Cores from 13 stratigraphic test wells in the Beluga River area, onshore northwestern Cook Inlet, Alaska

Joshua H. Long, Kurt Johnson, Simone Montayne, Cook Inlet Region, Inc., Stratus Consulting, Inc., Alaska Earth Sciences, Inc., and Center for Science in Public Participation

Geologic Materials Center Data Report 480



CIRI core collection following delivery to the GMC in 2017

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Cores from 13 stratigraphic test wells in the Beluga River area, onshore northwestern Cook Inlet, Alaska

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INTRODUCTION

Between February 2010 and April 2011, Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI) and its partner Laurus Energy drilled 13 stratigraphic test wells throughout the Beluga River area of northwestern Cook Inlet (table 1) to evaluate the potential of the study area (fig. 1) for the development of an underground coal gasification project. Wells are spaced approximately 1,700 and 4,400 feet from their nearest offset and range in total depth between 475 and 2,620 feet below the ground surface. These wells were continuously cored and recovered approximately 17,000 feet of 2 ½-inch-diameter core. The cores are whole (unslabbed) and, aside from being coated in drilling mud, are in excellent condition (fig. 2).

The continuous cores from these closely spaced wells comprise a unique and invaluable dataset that will allow for highly detailed observations and interpretations of coal-bearing Tertiary-age strata of the Tyonek and Beluga Formations. Such efforts could potentially support research associated with regional and local groundwater, paleoenvironmental, or engineering studies as well as evaluations related to carbon storage, hydrocarbon exploration, or coalbed methane prospectivity. These cores are part of the public collection housed at the Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys Geological Material Center (GMC) in Anchorage, Alaska, and they are available to the public for viewing upon request. The information provided by this GMC data release has not undergone technical review and should not be cited as authoritative. The report and all publication components are available from the DGGS website at https://doi.org/10.14509/32174.

DATA PRODUCTS

- Summary table including well name, American Petroleum Institute (API) number, location data, surface elevation data, total depth, as well as drilling and completion dates.

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- Detailed inventory of CIRI-Beluga core collection housed at the GMC.
- Well location map and single-page summaries for each well. Also includes a table for the observed depths of local and regional informal and formal stratigraphic units as they occur in the 13 wells. Well locations are based on the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission well surface hole locations data set, which can be found here (Alaska Division of Oil and Gas Open Data, sourced from Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, 2026)
- Summary report "Potential Environmental Impacts of the Proposed CIRI Underground Coal Gasification Project, Western Cook Inlet, Alaska" prepared by Stratus Consulting, Inc. for Center for Science in Public Participation.
- Correspondence from the curator of the GMC to the senior vice president of land and energy development at CIRI acknowledging the donation of core material to the State of Alaska.

Table 1. Borehole names and API well numbers for the 13 CIRI-Beluga stratigraphic test wells (Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, 2026).

Borehole name	Borehole API
CIRI CC-01C-10	50283201750000
CIRI CC-02C-10	50283201760000
CIRI CC-03C-10	50283201770000
CIRI CC-04C-10	50283201780000
CIRI CC-05C-10	50283201790000
CIRI CC-06C-10	50283201460000
CIRI CC-07C-10	50283201470000
CIRI CC-08C-10	50283201480000
CIRI CC-09C-10	50283201490000
CIRI CC-10C-10	50283201500000
CIRI CC-11C-11	50283201510000
CIRI CC-12C-11	50283201520000
CIRI CC-13C-11	50283201530000

