



national science week

Stephanie Howe, School of Earth Sciences UTAS “Hot Rocks” – Potential Energy For the Future

My research at the University of Tasmania involves looking at the thermal properties of rocks in the Sydney Basin, NSW. The thermal properties of these rocks will assist in geothermal exploration and maybe finding a resource to provide electricity for the Sydney area. Geothermal energy could be used in the future as a ‘green’ alternative to coal power.



I have always been interested in science - when I was young, I loved exploring in my garden and under my house to see what I could find. Also my great aunts would often go gem fossicking and give me some of their rocks, and I would wonder how they were formed and what made them colourful. I was very interested in science and maths at school and I always thought that I would like to study something to do with animals or health science. But at uni, I decided to study geology because I thought it was the most interesting and fun subject for me.

I have enjoyed studying geology because it is a very interesting degree which includes many other science components such as chemistry, physics, maths, geography, computer science, zoology and botany. The field trips with classmates were great fun, and it was very interesting to learn about the rocks of Australia and how the landscape was formed. We have studied rocks from all around Tasmania and also travelled to Broken Hill in NSW.



In the future, I hope to be involved in exploring for geothermal energy resources all around the world!

Fun geology fact: The geological name for fossilised animal dung is Coprolite.

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