Characterization of core extracted from the Olmos Formation (Cretaceous), Southwest Texas

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INTRODUCTION

This preliminary report presents data from ongoing activities of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Energy Resources Program, Gulf Coast Framework Studies Project (GCFSP). The purpose of the GCFSP is to conduct geologic framework studies that will aid in the evaluation of all fossil fuel energy commodities (coal, gas, and oil) in the Gulf Coast Region. The project will: (1) define the petroleum systems of the region; (2) conduct specific geologic framework studies and petroleum system analyses on selected priority intervals; (3) study the coal-bearing intervals to evaluate coal distribution and quality, and coal-bed methane, and source rock potential; (4) work in cooperation with the National Oil and Gas Assessment (NOGA) Project to conduct a focused assessment of the Gulf Region; and (5) contribute to the next phase of the National Coal Resource Assessment.

The USGS, through a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with The Exploration Company (TXCO) of San Antonio, has drilled a series of wells to assess the coalbed methane potential in the South Texas portion of the Gulf Coast Region. This report presents lithologic descriptions, photographs, and x-ray prints of cored intervals from the Olmos Formation (Cretaceous) from two wells, 1-117CR and 1-613CR, located in Maverick County (Figure 1). The cored interval for 1-117CR (from 1090.0 feet to 1212.5 feet below the surface) is 122.5 feet in length. For the 1-613CR well, the cored interval (from 1390.0 feet to 1525.7 feet below the surface) is 135.7 feet in length. The depths and lithology thicknesses for 1-117CR and 1-613CR were corrected based on comparison with borehole e-logs from the well locations. Due to depth correction of intervals for 1-613CR, information on cardboard or wood block labeled markers used in the core photographs to denote portions of the cores that were removed or missing, at the time of photography, do not reflect the corrected depth intervals.

X-ray radiographs were taken of the coal and carbonaceous shale portions of the cores to determine internal structural properties such as, partings, cleats, and burrows. For conversion to digital format the x-ray prints were scanned and, as a result, they appear as reversed images in this report. Additionally, in the scanned x-ray prints, carbonaceous shales or clays appear white and coals are black.

Initial analyses of sample data from cores 1-117CR and 1-613CR show average as-received ash yield values of 61.09 percent and 58.94 percent, respectively. Less than 50 percent ash yield occurs for five of the samples from 1-117CR and four of the samples from 1-613CR. Based on these initial results, intervals described as coal in 1-117CR and 1-613CR, in some cases, would be classified as carbonaceous shales and not coal (Wood and others, 1981).

REFERENCES

Wood, G.H. and others. 1983, Coal resource classification system of the U.S. Geological Survey: U.S. Geological Survey Circular 891, 65 p.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Figure 1. Locations of drill holes (red circles) in Maverick County, Texas. Click on the drill hole locations for core stratigraphy, photographs, and x-ray radiographs

Borehole:	TXCO/USGS 1-117CR Comanche Ranch
Company or Agency:	TXCO The Exploration Company/U.S. Geological Survey
Location:	Comanche Ranch, Maverick County, TX
Coordinates:	28°35.714 N, 100°17.622 W (GPS)
Ground Elevation:	766 ± 25 ft. (GPS)
Coring Depth:	1090.0-1212.5' (122.5')
Total Borehole Depth:	1214.0'
Driller:	A. Clark, U.S. Geological Survey
Drill Rig:	Truck-mounted mobile drill rig
Drilling Method:	Continuous wireline coring, 10 ft spring loaded push tube with shoe
Bit type:	Tungsten-carbide/diamond HC 4.75" OD, 3" ID core
Drilling Medium:	Bentonite mud
Casing:	None (PVC to 6ft)
Geophysical Logs:	Natural gamma, caliper, gamma-gamma density, conductivity, resistivity
Dates Drilled:	6/2/01-6/10/01
Rock Descriptions by:	P.Warwick, A. Karlsen
Stratigraphic Log Scale:	1 inch = 2.50 feet

Click on located in the stratigraphic descriptions for x-ray radiographs of coal/carboneous shale samples

Click on located adjacent to the stratigraphic descriptions for core photos

TXCO/USGS
1-117 CR Box 1
1090'-1103'

R1 | R2

5 in Carb up
Shale core

Run 2 Indurmin test
Core loss (~9.25 ft)

TXCO/USGS
1-17 CR Box 2
1103-1113.75

03-01-46
.85 ft CARB SHALE

03-01-47
1.17 ft CARB SHALE

03-01-48
.87 ft CARB SHALE

03-01-45
0.9 ft Carb Shale

GSA

TXCO / USGS
1-117 CR Box 3
1113.75-1124.2

03-01-11
E

03-01-11
E

TXCO/USGS
1-117 CR Box 4
1124.2-1133

[Click here to return to stratigraphic log](#)

TXCO/USGS
1-117 CR Box 5
1133-1146

[Click here to return to stratigraphic log](#)

