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Significant energy source found under US-Mexico border

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[\(NewsNation\)](#) — Researchers have found a significant source of geothermal energy underneath the U.S.-Mexico border along the [Rio Grande](#), which could lead to promising [clean energy](#) development in the rural region.

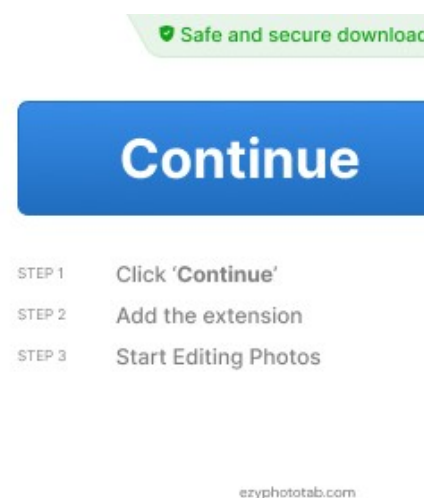
The findings came after a monthslong study conducted by the Bureau of Economic Geology at the University of Texas at Austin, which discovered that the region of Presidio County in Texas, which shares a border with Mexico, has the conditions necessary for geothermal development.

“There’s a thin, 10- to 15-mile-wide region that runs parallel or along the Rio Grande that has

probably two-thirds of the county,” Ken Wisian, head of the research team, told NewsNation.

Geothermal energy is a clean, renewable resource energy source that is produced deep in Earth’s core and can be used to create heat and electricity, according to the U.S. [Energy Information Administration](#).

The findings are significant because even though the U.S. is the world’s largest producer of geothermal electricity, it occupies less than half a percent of the total grid, which is incredibly large, Wisian said.



The findings were welcomed by county leadership, which is excited at the prospect of creating a geothermal energy plant that will inevitably create new jobs and lower energy costs for local communities.

Presidio is one of the [poorest](#) counties in the United States.

“Geothermal energy development would address virtually everything they’ve outlined in their economic development plan,” Wisian said, adding that the energy could serve as a vital source for agriculture and industry.

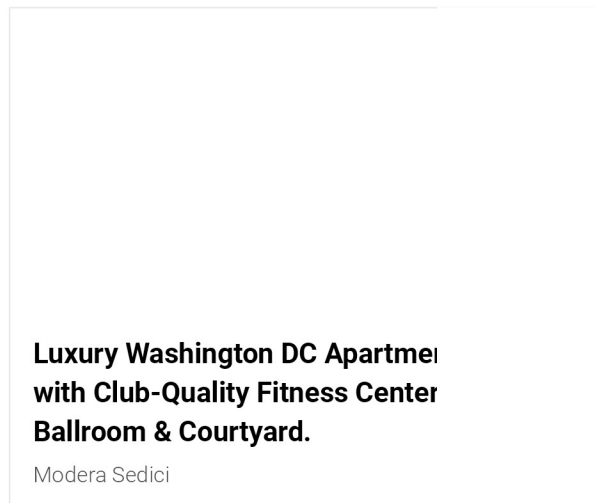
It could generate far more electricity than they need, meaning the county could potentially sell the excess back into the grid or attract new business, he said.

“Geothermal has a lot to offer rural communities, underserved communities, something like Presidio checks every block on the very large federal investment in production in tax credits on renewable energy,” Wisian said.

The community is already looking into how to raise funds for the project.

“Let’s just put our brains together and come up with draft proposals, and then we go to the county and say, ‘Look, this is what we’ve come up with,’” Trey Gerfers, who directs the county’s groundwater district, said according to [ThinkGeoEnergy](#).

While it may be optimal from an environmental perspective, Presidio County has a political resonance sitting on the border with Mexico and serving as an entry point for migrants seeking asylum.



U.S. Customs and Border Protection has [reported](#) just over 3,000 migrant “encounters” this fiscal year in the Big Bend area, where Presidio is located, down 63% from the same time last year.

But Wisian says he does not see geothermal energy mining as posing any security concerns for border protection because drilling requires a small amount of space and can be well within the

The plant could, in fact, potentially inspire Mexico to start its own geothermal energy production on its side of the border, which also has the same underground heat, he said.

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