

# ARPA-E

## Ventilation Air Methane (VAM) Mitigation

**ARPA-E program DE-FOA-00002505**

Reducing Emissions of Methane Every Day of the Year SBIR/STTR  
(REMEDY SBIR/STTR) Methane Emissions Abatement Program

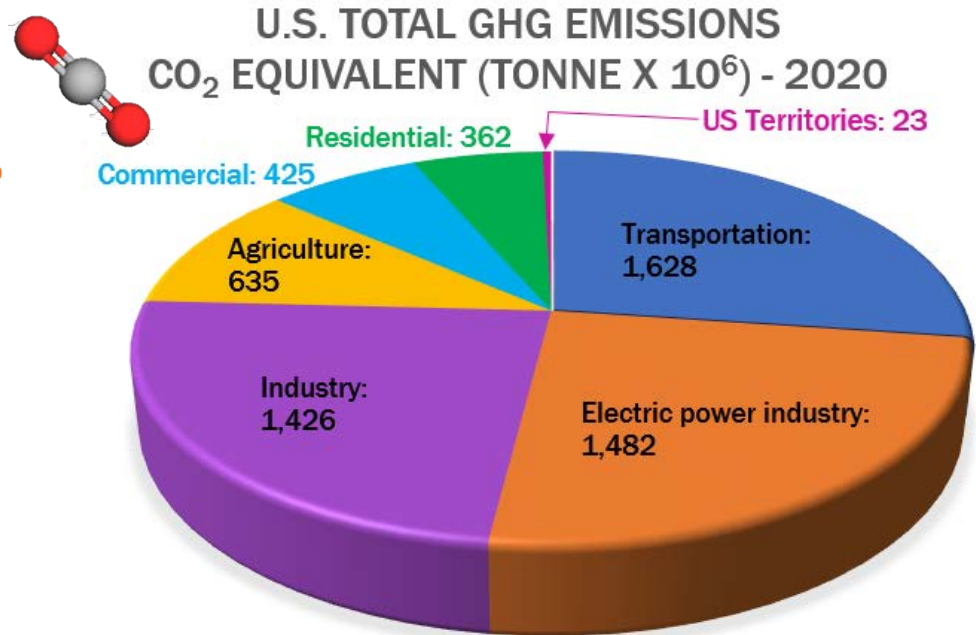
SRK Consulting (US), Inc. (SRK) partners with Precision Combustion, Inc. (PCI) to help mitigate ventilation air methane by conversion to CO<sub>2</sub> from U.S. coal mines



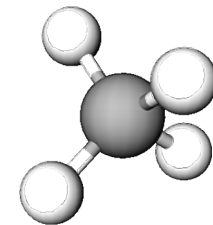
# Total Greenhouse Gas Emissions (2020)

- By sector:

- Transportation | 27.2%
- Electric power industry | 24.8%
- Industry | 23.8%
- Agriculture | 10.6%
- Commercial | 7.1%
- Residential | 6.1%
- US Territories | 0.4%



# Estimated Methane ( $\text{CH}_4$ ) Emissions



- Annual compilation from U.S. sectors:

- Engines

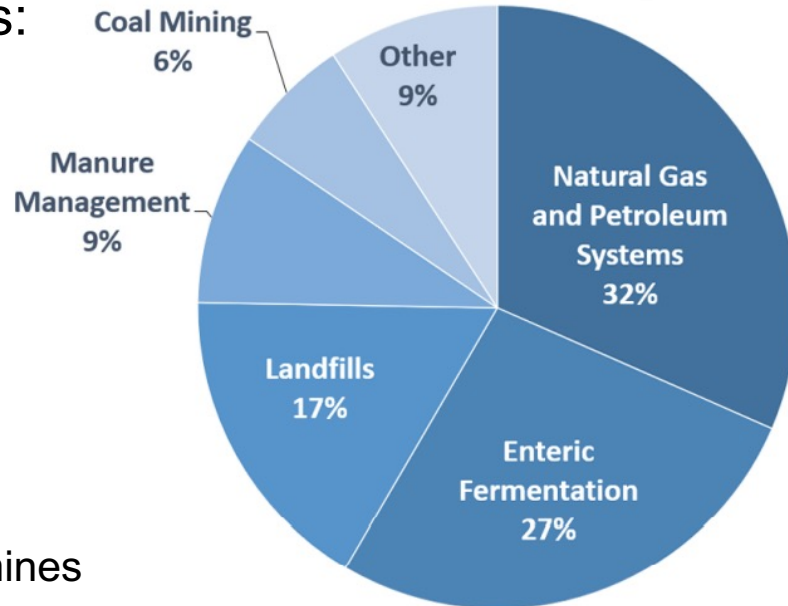
Engine exhaust emissions and crankcase  $\text{CH}_4$  from lean-burn LNG engines

- Flares

Landfills, oil & gas supply stream  
Enclosed flares are only accounted for  
Bleeder wells

