

ENERGY MATTERS

Keeping Track Of Our Energy Resources

(NAPSA)—The current debate over how best to meet our energy needs affects nearly everyone. While the demand for energy continues to increase, production from existing domestic oil and gas fields has declined. At the same time, the public has come to expect that the environment will be protected during exploration and production.

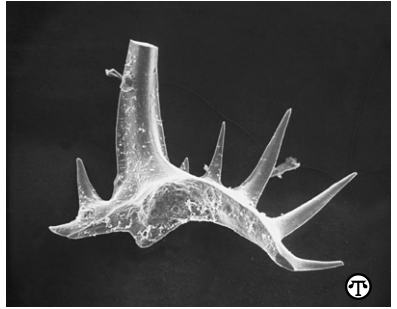
One branch of the federal government is doing what it can to find scientific solutions to the problem. Through its Energy Resources Program, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is engaged in:

- assessing national and world energy resources and their geological framework,
- evaluating the environmental and economic effects of the production and use of fossil fuels, and
- delivering energy resource information to the land and resource management bureaus of the Department of the Interior, other federal agencies, state geological surveys, the energy industry and the environmental community.

For example, the USGS is currently assessing the nation's natural gas endowment and the potential for adding to the reserves of oil and gas in the United States.

The assessment evaluates which areas have the best potential for producing natural gas and ways to improve assessment techniques. A similar assessment of the U.S.'s coal resources will be completed by early 2002.

Given that our nation imports



Chew on this fact!—Fossil teeth from ancient marine animals may point the way to new sources of energy.

more than 50 percent of the oil it consumes, knowledge of world energy resources is also important.

As a result, the USGS recently completed an assessment of the 76 most productive gas producing regions in the world.

Looking ahead, agency scientists are using the power of science to investigate new sources of clean, abundant energy, including geo-thermal energy, natural gas—also known as methane—from coal beds, and methane hydrates.

According to USGS Director Chip Groat, good energy strategies depend on credible assessments of undiscovered resources. Said Groat, “Energy policy for this country needs to be guided by good science.”

The USGS believes knowing about the history of the earth and its resources helps to ensure the safety and security of our energy future.

To learn more about earth science solutions, visit the Web site at <http://ask.usgs.gov>.

Note to Editors: This article is part of an awareness series for Earth Science Week, October 7-13, 2001, sponsored by the American Geological Institute, a partner of the USGS. However, this article is evergreen and can be used anytime.