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1 Carbon dioxide migration along faults at the Illinois Basin  
2 – Decatur Project revealed using time shift analysis of  
3 seismic monitoring data

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10 **Abstract**

11 Large scale underground storage of CO<sub>2</sub> is being deployed worldwide to reduce greenhouse gas  
12 emissions to the atmosphere. Modelling studies have investigated the possible risks from the  
13 CO<sub>2</sub> migrating along faults, but this has not yet been observed. We were able to identify such  
14 CO<sub>2</sub> migration at a commercial-scale, demonstration CO<sub>2</sub> storage project, the Illinois Basin -  
15 Decatur Project, including subsequent emergence of the CO<sub>2</sub> into overlying permeable layers.  
16 Our interpretation resolves previous inconsistencies observed at the project and provides a rare  
17 field observation the fluid dynamics of CO<sub>2</sub> moving between faults and reservoir lithology.  
18 The project had deployed time-lapse 3D vertical seismic profile imaging to study CO<sub>2</sub> plume  
19 development, interpreted based on the commonly used amplitude attributes. However, factors  
20 including survey repeatability, subtle seismic fluid effects and irregular filling of the storage  
21 reservoir by CO<sub>2</sub> meant that amplitude anomalies due to CO<sub>2</sub> were not distinct. Here we apply  
22 an alternative interpretation technique to the data based on time shift attributes, resulting in  
23 much clearer plume anomalies. This work provides field validations of previously theorised plume  
24 behaviours and demonstrates the use of an alternative analysis technique to overcome challenges  
25 in interpretation of seismic monitoring data for geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage.

## 26 Introduction

27 Carbon capture and geological storage is being scaled up worldwide to achieve net zero carbon  
28 emissions by 2050 (Krevor et al., 2023; Pörtner et al., 2022). Monitoring CO<sub>2</sub> storage through  
29 time-lapse seismic techniques has provided observations of the flow and trapping behaviour of the  
30 injected CO<sub>2</sub> at storage projects around the world (Furre et al., 2017; Hansen et al., 2013; Ivandic  
31 et al., 2015; Roach & White, 2018). The observations have revealed fluid dynamics which are more  
32 complex and dynamic than analogous subsurface fluids systems due to the properties of CO<sub>2</sub> as a  
33 supercritical fluid at reservoir conditions (Cavanagh & Haszeldine, 2014; Ringrose et al., 2022).

34 Of particular interest is the potential for CO<sub>2</sub> to move buoyantly upwards from a target reservoir  
35 through leakage pathways such as a fault or wellbore, and this has been investigated using geological  
36 analogues, and theoretical and numerical modelling (Gasda et al., 2004; Gilmore et al., 2022; Miocic  
37 et al., 2016; Nordbotten et al., 2009). There are no instances of CO<sub>2</sub> leakage from currently operating  
38 storage projects. However, CO<sub>2</sub> escape from natural subsurface accumulations is observed primarily  
39 through faults, and the escape of hydrocarbon gases through wellbores is pervasive (Dockrill &  
40 Shipton, 2010; Faulkner et al., 2010; Jung et al., 2014; Kang et al., 2016; Miocic et al., 2016;  
41 Onishi et al., 2019). Models of these systems show that complex dynamics emerge depending on the  
42 permeabilities of fault zones relative to reservoir units, and CO<sub>2</sub> migration up leakage pathways can  
43 in some instances be entirely mitigated by trapping as the plume emerges in overlying permeable  
44 strata. Despite their importance, the hydraulic properties of fault zones are notoriously difficult to  
45 evaluate, and there are no engineered settings in which the movement of CO<sub>2</sub> along faults has been  
46 observed.

