

Modeling versus The Real World Of Hydraulic Fracturing

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### **Objectives**

Overview of potential migration pathways

- Identify and discuss key fate and transport (F&T) modeling parameters
- Review available data for key F&T parameters
- Identify data gaps and discuss implications for EPA study

# **Potential HF Related Migration Pathways**

- Surface releases of HF and flowback fluids
  - Migration to groundwater
  - Migration to surface water
- Subsurface migration of HF additives (upward migration) to drinking water aquifers
  - Migration from the target zone

# **Sensitive F&T Model Parameters**

- Key model "source" characterization information for surface release simulations
  - Spill volume
  - Spill area
  - Chemical constituents/concentrations in spilled fluid
- Source characterization considerations for migration from bedrock (upward migration)
  - Fraction of trapped HF fluid/ flowback (e.g., 9 to 35% in Marcellus shale, 68 to 82% in CBM)
  - Geochemistry of brine and HF additives in target formation

# **Sensitive F&T Model Parameters**

- Surface Releases: Key parameters that typically control transport downgradient from source area
  - Hydraulic conductivity of soils and aquifers
  - Direction and magnitude of hydraulic gradient relative to drinking water well locations
  - Biodegradation of organic chemicals
  - Adsorption
- Upward Migration: Factors that control potential vertical migration of subsurface fluids
  - Direction and magnitude of natural head gradient
  - Bedrock stratigraphy and hydraulic properties
  - Distance between HF induced fractures and drinking water units
  - Strength of attenuation processes

# **Sensitive F&T Model Parameters (cont)**

- Key sensitive F&T parameters can be grouped into four general categories:
  - Source chemical characterization
  - Surface release
  - Upward migration
  - Hydrogeological and attenuation processes
- Available data, gaps, and modeling challenges for each of these categories are discussed as follows

# **Source Chemical Characterization**

#### HF additives

- Halliburton and other service companies have provided EPA-requested data
- EPA should be able to use this information to assess
  F&T characteristics of HF fluids
- Flowback characterization
  - Data for Marcellus shale is being continually generated (e.g., Hayes, 2009; NYSDEC, 2009; The Palmerton Group, 2011), other formations are also being analyzed
- EPA should identify key marker HF-related compounds for F&T evaluation
  - HF additives vary by job and formation
  - Appropriate to identify group of marker compounds

# **Flowback Quality Variability**

Sample	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9
Formation	Woodford Shale	Woodford Shale	Woodford Shale	Marcellus Shale	Marcellus Shale	Marcellus Shale	Marcellus Shale	Bakken Shale	Bakken Shale
Specific gravity	1.026	1.036	1.019	1.012	1.070	1.100	1.170	1.105	1.066
рН	7.92	7.51	7.91	6.61	6.72	6.68	6.05	7.11	7.04
Resistivity (ohms-cm)	20.42	14.87	36.46	54.93	8.363	6.342	4.776	5.585	8.057
Temperature (°C)	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
Ionic Strength	0.59	0.881	0.319	0.199	1.919	2.794	4.96	2.874	1.754
Hydroxide (mpL)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carbonate (mpL)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bicarbonate (mpL)	1,010	717	1190	259	183	183	76	366	366
Chloride (mpL)	19,400	29,400	10,000	6,290	59,700	87,700	153,000	96,400	58,300
Sulfate (mpL)	34	0	88	67	0	0	0	670	749
Calcium (mpL)	630	1,058	294	476	7,283	10,210	20,100	4,131	2,573
Magnesium (mpL)	199	265	145	49.6	599	840	1,690	544	344.0
Barium (mpL)	49.4	94.8	6.42	6.24	278	213	657	1.06	5.1
Strontium (mpL)	107	179	44.7	74.3	2,087	2,353	5,049	178	112
Total Iron (mpL)	4.73	25.7	8.03	14	27.4	2.89	67.6	26.4	33.8
Aluminum (mpL)	0.17	0.21	0.91	0.38	0.18	0	0.1	0.17	0.78
Silica (mpL)	33.8	-	40.7	-	-	Ι	-	Ι	-
Baron (mpL)	28.2	27.1	26.7	8.82	45.1	73.1	80.4	94.5	65.7
Potassium (mpL)	192	273	78.7	85.8	977	1,559	2,273	2,232	1,439
Sodium (mpL)	10,960	16,450	5,985	3,261	26,780	39,990	61,400	54,690	32,600
TDS (mpL)	33,300	49,300	18,200	10,800	98,600	144,000	252,000	160,000	97,700
TSS (mpL)	57	246	50	30	10	12	32	120	13,762
TOC (mpL)	89	64	133	180	218	70	143	266	235

