



North Dakota Petroleum Council

120 N 3rd Street, Suite 200
P.O. Box 1395
Bismarck, ND 58502-1395

Phone: (701) 223-6380
Fax: (701) 222-0006
E-mail: ndpc@ndoil.org



North Dakota Petroleum Council's *Oil Can!* Program

Contract number: G-034-065

Phase II report: December 22, 2015

Applicant: North Dakota Petroleum Council

Principal investigator: Ms. Tessa Sandstrom, Communications Manager



Program overview

Founded on the principles of listen first, develop partnerships and respect others, the North Dakota Petroleum Council's *Oil Can!* program is designed to open the lines of communication and improve understanding between the petroleum industry of North Dakota and property owners, policy makers, community leaders, media and the general public. The following information includes a brief explanation of program component activities from August 1 – December 22, 2015.

Education

Energy Career Awareness Partnership

ECAP activities during the fall months of the academic year tend to center on regional career fairs and work with school counselors preparing juniors and seniors for post-secondary training. Career fair access is made available to most schools throughout North Dakota and materials about careers, post-secondary training, safety programs, and general energy information are distributed. Career fair exposure is not as focused as direct classroom contact but is able to introduce North Dakota's energy industry to far more students than would be available via single classrooms.

ECAP continues to be a resource and point of contact for North Dakota's energy industry statewide. During the second reporting phase, the program has conducted public presentations and provided information and input for the following:

- Workforce development projects;
- Elementary, middle school and high school career exploration;
- Elementary, middle school and high school energy generation, refining and distribution talks;
- Individual classroom presentations focused on energy;
- ND Oil Can events;
- ND Lignite Council;

- Regional economic development meetings;
- ND Career and Technical Education programs;
- Community outreach information and education;
- Presentations for Professional and Social Organizations.

Community outreach

Code for the Road Public Safety Campaign

The North Dakota Department of Transportation, the North Dakota Highway Patrol, and the Petroleum Council is continuing the Code for the Road public safety campaign targeted at improving traffic safety in oil country. Key messages for the campaign that Petroleum Council is helping sponsor includes the message to “Pass on the Pass.” The Petroleum Council is continuing to fund the placement of four campaign billboards on Highways 2, 85, 1804 and 22 (Appendix A). Last year, the Petroleum Council also paid for the production of a safety television ad with NDDOT covering the cost of placement.

“Pick Up the Patch!”

Activities for “Pick Up the Patch!” continued through snowfall and included the Magic Day of Giving in Minot to help the community clean up garbage and help with other improvement projects throughout the city on Sept. 11, 2015. This season, more than 70 companies and 820 volunteers helped pick up more than 1,700 bags of trash along at least 150 miles of roadways making this year another successful one for the award-winning program.

Townhalls

This year’s Petroleum Council Annual Meeting was held in Fargo, ND, in September. An information session was hosted and presented a great opportunity to reach an audience that may not have had an opportunity to attend any of our past events or receive information about the oil and gas industry. In addition to offering the traditional “Bakken 101” information sessions, a panel titled “Bits + Bytes” was also held to inform attendees of the Bakken activities of four different businesses that are based in the Red River Valley. About 150 people attended the event

which was held at the historic Fargo Theater. The event was well received according to surveys and covered by local press.

Promotion & Marketing

The use of advertising and earned media to reach the general public and industry members has proven to be a very valuable tool for education purposes and to notify North Dakotans of upcoming *Oil Can!* events. Due to low oil prices and uncertain budgetary conditions, however, advertising was suspended during the first reporting period, but advertising efforts were continued in this second reporting period. This included a television ad titled “Strength”¹ that emphasized long-term growth for the state as a result of oil development, as well as the long-term commitment that the industry has in the state even with low oil prices. The ad ran from September 28 through October 18 on television with corresponding digital ads running online from September 28 through November 8. The ad had a reach of about 90 percent with each viewer seeing the ad about 10 times.

The Petroleum Council also tried a new approach to advertising called native advertising (or sponsored content) which allowed for more in-depth discussion of key issues. Native ads appear on news websites as sponsored articles (Appendix B). These articles were focused on energy security and exports, pipeline safety and spills, and reclamation, and ran from July through October.

Analytics for the first two ads show that the ads were successful. Both received click-through-rate (CTR) of about .35 percent, which is on par with the national average for this form of advertising. In addition, of those who read the article on the news sites, which was 635 people for the energy security article and 463 people for the reclamation article, about three percent of them clicked through links embedded in the article to learn more on the *Oil Can!* website.

