
Alaska Department of Natural Resources in the News

Office of the Commissioner

April 16, 2013

DNR, DOE SIGN AGREEMENT ON UNCONVENTIONAL ENERGY RESOURCES

(Anchorage, AK) – The Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Fossil Energy today entered into an agreement to work together – and with potential investors – to study unconventional energy resources in Alaska’s Arctic.

The memorandum of understanding was signed in Houston today by DNR Commissioner Dan Sullivan and DOE Acting Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy Christopher Smith. This week, Sullivan and Smith are delivering speeches in Houston at LNG 17, the world’s biggest natural gas conference this year.

“This is a clear example of how the state and the federal government can work together on energy issues that will play a critical role in Alaska’s future,” said Commissioner Sullivan.

“As a state, we want to responsibly develop and commercialize all of the North Slope’s energy resources, which include gas hydrates, shale and viscous oil, and other unconventional energy resources. Simultaneously, the Department of Energy is strongly interested in demonstrating that these resources can be developed on an economic scale,” Sullivan said.

“Forming good working relationships with state and local partners is critical to the Energy Department’s efforts to responsibly and sustainably develop all of America’s rich energy resources,” Acting Assistant Secretary Smith said.

“By establishing a framework for our continued work with the State of Alaska, we will advance America’s energy development and research, including our understanding of methane hydrates – a vast, untapped potential energy resource. And this agreement will help ensure Alaska continues to play a critical role in supplying America’s and the world’s energy needs,” Smith said.

In signing the MOU, DNR commits to helping DOE with its ongoing assessment of unconventional energy resources and DOE’s field evaluation of potential unconventional energy production technologies on the North Slope. This includes facilitating access to state lands and assisting with permitting and logistical issues, as well as providing expert review and interpretation of scientific data and reports by Division of Oil and Gas and Division of Geological and Geophysical Survey scientists.

Through its National Energy Technology Laboratory, DOE will have the lead role in developing research and development projects and providing scientific oversight of the field studies. In the agreement, DOE commits to sharing the available technical data with the State of Alaska.

“Alaska DNR and DOE/FE may also endeavor together to highlight the potential of all of Alaska’s natural resources, including conventional resources such as natural gas, and unconventional resources such as gas hydrates and viscous oil, as important supply sources to meet domestic energy demands and to ensure domestic economic and energy security,” the agreement states.

“This MOU highlights all of the energy resources of Alaska – from our huge conventional resource fields and natural gas opportunities to unparalleled on-shore methane hydrate resources. It is critical for the state and DOE work together to promote all of these opportunities. Responsible development of conventional resources today will support research advancements and unconventional breakthroughs in the future,” Sullivan said.

Visit the [National Energy Technology Laboratory website](#) to find out more about the DOE’s unconventional energy research on the North Slope.

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