TXCO/USGS
1-117 CR BOX 6
1146-1156

CARB SHALE 0.444
3 - 01-50 to 01-51

TXCO/USGS
1-117 CR Box 7
1156-1166

[Click here to return to stratigraphic log](#)

TXCO/USG-5
1-117 CR Box 8
1166-1178

Coal 144
07-01-51

Coal 0-6
03-10-50

144 CR

CARB SHALE
144 CR 57

CARB SHALE
144 CR 58

CARB SHALE
144 CR 56

Txco/USGS
1-117CA Box 9
1172-1187

CARB SHALE
974 CAP 54

CARB SHALE
14+ CAN 60

TXCO/LISC-S
1-117 CR Box 10
1187-1204

COAL
03-01-58
141

CHARB SPKLE
142
03-01-59

RUN 16

TXCO/USGS
1-117 CR
Box 11
1204-1212.5

GSA

X-ray radiograph

Well: Comanche 1-117CR

Sample: 03-01-44

Depth: 1101.00 - 1101.45 ft

AR Ash: 81.72%

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

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Well: Comanche 1-117CR

Sample: 03-01-45

Depth: 1103.10 - 1104.00 ft

AR Ash: 79.50%

Carbonaceous shale

Burrows

Coaly lenses

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-46
Depth: 1106.40 - 1107.25 ft
AR Ash: 56.26%

Carbonaceous shale
and mudstone

Coaly stringers

Burrows

Ripple laminations?

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-47
Depth: 1107.25 - 1108.35 ft
AR Ash: not available

Carbonaceous shale
with coaly streaks

X-ray radiograph

Top

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-48
Depth: 1108.35 - 1109.15 ft
AR Ash: 60.37%

Carbonaceous shale
with coaly streaks

Clay-filled vertical burrow

Becoming more
organic-rich towards
the base

5 cm

03-01-48

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Top

03-01-49

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-49
Depth: 1114.70 - 1115.50 ft
AR Ash: 45.00%

Cleats, filled with
mineralization? with
approximately
1 cm spacing

5 cm

X-ray radiograph

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-50
Depth: 1152.60 - 1153.00 ft
AR Ash: 62.91%

Carbonaceous shale
with coaly lenses

[Click here to return to stratigraphic log](#)

Top

03-01-53

Well: Comanche 1-117CR

Sample: 03-01-53

Depth: 1166.10 - 1167.40 ft

AR Ash: 38.30%

Coal, shaley, with
burrows and shale lenses

Zone with high ash
content

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-51
Depth: 1169.90 - 1170.90 ft
AR Ash: 36.68%

Coal, shaley, with
burrows and shale lenses

Zone with high ash
content

Top

5 cm

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-52
Depth: 1170.90 - 1171.50 ft
AR Ash: 63.81%

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

03-01-52

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Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-57
Depth: 1173.60 - 1174.60 ft
AR Ash: 81.28%

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

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X-ray radiograph

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-55
Depth: 1174.70 - 1175.70 ft
AR Ash: 71.61%

Carbonaceous shale
with burrows and
coaly lenses

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Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-56
Depth: 1175.70 - 1176.80 ft
AR Ash: 82.69%

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-54
Depth: 1181.20 - 1182.20 ft
AR Ash: not available

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

Well: Comanche 1-117CR

Sample: 03-01-60

Depth: 1184.50 - 1185.50 ft

AR Ash: 69.53%

Carbonaceous shale with
coaly lenses

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-58
Depth: 1189.80 - 1190.80 ft
AR Ash: 16.37%

Coal with shale lenses

Coal with horizontal and vertical burrows

Coal, laminated with horizontal burrows

Woody lenses -
compressed root?
cross-sections

Coal with horizontal burrows and vertical cleat development

Well: Comanche 1-117CR
Sample: 03-01-59
Depth: 1190.80 - 1191.80 ft
AR Ash: 38.01%

Coal with shale lenses and
burrows

Carbonaceous shale
with coaly lenses

Borehole:	TXCO/USGS 1-613CR Comanche Ranch	
Company or Agency:	TXCO The Exploration Company/U.S. Geological Survey	
Location:	Comanche Ranch, Maverick County, TX	
Coordinates:	28° 36.294 N, 100° 09.927 W (GPS)	
Ground Elevation:	721 ± 25 ft. (GPS)	
Coring Depth:	1390-1525.7' (135.7')	
Total Borehole Depth:	1649.6'	
Driller:	A. Clark, U.S. Geological Survey	
Drill Rig:	Truck-mounted mobile drill rig	
Drilling Method:	Continuous wireline coring, 10 ft spring loaded push tube with shoe	
Bit type:	Tungsten-carbide/diamond HC 4.75" OD, 3" ID core	
Drilling Medium:	Bentonite mud	
Casing:	None (PVC to 6ft)	
Geophysical Logs:	Natural gamma, caliper, gamma-gamma density, conductivity, resistivity	
Dates Drilled:	4/28/01 - 5/6/01	
Rock Descriptions by:	J.SanFilippo, R. Hook, P. Warwick	
Stratigraphic Log Scale:	1 inch = 2.50 feet	

