

across the United States and around the world.”

According to Lynn Helms, director North Dakota Department of Minerals, the energy industry is further along than just conversations about the unmanned systems. Industry is already working on plans to integrate the technology into the Bakken.

“We have funded through the oil and gas research council to look at a

project to look at what kind of sensors could be mounted on a UAV to fly a pipeline,” Helms said. “If its a really high risk pipeline, maybe more than once a day with a UAV to detect leaks or problems much earlier. That’s just the beginning application for the UAVs.

“We are looking at, as we talk about reclamation practices, you can load sensors on a UAV that can really keep track of vegetation growth and how rapidly and well reclamation is

working. Another great entrepreneurial area and North Dakota is at the tip of the spear.”

Goehring has also met with companies and officials regarding implementing UAS into the Bakken.

“I’ve met with four companies that have on this over the last four to five years,” Goehring said. “In fact I met with one company yesterday that is trying to look at doing some things in energy, in the energy corridors and

the pipelines. And we talked about thermal imagery, some radar technology that can start to penetrate and look at where those pipelines are buried, for detecting any leaks. We’ve also talked about just their technology that can fly over the whole energy county area and I think that’s going to be beneficial for energy.”

When asked if the technology could detect a single issue on a single plant in the field alerting another remote controlled unit to address the

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UAS research at the Carrington Research Extension Center