

Petroleum Technology Research Centre Announces Funding for Saskatchewan Research Council's Viking Tight Oil Research

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For Immediate Release

The Petroleum Technology Research Centre is pleased to announce it is providing \$300,000 in funding to the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) to implement and expand its Viking tight oil research program.

The Viking formation – located in west-central Saskatchewan – is one of the largest oil plays in North America with an estimated 3 billion barrels of light, sweet crude in place. However, specific geological features of the Viking continue to make recovery a challenge.

“The relative shallowness of the formation limits the sorts of enhanced oil recovery (EOR) technologies that can be used,” notes Dan MacLean, CEO of the PTRC. “Petrophysical properties like low porosity and permeability, and the tendency of clays to swell with the injection of fresh water, have increased demands for innovative recovery technologies.”

Wells in the Viking often produce no more than 5 to 15% of the oil in place, and production has been on the decline since 2012. The number of wells drilled in the area, however, continues to go up because of the poor recovery rates.

“Research into the Viking to optimize production from existing wells has both economic and environmental impacts,” notes Michael Crabtree, Vice-President of SRC’s Energy Division. “Field applicable research – such as identifying subsurface sources of saline water, and designer mixtures that will not cause clays to swell while applying new additives to waterfloods – will be an increasing focus.”

Viking formation research has been ongoing over a number of years, but the research is entering a new phase with three industry partners joining the consortium. PTRC receives funding from Innovation Saskatchewan and leverages these resources with contributions from industry and other sources.

“Innovation Saskatchewan is proud to support another important and innovative PTRC-funded research project,” said Tina Beaudry-Mellor, Minister responsible for Innovation Saskatchewan. “We all benefit from research on improving recovery and lessening the environmental footprint in Saskatchewan.”

The program will also be using SRC’s state-of-the-art modeling and imaging technologies to provide industry partners with improved field characterization for the application of new technologies. PTRC recently acquired an industrial-scale CT-scanner – now housed at SRC’s Energy Division in Regina – which is just part of the research council’s expanding reservoir characterization capabilities. The scanner was partially funded through Western Economic Diversification Canada’s Western Diversification Program.

“We are excited by the possibilities in the Viking over the next few years,” said MacLean, “and optimistic that some of the learnings from this program may have recovery and environmental applications to other unconventional and tight/light reservoirs in the province.”

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About the Petroleum Technology Research Centre (PTRC)

The Petroleum Technology Research Centre (PTRC) is a not-for-profit corporation founded in 1998 to facilitate research and field demonstration projects into enhanced oil recovery and carbon storage, with the goals of improving recovery rates while reducing the environmental footprint of the oil and gas industry. Funding is provided to the PTRC through Innovation Saskatchewan and is leveraged with private sector contributions from industry partners. It is the PTRC's mission to realize 5 billion additional barrels of oil reserves from Saskatchewan's existing oil-in-place over five years of R&D and field trials of new and improved technologies.

About the Saskatchewan Research Council

SRC is one of Canada's leading providers of applied research, development and demonstration (RD&D), and technology commercialization. With more than 350 employees, \$70 million in annual revenue and 71 years of RD&D experience, SRC provides services and products to its 1,500 clients in 20 countries around the world. For more information, view SRC's website at www.src.sk.ca.

About Innovation Saskatchewan

Innovation Saskatchewan (IS) was established in 2009 as a government agency that provides recommendations and advice to the Saskatchewan Government regarding its strategic direction in the areas of research, development, science and technology. IS is also involved with the demonstration and the commercialization of new technologies and facilitates in the co-ordination of the province's innovation activities.