47 However, while time-lapse seismic surveys provide a means for observation of fluid movement  
48 over time, their acquisition and processing must be performed in a way that maximises repeatability  
49 (Johnston, 2013). In general, land seismic surveys can suffer from significantly more noise than  
50 marine seismic surveys due to scattering by the near surface layer (Stork, 2020). Time-lapse 3D  
51 (i.e. 4D) vertical seismic profile (VSP) surveys at the onshore Illinois Basin – Decatur Project CO<sub>2</sub>  
52 storage site, the focus of this work, were affected by seasonal variations in ground conditions and  
53 source co-location issues due to infrastructure development and permitting difficulties (Couëslan et  
54 al., 2013). The project used an interpretation approach for the 4D data that is based on amplitude  
55 difference (Couëslan et al., 2014) and normalised RMS amplitude difference attributes (Bauer et al.,  
56 2019). The results were ambiguous due to weak time-lapse signals (Couëslan et al., 2013). During

57 the post-injection phase, the project detected an isolated finger of CO<sub>2</sub> in the injection well in a  
58 shallower zone than the injection interval (Zaluski & Lee, 2021), and the lack of seismic monitoring  
59 during that period meant the origins of the CO<sub>2</sub> could not be ascertained.

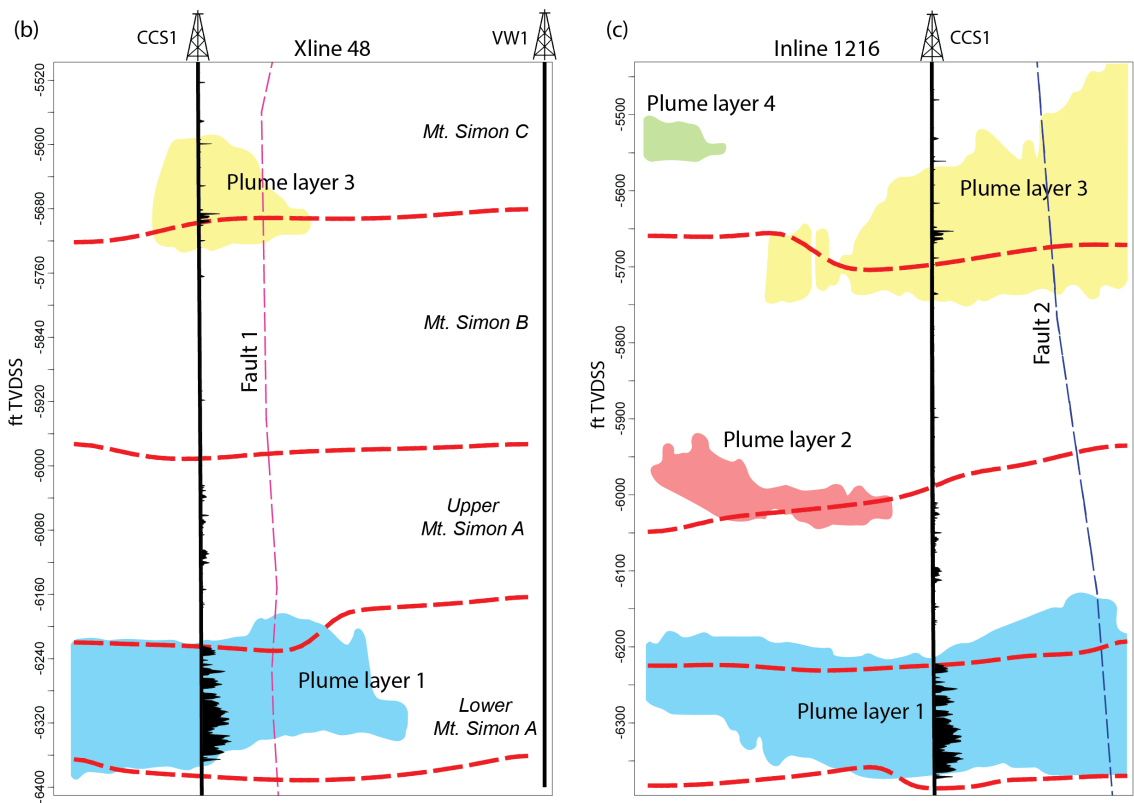
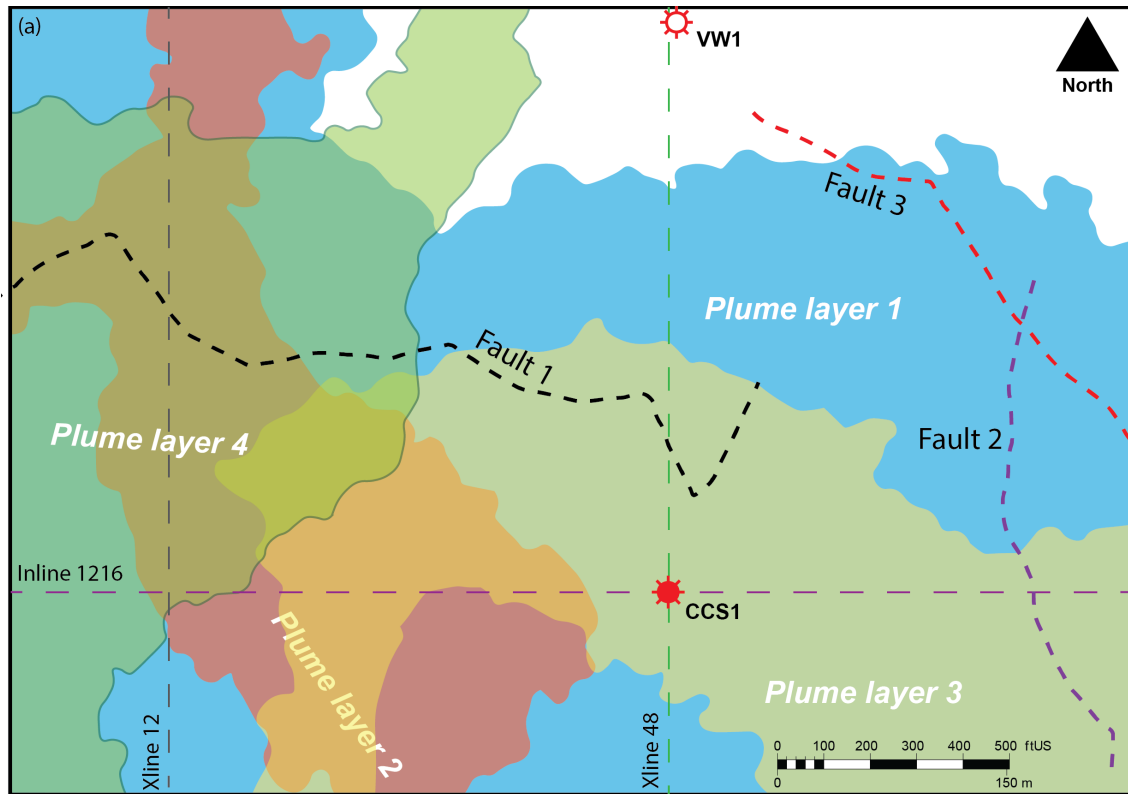
60 We used time shift attributes to analyse the seismic monitoring data at Decatur, a technique  
61 that has been applied successfully to monitor fluid movement in oil and gas reservoirs (Benguigui  
62 et al., 2012; Falahat et al., 2011; Santos et al., 2016) and to support amplitude interpretation at  
63 CO<sub>2</sub> storage sites (Arts et al., 2004; Chadwick et al., 2004, 2005; Furre et al., 2015; Grude et al.,  
64 2013). The results resolve inconsistencies in the previous interpretation, revealing that the CO<sub>2</sub>  
65 plume at Decatur has been migrating along major faults previously characterised in the reservoir,  
66 and moving in response to injection at a neighbouring site. The analysis thus provides an important  
67 dataset of previously theorised plume migration behaviour between fault zones and reservoir units,  
68 while demonstrating the superiority of a seldom used approach to time-lapse seismic analysis.

