

NEWS

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Contract finalized for geothermal study in Presidio County, Texas

A contract has been finalized for a team from the University of Texas at Austin to conduct a geothermal feasibility study in Presidio County, Texas.

The Presidio Municipal Development District (https://presidiotx.us/?page_id=47) (PMDD) has authorized a contract with the University of Texas at Austin (<https://www.utexas.edu/>) to conduct a geothermal feasibility study near the Rio Grande in Presidio County, Texas. This follows the approval of USD 15,000 in funding (<https://www.thinkgeoenergy.com/funding-approved-for-geothermal-feasibility-study-in-presidio-county-texas/>) for the study that we reported on a few months ago.

The study is expected to take six to eight months, the results of which will aid in deciding whether the site is a good candidate for development of geothermal resources.

Dr. Ken Wisian, a geophysicist from the University of Texas at Austin, introduced the idea of potential geothermal utilization to the Presidio County Commissioners Court meeting in June, with the endorsement of Trey Gerfers, general manager of the Presidio County Underground Water Conservation District.

Wisian also happens to be one of the principal authors of the landmark study “The Future of Geothermal in Texas: The Coming Century of Growth & Prosperity in the Lone Star State.” (<https://energy.utexas.edu/research/geothermal-texas>) This report was the product of a multi-year, multi-disciplinary, cross-collaborative effort of multiple research institutions (<https://www.thinkgeoenergy.com/collaborative-study-highlights-the-growing-momentum-for-geothermal-energy-in-texas/>) across the state.

Board Secretary Lizette Rohana clarified that the contract was drawn up between PMDD and UT-Austin, rather than Wisian as an individual. Other universities may then contribute to the research.

According to the presentation of Wisian back in July to the PMDD board, the area with the highest potential in the region was located close to the river, although an exact location can only be identified after a detailed study. Geothermal resources will likely be located at a depth of 6.5 kilometers. Getting a geothermal facility operating in the region will likely cost anywhere between USD 10 to 13 million.

Wisian said that a local clean energy project in Presidio County would be a great candidate for grant funding given the its status as a low-income border county.

Secretary Rohana stated that the project funding is ultimately a gamble, but one that the board is willing to make. There is cautious optimism for the project given the promising results of the previous studies that the university had done.

Source: The Big Bend Sentinel (<https://bigbendsentinel.com/2023/10/25/pmdd-authorizes-contract-for-geothermal-energy-study/>)



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