

Overview of Coal Bed Methane Development And Associated Environmental Issues of Concern

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Biographical Sketch of Author

Dan Arthur is a founding member and the Managing Partner of ALL Consulting (www.all-llc.com). Mr. Arthur earned his bachelors degree in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Missouri-Rolla. He is a recognized authority on environmental issues pertaining to coal bed methane development and production. Currently he serves as the lead researcher on several significant projects involving coal bed methane, including the Montana Statewide Environmental Impact Statement and Amendment of the Powder River and Billings Resource Management Plans; a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) funded research project involving the development of best management practices utilizing Geographical Information Systems technologies for efficient environmental protection during Coal Bed Methane Development and Production; a DOE funded research project to develop a national primer on coal bed methane; a DOE funded research project to develop a Handbook on the preparation and review of environmental documents for CBM development; and a project managed by the Ground Water Protection Research Foundation (GWPRF) and funded by DOE and BLM involving analysis of produced water management alternatives and beneficial uses of coal bed methane produced water. Mr. Arthur has published many articles and reports and has made numerous presentations on environmental, energy, and technology issues.

Abstract

Coal Bed Methane (CBM) is a carbon-based gas that occurs naturally in large quantities in seams of unmined coal seams. During the second half of the 1990s, CBM production increased dramatically nationwide to represent a significant new source of natural gas to meet ever-growing energy demands. Development and production varies throughout the United States as do environmental and resource management concerns. As CBM development has increased, so have concerns regarding land and resource management/planning, water rights, cultural and environmental impacts, and regulatory applicability and processes. In many instances, concerns have crossed regulatory boundaries and commonly involve multiple federal, state, and local government and quasi-government agencies and in some instances Native American Indian Tribes. This presentation will provide a general overview of CBM development and concerns nationally.