The website did see spikes in visitation during these and the television ad flights, increasing by between 600 and 1,000 visitors per ad flight. Work continues to increase the prominence of the *Oil Can!* site in search engine searches.

The Petroleum Council has also continued to write monthly editorial pieces for the *Bismarck Tribune’s Bakken Breakout* publication and *The Bakken Magazine*, and North Dakota

¹ <https://youtu.be/FsOqGGuUZ30>

Association of Oil and Gas Producing Counties publication, *Basin Bits*. These articles are a means of covering hot topics and issues that are critical for industry's continued success.

Social and Online Media

The North Dakota *Oil Can!* website, www.northdakotaoilcan.com, was established in March of 2012 to provide information about the Bakken and the oil and gas industry in North Dakota to the general public. The site was updated in July to make it responsive to the media being used to view it. In other words, if a viewer was using a smartphone, the website would automatically adjust to a format more easily viewed on that device. This has slightly increased the duration that people stayed on the site since it was launched.

Between August 1 and December 16, there were more than 13,503 pageviews (the number of times a person visited the page) and 8,182 sessions, or those who interacted with the site. Of those, 19 percent were returning users.

The top three pages visited include the home page, which outlines general information about the industry and industry news and events, the community page, which outlines charitable work being done by industry in communities, the events page, and the videos page, which include a number of new videos highlighting Bakken basics or more specified topics, such as TENORM, reclamation or safety practices.

The *Oil Can!* program has also maintained a presence on Facebook and Twitter and hired a contractor (Appendix C) to help maintain the site and ensure more frequent posts, which in turn, increases the reach and prominence of those pages in users' news feeds. To date, the Facebook page has a current following of 2,928 with most posts reaching about 1,500 people on average each week. The *Oil Can!* Twitter handle (@NDOilCan) has 2,050 followers. The account has maintained an average of about 22,000 tweet impressions per month. Impressions represent the number of times that a tweet will show up on users' feeds, which is up significantly since the contractor was brought on to manage the site.

In addition to Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, *Oil Can!* also has an Instagram account through which to share photos. The account is still new, but it does have 311 followers and is a great medium through which to share check presentations or photos from events or charity drives.

This year, the Petroleum Council did contract with Odney to conduct a public perception survey. As in similar years, economy, jobs and energy security remain the top most recognized benefits of oil and gas, but this year, respondents to the survey did say they would be more likely to support the oil and gas industry if they knew that thousands of products they used daily were derived from oil and gas. For this reason, the Petroleum Council will be making 12 separate videos highlighting some of these products. An education video and Christmas video are in the final stages of production and will be rolled out before year's end and shared via social media.

Oil & Gas Tidbits

Oil and Gas Tidbits is intended to provide information on the use of new technology and other items of interest to North Dakota policy makers, educators and industry members. *Tidbits* is distributed to more than 1,650 individuals and is also available online at www.ndoil.org and www.northdakotaoilcan.com. This year's issues have focused on the Petroleum Council 2013 economic impact study, oil exports, and pipeline needs and reclamation². The fourth will come out before the end of the year and is focusing on flaring.

Oil Can! Monthly Newsletter

To supplement the *Oil and Gas Tidbits*, an e-newsletter focusing on positive stories and information about the industry has been sent out monthly. The newsletter is sent to 2,565 individuals including industry and public leaders, the media, and members of the general public who sign up at www.northdakotaoilcan.com.

The newsletter has a good open rate of about 26 percent, which is on par with the national average of 25 percent and above other comparable sectors nationally, including 23 percent for manufacturing, 25.4 percent for agriculture and 23 percent for politics. In addition, it has a five percent click-through rate (those clicking through the newsletter to the website to read more), which is twice the national average and twice those other aforementioned industries.

Public Perception Survey

As a means to gauge the opinions of North Dakotans toward the state's oil and gas industry, the *Oil Can!* program commissioned Odney to conduct a public perception survey in November

² Visit <http://www.northdakotaoilcan.com/home-menu/news-info/tidbits/>

2015 to measure the results of the advertising campaign and education and outreach efforts. The survey identified that, overall, North Dakotans continue to have a very favorable attitude toward the oil and gas industry. Seventy-two percent of those surveyed statewide favor oil and gas development in the state. In the oil and gas producing counties, 73 percent of those surveyed favored oil and gas development in the state. The survey did show that favorability has gone down for oil and gas development compared to past years, but this could be explained because of the absence of television advertising. Examination of results shows that those who are familiar with the *Oil Can!* program and its ads are more likely to support the industry, which demonstrates a need to stay visible and continue those efforts.

