

**NEW  
ZEALAND  
GEOTHERMAL  
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**Media Statement**

**Major Changes to Geothermal Asset Ownership at Kawerau**

The New Zealand Geothermal Association is pleased to hear of the changes in geothermal asset ownership at Kawerau announced last week.

The transfer of wells, steamfield equipment and contracts from the Crown has involved many months of careful negotiation by representatives of the Crown, Mighty River Power, Tuwharetoa ke Kawerau and Norske Skog Tasman.

This has involved a balancing of government commitments, Treaty obligations and commercial interests and speaks highly of the will of all parties to make the set of deals work.

The transfer marks a change from what has essentially been a caretaking role by the Crown over the last 10 or 15 years, to a development focus. This comes at a time when there is strong interest from government in maximising the use of renewable energy under goals within the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (NEECS). Geothermal energy developments count towards the current renewable energy target under the NEECS.

The existing Kawerau development already supplies the largest geothermally-sourced process heat supply in the world at the Norske Skog Tasman pulp and paper plant, along with some geothermal power generation. The Kawerau geothermal field has the potential to supply more steam and hot water for a range of applications.

The next steps include further investigation, concept development and community consultation, assuming favourable exploration results. The continued good will of the three parties and other property owners over the Kawerau field should result in some interesting developments in the coming years.

There are many other geothermal fields in New Zealand that are currently untapped or underdeveloped, and that could be readily developed. Geothermal energy is expected to make an even greater contribution to supplying New Zealand's increasing demand for electricity. Conservative estimates taking account of likely consent restrictions have indicated that more than 600MW of new geothermal power stations could be installed.

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The **New Zealand Geothermal Association (NZGA)** is an independent, non-profit industry association with a wide membership covering developers, regulators, researchers, consultants, Maori interests, suppliers, etc. It provides information on geothermal phenomena and utilisation for industry, government and educational organisations. The NZGA supports appropriate sustainable development of geothermal resources, and works with industry and government to achieve this.