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# **Surface Releases**

- Understanding "actual" spill characteristics critical for evaluating release significance and F&T modeling
  - E.g., spill volume, area, location
- Spill databases maintained by various states (e.g., PA, CO, WV)
  - Data are difficult to extract (by public) to perform meaningful statistical analysis
  - If EPA has access, would be useful to characterize the size and frequency of spills associated with HF stimulations

### **Data Collected As Part of Spill Response Measures**

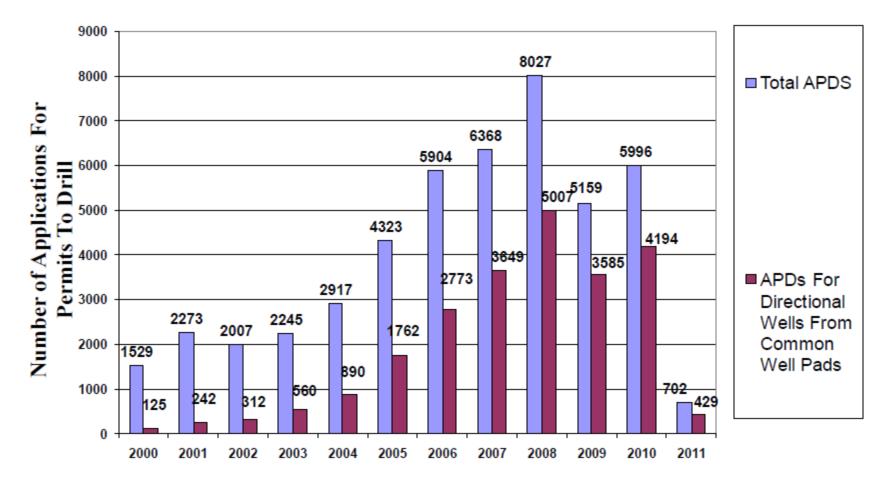
	States Reporting Requirements					
Measurement Type	CO	OH	PA	WV		
Nature of spill						
Volume or flow rate of spill						
Chemical analysis/identity/kind of spilled fluid						
Area and vertical extent of spill						
Distance to nearest surface water, water wells, groundwater						



Unclear, but may include this information Spill volume is required for brine spills, but unclear for other spills Required

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#### Number of Oil and Gas Well Permits For Wells Drilled Directionally From Common Well Pads in Colorado 03-07-11



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# **Upward Migration**

- Data collected at the time of well installation and stimulation
  - Could be used to perform screening level analysis to assess migration potential to drinking water aquifers
- Modeling of field conditions impracticable
  - Not aware of any standard models that can simulate transport processes
  - Data requirements to develop/calibrate a model make this unrealistic
- Migration of "stray gas" also common issue
  - Understanding F&T and modeling a challenge

# Data Currently Reported During Well Installation and Stimulation

	States Reporting Requirements					
Measurement Type	СО	OH	PA	WV		
Depth interval of stratigraphic units						
Depth interval of freshwater aquifers						
Depth interval of brines						
Depth of target formation						
Casing/wellbore size, type, and depth						
Electrical, radioactive or other geophysical logging						
Core/drill cutting analyses/logs						
Formation water chemical analysis						
Flowback chemical analysis						
Type and volume of fluid used to stimulate the well	a		b			

Only if collected during the course of business
Only if requested by the state
Only if collected during the course of business and requested by the state
Required

Notes:

a) Colorado requires chemical analysis of the injected fluid.

b) Pennsylvania requires operators to list the chemicals or additives used.