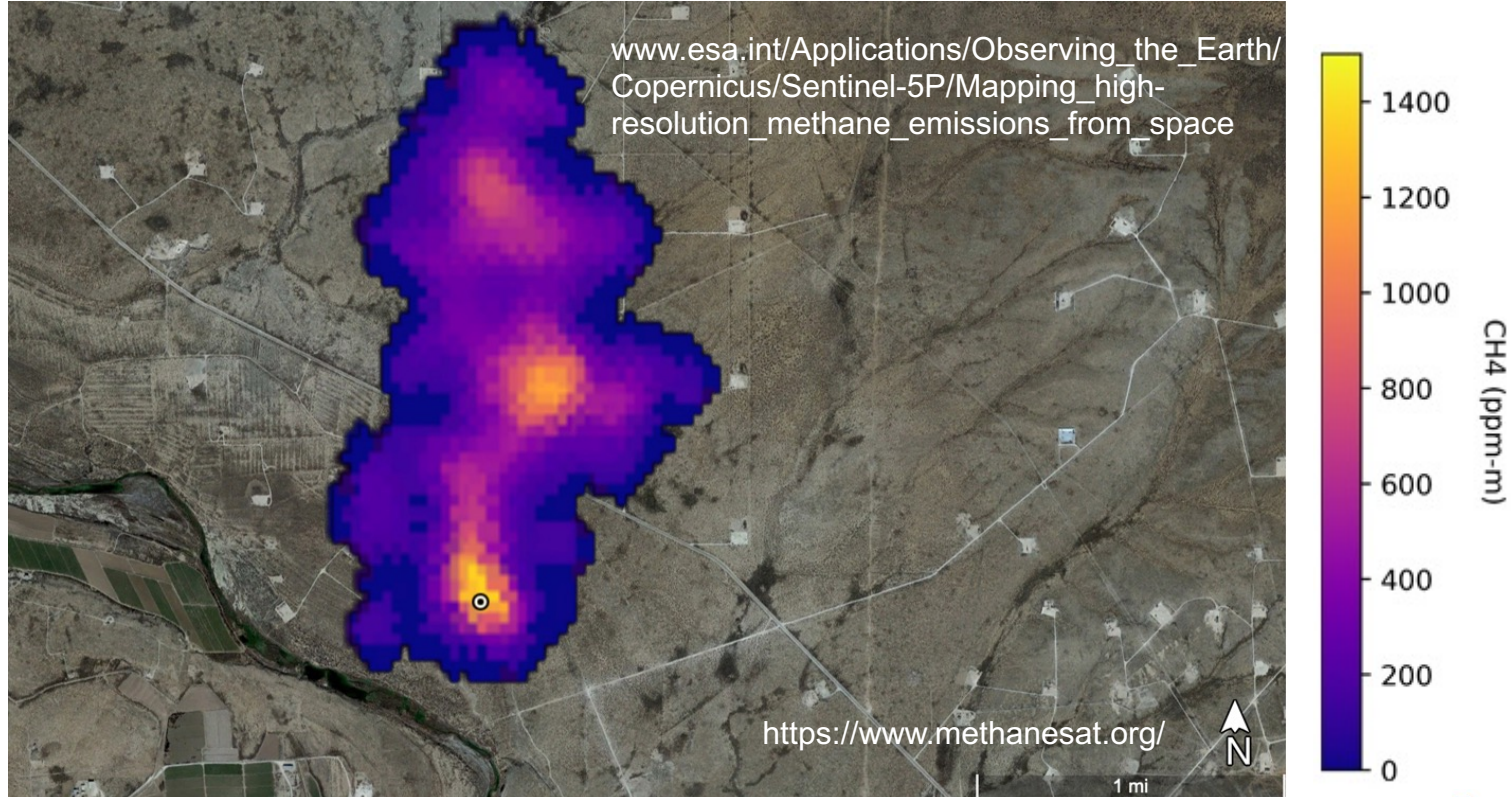
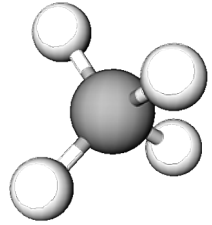
- VAM

Low concentration  $\text{CH}_4$  from active coal mines



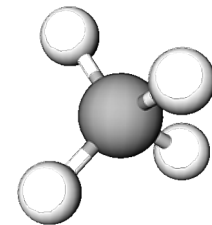
- Lofty goal of 99.5%  $\text{CH}_4$  reduction for all exhaust streams

# Satellite Methane Observations



Source: [www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/thumbnails/image/1-pia25592\\_emit\\_methane\\_permian.jpg](https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/thumbnails/image/1-pia25592_emit_methane_permian.jpg) | accessed Feb.27-23

# Potential CH<sub>4</sub> Utilization



- REMEDY CH<sub>4</sub> utilization programs:
  - Engines

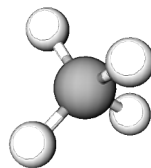
Engine exhaust emissions and crankcase CH<sub>4</sub> from lean-burn LNG engines
  - Flares

Estimated 300,000 flares required for safe operation of oil and gas facilities – enclosed flares are encouraged
  - VAM

