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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hawaii Electric Light Company seeks information on expanding geothermal energy on Hawaii Island

(Hilo, Hawaii) Hawaii Electric Light Company is seeking information to determine the best way to pursue geothermal power development on Hawaii Island.

In a request for information (RFI) issued today, the utility is seeking input from stakeholders including potential geothermal developers and interested landowners on next steps that take into account the renewable energy goals and clean energy policy of Hawaii within the state's unique community, cultural, historical, and environmental context.

The full RFI is available at <http://GeothermalRFI.heco.com>. Questions or comments may be submitted via the email listed there and answers useful to all stakeholders will be posted on the site. Responses to the RFI are requested by August 31, 2011.

“Geothermal power is already a proven source of firm renewable power that can play an even larger role in Hawaii’s clean energy future,” said Jay Ignacio, president of Hawaii Electric Light Company. “This is a first step and with growing interest and discussions around the state we must consider the best approach because developing geothermal is unique.”

Geothermal development differs from other renewable energy projects such as wind, solar, biofuel and biomass, waste-to-energy or hydro-electric. Community and cultural consultation are a critical part of the process. Typically, a geothermal project must begin with resource identification, resource evaluation, and drilling one or more test wells. These high-cost procedures must precede a formal project proposal. A resource verified through an exploratory well must be found before further steps, including production well drilling and plant construction can begin.

The RFI focuses on the early phase of geothermal development. It seeks:

- Information from those with specialized knowledge or experience in geothermal development, including well drilling for resource assessment, financing,

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partnerships (including with landowners), Hawaii community and cultural considerations, mineral rights, mining leases, permits and approvals.

- To identify interested parties willing to join in discussions regarding geothermal power development on Hawaii Island to share information and propose cost-effective solutions for a viable and efficient geothermal power development process.
- To discover collaborations and efficiencies for geothermal development, including establishing a geothermal resource sub-zone (GRS) in West Hawaii and exploratory drilling to find new resources in that area.
- To recognize culturally sensitive geothermal development pathways and appropriate strategies for building community partnerships and acceptance, including possible community give-backs and benefits.
- To reduce and stabilize electricity prices on Hawaii by de-linking the cost of geothermal power from fossil fuel prices.

The request for information is not a request for proposals for specific projects nor a solicitation for development or construction, exploration or testing for a geothermal project.

More than 30 percent of electricity on Hawaii Island is generated from renewable resources, including hydro, wind, distributed photovoltaic, concentrating solar and geothermal. Puna Geothermal Venture, a subsidiary of Ormat Technologies, operates a 30 megawatt (MW) capacity geothermal plant in East Hawaii. A proposed purchase power agreement between HELCO and PGV for an additional eight MW is now before the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission.

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