

Lithium Valley Update Summer 2026

Progress has been slower than anticipated, and that is largely attributed to global lithium markets and prices that have created a challenging environment for lithium development not just in the Salton Sea but everywhere. Geothermal is a global focus, and many countries are advancing their geothermal efforts while looking to the United States for leadership in this area. California has the most geothermal capacity and installations in the world, and the work continues.

We have seen progress towards lithium development. Project developers have been working to secure funding despite the current market challenges. In January 2025, Energy Source Minerals was awarded a \$1.34 billion conditional loan commitment from the US DOE's Loan Programs Office.

Controlled Thermal Resources (CTR), another of the current developers working on lithium and geothermal projects in the region, also had its Hell's Kitchen project designated as a [FAST-41 Covered Project](#) last year. The designation provides the project with streamlined federal permitting as they continue to seek additional financing and revenue-generating opportunities.

Berkshire Hathaway, which owns and operates 10 of the current geothermal plants in the Salton Sea area, acquired a direct lithium extraction company called Terra Lithium in the fall of 2024.

On the policy and planning side, we've also made progress. The CEC has also held several informational proceedings and workshops on Lithium Valley to inform and engage stakeholders, including developers, local communities, and Native American Tribes of California, to name a few. The informational proceeding is designed to identify potential policy and regulatory changes that may be needed to create a more conducive environment for lithium development. This proceeding builds on the work of the Lithium Valley Blue Ribbon Commission, which was established by statute in 2021