



KEVIN C. CONNORS

Assistant Director for Regulatory Compliance and Energy Policy
Energy & Environmental Research Center (EERC), University of North Dakota (UND)
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Principal Areas of Expertise

Mr. Connors' principal areas of interest and expertise include regulatory policy, permitting, and regulatory interpretation related to the geologic storage of CO₂, enhanced oil recovery, and unconventional oil and gas development.

Education and Training

B.S., Geology, University of Montana, 2009.

Research and Professional Experience

November 2021–Present: Assistant Director for Regulatory Compliance and Energy Policy, EERC, UND. Mr. Connors works with a multidisciplinary team of scientists, engineers, and business professionals to integrate legal and regulatory policy, permitting, economics, and tax perspectives with applied research related to incremental oil recovery, unconventional oil recovery, and CO₂ capture and geologic storage. Mr. Connors also manages the Plains CO₂ Reduction (PCOR) Partnership focused on commercial deployment of carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS).

July 2019–October 2021: Principal Policy & Regulatory Strategist, EERC, UND. Mr. Connors worked with a multidisciplinary team of scientists, engineers, and business professionals to integrate legal and regulatory policy, economics, and tax perspectives with applied research related to incremental oil recovery, unconventional oil recovery, and CO₂ capture and geologic storage.

November 2018–June 2019: Principal Consultant Drilling and Well Operations, Equinor Energy, Austin, Texas. Mr. Connors worked as a regulatory advisor for Equinor's Williston Basin Bakken asset. He gained experience in securing federal and state permits to drill, advising Equinor stakeholders on regulatory issues, and maintaining compliance in a multi-jurisdictional regulatory environment. Mr. Connors worked on special projects with Equinor's research and technology teams as the lead regulatory advisor in developing solutions to gas flaring and CO₂ emissions in the Bakken.

October 2010–October 2018: North Dakota Industrial Commission (NDIC) Oil and Gas Division.

October 2015–October 2018: Pipeline Program Supervisor. This position was created by the North Dakota Legislature to develop North Dakota's first Underground Gathering Pipeline Program to improve pipeline integrity. The development of the pipeline program included administrative rule making, hiring and managing office and field staff, developing a data management system (database), and meeting with industry leaders and academic researchers. Mr. Connors created guidance documents for program staff, regulatory inspectors, and the regulated community; testified before the North Dakota Legislature; and presented at public events throughout western North Dakota.

July 2011–October 2018: CCS Supervisor. This position was created by the North Dakota Legislature to provide a timely response to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules relating to the geologic sequestration of CO₂ (Class VI). Mr. Connors successfully led North Dakota's efforts to obtain Class VI primacy for the state of North Dakota. He gained expertise in the EPA Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program and North Dakota's geologic storage of CO₂ statutes and authored and adopted North Dakota's CO₂ storage rules through the administrative rule-making process. In this position, he participated in the North Dakota Carbon Dioxide Storage Workgroup, testified before the North Dakota Administrative Rules Committee, authored publications, and presented at technical conferences on carbon capture and storage regulatory frameworks. He also has expertise in North Dakota's pore space amalgamation process for CO₂ storage and gas storage. In 2018, he developed guidelines for gas storage in North Dakota. The guidance document was intended to provide a pathway forward for permitting and storing Bakken produced gas to mitigate flaring.

October 2013–October 2015: UIC Supervisor. Mr. Connors administered the North Dakota Class II UIC Program. During his time as UIC Supervisor, he issued over 100 UIC permits, revised and updated program technical guidelines, evaluated regulatory filings, performed technical evaluations of UIC permit applications, and processed well completion reports, workover reports, and various other regulatory filings. He prepared and submitted quarterly reports to EPA as part of the UIC program primacy agreement between North Dakota and EPA. In spring 2015, Mr. Connors created a regulatory comparison table using North Dakota Statutes and regulations in comparison to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposed rules on hydraulic fracturing. The regulatory comparison was key evidence in the state of North Dakota's lawsuit against the BLM.

October 2010–July 2011: Petroleum Engineer. As an oil and gas inspector, Mr. Connors conducted enforcement and compliance inspections in the field during a time of increasing oil and gas activity.

January–September 2010: Wellsite Geologist, Weatherford. Mr. Connors provided geological services for the drilling and completion of horizontal wells in the Bakken and Three Forks Formations.