Hydraulic fracturing in Nova Scotia

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Hydraulic fracturing is a technique used to enhance the recovery of oil and gas from conventional and unconventional resource plays. The extraction of unconventional hydrocarbons has only recently become economically feasible due to technological developments in directional drilling and new applications of hydraulic fracturing. Hydraulic fracturing has become a topic of interest in Nova Scotia because of the geological potential of the province. The Horton, Windsor, and Cumberland groups in Nova Scotia have shown promising shale gas and coalbed methane resources. Although the province has potential onshore hydrocarbons, environmental and human health concerns surrounding hydraulic fracturing have caused controversy with the general public and environmental groups in part due to lack of public awareness and education. To address these concerns, in April 2011 the Nova Scotia Department of Energy and Nova Scotia Environment launched a joint review with the intention of identifying possible effects of hydraulic fracturing, industry best practices, and relevant regulations used in other jurisdictions. With proper environmental mitigation measures the development of the onshore hydrocarbon industry in Nova Scotia shows economic potential and a source for domestic energy supply.