

OIL SHALE – A RESOURCE IMPORTANT TO AMERICANS

Oil shale is an important domestic energy resource because:

1. Oil shale is a huge untapped domestic resource that can assist the nation in becoming less reliant upon foreign sources of petroleum and reduce the price we pay at the pump of the long term.
2. There are looming oil shortages, higher gasoline prices and political instability resulting from importing so much petroleum.
3. Both the military and public will benefit through the stabilization of gasoline prices, the reduction in the trade deficit, the creation of jobs here at home, the tax and royalty income for local communities, and a more secure future for our children and grandchildren.
4. Thus, a U.S. government policy is needed that supports the development of all domestic energy resources, including oil shale.

Oil shale can become a sustainable industry after decades of setbacks, because:

1. Knowledge about oil shale processing has improved here in the United States, and from the experience of foreign firms.
2. Despite reports to the contrary, a wealth of information is available to the public and decision makers on water usage, environmental impacts, energy efficiency, socioeconomic impacts and benefits, and climate change implications.
3. Lessons were learned from the past attempts to commercialize oil shale. Today, there are no government mandates and financial incentive for quick production as there were in an earlier boom and bust era.
4. Current research and development projects are taking a methodical and deliberate approach to obtain the detailed technical, economic and environmental answers before proceeding.

OIL SHALE RESOURCE

Oil Shale is a natural resource that produces fuel for automobiles, jet planes, trains and trucks. It is a rock that contains a solid hydrocarbon called kerogen. The composition of the rock varies depending upon the geologic origin. While oil shale is found in many regions of the world, the largest deposits of rich oil shale occur in the United States. There are oil shale deposits in the eastern United States but the thickest and richest oil shale deposits are those in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming as can be seen on the following map.

The Green River Formation Oil Shale Deposits

