Florida Dependence on Petroleum

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Petroleum is Florida’s number one energy source and demand is growing. Transportation and power generation are the two areas where petroleum use must be reduced in order to reduce dependence on oil. The following is a synopsis of petroleum supply and demand in Florida, followed by a best-case scenario for reducing use of petroleum. The data come from the US Department of Energy / Energy Information Administration, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and a variety of sources in peer-reviewed and gray literature.

Petroleum supply

Florida has no oil refineries and relies entirely on petroleum products delivered by pipeline, tanker, and barge to marine terminals near the state’s major coastal cities. With 0.3% of US known reserves, Florida produces only 0.1% of US oil from 57 wells, and ranks third among states in terms of total energy of all forms imported from beyond its borders (87 percent of total energy used). Once petroleum is refined and reaches Florida, it is fungible with respect to source of origin. The non-domestic supply of US petroleum is shown in Figure 1 below. As a rule of thumb, roughly 60 percent of US oil is non-domestic in origin. The US gets 57 percent of non-domestic oil from five countries: Canada, Mexico, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela. The US domestic production in 2000 was 9.3 million barrels a day and it imported 10.4 million barrels a day. Current consumption is over 20 million barrels a day. US production is projected to steadily decline over the next decade. US proven reserves amount to 11 years at current rates of consumption.

Figure 1. Imported oil sources for the US.

Figure 2 below shows that global oil use is highly interdependent, with most developed nations dependent on non-domestic sources. All major oil fields in the US are in various degrees of declining production, and Figure 3 shows that most large non-US fields are in decline. Refining capacity in the US is operating at near its maximum capacity.
US speculated reserves are usually assumed to be four times proven reserves, but these include mainly offshore and very deep deposits. Oil recovery rate from these speculated reserves is unknown and dependent on infrastructure that has yet to be built, while current infrastructure is aging and often in disrepair. The consensus among experts (e.g., Simmons and Company, and many others) is that extracting oil from speculated reserves will be very expensive. Our best
information suggests that, regardless of source, petroleum production will peak and will not be a cost effective source of energy sometime within the next 25 years (i.e., “peak oil”). Extraction of remaining known reserves will be increasingly expensive. From these data it is arguable that petroleum, regardless of source of origin, must be phased out as a source of energy. The remainder of this report is focused on demands for petroleum and how to reduce dependence of petroleum use for power generation and transportation.

**Florida petroleum use**

The US demand for petroleum is expected to grow by at least 37 percent by 2030. Based on recent trends in population growth and vehicle miles traveled, it is reasonable to assume that Florida’s demand will grow faster than the US rate if unchecked. Due in part to the tourist industry, Florida’s demand for petroleum-based transportation fuels (i.e., motor gasoline and jet fuel) is among the highest in the United States. The traffic at the international airports in Miami and Orlando is among the heaviest in the country.

![Figure 4. US energy use in quadrillion Btu through 2030.](http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/aeo/pdf/0383(2007).pdf)

Florida uses about 5 percent of US consumption, or approximately 382 million barrels of oil per year (CY 2004), and petroleum is the largest single source of energy used by Floridians (Figure 5). Floridians consume about 21 barrels of oil per person per year (based on estimated population in 2004), and transportation is the largest sector for overall energy use (36 percent, Figure 6). Though Florida petroleum reserves are about 0.3 percent of US reserves, Florida ranks third among states in petroleum use (Figure 7), and about 73 percent of Florida petroleum consumption is for transportation (Figure 8). Florida production of electrical power from oil
fluctuates between 12 and 17 percent (Figure 9). It is clear from these data that transportation and power production are the two sectors where Florida must focus its efforts if it wishes to reduce its dependence on petroleum.

Figure 5. Florida energy use by source.

Figure 6. Florida energy consumption by end use sector.
Figure 7. Florida petroleum energy consumption relative to other major oil consuming states.

Figure 8. Florida petroleum consumption by use. Source for Figures 5-7: (http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/states/sep_sum/plain_html/sum_btu_1.html)
Because all refined petroleum is from out of state, all revenues except taxes leave Florida for economic activity associated with petroleum. Assuming a market value of $60 per barrel, the current financial activity associated with Florida transportation petroleum excluding jet fuel is $14.8 billion per year. Of this, $1.79 billion represents state tax and remains as part of state revenues (Figure 10). The difference represents the potential total cost to Florida (without considering local taxes and fees), and can be thought of as a benchmark for assessing what could be spent annually to reduce consumption or develop new technologies.