Lithologic Symbols

Conglomerate	Shaly sandstone	Coal	Core loss or no record

Massive sandstone	Sandy shale	Siltstone

Crossbedded sandstone	Shale, carbonaceous	Interbedded siltstone and shale

Rippled sandstone	Carbonaceous shale	Interbedded sandstone and shale	

* located to the left of the stratigraphic column indicates lithologic symbol for interval modified from "coal" to "carbonaceous shale" based on as-retrieved ash yield > 50 percent

Click on located in the stratigraphic descriptions for key radiographs of coal/carbonaceous shale samples

Click on located adjacent to the stratigraphic descriptions for core photos

Depth below surface, in feet

Depth below
Mean Sea Level in feet

TXCO 1-613CR
1390.00-1400.00'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1400.00-1410.00'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1410.00-1419.15'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1419.15-1428.90'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1428.90-1437.45'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1437.45-1447.60'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1456.80-1466.80'

TXCO 1-613CR
1466.80-1476.80'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1476.80-1486.80'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1486.80-1497.00'

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0.05 EST.
1508.25'

COAL. RECENT
SAMPLE 3-01-34
1508.25' - 1509.25'

ESTIMATE 0.7' IN COAL
1509.0' - 1509.2'

COAL + CLAY SHL #03-01-36
±0.7' 1503.3-1504.0'

1.0'
1507.2-1508.2'

TXCO 1-613CR
1507.70-1517.50'

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TXCO 1-613CR
1517.50-1525.70

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Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-19
Depth: 1402.90 - 1403.90 ft
AR Ash: not available

Carbonaceous shale
with coaly lenses

Transistor (not part of core)

Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-20
Depth: 1410.00 - 1411.00 ft
AR Ash: 73.28 %

Carbonaceous shale
with coaly lenses and
burrows

Well: Comanche 1-613CR

Sample: 03-01-21

Depth: 1411.00 - 1412.05 ft

AR Ash: 74.92 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

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Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-22
Depth: 1414.50 - 1415.30 ft
AR Ash: 83.38 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

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Well: Comanche 1-613CR

Sample: 03-01-25

Depth: 1442.80 - 1443.55 ft

AR Ash: 64.59 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-24
Depth: 1443.55 - 1444.55 ft
AR Ash: 41.65%

Coal with shale lenses,
with many horizontal and
near-vertical burrows

Burrows

Well: Comanche 1-613CR

Sample: 03-01-28

Depth: 1452.20 - 1453.10 ft

AR Ash: 60.12 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-27
Depth: 1453.10 - 1454.10 ft
AR Ash: 68.57 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-26
Depth: 1454.10 - 1455.10 ft
AR Ash: 50.48 %

Carbonaceous shale,
with coaly lenses and
burrows

Well: Comanche 1-613

Sample: 03-01-29

Depth: 1465.85 - 1466.70 ft

AR Ash: 42.82 %

Carbonaceous shale,
with coaly lenses and
burrows

Compressed woody
lens, root?

X-ray radiograph

Well: Comanche 1-613CR

Sample: 03-01-31

Depth: 1482.20 - 1483.20 ft

AR Ash: 65.69 %

Burrows, or roots (?)

Carbonaceous shale,
with coaly lenses and
burrows, broken pieces

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Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-33
Depth: 1491.55 - 1492.40 ft
AR Ash: 39.83 %

Carbonaceous shale,
with coaly lenses and
burrows, broken pieces

X-ray radiograph

Well: Comanche 1-613CR

Sample: 03-01-36

Depth: 1500.10 - 1500.65 ft

AR Ash: 50.69 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces with coaly
lenses and burrows

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Well: Comanche 1-613CR

Sample: 03-01-35

Depth: 1503.65 - 1504.65 ft

AR Ash: 63.94 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces with coaly
lenses and burrows

Well: Comanche 1-613CR

Sample: 03-01-34

Depth: 1506.40 - 1507.40 ft

AR Ash: 61.77 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces with coaly
lenses and burrows

Well: Comanche 1-613

Sample: 03-01-40

Depth: 1512.78 - 1513.75 ft

AR Ash: 64.24 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

X-ray radiograph

Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-39
Depth: 1514.05 - 1514.50 ft
AR Ash: 48.77 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

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Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-38
Depth: 1514.50 - 1515.50 ft
AR Ash: 72.31 %

Carbonaceous shale,
broken pieces

Well: Comanche 1-613CR
Sample: 03-01-37
Depth: 1515.50 - 1516.50 ft
AR Ash: 68.66 %

Carbonaceous shale,
some coaly lenses