



GEOHERMAL RISING Bulletin

DECEMBER 2020 | VOL. 49, NO. 4

Guest Editor Letter

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This issue of the *Bulletin* contains papers intended to encourage discussion regarding the expanding opportunities for geothermal research and development. The authors who were invited to contribute were chosen because of their expertise in areas where I myself would like to expand my knowledge and perhaps have my perspectives challenged.

The first topic for consideration is the expanding role – and range – of subsurface thermal storage. Many of us in the geothermal community may not give thermal storage much consideration, as it is commonly thought of as a low-temperature application for buildings, but what if we could expand the temperature range and scale? What options might we have?

Our second topic focuses on the potential applicability of closed-loop and single well applications for harvesting geothermal energy. This has been getting considerable

attention in some circles lately and is worthy of serious consideration. Speaking for myself, I have long held the traditional view that such systems could never be feasible simply on surface area arguments alone. But with all the recent advances in well drilling and generation technologies, perhaps it is time to reevaluate.

Our final submission focuses more on industry sectors rather than technologies. I hope to elicit some critical thinking and discussion on how we in the geothermal community feel about the potential for large-scale oil and gas industry involvement. The oil and gas industry can bring a lot of mass and momentum at a measurable scale, but at what price and with what consequences?

2020 has been, at the very least, an interesting and challenging year. I hope this issue of the *Bulletin* is challenging in its own right.