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Minister for State and Regional Development
Minister for Mineral and Forest Resources
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SUCCESSFUL TENDERS FOR GEOTHERMAL ENERGY EXPLORATION

Minister for Mineral Resources Ian Macdonald today announced the successful tenders for licences to explore for geothermal energy in the Sydney Gunnedah Basin.

“The development of geothermal energy in NSW presents an opportunity to explore an existing source of potentially emissions-free energy for power generation,” Mr Macdonald said.

“The NSW Government wants to pursue all avenues available to continue to develop new sources of renewable energy for the State,” he said.

Four companies Macquarie Energy Pty Ltd, Centennial Coal Company Limited, Granite Power Limited and Gradient Energy Limited, have received licenses to explore in nine areas ranging in size from 438 square kilometres to 1,926 square kilometres.

The areas released extend from the south of Greater Sydney as far west as the Rylstone/ Kandos areas, and to the north and north-west of Muswellbrook in the upper Hunter Valley region.

There are two exploration sites on the Central Coast, to the west and north of Terrigal, and one area west of Singleton.

Mr Macdonald said accessing geothermal energy involves tapping into temperatures of more than 200 degrees only a few kilometres below the earth’s surface.

“This has the potential to be a clean, safe and viable energy source,” Mr Macdonald said.

“Harnessing this massive energy store in NSW would involve drilling boreholes between three and five kilometres deep, and circulating water through the rocks to extract the heat,” the Minister said.

Industry and Investment Executive Director, Mineral Resources, Brad Mullard said, there are two possible sources of thermal energy in NSW: hydrothermal fluids (hot groundwater), and hot rock origin (buried heat producing fractured granites).

“The potential for power generation using the earth’s heat is being explored as part of the Government’s commitment to developing alternative forms of energy to aid in reducing greenhouse emissions,” Mr Mullard said.
