

DOE giving \$575 million in carbon capture grants

Frederic J. Frommer, Associated Press, 9-8-10

WASHINGTON — The Energy Department said Tuesday it was awarding \$575 million for carbon capture research-and-development projects in 15 states.

The experimental technique involves storing carbon dioxide emissions from coal plants and other sources underground, in an attempt to reduce pollution blamed for contributing to global warming.

"This is a major step forward in the fight to reduce carbon emissions from industrial plants," said Energy Secretary Steven Chu. "These new technologies will not only help fight climate change, they will create jobs now and help position the United States to lead the world in clean coal technologies, which will only increase in demand in the years ahead."

All told, he said, the department has invested more than \$4 billion in carbon storage and capture, matched by more than \$7 billion in private investments.

The newest money will fund 22 projects in 15 states, ranging from evaluation of geologic sites for carbon storage to development of turbo-machinery and engines to help improve carbon capture and storage. The projects, in states including California, Pennsylvania, Colorado, New York and Texas, are being funded from the economic stimulus law.

President Barack Obama wants a cost-effective deployment of carbon capture and storage within 10 years - despite questions about the technology and skepticism about its feasibility. He created a task force this year charged with coming up with a plan to overcome barriers to such deployment.

One issue identified by the task force was liability, because a sudden release of large amounts of carbon dioxide can kill by asphyxiation. The task force called for several options to be considered: maintaining the current legal framework; putting limits on claims; establishing an industry-financed trust fund to pay damages after a site is closed; or transferring of liability to the federal government following a site closure, under certain conditions.