

“Shell again delaying plans for Beaver County petrochemical plant”

By Timothy Puko, *TribLive*, June 28, 2013

Shell again delayed its decision to buy land for a petro-chemical plant in Beaver County, officials said Friday.

A Shell spokeswoman and government and civic leaders said the announcement is not a bad sign for the project, a multibillion-dollar plant called a “cracker” that will help turn ethane into plastic.

The company intended to take years to evaluate the site and sought the option to extend its deadline for buying riverside property in Center and Potter, spokeswoman Kimberly Windon said.

“We’re still on track. We’re still continuing to evaluate the site,” Windon said, noting the company is studying transportation to the site, working on government permits and communicating with people in the county.

Shell struck a deal in March 2012 with Robinson-based Horsehead Holding Corp. for its 300-acre site along the Ohio River. It has an option to buy the land but never fully committed to buy or build on it. The option expired this weekend, but the company received its second six-month extension since December

Read more: <http://triblive.com/news/adminpage/4278227-74/shell-plant-site#axzz2XnEw8ZLn>

“W.Va. coal-to-liquids project moves closer to reality as TransGas signs EPC deal”

By Darren Epps, *SNL Financial LC*, July 8, 2013

TransGas Development Systems LLC signed an engineering, procurement and construction contract with Spain construction giant ACS Group to build the Adams Fork coal-to-liquids plant in Mingo County, W.Va., a project official told SNL Energy on July 8.

Randall Harris, project developer for the Mingo County Redevelopment Authority, said ACS will need an estimated six months to conduct the detailed engineering. TransGas unit Adams

Fork Energy LLC is developing the \$3 billion facility on roughly 200 acres in the Central Appalachian coal fields.

"It's a daunting job to turn this idea into a construction drawing and a materials list," said Harris, who serves as the technical director for TransGas. "There are so many bits and pieces."

Harris said construction will likely take 36 months once the project receives financing, putting the new estimated start date at about 2017. Harris said he initially hoped the plant would be operating by late 2016.

The Adams Fork project is ahead of the Medicine Bow plant proposed by DKRW Advanced Fuels LLC, which is now set for a 2018 start date after officials submitted an updated construction schedule with Wyoming regulators.

Read more: <http://www.sn1.com/InteractiveX/article.aspx?CDID=A-18396878-11807&KPLT=4>

“Northern Ireland waste CHP facility gets planning consent”

Gas to Power Journal, July 17, 2013

Energos, a supplier of small-scale waste to energy plants, has received permission from the Environmental Ministry in Northern Ireland to build a waste to heat CHP facility in Lisburn, Ireland. Construction is scheduled to start in 2014 at a gasification facility as part of AmeyCespa's Milton Keynes Waste Recovery Park.

Energos seeks to build the facility at the former Burn House Rendering plant. Once operational, it will generate 7MW of electricity for 17,000 local homes and up to 25MW of relatively cheap heating using steam or hot water. The CHP plant is designed to burn 80,000 tonnes of mixed waste, and around 60% of the electricity will come from biomass-fired generators.

Read more: <http://gastopowerjournal.com/projectsafinance/item/2011-northern-ireland-waste-chp-facility-gets-planning-consent#axzz2aY7VUtOE>

“Gas2 gas-to-liquids (GTL) pilot plant on target”

Your Project News, July 22, 2013

Scottish gas reforming company Gas2 is on track with the development of the next generation of natural gas-to-liquids (GTL) technology with a test program that is underway at its newly constructed pilot reactor plant.

The £5 million plant, located at the specialist petrochemical research Wilton Centre, Teeside, has been designed to validate five years of laboratory testing and computational fluid dynamic modeling. It has been built on time and on budget, and is on schedule with an extensive test program that will continue throughout 2013.

Aberdeen-based Gas2 has developed a catalytic ceramic based porous membrane (pMRTM) that is used in its gas reforming (Syngas) reactors and fluid forming (Fischer Tropsch) reactors to create liquid hydrocarbons. This is an alternative technical solution to other developers of small to medium-scale GTL -. Gas2 is the only gas reforming company to have developed its own complete stand-alone GTL solution on this scale, without being tied to any particular larger industrial partners.

The Gas2 Syngas reactors have been commissioned and are operating successfully, producing upper quartile gas conversions in a single pass and through-puts within a narrow 2:1 hydrogen to carbon monoxide output ratio. The Fischer Tropsch (FT) reactors will be commissioned during summer 2013.

