

Nova Scotia Department of Energy: Onshore Petroleum Exploration Update and New Initiatives

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Over the past ten years the onshore has witnessed a very busy exploration cycle due to the existing pipeline infrastructure and success in the same rock groups in New Brunswick. Twenty-five seismic programs and twenty-four petroleum wells have been drilled by industry since 2000, providing needed data in basins where shows and seeps are common but still eluding a commercial discovery. Nonetheless, industry continues to hold the rights to nine petroleum agreements.

Forent Energy has completed a gradiometry survey over its Shubenacadie Basin conventional Exploration Agreement (EA) while Eastrock and PetroWorth have applied to drill a well on its conventional EAs located in Cumberland Basin and western Cape Breton, respectively. Elmsworth Energy (Triangle) is seeking a partner to drill a prospect situated on the western portion of its shale gas Production Lease. Eastcoast Energy is planning a drilling program for coalbed methane on its Production License in the Stellarton Basin.

The Nova Scotia Department of Energy (NSDOE) is undertaking several initiatives to better serve clients and to improve staff's knowledge of the onshore petroleum potential. A five year Digital Atlas project was commenced in the summer of 2008 and will provide an excellent guide for explorers by shortening their learning curve and enticing more companies to explore in Nova Scotia. The Atlas will contain a good balance of text, figures, appendices and extensive bibliographies.

Legacy seismic data that have been acquired can be incorporated with all the new seismic and well data. A licensing agreement with Chevron and Irving has allowed the department to obtain in SEG Y format all the data acquired in the early 1980s. In addition, seismic data acquired by Anchutz in the early 1970s has been scanned and converted into SEG Y format, which will also be incorporated into the NSDOE database.

Additional staff added to the Petroleum Resources Division over the past two years has allowed field work to be incorporated into mapping projects. The future plan is to have a Memorandum of Understanding with Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, which would allow more collaboration between the two departments including joint projects in the Carboniferous basins.

An industry that is well informed, able to bring new ideas and technology to the basins, and possesses a little bit of persistence will no doubt result in a future commercial discovery.

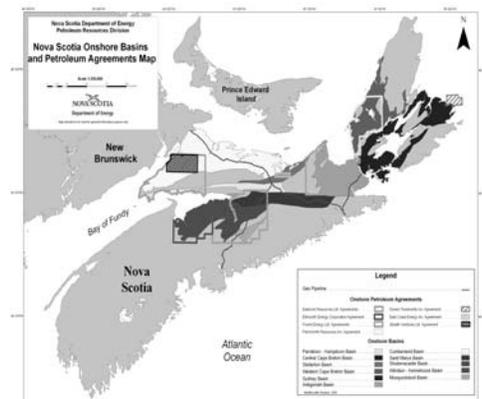


Figure 1. Map showing basins and petroleum agreements, onshore Nova Scotia.

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