

Widespread Energy Granted NZ Prospecting Permit

New Zealand venture capital investor Widespread Energy, has successfully applied for a petroleum exploration permit off the west coast of New Zealand's South Island.

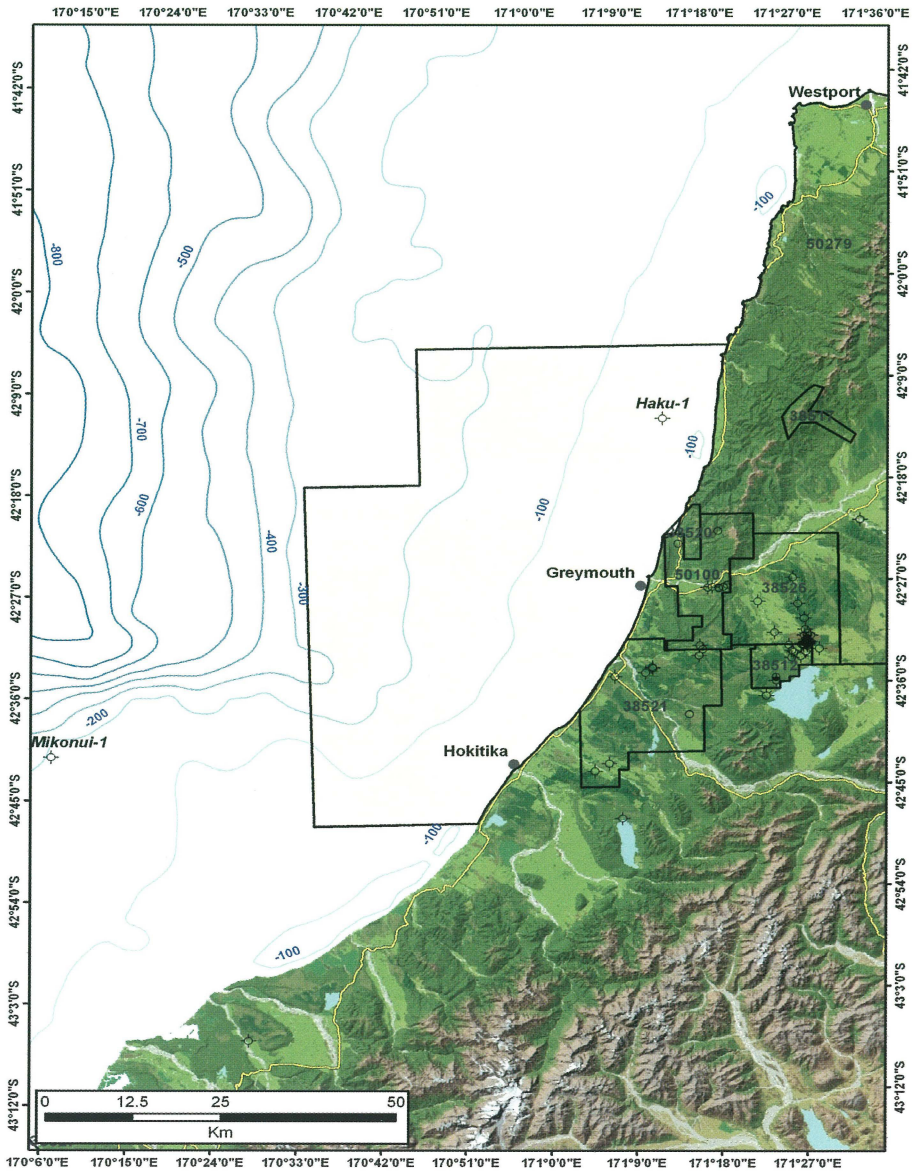
PEP 50439, covering an area of 3,269 km² between Hokitika and Punakaiki, has been granted to Widespread Energy for an initial term of five years, subject to the staged work programme tendered.

The initial year of the programme will involve reprocessing of 200 km of seismic data into a digital form that can be integrated with the existing digital data set, and mapping of selected geological horizons. Widespread will also investigate thermal history to ascertain the

timing and quantity of oil and gas generation, and develop an inventory of exploration leads and prospects.

Widespread will hold a 100% interest in the acreage, although it anticipates the formation of a joint venture depending on exploration results. The proposed entity would together fund and conduct subsequent work, including seismic acquisition and exploration drilling, required within four years under the terms of the permit.

Reprocessing of seismic lines across Widespread's onshore west coast exploration permit (including the Kotuku oil seeps) has recently been completed, and the re-evaluation of sub-surface structure is underway. ■



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