

DOMINION GOVERNMENT PETROLEUM REGULATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT ON OIL SANDS DEVELOPMENT TO 1930

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For twenty-five years after Alberta was created as a province in 1905, the Dominion, or Federal, Government of Canada controlled land and resource development in this province until 1930 when control of Alberta's land and resources was finally turned over to the province. Until then, Alberta was not on equal footing with the four original partners of Confederation that had been granted control of their provincial lands and resources under the British North America Act. Until 1910, a limited number of individuals purchased petroleum and natural gas rights along with surface rights in Alberta; however, a major change in Dominion policy in 1910 allowed only for the leasing of these rights.

During this period of federal government control, efforts were initiated to unleash the petroleum embedded in what was then officially called and defined as "tar-sands" in the regulations. As more was learned about the unique features of the tar-sands or oil sands located in north-east Alberta, various recovery methods were attempted. In turn, government regulations reflected an increasing knowledge of the potential pool of oil in the northern Alberta region and regulations specific to tar-sands and then bituminous sands were introduced.

Several companies and individuals attempted to win the oil believed to be embedded in the oil sands. Methods of recovery included traditional drilling first, then in-situ methods and finally the first successful recovery using an experimental separation process. Exploration was originally confined to the shores of that Athabasca River, the main route of transportation, and then eventually to land surrounding the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway when it finally inched its way towards the great waterways of the north.

THE TIME HAS COME ...

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The Maritime province of New Brunswick is full of many wonders. Joyce Hunt grew up in Moncton and completed her post-secondary education at the University of New Brunswick [UNB]. Hunt taught school in communities not far from Saint John before moving to Alberta with her husband Peter, who

as a university student, as well as upon graduating from UNB School of Engineering, worked for Irving Oil. Little did she know that while exploring this wonderland with her family as a child and later studying Canadian history that her adventures and education would lay the foundation for her curiosity about the oil sands in northeast Alberta. This background ultimately resulted in her book on the early history of the oil sands.

Hunt will share some of her early recollections of her wonderings and what she learned about the riches of New Brunswick along with the petroleum history of New Brunswick not only as a child, but also as she researched background information for her book *Local Push Global Pull – The Unknown History of the Athabaska Oil Sands*.

"Hunt's introduction to petroleum was as an early age in her home province of New Brunswick. Her father would take family drives in Alberta County, stopping to visit the historic Albert Mines, site of the Albertite oil shale. She also recalls the 'horrible smell' of her grandparents' gas-lighted home, in Surrey."