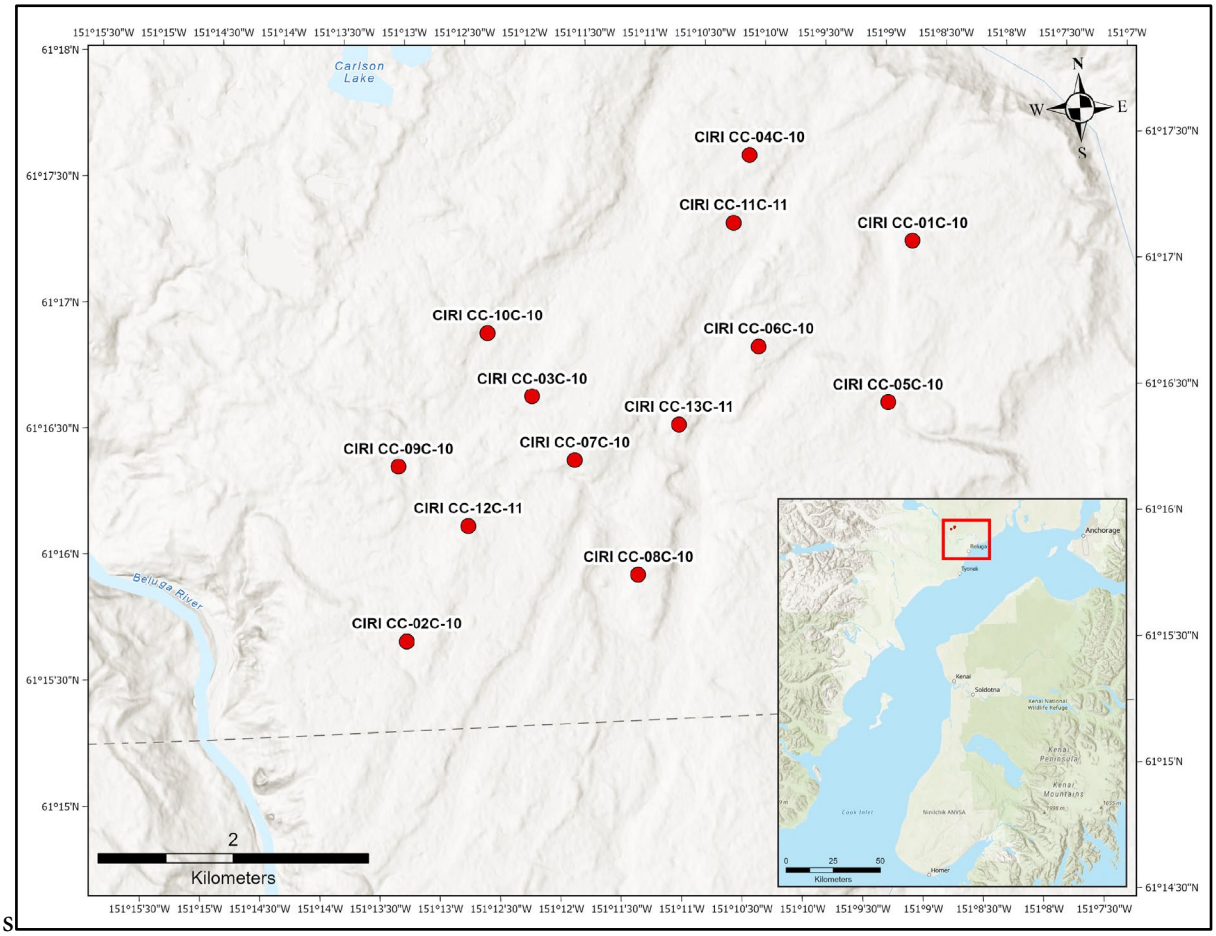


Figure 1. Location of stratigraphic test wells that are the subject of this report.



Figure 2. Photograph of a typical box of core from the CIRI-Beluga collection at the GMC.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The State of Alaska acknowledges the generous contribution of this core material by CIRI. Thanks to CIRI's donation to the GMC, this material is part of the state's geologic material archive and is available for research, industry, and education, fostering geologic understanding, awareness of economic opportunities, and public interest in Alaska's geologic history.

REFERENCES

Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, 2026, AOGCC Data Miner: Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, accessed November 5, 2026, at http://aogweb.state.ak.us/DataMiner4/Forms/Home.aspx