

Energy Department seeks methane hydrate proposals

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The U.S. Department of Energy is looking for research proposals that could advance what's known about methane hydrates, a potential new source of fossil fuel.

Methane is the main ingredient of natural gas. The department describes methane hydrate as a lattice of ice that traps methane molecules but does not bind them chemically. Methane is released when the material is warmed or depressurized.

Methane hydrate is found on Alaska's North Slope and in sediment on the outer continental shelf.

The department is offering grant money for research projects in Alaska that could explore how to economically extract methane. The department is also seeking researchers to document methane hydrate deposits in outer continental shelf waters.

The department anticipates federal funding of \$20 million over two years for [research projects](#).

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