Project BRIEF and EnergyInDepth.org

America's dependence on foreign energy is growing more serious and severe by the day. You already knew that. But did you know that advanced new technologies are being deployed right now in the United States to recover energy resources that as recently as five years ago were considered unrecoverable?

Maybe you've heard that producing energy here at home creates jobs, revenues and security in the communities in which it's done. But do you know how many? How much? And to what extent?

Perhaps you've been told that economic gain isn't possible without environmental pain. But how much do you know about a new drilling technique called "slim hole"? And what have you heard about what's being done in small towns across the nation to shrink footprints and limit land use by squeezing more energy from fewer wells?

Probably not a whole lot – until now. Allow us to introduce you to Energy In Depth and Project BRIEF.

Project BRIEF

Project BRIEF (Bringing Real Information on Energy Forward) is a comprehensive and quantitative research project that seeks to illuminate the real facts behind one of the most misunderstood industries in the nation. Project BRIEF was carried out by some of the nation's most respected and trusted analysts, drawing on local knowledge and primary sources of information. Researchers compiled their findings into three reports, each focusing on a different aspect of the energy industry: the history and progress of effective state regulation, the role of the federal government and the potential economic consequences of proposed regulations.

Key Project BRIEF Conclusions:

- 1.2 million Americans are directly employed by domestic oil and natural gas producers
- In 2007 alone, the industry invested a record $226 billion in domestic exploration and production, driving countless state and local economies
- In 2007, the oil and gas industry paid public and private landowners $30 billion in royalties.
- State regulation of the domestic energy activities has effectively protected the environment and public health for over a century.

Threats Associated with New Legislative/Regulatory Proposals:

Numerous environmental organizations and several Members of Congress are advocating dramatic changes/expansions of existing regulatory frameworks that affect the oil and natural gas industry. These proposals include:

- Requiring oil and natural gas E&P operations to report to the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI).

- Subjecting hydraulic fracturing of oil and natural gas wells to Underground Injection Control (UIC) program requirements, despite language excluding this in the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

- Requiring that all wastes associated with oil and natural gas development and production be addressed under RCRA "cradle-to-grave" hazardous waste (Subtitle C) provisions, including requiring that the injection of produced water and other materials associated with enhancing oil and natural gas production meet the standards of Class I injection.

- Requiring storm water permits for all oil and natural gas E&P operations, rescinding Section 323 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

- Requiring aggregation of the emissions of oil and natural gas E&P activities under the National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) program, and requiring EPA to review and update clean air regulations related to oil and natural gas E&P.

- The implementation of new Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) requirements issued by EPA to "provide increased clarity," as well as to better "tailor" requirements to oil and natural gas E&P industry operations.

If enacted, these new regulations could:

- Force the closure of more than half of America's oil wells and a third of our gas wells

- Cost the federal government $4 billion in revenue; state treasuries would lose $785 million

- Slash domestic oil production by 183,000 barrels per day; natural gas by 245 billion cubic feet per year

Energy-In-Depth Website

Plenty of websites have been created to celebrate the oil and gas industry; even more, to malign it. Energy In Depth was created to explain it – to tell the real story of the people responsible for producing energy in America, and provide you with unprecedented, behind-the-scenes access to see for yourself exactly how they do it.

Here are just a few of the features you'll find on Energy In Depth:

- Virtual well site tour. Travel to the dusty plains of west Texas or the rolling hills of northwest Pennsylvania without leaving the confines of your chair. With Energy In Depth's virtual wellsite tour, visitors will have a chance to get up close and personal with every component of the drilling pad, guided along throughout by an interactive glossary of terms and an audio description of each function and apparatus of the site.

- Interactive State-by-State Map. How many jobs would be at risk in Louisiana if lawmakers in Washington, D.C. added a new layer of red tape to local oil and gas development? How much annual tax and royalty revenue would Ohio stand to lose under a similar plan? What about the remaining 48 states? The interactive and colorful state-by-state map housed on Energy In Depth brings together all that information and more in an easy to read, easier to use digital format.

- Frac In Depth/Environment In Depth. So you've heard in passing of this thing called "hydraulic fracturing," but don't really know what it is, where it's used, and why it's gotten so much negative attention in the press. Time to do your homework. Energy In Depth features an entire stand-alone section devoted exclusively to the who, what, when, how, and where of hydraulic fracturing – along with a separate section of the site detailing recent breakthroughs in technology that are allowing producers to protect, preserve and expand the wonders of our environment.

- New Media, Multimedia, Get Involved. Wish you could "tweet" the head of a major independent energy producer out west to see what his company is doing to expand economic opportunities in the area? Don't know what a "tweet" even is? At Energy In Depth, social networking is an essential component of the interactive experience we seek to provide, adding to that experience with fun, compelling and educational videos on producing energy in America today, and providing all the tools needed for visitors to get informed and take action.

- The Most Comprehensive Energy Research Library You'll Find on the Web. The product of months of independent research and hundreds of hours of document assembly, the Energy In Depth library brings together reports, studies and analyses you will find literally nowhere else. From the landmark EPA report underscoring the safety of hydraulic fracturing, to the widely cited (but difficult to locate) 1991 Palmer study – explaining the intricacies of injection rates and capture zones.

Energy is the lifeblood of our economy, the backbone of our security and essential to our way of life -- the edifice upon which modern societies are built. Aren't you curious about who finds it, where it's found, and how it's produced?

Look no further than Energy In Depth.