Read more: [http://www.yourprojectnews.com/gas2+gas-to-liquids+\(gtl\)+pilot+plant+on+target_92540.html](http://www.yourprojectnews.com/gas2+gas-to-liquids+(gtl)+pilot+plant+on+target_92540.html)

“Biofuels company Virent cuts staff by a third”

By Judy Newman, *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 25, 2013

Virent, Madison’s pioneering biofuels company, is shrinking its staff by about one-third.

The company, founded in 2002 based on UW-Madison research, ended the jobs of 35 employees on Wednesday; 76 employees remain at Virent’s North Side operations center, 3571 Anderson St.

Virent is wrapping up several major research collaborations and is restructuring the company with an eye toward “the long haul,” said Jeff Moore, executive vice president of business operations. “We’re very much focused on commercializing the technology and building a workforce around that.”

Virent has been developing fuels from waste-plant sugars designed as substitutes for gasoline and other fuels in collaboration with several companies including Royal Dutch Shell. It also is working on producing paraxylene, a key chemical used in plastic bottles, in a joint effort with Coca-Cola.

Read more: http://host.madison.com/wsj/business/biofuels-company-virent-cuts-staff-by-a-third/article_6e55e27a-e51f-58a1-ae91-431878608600.html

“Syntroleum Corporation Provides Update on Strategic Alternatives Process”

Syntroleum Corporation (Press Release), *Globe News Wire*, July 26, 2013

TULSA, Okla., July 26, 2013 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- In response to media and investor inquiries, Syntroleum Corporation (Nasdaq:SYNM) today provided an update on its ongoing strategic alternatives process.

On July 17, 2013, Syntroleum announced that its Board of Directors has retained Piper Jaffray & Co. for the purpose of evaluating strategic alternatives to enhance shareholder value. This action was prompted by the receipt of unsolicited offers from third parties with respect to a potential sale of (1) the company, (2) its assets, (3) its intellectual property or a combination thereof. Piper Jaffray is currently assisting the company with respect to evaluating these alternatives and is actively contacting additional parties as part of this process. There can be no assurances as to whether any particular strategic alternative for the Company will be recommended by the Board of Directors or undertaken or, if so, upon what terms and conditions.

Syntroleum's technology portfolio is weighted to the production of drop-in, synthetic fuels – specifically the production of second generation, drop-in renewable products and the conversion of natural gas to drop-in synthetic diesel, kerosene and naphtha (Gas-to-Liquids or "GTL"). Margins in both renewable fuels and GTL production are at historically high levels. The long run economics of GTL has been significantly enhanced as a result of the revitalization of the North American natural gas industry. Given the favorable commercial environment, the Company believes that now is an appropriate time to broadly review its strategic alternatives with respect to its renewable and GTL intellectual property and its ownership and licensing interest in Dynamic Fuels.

The Dynamic Fuels plant in Geismar, LA is in full standby mode, ready for operations. On February 25, 2013, the Dynamic Fuels Management Committee approved \$7.3 million for the procurement and installation of new hydro-isomerization catalyst at the Geismar facility. The new catalyst was delivered to Dynamic Fuels on June 25, 2013 and installation was completed on June 28, 2013. Prior to loading the new catalyst, the hydro-isomerization reactor was inspected by Fairbanks Inspection and Testing on March 11, 2013 and met design specifications. The inspections included non-destructive examination procedures customary in the refining industry. While the plant is ready for commercial operation, the Dynamic Fuels Management Committee has not determined a re-start date.

Read more: <http://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2013/07/26/562696/10042060/en/Syntroleum-Corporation-Provides-Update-on-Strategic-Alternatives-Process.html>

“Sasol taps Emerson to automate planned Louisiana cracker, GTL complex”

Hydrocarbon Processing, July 29, 2013

Sasol has chosen Emerson Process Management for a comprehensive program to automate its planned integrated gas-to-liquids (GTL) and world-scale ethane cracker complex in Lake Charles, Louisiana.

The automation program’s overall scope -- including dozens of integrated process units and more than 100,000 measurement and control points -- makes it one of the largest Emerson has been awarded.

Sasol said it anticipates a total investment of \$16 billion to \$21 billion in the two facilities. When completed, the GTL plant will transform the region’s abundant low-cost shale gas into high-performance, low-emissions diesel and other transportation fuels.

The adjacent ethane cracker and derivatives plant will convert ethane to ethylene and other downstream derivatives.

As main automation contractor, Emerson will provide the majority of the process automation technologies, engineering, and ongoing support services for the operations under a long-term agreement.

