Mining Butte's Geothermal Resources



MONTANA BUREAU OF MINES AND GEOLOGY

A Demonstration System for Capturing Geothermal Energy from Mine Waters Beneath Butte, MT







This is <u>not</u> the kind of geothermal system we're talking about.

Temperature (°F)

Well Depth (FT)

Why Heat Pumps?

3 to 4 kWh of thermal energy can be produced for every 1 kWh of electrical energy used to drive heat pump.

Ground Water input (50 -59°F) ----(76-78°F at Orphan Boy/Orphan Girl) Heat Pump output (104 -127°)



Coefficient of performance (COP) of geothermal heat pump was assumed to be 3.5.

Descriptor - Include Initials, /org#/date

Open vs Closed Loop Heat Pump Systems



Figure 3. Open loop geothermal heat pump system using a secondary heat exchanger to avoid direct contact of the water with the heat pump; the heat pump loop would contain refrigerant and the open loop would use ground water (or mine water).

Watzlaf and Ackman



Figure 2. Closed-Loop geothermal heat pump system: the heat pump loop contains refrigerant and the ground loop contains an antifreeze solution.

Why mine water as a heat source?

- Mine water (or groundwater) usually at constant temperature, making an excellent heat source or sink.
- Huge water volumes as compared with wells and the hole is already there.
- Natural convection in mine voids can help with heat transfer, so water temperatures are constantly replenished.

Mine Water Data

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Sample</u> <u>Depth</u> (below water surface)	<u>рН</u>	<u>SC</u> (umhos/cm)	<u>Temp</u> (ºC)	<u>Temp</u> (ºF)
Orphan Girl	01/17/06	10:29	~10 ft	6.80	1655	26.4	79.5
Orphan Boy	05/16/05 12/22/05	10:10 10:30	42 ft 42 ft	6.66 6.81	1580 1570	26.3 25.2	79.5 77.3



Cross section of Orphan Boy Mine shaft

