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Profiling oil shale research and development in the United States

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Significant research efforts are underway in America's universities and national laboratories to begin to address some of the technical, economic, and policy uncertainties that constrain the development of America's enormous oil shale resource. The Department of Energy's Office of Naval Petroleum and Oil Shale Reserves (NPOSR) recently completed an effort to document many of these activities by profiling individual research projects that are underway or planned at various universities, national laboratories, and public agencies. Results of this effort are documented in a report titled "Oil Shale Research in the United States: Profiles of Oil Shale Research and Development Activities in Universities, National Laboratories, and Public Agencies." The report contains profiles of 27 distinct research and development projects that are being conducted by six different research institutions in the areas of resource characterization, extraction technology, environmental impacts, source water requirements, economics, and regulations and permitting. This paper will provide a summary of the 27 projects, with emphasis on environmental concerns, including water issues and carbon dioxide emissions, as these topics continue to be high on the agenda in moving an oil shale industry forward.