

*U.S. Natural Gas Availability: Gas Supply
Through the Year 2000*

February 1985

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**U.S. NATURAL GAS
AVAILABILITY**

**GAS SUPPLY THROUGH
THE YEAR 2000**

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Foreword

This report responds to a request from the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and its Subcommittee on Fossil and Synthetic Fuels to conduct a study of the domestic (Lower 48 States onshore and offshore) natural gas availability over the next few decades. OTA was asked to examine both conventional and unconventional sources of natural gas, review current estimates of resource bases and production potentials, and examine key technical issues that will affect the future development of those sources. This request was supported by the Subcommittee on Energy Research and Development of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Two interim reports were released in conjunction with the request: a Technical Memorandum on U.S. *Natural Gas Availability: Conventional Gas Supply Through the Year 2000*, and a Staff Memorandum on *The Effects of Decontrol on O/d Gas Recovery*. This report combines the results of the earlier reports with considerable additional material on the unconventional gas sources to provide a comprehensive survey of the natural gas sources available to the United States during the next few decades.

National concerns about gas supplies have eased considerably with the current surplus deliverability and recent improvements in the rate of additions to the Nation's proved reserves. The Congress' perception of the Nation's long-term gas supply prospects will still, however, play an important role in its consideration of several important policy initiatives. These initiatives include pressure for repeal of constraints on gas usage embodied in the Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act of 1978, continuing attempts to decontrol natural gas prices, and initiatives to support the added use of natural gas in power generation as part of a strategy to reduce acid rain.

In addition, arguments about the appropriate Federal role in research on unconventional gas sources hinges in large part on Congress' concerns about the need for new sources to supplement the United States' traditional domestic gas sources. OTA hopes that this report will help to clarify the continuing arguments about gas' potential long-term role in future U.S. energy consumption and assist the Congress in formulating effective natural gas and energy policies.

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