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## NORTH AMERICAN COALBED METHANE FORUM 1985 - 2015 CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF FORUMS

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In late 1985, several individuals involved in coalbed methane activities in Black Warrior Coal Basin of Alabama and in Northern and Central Appalachian Coal Basins established the Pittsburgh Coalbed Methane Forum. The first forum was held on April 23, 1986 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and was attended by 59 persons. In 1993 the Pittsburgh Coalbed Methane Forum became associated with West Virginia University, with the Department of Petroleum and Natural Gas Engineering providing coordination of the Forum. A year later, in 1994, The Pittsburgh Coalbed Methane Forum became the North American Coalbed Methane Forum to reflect more accurately the national and even international scope of the Forum. The Forum is governed by a Board of Directors that consists of representatives from the coalbed methane, coal and natural gas producing companies, gas marketing and service industries and representatives from legal, government and education communities.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The North American Coalbed Methane Forum (NACBM) was established to advance mine safety and to develop and increase production of coalbed methane as a worldwide energy resource. The Forum provides an opportunity for an exchange of information and ideas on coalbed methane research and technology between the public and private sectors. Forum participants can share practical experience in the development and use of coalbed methane and present related information on the legal, environmental, ownership and related issues which accompany the production of coalbed methane.

### 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

To celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Forum will hold a two day session in May 2015 at the Hilton Garden Inn at Southpointe near Canonsburg, PA.

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The anniversary sessions will be held on Wednesday May 20, and Thursday May 21, 2015. They will consist of one day special short course followed by the Forum's regular session the next day. The registration fee for the two days is \$350.00. One day registration, either first or second day, is \$250.00. Early registrations will receive a copy of the Elsevier publication "Coalbed Methane: From Prospect to Pipeline". The planned presentations are as follows:

- A. Short course
- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Session I   | Coalbed Methane and Coal Geology                                     |
| Session II  | Vertical Drilling and Hydrofracking (including reservoir properties) |
| Session III | Coal Seam Degasification   |
| Session IV  | Coalbed Methane Production Techniques                                |
- B. Regular session
1. Dynamics of Natural Gas Production: Global Energy Picture
  2. New CBM Projects: Hoosier Energy coalbed methane project in Indiana
  3. Coalbed methane potential in Illinois coal basin
  4. Conversion of coal gas to liquids
  5. On cleaning and compressing coalbed methane
  6. Impact of methane recovery on coal mining
  7. Legal and regulatory updates
  8. Panel presentations and discussion on "Why and how coal is important to your state" by states' coal association executives:  
Bruce Stevens – Indiana; Bill Bissett – Kentucky; John Pippy – Pennsylvania;  
Harry Childress – Virginia; Bill Raney – West Virginia; Phil Gomet – Illinois  
Christian Palich – Ohio.

## THE RESILIENCE OF FOSSIL FUELS

As it currently stands, coal, natural gas and oil account for about 86 percent of all global energy, with coal powered generators providing about 40 percent of all global electricity. In twenty years the share may be slightly lower as China, India, and other developing countries of the world power up on abundant fossil fuels, mostly coal. As coal remains the essential fuel for providing electricity in rich and poor countries alike, there is little reason to believe that there will be any significant decline in the consumption of coal in global power generation, (Coal Age, September 2014 P. 12).

The development of the shale oil and shale natural gas in the United States, has domestic production now outpacing domestic demands and has increased the possibility of exporting natural gas and oil. The combined effects of horizontal drilling and multi-stage hydraulic fracturing (recent record is 92 stages in one horizontal well) has opened up both natural gas and oil shale basins to exploration and development. According to EIA in 2013 the domestic production of oil, natural gas and coal satisfies 84 percent of total US energy demand. (AAPG Explorer July 2014 p. 10).

## THE LIGHTER SIDE OF METHANE

Recently the US House of Representatives passed an omnibus spending bill and a continuing resolution (CR) funds, thus coining the word "CRomnibus" to describe the current bill. The 1063 bill included pet demands and policy prescriptions. One of them is **COW FARTS**. Methane is widely acknowledged to be a potent greenhouse gas, Much of the methane produced in the US comes from the flatulence of livestock raised for food. The bill specifically prohibits the EPA from issuing any regulation "requiring the issuance of permits under title V of the Clean Air Act... for carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, water vapor, or methane emissions resulting from biological processes associated with livestock production."

A recently discovered microbe in the melting Arctic permafrost appears to be releasing vast amounts of methane. According to the research scientists *methanoflorens stordalenmirensis* "breathes out methane like we breaths out carbon dioxide". The researchers hope the microbial discovery will provide a more accurate picture how thawing permafrost releases greenhouse gases. (Pittsburgh Post Gazette November 1, 2014 p. A2).