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IMAGES MAPS	Wellbore Permit							
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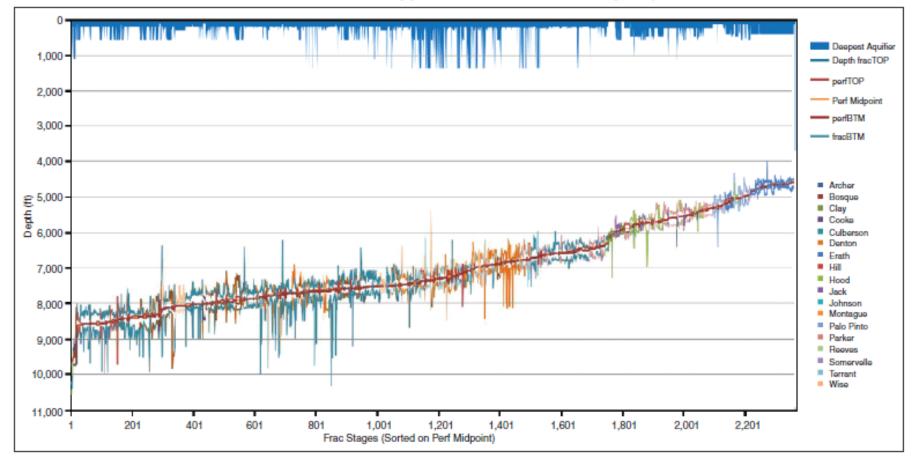
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	Initial Test Data:						
	Test Date: Hours Tested: Gas Disposal:	11/16/2006 24	Test Method: Gas Type:	FLOWING			
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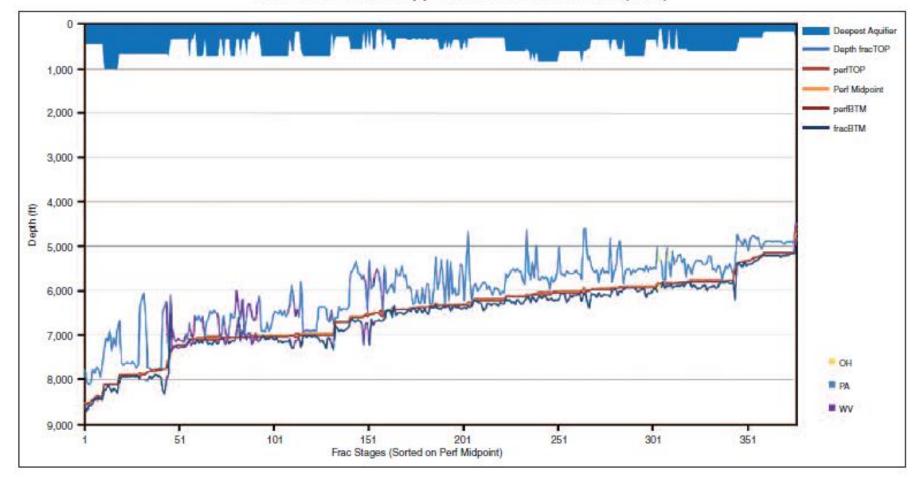
#### **Induced Fracture Data**

#### Barnett Shale Mapped Fracture Treatments (TVD)



#### **Induced Fracture Data**

#### Marcellus Shale Mapped Fracture Treatments (TVD)



# **Stray Gas Migration**

- Migration of natural stray methane to drinking water aquifers a common issue – no correlation with fracing
- Old improperly abandoned wells are typically the cause
  - Serve as preferential migration pathway
  - EPA's 2004 study found this to be a significant mechanism in investigated case studies
- Understanding communication of such wells to stray gas reservoirs and drinking water aquifers is difficult
  - No standard tests available for measuring such communication
  - Case-by-case analysis needed
- Credible modeling of such scenarios likely not possible
- Proper abandonment is the key to the solution

# Hydrogeological & Attenuation Processes

- Hydrogeological and attenuation data (e.g., hydraulic gradient, conductivity) typically not collected as part of HF jobs
- However, extensive data available in the literature for F&T analyses, especially for surface releases
- Attenuation process expected to have a significant influence on HF additives F&T in shales
  - High organic carbon resulting in high retardation
  - Biodegradation expected to be significant due to long travel times
  - Nonetheless, modeling of such processes will be challenging

# **Overall Implications for EPA Study**

- Key data required for F&T evaluations are available
  - E.g., spill databases, gas well construction details
  - Data will provide perspective on relatively low frequency and magnitude of spill incidents, distance to drinking water aquifers
  - Some gaps exist, but can be addressed by using literature values/ limited data collection
- HF fluid composition data and flowback characterization data are also available
  - Additive information provided by Halliburton and others
  - Flowback data are being continually generated
- EPA should utilize all data and assess human health risks associated with drinking water
  - EPA study draft places significant emphasis on case studies
  - Unclear how broad conclusions will be drawn on the basis of a few case studies
  - EPA should instead conduct a human health risk assessment that utilizes all available information including that from case studies

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