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Governor Strickland Announces New Investment in Energy Economy

*Battelle Memorial Institute, ODNR cooperate in \$2.3 million project aimed at
advancing clean coal*

Columbus, OH – As part of the governor’s energy strategy to create jobs by supporting clean coal and next-generation energy production, Ohio Governor Ted Strickland today announced the selection of a Tuscarawas County site for a \$2.3 million project to measure Ohio’s capacity for deep well storage of carbon dioxide emissions.

This method, known as carbon dioxide sequestration, is the first step towards making clean coal technologies a reality in Ohio. Deep wells will allow carbon emitted in the clean coal and ethanol energy production process to be stored beneath the earth's surface so that it doesn't contribute to global warming.

“Ohio has one of the most energy intensive economies in the country,” Strickland said. “This project explores cutting edge technology to decrease those carbon emissions and protect Ohio’s current manufacturing and energy industries while attracting new ones. I am proud Ohio is making this investment to plan for the future.”

The deep well test site, approximately 2 miles northeast of Port Washington in Salem Township, was selected by a team of scientists with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and Battelle Memorial Institute. The deep well will gather critical geological data on the region’s ability to store or “sequester” carbon dioxide emissions far underground. If this deep well confirms favorable conditions for carbon dioxide sequestration, it could lead to future industrial development in the region.

The state budgeted approximately \$2.3 million in both the general revenue and clean coal research fund for drilling, testing, data analysis, and reporting on the project.

Developing ways to manage these emissions in an environmentally responsible way will position Ohio to attract and retain the kinds of high-tech industries targeted in the Turnaround Ohio initiative. ODNR, Battelle, a non-profit research organization based

in Columbus, and the Ohio Air Quality Development Authority are pioneering carbon dioxide sequestration research in Ohio.

“This is a great example of how economic development and the wise use of our resources can be compatible goals,” said Sean D. Logan, director of ODNR. “Projects like this enable us to use our natural assets to create the greatest benefit for the most people for the longest possible time.”

Current studies show that Ohio is well situated for deep well projects because of natural rock layers that might safely store and seal quantities of carbon dioxide once the gas is captured and injected in the ground.

This test, called the Ohio Stratigraphic Borehole (Ohio Strat Test), will require geologists to drill to a depth of 8,600 feet to look for porous rock layers that would hold carbon dioxide in much the same way oil and gas deposits remain trapped for millions of years underground.

Once the well is drilled, scientists will take specific physical measurements of the rock layers, especially their porosity, permeability, chemistry and ability to accept injected fluid.

“The Tuscarawas County project will expand our knowledge of Ohio’s deep underground geology and fill in some gaps that currently exist,” said Phil Jagucki, field project manager for Battelle.

Planning for site access is already underway. Drilling is scheduled to begin between April and July, with testing conducted for several months after that. The entire project, including analysis of the data that is gathered, is scheduled for completion by the end of 2008.

The project will have little impact on local residents during the drilling and testing. There are no residences within a quarter-mile radius of the site. There will be a temporary increase in truck traffic along state Route 36, while the drilling rig and related equipment are transported.

All data will be available to the public on the ODNR website and via reports to be published by the Division of Geological Survey. Representatives from the ODNR Division of Mineral Resources Management and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency will join the project in order to plan future regulation of carbon dioxide sequestration. A number of experts from the local oil and gas industry will serve as consultants.