Approximately 44 percent respondents statewide and 38 percent in oil counties said they are concerned about oil and gas development, but these concerns rank below other state priorities or concerns, including increased regulations being set forth by the EPA, flood protection and water supply, and property taxes. Concerns about oil development centered primarily on social and infrastructure issues, similar to past studies (Appendix D).

The survey continues to be a useful tool in measuring the effectiveness of our education and outreach initiatives. Overall, those surveyed demonstrated a good understanding of the issues, including the progress being made in many areas of concern, and the high favorability ratings for the industry also helps demonstrate that the *Oil Can!* program and messaging continues to be successful.

Looking ahead

As the third phase of this project gets underway, several goals are at the forefront of plans for the *Oil Can!* program, including:

- Increasing efforts to coordinate key stakeholder groups for the purpose of addressing hot topic issues that arise relating to oil and gas development, including spills and flaring;
- Expanding communications and outreach efforts through activities such as town halls held in conjunction with the Williston Basin Petroleum Conference and the Bakken Rocks CookFests;
- Engaging students in oil and gas activities through our ECAP and Oil Can! Power Kids' Futures programs;

- Running informational ads covering those hot issues;
- Continuing our “Pick Up the Patch” efforts to ensure our roads, highways and communities stay clean, especially before snow falls this fall and winter; and
- Increasing the Petroleum Council and *Oil Can!* program’s presence on social media sites, including Facebook and Twitter, especially through sharing of the oil product video series.

Additional goals include further engaging industry members in making *Oil Can!* principles part of industry culture, as well as building partnerships to increase oil and gas industry presence and educational efforts throughout the state, and working hard to make *Oil Can!* an easily recognizable brand to North Dakotans.

Oil Can! has proven to be a valuable tool for improving constructive dialogue between industry members, key stakeholders, policy makers and the general public. *Oil Can!* provides a very useful response mechanism for situations that are time-sensitive and require a proactive approach, such as impact alleviation. As the brand and reputation of the *Oil Can!* program expand, we suspect its value to all parties will continually increase. Financial support from the Oil and Gas Research Council has been instrumental in the development and implementation of *Oil Can!* In addition, there have been many partners along with Petroleum Council members who have played important roles in sharing the messages and outreach efforts of *Oil Can!* during this second phase of the 2013-2014 biennium.

