

SAGE History

After a public information meeting on geothermal development sponsored by the Maui Sierra Club, August, 1989, several concerned citizens decided to form a group around the issue of geothermal development. Nelson Ho, Sierra Club Regional Vice-President and activist from the Big Island, as well as Councilmember Wayne K. Nishiki's office, organized the initial meeting of the group in September. Members of the group decided to call themselves SAGE, an acronym standing for Sane Assessment of Geothermal Energy, and to spend time researching whatever facts were available on issues of public health and safety as well as effects on environment, economics, native Hawaiian archeology and culture, and other topics.

Only after 6 weeks of close examination of the issues did the group vote to oppose geothermal development as it is currently proposed. In close order upon this decision, SAGE successfully organized public response to the first Public Information Meeting sponsored by the state, November 6, 1989; raised an initial sum of money to begin its legal strategy; researched the question of whether or not a permit had been obtained to lay the test cable and contacted the Army Corps of Engineers about filing suit; contributed \$500 to the Pele Defense litigation against the Department of Health; held a press conference to announce its support for a call by 16 Big Island groups for an immediate moratorium on geothermal development as well as a meeting with the Governor, and began drafting a preliminary fact brochure and detailed briefing packet on the geothermal and cable system development project.

Steven Moser, M.D. serves as the Chair of SAGE's Steering Committee. Dr. Moser is a physician specializing in internal medicine and kidney disease. He is the Chairperson of the Hawaii Medical Association Toxic Agents Committee and has over eight years experience successfully organizing community action groups.

Kenyavani Gilman, Blue Ocean Preservation Society's Representative to SAGE and Chair of the Public Relations Committee is Past President of the Maui Mental Health Association and a Vice-President for the Blue Ocean Preservation Society. She has worked for over ten years in community organization in the fields of mental health and child abuse and neglect as well as the environment.

Carl Freedman serves as advisor to the Steering Committee. He has ten years experience as an economist and policy planner for the Fore Laws on Board Foundation, an environmental organization headquartered in Oregon and serves as president of that organization. He has a great deal of experience preparing and offering testimony before utilities

commissions, legislative bodies, and energy facility siting councils. He was also an intervenor in the matter of the licensing of the Pebble Springs nuclear power plants.

Remaining Steering Committee members include:

Beverly Fykes, Ph.D., political consultant and writer
Jason and Dechen Groode, community activists
Lisa Hamilton, community activist
Bill Smith, independent legal research service
Andrea Swanander, community organizer
Paul J. von Hartmann, support coordinator for Sea Shepherd
Hawaii

SAGE operates through a system of committees which report to Steering Committee. Both these committees and the general membership are composed of representatives from native Hawaiian groups, environmental organizations, community action groups, and concerned citizens from all over Maui.