

# Area to open for geothermal drilling

By KATY SLADE  
Of the Emerald

On or soon after Feb. 11, the Forest Service regional forester is expected to give the go-ahead on leases enabling leaseholders to begin plans for geothermal test drilling in the Breitenbush area of the Mt. Hood and Willamette National Forests.

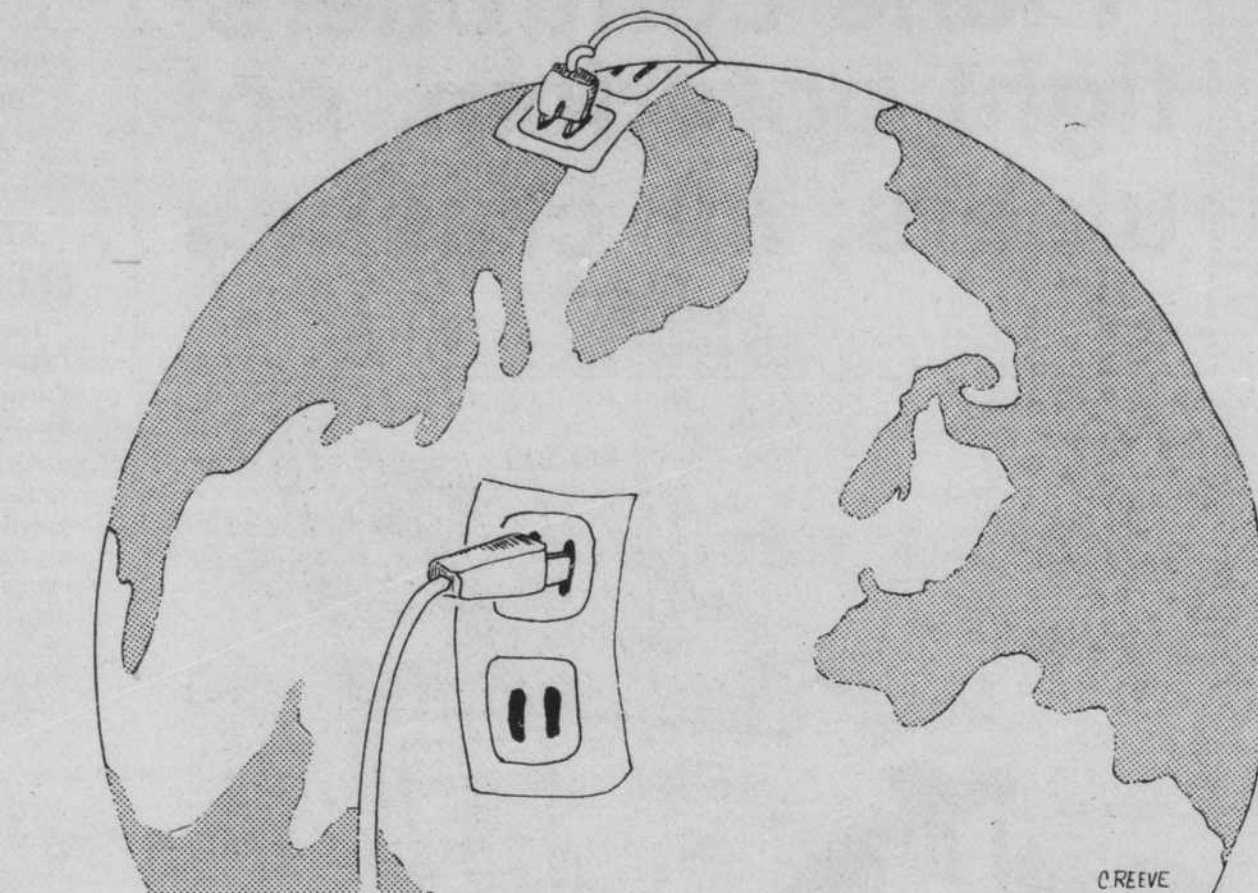
According to Edwin Stout, lands and minerals official for the agency, "It isn't likely we'll go through all that (work involved in the proposal) and then turn around and say no to it."

The work Stout referred to is a 340-page Environmental Statement (ES) prepared by the Forest Service, which has been open to public scrutiny since Jan. 11. (The agency is required to wait one month after publication before making a decision.)

Stout said many applications for leases have already been received, but approval of the proposal will allow competitive bidding in the most desirable development areas to begin.

The Bureau of Land Management will oversee the lease awarding. If test drilling or further development takes place, the U.S. Geological Survey Agency will supervise proceedings. The Fish and Wildlife Department will also have a role in geothermal development.

Among the possible uses of geothermal energy are generation of electrical power, space heating,



and industrial processing.

Oil companies are expected to be the dominant industry in geothermal development, says Stout, due to the similarity in exploration techniques.

"The oil companies have the know-how and the drilling equipment. They're the only ones who know how to drill five to 10,000 feet," he said.

Stout mentioned one oil company (Sunoco Company) has a

number of applications in the Breitenbush area.

The ES lists a number of drawbacks to geothermal development in the area, some of which are:

- Inability to gather important information at this time. Environmental groups such as Friends of the Earth criticized the ES for its lack of specific information. Stout says specific information cannot be obtained until test drills determine the extent of the resource.

- Degradation of the quality of recreation in the Breitenbush area (which includes five campgrounds, surrounds Breitenbush Hot Springs, and lies adjacent to the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness).

Undesirable consequences of the development could also reach the Bull of the Woods Area and the Olallie Lake Scenic Area.

