

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP OF NATURAL GAS OPERATIONS

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The Houston Advanced Research Center and Texas A&M University have been leading an industry consortium effort to investigate the development of low impact drilling systems. The goal is to reduce the environmental impact of rig operations through integration of low-impact site access and site operations. The presentation will discuss a scorecard that is being developed to provide an ecological understanding of the tradeoffs associated with producing energy. This scorecard is being developed through a series of workshops being held with ecologists, botanists, wildlife management experts and others in addition to oil and gas industry experts. The scorecard assesses drilling operations and technologies with respect to air, site, water, and biodiversity issues. Low environmental impact operations reduce the environmental footprint of operations by the adoption of new methods to use in (1) getting materials to and from the rig site (site access), (2) reducing the rig site area, (3) using alternative drilling rig power management systems, and (4) adopting waste management at the rig site. The scorecard enables a dialog to be established and maintained among all interested, concerned and affected stakeholders. In this manner, the oil and gas industry has a new way of seeing itself within the larger network.

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