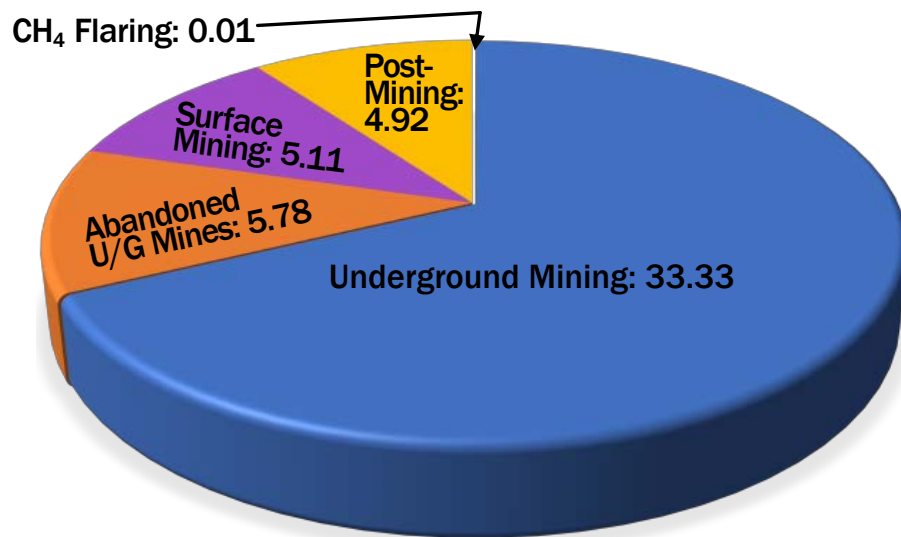
CH<sub>4</sub> concentrations below 2% for operating mines  
Gob and bleeder systems are natural candidates  
Room for innovations, if new regulations are implemented

# VAM Opportunities

- **UNDERGROUND COAL MINES & BLEEDER SYSTEMS**
- **ABANDONED UNDERGROUND MINES**
- **HIGHWALL MINING OPERATIONS (HWM)**
- **BULK TRANSFER**



**US COAL MINING GHG EMISSIONS  
CO<sub>2</sub> EQUIVALENT (TONNES X 10<sup>6</sup>) - 2020**



# Coalbed Methane Outreach Program (CMOP – EPA) Abandoned Mine Methane Opportunities

- US: 514 abandoned gassy mines (2015)
  - 42% - West Virginia & Pennsylvania
  - 17% - Colorado & Utah
- Top 79 candidate mines in 2017 would have removed  $308.6 \times 10^6 \text{ m}^3/\text{year}$ 
  - 35 currently in use for REMEDY projects
- CO<sub>2</sub> capture needs to be incorporated



## Global Methane Initiative (GMI)

### [International Coal Mine Methane Projects Database](#) (2021)

- Includes current US methane utilization projects & opportunities





# Abandoned Mine Methane Opportunities

- Open Flares: *Not* included in REMEDY program (unknown quantity)
- Gas Sales to Pipeline: 32
- Enclosed Flare: 20
- Direct Thermal, Heaters: 3 (1 trona mine)
- Power Generation: 2
- VAM : 2
  - One actual airflow from mine workings, decommission 2013
  - One borehole gob drainage
- Abandoned mines are perfectly suited for VAM site - *safety's sake*



# Pilot Plant

- New pilot plant will generate carbon credits from catalyzed  $\text{CH}_4$
- Plans for  $\text{CO}_2$  capture from VAM destruction exhaust stream
- Pilot plant sites to be evaluated in Q2 2023
  - Currently producing Highwall Mining (HWM) operations
  - VAM extracted to aid remote mining procedure
    - Operator's camera visual quality improvement
- Seeking MSHA approval for explosion proof systems integration
  - Allowing  $\text{CH}_4$  concentrations beyond MSHA limits!
- Pursuing abandoned underground mines for full production model
- Focus innovation to replace coal mine  $\text{CH}_4$  flare-off systems!

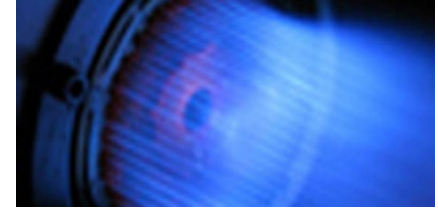
# Pilot Plant

- Remote, modular system destroys methane during normal HWM production, while remaining stationary during miner relocation
  - Pre-conditioning removes dust and moisture from exhaust airflow stream
  - Location helps eliminate possibility for catastrophic explosion
  - Explosion proof systems already approved for use in natural gas production can be readily approved by MSHA

# Precision Combustion, Inc.



- **MICROLITH<sup>®</sup> ADSORBERS FOR CARBON DIOXIDE AND WATER**



- **RCL<sup>®</sup> CATALYTIC COMBUSTION TECHNOLOGY**



- **OXY-AUTOTHERMAL REFORMER (OXY-ATR)**



- **SABATIER METHANATION REACTOR**



# Thanks for being a great audience!

We hope our legacy includes a cleaner atmosphere!

