

**ASX ANNOUNCEMENT AND MEDIA RELEASE, 10 March 2010**

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## **GREENEARTH ENERGY COMMITTED TO ADDRESSING COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

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On the evening of Thursday 4 March, a community meeting was held at the Wurdale Hall, Wurdale, at which representatives of political parties were invited to outline their position on geothermal energy in Victoria, and to comment on the Geelong Geothermal Power Project (GGPP).

Included in the issues discussed, were community consultation, environmental impacts, perceived hazards posed by geothermal operations, and the possible proximity of geothermal developments to existing communities.

The Geelong Geothermal Power Project proposes to tap into a Hot Sedimentary Aquifer (HSA) to generate base load (continuous), zero-carbon emission electricity from this renewable resource.

Mr Simon Molesworth, Chairman of Greenearth Energy said today: "If successful, this project will deliver one of Australia's first HSA geothermal energy plants using technologies that have been employed overseas for several decades.

"It will not only generate energy from a renewable resource, it will also demonstrate and prove up this type of technology in Australia. This will represent a significant milestone in Australia's geothermal and renewable energy journey, demonstrating how other suitable HSA resources across the country can be developed to meet head on, the challenges of climate change.

"The concerns raised by the community in last Thursday's meeting are completely understandable, given the newness of this technology in Victoria, and it is our responsibility to address these fully and to allay concerns expressed.

"With regard to community consultation, Greenearth Energy is completely committed to engaging the community throughout the project. To that end, we held an 'Open House' information session at the Modewarre Memorial Hall on the 27th February 2010. More than 200 members of the community attended and were able to seek answers directly to questions.

"We have also held a number of meetings with various Stakeholder groups with whom we are seeking feedback on the establishment of a Community Reference Group under IAP2, the International Good Practice Standard for Community Consultation.

"We have also met with, individually, a number of the residents of the community at their request and we continue to provide information to individual enquiries via our community enquiry email.

Mr Molesworth said that: "Claims of aquifer contamination made at the 4 March Wurdale meeting recently reported in the media were wholly misleading and contribute to the misconceptions surrounding the project.

"Greenearth Energy's advisors, who have more than 30 years international experience in this area and have been involved in more than 50 percent of the world's geothermal energy plants have advised Greenearth Energy that they are not aware of any instance of cross contamination between aquifers in developing geothermal energy projects nor of any international research in this area," he said.

"Also in Greenearth Energy's research of more than 60 years of the drilling of deep oil and gas wells through shallow aquifers, in Victoria we have not found any documented occurrence of cross contamination between aquifers.

"The wells will be drilled using the same techniques that water companies use to drill into shallow aquifers to extract drinking water.

"The wells will also be sealed as they pass through rock above the target hot sedimentary aquifer by means of concentric stainless steel casing strings and cementing, which is exactly the same as is used with an oil and gas well, of which there are many in Victoria.

"The Birdsville (Queensland) hot sedimentary aquifer geothermal energy plant demonstrates the safety of this type of system. The Birdsville plant cools the hot water extracted from the aquifer after it has passed through the geothermal energy plant and this is then used in the town's drinking water.

"If a higher level aquifer is intersected, monitoring can be undertaken at wells that are drilled into this aquifer to give reassurance that no cross contamination is taking place.

"It must be remembered of course that this project will be subject to a rigorous environmental planning and approvals process. The conditions imposed under the regulatory regime require Greenearth Energy to take all possible measures to protect the environment and the community.

"We note that a resident of the Gherang community has made a claim that he has overseas research that provided evidence of cross-contamination of aquifers in the public meeting convened on 4 March 2010.

"Greenearth Energy takes its' corporate, environmental and social responsibility very seriously and in that regard we ask that this community member to provide us with this research so that we can address any issues of concern.

"We would like to extend an open invitation to any community member to meet with us in person to discuss any concerns. We are absolutely committed to doing the right thing and this means that if there is evidence or research that we, our advisers or the regulatory authorities we deal with are not aware of then we are very keen to see it. It is very important that we see the specifics of this research so we can evaluate its relevance to our project and take any necessary steps.

"There will be many opportunities for community participation in our project, and that is our aim to establish a genuine partnership with the community and to build something that the community and this Company can together be truly proud of," said Mr. Molesworth.

Members of the community are encouraged to contact Greenearth Energy by either telephoning 03 9620 7299 or by sending an email to [ggppenquiries@greenearthenergy.com.au](mailto:ggppenquiries@greenearthenergy.com.au) outlining any project queries.



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