

Midland Reporter-Telegram

Permian Basin operators shift focus to Barnett and Woodford shales

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Having focused on developing unconventional resources in the Spraberry and Wolfcamp formations, Permian Basin operators are now turning their attention to the Barnett and Woodford shales.

Tim McMahon, project manager of tight oil resource assessment at the Bureau of Economic Geology at the University of Texas at Austin, says the Permian Basin is currently the most active in Barnett drilling with 34 wells completed in 2023.

The emergence of significant hydrocarbon production from the Barnett shale is occurring along the transition from the Central Basin Platform into the Midland Basin primarily in Andrews and Ector counties and extending eastward.

Andrew Lewis, vice president of geoscience at Fairfield Geotechnologies, offered a case study of five wells targeting the Lower Barnett drilled by Ares Energy in Ector County when he addressed the recent West Texas Geological Society's Fall Symposium.

"It's important to have seismic data to help plan wells like this," Lewis told his audience. Seismic data allowed Ares to move the first well, the Sweet Melissa, 800 feet southwest to mitigate the lateral's traverse across a potentially faulted structure. The well was drilled longer than planned with a total lateral section of 10,155 feet. Ultimate recovery from this one well is estimated to be 1.2 million barrels of oil and 1.8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas...