

Mannville CBM Projects in Alberta: Are They Economically Viable?

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Abstract

CBM exploitation in the Western Canadian Basin began in earnest in the late 1990's. Economic production was initially confined to the shallow, (mostly) dry coals of the Horseshoe Canyon Formation. Coincident with this first production success, operators continued to explore and test other coal-bearing Formations in a variety of depth and structural settings. Relatively minor and decidedly uneconomic production was obtained from virtually all of these exploratory projects. However, in 2005, Trident Exploration Corp and its partner Nexen announced that a portion of their Joint Venture lands in the Fort Assiniboine (Corbett) area of central Alberta was capable of supporting a commercial project in the Mannville coals.

This presentation will compare a few of the known Mannville projects to the Corbett commercial project. It will then review the development history of the Corbett project, looking specifically at the changes in exploitation strategy that were instrumental in achieving commercial production. Lastly, we will look at the production trends for the Corbett project and speculate on the future of Mannville CBM in Alberta.