## 69 **Results and Discussion**

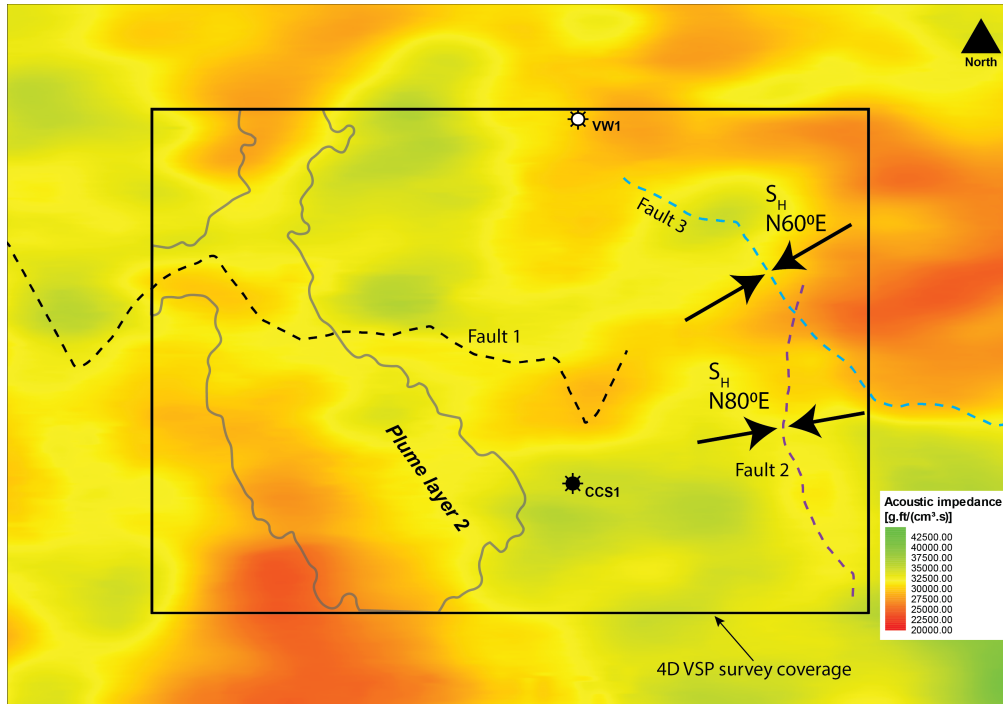
### 70 **Interpretations of CO<sub>2</sub> plume anomalies from seismic monitoring data**

71 We interpret CO<sub>2</sub> plumes qualitatively from the results of time shift analysis, identifying several  
72 plume layers, with the largest layer in the injection interval (the lower unit of the Mt. Simon A  
73 formation). A second plume layer is identified in the upper unit of the Mt. Simon A formation, and  
74 a third and fourth layer in the Mt. Simon C formation. Figure 1 (a) shows a map view of three  
75 layers located at different depths as interpreted from the first time-lapse monitor. Figures 1 (b) and  
76 (c) show cross sectional views of the plume layers. Also shown are three out of 28 faults interpreted  
77 to transect parts of the Mt. Simon formation. These faults were interpreted prior to injection, from  
78 3D seismic data acquired during site characterisation. Most of the faults have small displacements  
79 relative to the thickness of the Mt. Simon, with the largest vertical displacement estimated to be  
80 about 18 m. All interpreted plume anomalies exceed the lateral coverage of the seismic monitoring  
81 cubes. This is because the VSP surveys employed have a limited imaging aperture given that the  
82 receiver array is located in a well.

83 We check the plume results from our analysis against saturation measurements acquired in the  
84 wells. The seismic results show that layers 1 and 3 should be detected in injection well CCS1, but  
85 not layer 2 which does not reach the well. Observations from the repeat saturation logs confirm  
86 this expectation. However, while monitoring well VW1 shows a detection of an approximately 2 m



**Fig. 1** (a) A map view of interpreted plume layers from time shift analysis at different depths for the first monitor. (b), (c) Cross sections along the inline and crossline marked in (a). CO<sub>2</sub> saturation from well logging measurements at a time corresponding to the first monitor is shown along the well path. Thicknesses of the upper plume layers appear exaggerated due to the low frequency characteristics of the seismic data.



