

Permitting for federal lands in the Dakotas may be expedited

On June 19, the Senate passed S. 244, a bill designed to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to streamline permitting for oil and gas projects on federal lands in North and South Dakota. Introduced by John Hoeven (R-ND) and Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND), the bill extends a Bureau of Land Management federal permit streamlining program to include federal lands in the Dakotas. A related bill, H.R. 767, passed the House on May 15, 2013.

The USGS estimates that the Bakken and Three Forks Formations contain approximately 7.4 billion recoverable barrels of oil and 6.7 trillion cubic feet of associated/dissolved natural gas. Currently, the majority of development has occurred on private lands where permitting is faster.

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A map of the Bakken and Three Forks Formations within the Williston Basin of North Dakota, Montana, and South Dakota (Photo Credit: USGS)