Oil Can! Program Budget

Phase I: August – December 2015

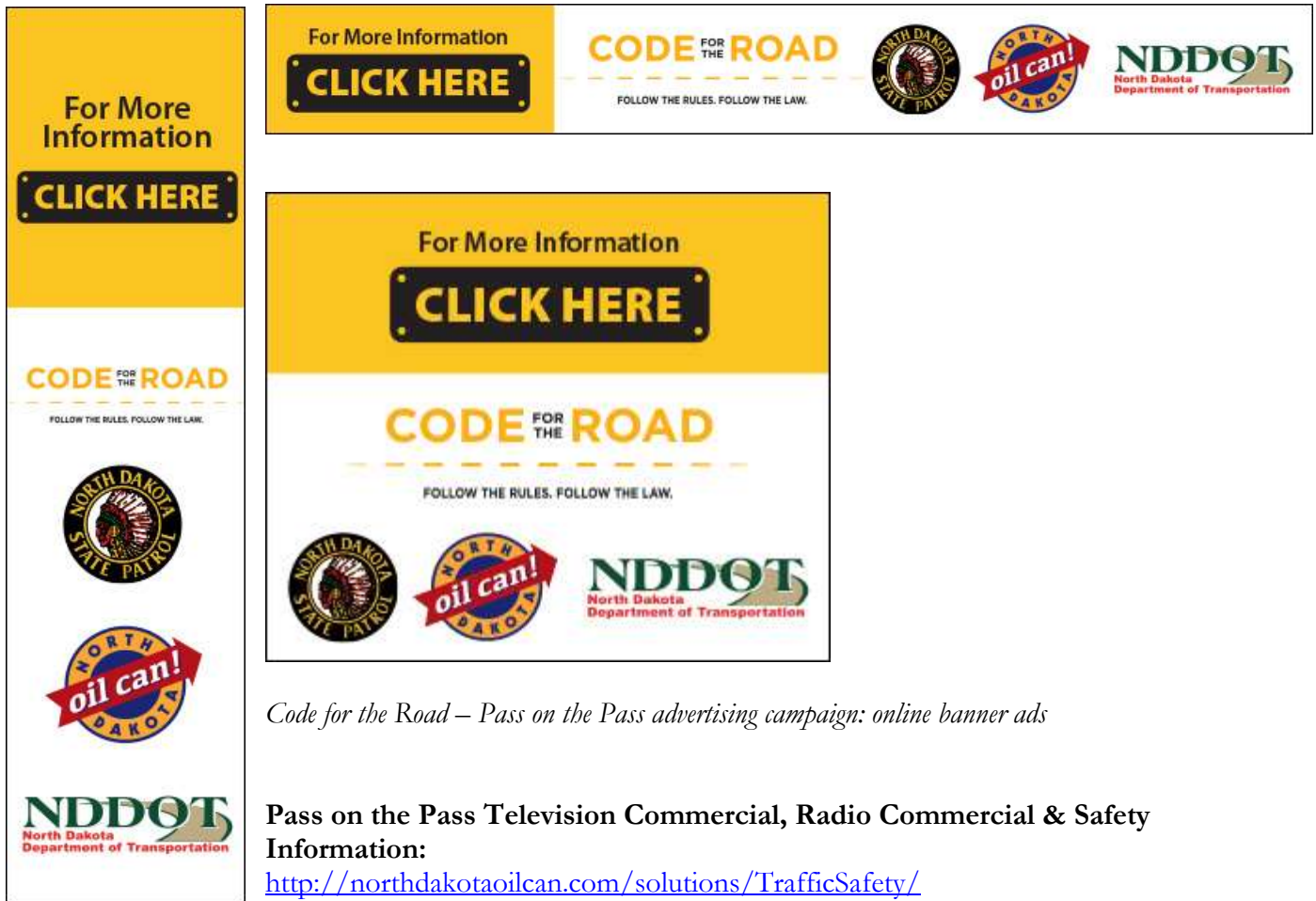
	Budgeted Amount	2nd Phase Expenditures	YTD Expenditures
Outreach Progresszone, CookFest, Pick Up the Patch, Town halls	\$ 163,080.00	\$ 28,961.62	\$ 54,784.96
Education ECAP, Teachers Seminar, Power Kids' Futures	\$ 170,000.00	\$ 48,340.79	\$ 65,043.44
Promotion & Marketing Advertising, Creatives, Web and Social Media, Publications	\$ 1,109,500.00	\$ 240,120.20	\$ 376,772.04
Emerging Issues	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Totals	\$ 1,540,580.00	\$ 317,422.61	\$ 496,600.44

Respectfully submitted by Tessa Sandstrom, communications manager, North Dakota Petroleum Council.

APPENDIX A – CODE FOR THE ROAD



Code for the Road – Pass on the Pass advertising campaign billboard



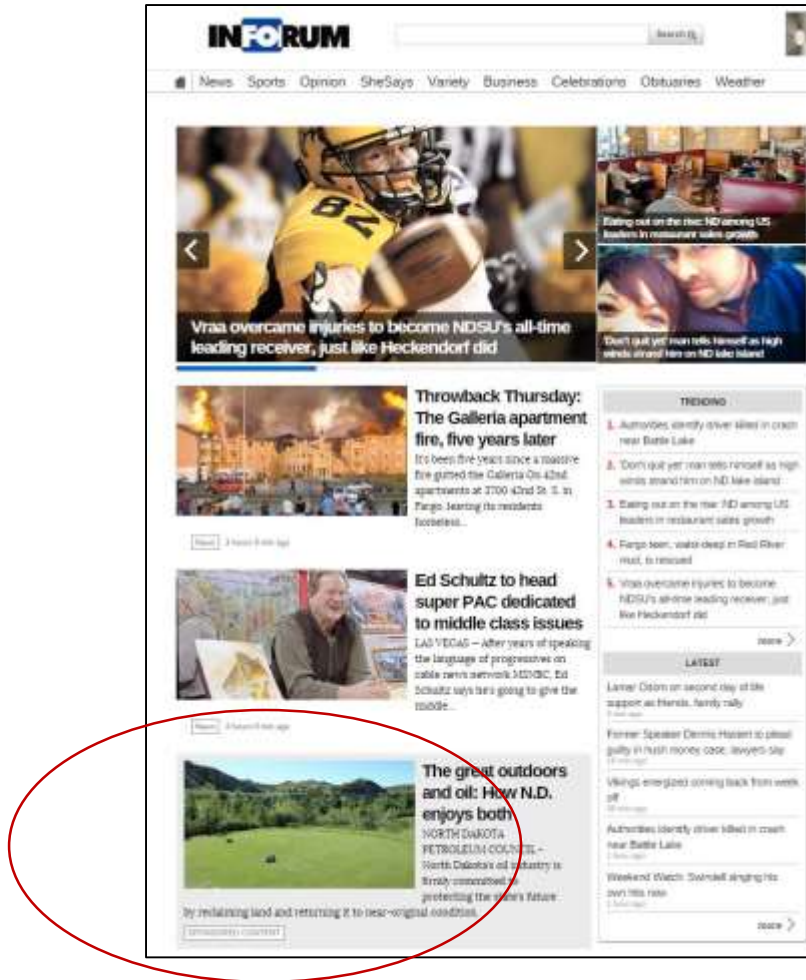
Code for the Road – Pass on the Pass advertising campaign: online banner ads