Figure 10. Annual economic activity associated with transportation petroleum exclusive of jet fuel.
Options for reducing petroleum use in Florida

The numbers above show that Florida has enormous dependence on petroleum and the implications are sobering. Significantly reducing Florida’s dependence on oil by 2030 would require decisive and immediate action in order to begin moving the economy in the desired direction with the least disruption. This would affect every area of the Florida economy and require significant long-term financial commitments, supported by robust federal, state, and local policy mechanisms. Gaining consensus for what amounts to an expensive (e.g., $60 million for a new ethanol plant), multi-decadal Marshall-type plan is key to insuring the likelihood of success. It is unlikely that Florida can develop policies without coordination with overarching federal incentives and mandates.

[Note: Only existing or soon to be available technologies are considered in the options below. In the calculations below, it is assumed that 1 barrel of petroleum equals 42 gallons of motor fuel. All calculations designated as barrels are corrected for equivalence.]

1. Eliminate petroleum as a source of energy for electrical power

At lease twelve percent of Florida power generation is derived from petroleum, but without data from the utility sector, we are unable to estimate the amount of oil that is used for this purpose. The best options for eliminating this use of oil include a portfolio of reducing demand for electricity, power generation from renewables, and improving efficiency of power production. Elliot et al. (2007) outline these options in a report for the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) available at http://www.aceee.org/. Below is Table ES-1 (Table 1) from the report showing the recommended policies. Power generation from petroleum could be the top priority for these policies, but they apply equally well across all sources of energy for power generation. Using these tools, it should be possible to eliminate the use of petroleum for power production by reducing power consumption by more than the percentage currently generated from oil. Sources of renewable energy for power generation have been reviewed in two recent reports by S. Mulkey to the Century Commission (2006, 2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy Efficiency (EE) Policies</th>
<th>2013 Electricity Savings (million kWh)</th>
<th>2013 Demand Savings (MW)</th>
<th>2023 Electricity Savings (million kWh)</th>
<th>2023 Demand Savings (MW)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2 More stringent building codes</td>
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<td>12,286</td>
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<td>3 Public buildings program</td>
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<td>293</td>
<td>4,600</td>
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<td>4 Improved CHP policies</td>
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<td>5 Short-term public ed. &amp; rate incentives</td>
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<td>3,549</td>
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<td>6 Appliance &amp; equipment standards</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>3,680</td>
<td>990</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Advanced buildings program</td>
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<td>336</td>
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<td>8 Industrial competitiveness initiative</td>
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<th>2023 Electricity Savings (million kWh)</th>
<th>2023 Demand Savings (MW)</th>
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<td><strong>33,159</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,161</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>102,513</strong></td>
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Table 1. ACEEE recommended policies for meeting projected power demand in 2013 and 2023.
2. Ethanol production

Ethanol is the most common biofuel in the US for use in transportation, where it is usually blended with gasoline at rates of 10-85 percent. Although several plants are in development, there is presently no ethanol produced for fuel in Florida. In 2006, only 12 filling stations sold ethanol or other alternative fuels, and in 2003 the state had somewhat more than 17,000 alternative fueled vehicles in use (operating on mostly compressed natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas). Most US ethanol is produced from corn, which is a minor crop in Florida. In theory, sugar cane holds the greatest promise in Florida for ethanol production directly from fermentation of carbohydrates. Florida has extensive sugar cane, sorghum, and citrus by-products that could be diverted to this process, but current market values and subsidies make development of these resources unlikely. Assuming conversion of all Florida sugarcane, corn, sweet sorghum, and citrus molasses to ethanol, Florida could produce about 298.4 million gallons (7.1 million barrel) per year (A. Hodges, University of Florida).

Sustainable ethanol production will utilize cellulosic materials such as wood and various woody waste products. USDOE/NREL and various universities have conducted research on the technology for cellulosic ethanol production for 20 years, but significant technical obstacles remain. Although raw materials for production are abundant, because of technical issues it is unclear when cellulosic ethanol may be available in large quantities. In the most favorable scenario, cellulosic ethanol production in the US could reach 10 billion gallons by 2030, but baseline projections are considerably lower (DOE; A. Hodges, University of Florida). Estimates of potential cellulosic ethanol production in Florida range widely, with one estimate as high 8 billion gallons per year (L. Ingram, University of Florida). This apparently assumes large-scale conversion of arable land to energy crops such as short rotation trees, grasses, and canes, and highly efficient use of residues from agriculture, forestry, and municipal green waste.

