INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION ON DEEPWATER NATURAL GAS HYDRATE CONTINUES – GULF OF MEXICO GAS HYDRATE JIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

John T. Balczewski*
Chevron Energy Technology Company
Earth Science Department
6001 Bollinger Canyon Road, CHVPKD/D1248, San Ramon CA 94583
U.S.A.

Ray Boswell
U.S. Department of Energy
National Energy Technology Lab
3610 Collins Ferry Rd., P.O. Box 880, Morgantown WV 26507
U.S.A.

Timothy S. Collett
U.S. Geological Survey
Denver Federal Center, Box 2504, MS 939, Denver CO 80225
U.S.A.

Richard Baker
U.S. Department of Energy
National Energy Technology Lab
3610 Collins Ferry Rd., P.O. Box 880, Morgantown WV 26507
U.S.A.

ABSTRACT

The Gulf of Mexico Gas Hydrate Joint Industry Project (JIP) is a cooperative research program between the U.S. Department of Energy and a Chevron-led collaboration of U.S. and international companies and agencies involved in deepwater exploration and production. The primary activities of the program are to collect data and develop models, tools and processes that allow better characterization of in-situ natural gas hydrates in the deepwater Gulf of Mexico sediments. Research carried out under this program has resulted in significant advances in our understanding of methane hydrates, their role and occurrence in nature, and their potential implications for deepwater oil and gas exploration and production operations. The successes of this program are largely due to an unprecedented level of cooperation between federal agencies, industry, national laboratories, and academic institutions. Early JIP phases (1 and 2) included advanced seismic processing, collection of samples to improve the validity of assumptions that drive seismic interpretations, the determination of wellbore stability impacts, development of field sampling methods, and a 35-day deepwater hydrate...