Pass on the Pass Television Commercial, Radio Commercial & Safety Information:

<http://northdakotaoilcan.com/solutions/TrafficSafety/>

APPENDIX B – NATIVE ADS

Example:



View articles here:

“How North Dakota’s growth is good for the world”

<http://www.northdakotaoilcan.com/how-north-dakotas-growth-is-good-for-the-world-2/>

“Pipelines vital to U.S. energy security”

<http://www.northdakotaoilcan.com/pipelines-vital-to-u-s-energy-security/>

“Companies protect N.D.’s environment – see how they do it”

<http://www.northdakotaoilcan.com/reclamation-vital-to-oil-industrys-success/>

APPENDIX C – SOCIAL MEDIA



Megan Van Eldik Rountree is a marketing, social media management, branding, advertising and communications consultant with a focus on energy, primarily oil and gas. As a consultant, Megan works to build solid client relationships; encourage positive interaction with social media audiences as well as growth of social channels for clients; and, create creative marketing messaging and successful social campaigns.

Megan's clients include the North Dakota Petroleum Council's Oil Can! program, Energy Unites and US Oil and Gas Association, among others.

APPENDIX D

Public Perception Results (independent study paid wholly by the NDPC)

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF OIL AND GAS IN NORTH DAKOTA

The oil and gas industry has benefitted the North Dakota tremendously, contributing more than \$43 billion to the state's economy, supporting more than 60,000 jobs and paying billions in taxes that are helping fund essential programs and priorities. There are challenges to oil and gas, however, so do the benefits outweigh those impacts? The North Dakota Petroleum Council surveyed 869 North Dakotans to learn more about their thoughts, concerns and opinions of oil and gas development. Here are the results.



THE REASONS: JOBS ECONOMY ENERGY SECURITY



THE CONCERNS

Respondents recognize there are also challenges that go along with oil and gas development, namely spills and social impacts such as impact to infrastructure and housing.



THE BENEFITS VS THE IMPACTS

And despite these concerns, North Dakotans feel any impacts or risks are outweighed by the benefits.



PROGRESS

STATEWIDE

OIL COUNTIES

Living conditions and infrastructure in western North Dakota have improved greatly during the last year.



Pipelines are the safest, most reliable and efficient way to move crude oil.



The oil and gas industry contributes billions of dollars to the state economy each year and supports tens of thousands of jobs.

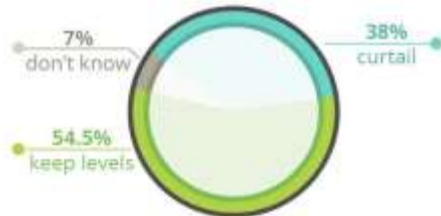


ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

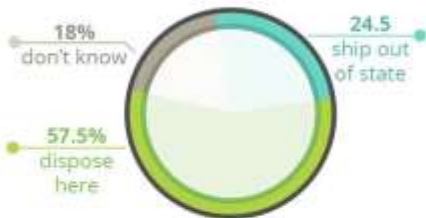
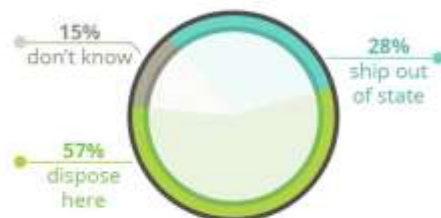
STATEWIDE

OIL COUNTIES

Flaring: respondents statewide and in oil counties agree progress is being made in reducing flaring and production should remain at current levels rather than being curtailed.



TENORM: respondents statewide and in oil counties agree naturally occurring radioactive material, or TENORM, can be safely disposed of in special landfills within North Dakota.



BOOM OR BUST: respondents statewide and in oil counties agree there is more opportunity than before the boom and industry is here for the long-term.