Until the technical limitations on cellulosic ethanol are overcome, speculation on production is specious. Moreover, given that markets will be a major driver for resources devoted to production, it is difficult to realistically identify the resource base in Florida. Nevertheless, one estimate of cellulosic ethanol production in Florida could be derived from the sources of biomass shown in Table 2 (http://trees.ifas.ufl.edu/Energy%20Options.PDF). This is perhaps appropriate for use as an upper estimate because it is derived from the primary productivity of existing acreage and uses. Using these data, Florida could produce about 38 million barrel annually of ethanol from all sources (carbohydrate and cellulosic), assuming optimistically that all cellulosic biomass in Table 2 could be converted to ethanol. It should be noted that much of this biomass has competing uses in existing markets. Additionally, some of this biomass could also be used as feedstock for the generation of electricity.
3. Existing technologies for improving efficiency of automobiles

In a report dated October 2005, the US EPA reviewed new powertrain technologies for improving fuel economy of automobiles. The key results for gasoline vehicles, advanced diesel vehicles, gasoline/battery hybrids, and diesel/battery hybrids are shown in Table 3 (http://www.epa.gov/otaq/technology/420s05013.pdf). These data suggest that new gasoline power technologies can improve in performance at a bit more than half the rate at which consumption is projected to increase (assume 37 percent by 2030). Only diesel hybrids roughly match the rate of increase of petroleum use. The technology assessment report above emphasizes “These results should not be taken to imply that these technologies will necessarily move into the mainstream market in the near future. Decisions by manufacturers to invest in, and consumers to buy, new technologies involve many factors well beyond the scope of this paper.” This means that technically these improvements are possible, but non-technical factors ultimately control their rollout.
Table 3. Efficiency gains in automobiles from existing technology. Specific technologies are described in the report.

4. Soon to be available electric cars

Electric cars capable of going 40 miles between charges will soon be available in the US market, possibly as early as 2010. In terms of carbon emissions, such cars would produce up to 40 percent less greenhouse gas than gasoline mainly because the mix of fuels available for electric power generation includes nuclear and renewables. Because most automobile travel consists of short drives, electric cars could be a major offset of petroleum use, while offering a modest improvement in overall greenhouse emissions.

5. Reducing the use of automobiles

Perhaps the best and most challenging offset for transportation petroleum is to get people out of their cars and into public transportation or onto their bicycles or on foot. The state would need to make major investment in the design and construction of public transportation (including buses
and trains) that is useful to the majority of commuters. It is arguable that the biggest impediment to this is the design of our communities, which consists of residential zones separated from commercial and industrial zones. Mixed-use zoning could permit multimodal transportation, including bicycles, and shorter distances between residence and workplace. The current infrastructure of most metropolitan areas is not amenable to such changes without major redevelopment and infill. Discussion of better community design is covered in more detail in the document “Towards a Sustainable Florida” prepared for the Century Commission (S. Mulkey, ed. 2006).

Summary best-case transportation scenario for 2030 using new powertrain technologies and ethanol

For the purpose of this analysis, let’s assume performance of gasoline vehicles doubles in 1/4 of the vehicle fleet, and that diesel hybrids increase performance by 70% and constitute 3/4 of the vehicle fleet in 2030. In 2030, petroleum use is projected to be 525 million barrel annually, with about 339 million barrels used in transportation exclusive of jet fuel (about 65 percent of total). The new technologies described above would reduce consumption by 91 million barrel annually by 2030. Given that Florida could produce around 38 million barrel annually as ethanol, in the best-case scenario this leaves of gap of 210 million barrel for transportation that will need to be covered by some other means (Figures 11, 12).

Figure 11. Best-case scenario for reduction of transportation petroleum in Florida by 2030 in million barrels of oil.
Bottom line assessment

This analysis indicates that under optimistic projections for transportation we cannot come close to meeting current or projected increases in demand with existing technologies and strategies. It is possible that extensive conversion of Florida lands to short rotation energy crops for production of cellulosic ethanol could increase the role of biofuels, but such land use change would result in significant negative environmental consequences and disrupt existing markets. Note also that this report does not include production of biodiesel, which is currently produced in very small quantities in Florida. Assuming that we desire to maintain present lifestyles and transportation intensity, it is appropriate to devote major resources to research and development of alternative fuels and new transportation technologies. Additionally, we should also rapidly begin to implement mechanisms to reduce demand for traditional transportation fuels and reduce use of the automobile. Development of biodiesel, electric cars and alternative or public transportation could cover part of this gap.

Authors

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