Read more: <http://www.hydrocarbonprocessing.com/Article/3236915/Latest-News/Sasol-taps-Emerson-to-automate-planned-Louisiana-cracker-GTL-plant.html>

Related article*

***“GTL ’13: Sasol eyes diversified product slate for Louisiana GTL plant”**

By Ben DuBose, *Hydrocarbon Processing*, July 30, 2013

HOUSTON -- Sasol is emphasizing a diversified product portfolio as it continues to map out plans for the new gas-to-liquids (GTL) project at its complex in Lake Charles, Louisiana, a company executive said Tuesday.

In the keynote address at the inaugural GTL Technology Forum, Mark Schnell noted that initial GTL proposals from the 1970s were designed primarily to produce diesel and naphtha.

But in the modern energy landscape is offering additional opportunities for the GTL industry, explained Schnell, who serves as Sasol’s general manager for marketing, strategy and new business development.

“In Louisiana, we’re trying to diversity significantly,” Schnell said. “On the heavy end, that means looking at specialty waxes and lubricant base oils. On the lighter side, paraffin waxes can be ideal feedstocks for detergent.”

Sasol is expected to make a final investment decision on the new Louisiana project in 2014, after the engineering and design review is finished. The plant is estimated to cost about \$14 billion, making it about three times as expensive as a new traditional refinery. However, the ability of a GTL plant to directly tie into the affordable market for natural gas feedstocks could easily offset that cost.

The plant's two phases would start operations in 2018 and 2019, becoming the first facility in the US to produce GTL transportation fuels and other products.

Schnell noted that a diversified product slate might not make sense for units in other locations such as the Middle East, where Sasol operates a 34,000 bpd GTL facility in Qatar. But the mainland US is a major consumer of those items, and Sasol is adjusting its strategy accordingly.

Read more: <http://www.hydrocarbonprocessing.com/Article/3237485/Latest-News/GTL-13-Sasol-eyes-diversified-product-slate-from-Louisiana-GTL-project.html>

“Utica ethanol plant could resume production by Oct. 1”

By Jeff Bollier, *The Northwestern*, July 29, 2013

A Stanley, Wis. ethanol company that has agreed to purchase the Utica Energy ethanol plant expects to resume ethanol production by early October.

Ace Ethanol President and General Manager Neal Kemmet said the company's membership voted to approve the acquisition of Utica Energy late last week, clearing the way for the company to complete its purchase the ethanol plant on State Highway 91 on Aug. 9.

“There are still a few outlying terms and conditions to meet before the sale can be consummated,” Kemmet said. “Once we close, we'll start getting a more solid time frame on getting (production) started back up.”

Winnebago County Circuit Court Judge Scott Woldt approved the sale of Utica Energy's assets, including the ethanol plant, to the Fox River Valley Ethanol LLC subsidiary of Ace Ethanol, for \$16 million on July 11. Utica Energy ceased ethanol production last fall and collapsed by early December under the weight of more than \$30 million of debt.

Kemmet said Ace Ethanol it will begin to ramp up staffing and operations once it completes the purchase. He said the company would also start posting bids for new crop corn shortly after the sale closes, giving farmers one more vendor with which to do business in the region.

Read more: http://www.thenorthwestern.com/article/20130729/OSH0101/307290314/Utica-ethanol-plant-could-resume-production-by-Oct-1?nclick_check=1

“Northwest Iowa ethanol plant celebrates new cellulosic technology”

By Dave Dreeszen, *Sioux City Journal.com*, July 30, 2013

GALVA, Iowa | Quad County Corn Processors formally broke ground Monday on an \$8.5 million expansion that will allow the Northwest Iowa biorefinery to start turning corn kernel fibers into cellulosic ethanol.

Most cellulosic ethanol, a next-generation biofuel, is made from wood, switchgrass or other inedible parts of plants, such as corn cobs and stalks.

After four years of research, Quad County officials developed cutting-edge technology to make 2 million gallons of cellulosic ethanol each year with the feedstock -- corn.

The process, which ferments the starch first and then the fiber, rather than a concurrent process that ferments both at the same time, is expected to increase the 35-million gallon plant's annual capacity by about 6 percent, General Manager Delayne Johnson said.

Construction on the new "bolt-on" addition is scheduled for completion in April 2014. Johnson said the investment will create five new full-time jobs, "allow us to produce more ethanol from the same amount of corn, help us contribute to the nation's supply of cellulosic ethanol, and will continue to lower prices at the pump for consumers."

A number of politicians and industry officials joined Quad County staff, directors and shareholders for a ground-breaking ceremony Monday afternoon at the site, located just south of the small Ida County town of Galva, along U.S. Highway 20.

Read more: http://siouxcityjournal.com/news/local/northwest-iowa-ethanol-plant-celebrates-new-cellulosic-technology/article_9f444a52-09c5-5217-b90b-025d578f1f1f.html