Effects would include a highly unpleasant and easily detectable

odor if hydrogen sulfide is found in the geothermal reservoir, noise, dust, industrial machines and buildings, an increased chance of forest fires if industrial activity is introduced to the area, and leveling of steep slopes to facilitate drilling and development, which would drastically alter the scenic values of the region.

The ES lists elk, small ground dwellers and birds as those most likely to be displaced or killed if a geothermal development occurs.

Stout agreed development would "change the character of the countryside".

The impetus for geothermal development, he said, stems from the Geothermal Steam Act drawn up by Congress in 1970, with subsequent regulations set by the Geological Survey in 1973 enabling federal agencies to implement the Act.

The area considered in the ES by the Forest Service originally covered 44,282 acres of the Breitenbush area, but 17,225 acres were subsequently excluded from present development to "protect soil, wildlife, recreation, visual and Wilderness values", the ES states.

Stout said measures taken by developers to minimize the undesirable effects of development would add to costs, but added that if a rich resource is discovered, "all kinds of things could be done."

"This is a very young industry," he continues. "Maybe they could put everything underground."

## Nurse helps terminally ill cope with death

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP)—Joy Ufema's work requires a thick skin and a soft heart. She helps terminally ill patients die their own way.

A registered nurse at Harrisburg Hospital, she listens to their thoughts, makes sure they get the best of care even if it means bending some rules and protects their rights.

"I found the basic premise is there are no frail human beings. I think there's an innate quality in us that human beings can handle anything," said Ufema, now in her fifth year as a death and dying nurse.

"I believe in being explicitly honest and real. If you choose not to respond to that because you can't take it, then that's your choice. I promise not to make any value judgements on how you handle it," she added.

"What's important is that the patient calls the shots all the way."

Ufema, 35, has counseled

some 400 patients. She had been in nursing for about a year when she asked her superior if she could set up a program to help the dying.

Her work was inspired by Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, a Swiss psychiatrist who has done extensive studies on death and dying.

But Ufema's work is unique because few hospitals have similar programs. And death is a topic generally treated as taboo.

"I'm having a great deal of difficulty understanding why we don't discuss death in our society. It's the one thing we all have in common," said Ufema.

Ufema pays a visit to a patient after a physician breaks the news about a terminal illness.

"I ask a patient if he feels like sharing with me what it's like to be seriously ill. And that context is that I know, and he knows," Ufema said.

"Dying means a loss of control over life. So if he has some control, I think that's valuable. I encourage the dying patient to take control over the remainder of his life. I think it's important to finish things his way," she added.

"My greatest asset is simply being real. I'll tell a dying patient I'm uncomfortable being here. I don't want to be here, but I am. And I'm scared. I'm not coming in here with a clipboard and a lab coat. I don't wear a black cape and come in saying, 'You're dying. You're dying,'" Ufema said.

"Part of it is that I have a genuine concern about their condition at this time. And part of it is

also saying I have no idea what you're going through. I'm not going to tell an empathetic lie and have them say to me, 'Oh, yeah? When did you die of leukemia?'" she added.

One of her patients was Edward A. Miller, a 32-year-old lawyer who worked for the state. He died recently of lung cancer.

Miller was able to rationalize his fate.

"I'm not upset about dying. It's the breaks. You can't do anything about it. You can't blame anyone. You can't do anything to prevent it. I don't think it takes courage to die. Everybody dies," he said in an interview last month.

He was a unique patient in that he already accepted his death before meeting Ufema. But his relationship with the death and dying nurse meant a lot to him.

"Joy's intelligent. She understands what I'm going through. She's interested. Such communications are a means of building up one's own sense of worth," he added.

"There are some people I can't talk to about death. It would be too tough for them, or they would not understand. It's always nice to have another friend like Joy,

someone who cares about you."

"And she does a lot of little things, like making sure the nurses are around and I'm being taken care of. If you're treated like a lump of flesh, you begin to feel like one. You can't be anything but depressed," Miller said.

Ufema does have critics. Some hospital personnel call her the "Death Squad." But her program is gaining greater acceptance.

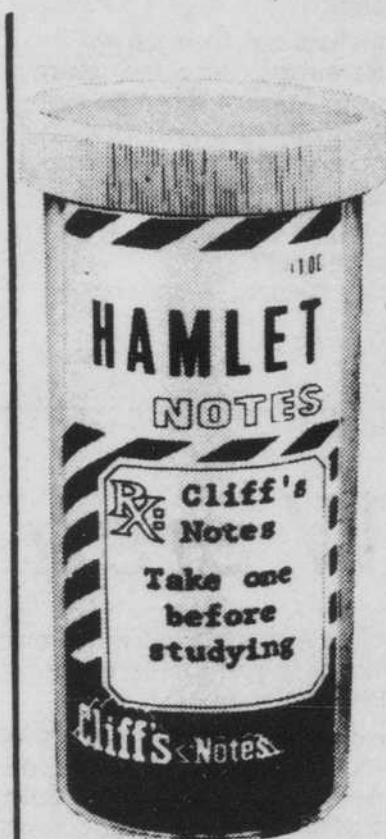
"I've had doctors hang up on me or throw charts. And I've been bodily taken out of a patient's room. But that's changing. There's a better understanding," she said.

Ufema disregards the dangers of developing strong emotional ties with people who have only a short time to live.

"I'm absolutely emotionally involved. I think that's why I'm effective," she said.

"There are some patients who I have just cried over. There were some emotional things in our discussions or just the whole injustice of having to die," she added.

"Some days I'm super depressed because dying is such an injustice. The rewards come from a good death. By that I mean the patient has called the shots all the way — taken control and finished it his way," Ufema said.



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