

Papers Presented at the 27th Annual GCSSEPM Foundation Bob F. Perkins Research Conference

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Preface

This year's theme for the 27th Annual Bob F. Perkins Research Symposium was to examine a distinctive time period within the greater evolutionary history of the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean, and northern South America; the Paleogene. Within the longer-term Jurassic-Recent histories of these regions, some of the most enigmatic yet crucial aspects of the petroleum systems pertain to the Paleogene. In the Paleogene of the Gulf of Mexico, we have Chicxulub and its "ejecta reservoirs," the Laramide Orogeny as a proximal source of clastic sediment, strong climate changes and re-initiation of glacio-eustatic sea level changes, deep-water Wilcox sand and its age and correlation issues, deep water structures and their genesis, Paleogene canyons and their causal mechanisms, Paleogene marginal failure and re-grading of the slope, and possible isolation from the world's seas and water level draw down, to name a few. The talks, papers, and discussions given at this year's conference provided one of most comprehensive examinations of these issues made to date, thereby helping the exploration community move ahead on Paleogene leads with a shared sense of enthusiasm and risk.

Papers on the Gulf of Mexico ranged from formal USGS estimates of reserves in the Gulf's Cenozoic (Warwick *et al.*; Swanson *et al.*); stratigraphy, sedimentology, and petrophysics of the "whopper" and other sands of the deep water Wilcox system (Zarra; Winker; Fiduk; Fillon; Matava *et al.*); delivery systems of these sands to the toe of the former slope (Pindell and Kennan); discussions of the age, form, and origin of the Paleogene paleo-canyons along the Gulf's rims

(Galloway; Cossey); an update on the hypothesis of Paleogene water level draw down in the Gulf as a result of the Cuban collision with the Bahamas (Berman and Rosenfeld); Paleogene bio- and other chrono-stratigraphies (Rosen; Denne; Ellwood *et al.*); structure of the Paleogene, both of Paleogene age as well as younger structuring of the Paleogene strata (Mount *et al.*; Seitchik *et al.*; Radovich *et al.*); an analysis of K-T impact generated sediments in Mexico (Grajales); exploration and appraisal challenges of the deep water Paleogene (Stokes *et al.*; Lewis *et al.*); and the link to Laramide deformations in the supply of sediment to the Gulf (Eguiluz); and thermal modelling at the Wilcox level of the Gulf's petroleum systems (Rowan *et al.*).

Turning to the Paleogene of northern South America, reconstructing Paleogene sandstone fairways, great rivers, and the processes that controlled them are top of the exploration checklist. Here, as with the Gulf of Mexico, the progressive release of seismic, well, and core information is allowing a consensus to form regarding tectonic evolution in the complex Caribbean plate boundary zone, upon which exploration strategies may now be based more firmly. Themes included tectonostratigraphic evolution and basin genesis (Pindell and Kennan; Gomez *et al.*); clastic sediment distribution systems (Vincent and Wach); analyses of exploration strategy and risk reduction (Villamil; Kean *et al.*); and review of criteria from the northern Andes requiring that the Caribbean Plate is of Pacific origin (Kennan and Pindell).

In both the Gulf of Mexico and northern South America, these papers looked back through the veil of Neogene

evolution and examined the interrelated elements of the region's Paleogene geology. In so doing, we broadened our appreciation for what it was about the Paleogene that made it so unique, as well as so crucial to ongoing exploration efforts.

As usual, the GCSSEPM Section and Foundation and this year's technical committee are deeply grateful and indebted to all the technical contributors who have donated their time, data, and effort to give talks at the conference and papers for these transactions. This year in particular seems to have been worse than most years regarding time, given the occurrence and elevated stakes of the various license rounds. Without these valiant efforts by the entire cast of speakers, which I personally am aware involved much weekend time, we would lose one of the most important events of the year on the Houston calendar.

In addition, I personally would like to thank a number of people who played key roles in this year's meeting and transactions. Dr. Lorcan Kennan took on most of the daunting task of processing the manuscripts from initial receipt to final submission. Lorcan did a terrific job and I hope neither he nor

I caused any offence to anyone in our efforts to get the papers submitted "in time," if not always "on time." "Final submissions" then went on to Norman Rosen, who personally read and standardized every paper and ensured a certain level of English comprehension across the board. The next step was for the papers to go on to Gail Bergan, who organized them all interactively onto this year's CD ROM. I would also like to thank those on the technical committee for helping to fill out the top notch technical agenda that was this year's meeting; Josh Rosenfeld, Jon Blickwede, Stuart Lake, Tomas Villamil, Larry Zarra, and Dick Fillon.

And then there are the conference sponsors, who are listed elsewhere on the CD. We are most appreciative of the corporate support that we have received for this conference; these meetings would not be possible without it.

Finally, let us not forget that the entire Gulf of Mexico exploration community owes a huge and gracious thanks to Dr. Norman Rosen and the trustees, who share and believe in the original vision and wisdom of Bob F. Perkins and keep this fabulous annual meeting running.

*James Pindell
Tectonic Analysis Ltd.
Sussex, England.
October, 2007*

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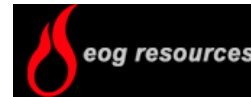
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