

## WBR ARTICLE

### International Advanced Coal Conference kicks off at UW

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LARAMIE — As scientists for the universities of Wyoming and Queensland in Australia gathered for the International Advanced Coal Technologies Conference 2010, the shadow of the Gulf of Mexico oil well spill hung over the gathering.

Keynote speakers at the conference — Wyoming Gov. Dave Freudenthal and former Queensland Gov. Peter Beattie — said concerns about the spill have renewed efforts of fossil fuel opponents to battle coal as well as oil.

“What’s happened with BP and this terrible spill has damaged fossil fuels enormously,” Beattie said as the two-day conference opened this morning.

Freudenthal said the spill has “empowered the cynics” to throw stones against BP and fossil fuels in general.

“Beating up on fossil fuels, unfortunately, has become a lot more powerful since the BP spill,” Wyoming’s governor said. .

The conference is the second organized by UW and the University of Queensland. The first was held in 2008 in Queensland in northeast Australia, the leading coal-producing state.

Both universities are working together and with other institutions in coal technologies research with the end goal of ensuring that coal can be used cleanly in generating electricity for decades to come.

“The future of coal is clean coal technologies, and we have to invest in it,” said Beattie, who is now Queensland’s trade commissioner to the U.S.

A third keynoter, Dr. Joseph Strakey, the chief technology officer for the Department of Energy’s National Energy Technology Laboratory, said DOE believes that coal will continue to be a vital part of the world’s energy mix as projected world electricity consumption grows by 49 percent by the year 2035.

A fourth keynoter, scheduled to speak tomorrow noon, is Zouli Zhu, director of the Shaanxi Provincial Development and Reform Commission in China.

In opening the conference, UW President Tom Buchanan urged the 170 participants. researchers and scientists to continue to advance coal technology research and “make a better mousetrap.”