

Bituminous Coal Deposit Found In Crawford County.

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Van Buren, Ark., March 6 (AP). — William C. Guilliams, county supervisor, announced today the finding by the state Geological Department's WPA mineral survey of a bituminous coal deposit covering 61 sections in the Van Buren-Alma-Dyer area in Crawford county. Guilliams said the new field was easily accessible for development.

Mineral Survey Made in Local Territory

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Crews are working in Crawford, Sebastian and other counties on a state-wide mineral survey sponsored by the State Geological survey through the WPA.

They are going over every square mile, to "locate, map and determine the economic value of mineral resources for future development." A crew of 12 has Crawford county headquarters at Alma, and the Sebastian supervisor's location is Greenwood.

The first of a series of stories about the survey's accomplishments is being released this week. It deals with beds of oyster shell in Crow creek, which U. S. highway 70 crosses 83 miles east of Little Rock. Other findings to be reported will include those in Western Arkansas.

Large Crawford Coal Deposit 3/13/39 Discovered *Southwest America*

The most important result, thus far, in the State Geological WPA mineral survey in Crawford county has been the discovery of a "large" bituminous coal deposit in an area centering at Alma, according to Willard C. Guilliams, county supervisor.

The Missouri Pacific railroad and U. S. highways 64-71 run through the area. The coal lies at a depth of 180 feet in the southern part, as shown in gas well logs. The vein has been logged as having a thickness of from four feet in the southeastern part, to six feet in the south central. Other veins near the center run from 14 to 16 inches in thickness, with an overburden of ten feet, survey men said.

Missouri Pacific and Frisco railroad representatives, and Alma business men are interested in the survey's progress, Guilliams said. The seam's full extent has not been determined because the area's border sections have not been "worked," but it probably goes farther east and north, he continued.

Field Virtually Untouched

"Only a small part of this coal field has previously been known, and virtually no development has been undertaken," Guilliams said. A small amount of the coal outcropping in section 13, township 9 north, range 30 west (three miles south of Alma) had been tested and used by the Van Buren smelter for charging purposes, he continued.

The Crawford survey is one of 52 which the state department is sponsoring in Arkansas counties, to acquaint residents of the counties with their own building and road materials, and to check other natural resources, Guilliams explained.

A crew of 12 men directed by the supervisor is covering Crawford county's 344 square miles, section by section. Headquarters are at Alma. Besides checking the extent of mineral deposits, they place other information on their field sheets—surface and ground waters, electric power and gas lines, railroads, highways, dams, bridges and other improvements. Samples are sent to Little Rock, for a test determining their utility and value. The Crawford survey started four months ago.

Co-operation Given Survey

Local co-operation has been valuable, Guilliams said. Fred Alexander, Alma banker, provided a two-room office suite, completely furnished; the Alma Hardware company furnishes gas heating stoves, and Alma high school made a loan of a typewriter. The city of Alma provides for the utilities, and merchants furnish powder and a "powder man" for sinking test holes.

The state-wide survey is under the direction of Robert C. Beckstrom, state supervisor who completed a similar survey for Oklahoma, and R. E. Vandruff, technical supervisor. When the work is completed, field reports, samples and analysis data will become the property of the State Geological survey. From this information, State Geologist George C. Branner will compile bulletins, county by county, which will be available to the public. The survey's value does not depend entirely upon discovering mineral deposits, because the information about the extent of known deposits will mean much, Guilliams explained.

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