

Beluga Coal-to-Liquids (CTL)

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Ground Truth Trekking

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WINTER SUNRISE ON THE CHUITNA RIVER — In the winter of 2008, we skied through the site of the proposed Chuitna Coal Mine (/Issues/AlaskaCoal/ChuitnaCoalMine.html) on our way to the Aleutian Islands (/Journeys/WildCoast.html). — Get Photo (/photos/winter-sunrise-on-the-chuitna-river/)

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PacRim Coal was pursuing a possible coal mine (ChuitnaCoalMine.html) in large deposits on the Chuitna River near Cook Inlet and this could have supplied coal to a coal-to-liquids (CoalToLiquids.html) (CTL) facility in nearby Beluga. This facility was proposed as an 80,000 barrels (approximately 40,000 tons of coal) per day integrated gasification combined-cycle (IGCC) (CoalCombustionMethods.html) plant called "Alaska Natural Resources to Liquids", at an estimated cost at $5 billion in 2006. The initial $1.5 million feasibility study (http://www.netl.doe.gov/File%20Library/Research/Coal/ccbtl/Beluga-Coal-Gasif-Feasibility-Study9_15_06.pdf) (4.1 MB) was completed in 2006.

This project is still in the idea stage, with no firm plans or permit applications, and was contingent on the development of the proposed Chuitna Coal strip mine (ChuitnaCoalMine.html). The fuel produced at this facility would have been exported to the West Coast of the US.

This facility would have theoretically offset some of the cost of carbon capture and sequestration (LowCarbonCoal.html) by pumping the excess CO2 into existing nearby oil and gas fields to enhance yields of these fossil fuels. However, the feasibility analysis (BlueSkyCoalPower.html) examined the CO2 storage and/or recovery options for Cook Inlet and determined that under most projections this wouldn't be economically viable.

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While no progress has been made on this project in many years, a very similar proposal using newer technology was put forward (/Issues/AlaskaCoal/TyonekCTL.html) by Tyonek Native Corporation (TNC) in 2010. *[CO2]: Carbon dioxide

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