combat climate change. But the impacts of geothermal energy on the environment deserve focused attention and thoughtful analysis.”**

“Ironically, the geothermal company at the center of the debate in Mammoth - Ormat Technologies, Inc. - also has three geothermal plants located in Imperial County.... It will be extremely important to hold companies like Ormat, and the agencies that review and approve their geothermal projects, responsible for implementing adequate monitoring and mitigation measures to ensure environmental protection and long-term reliability of the region’s water.”

**Read more here:** <http://www.desertsun.com/story/opinion/contributors/2015/11/28/viewpoint-studying-geothermal-energy/76394878/>

###

### **About Mammoth Community Water District**

MCWD provides water and wastewater utility service to the Town of Mammoth Lakes and surrounding areas. MCWD strives to provide reliable, affordable utility service to our customers and to conduct our operation in a manner reflecting our stewardship role. We encourage our customers to practice responsible use of our limited water resources, and to take advantage of the information and services available to support this goal.



Find out more by visiting [www.mcwd.dst.ca.us](http://www.mcwd.dst.ca.us) and follow us on Twitter @MammothWater