**Fig. 2** Reservoir quality represented by acoustic impedance, with low values (red and yellow) corresponding to high quality regions. Slice shown is at 6000 ft TVDSS. CO<sub>2</sub> plume layer 2 interpreted from 4D VSP within the coverage at the corresponding depth appears to track high quality regions of the reservoir. Faults 2 and 3 have their planes oriented sub-perpendicular to the direction of maximum horizontal stress,  $S_H$ , which ranges between N60°E to N80°E, and are therefore sealed shut.

87 thick layer 1 from the saturation log, the interpreted CO<sub>2</sub> plume layer 1 from seismic does not reach  
 88 the well. Given that the seismic wavelength at the depth of the injection interval is about 80-100  
 89 m, we do not expect a 2 m thick plume of low saturation to be detected. Moreover, in the third  
 90 monitor, by which time 730,000 t of CO<sub>2</sub> had been injected and the gross thickness of the plume at  
 91 VW1 from the saturation logs was about 18 m thick, it is detected from the seismic results (Figure  
 92 S.3 in the Supplementary Information). The saturation logs show that the upper plume layers are  
 93 thin (layer 3 is about 5 m at the location of well CCS1), however, their thicknesses from seismic  
 94 appear exaggerated due to the low frequency characteristics of the data. The plume features from all  
 95 monitors are qualitatively very similar as observed within the narrow monitoring cubes (Figure S.3  
 96 in the Supplementary Information). This suggests that the vertical distribution behaviour, including  
 97 flow through faults, developed quite early, within four months of injection. Therefore, with increasing  
 98 mass of injected CO<sub>2</sub> over time, we expect the major differences to be in the lateral footprint, which  
 99 the narrow cubes make impossible to fully observe.

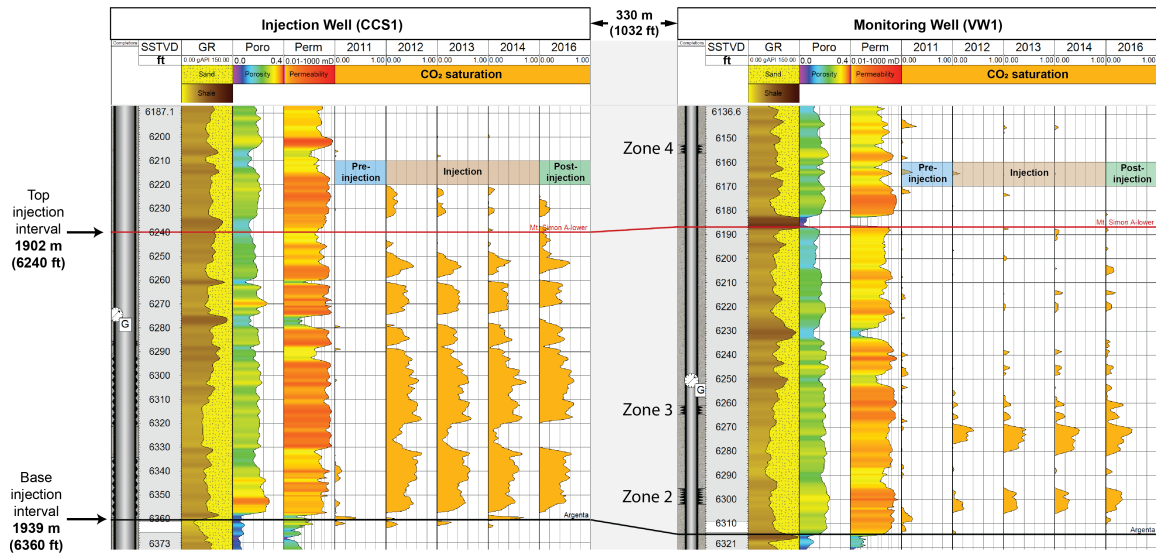
100 The irregular plume shapes produced by the shallower CO<sub>2</sub> layers appear to be controlled by  
 101 reservoir quality. As shown in Figure 2, the outline of plume layer 2 tracks the high quality regions

102 as the CO<sub>2</sub> avoids the poor quality areas. We use a 3D volume of acoustic impedance, a product  
103 of rock bulk density and P-wave velocity, to represent reservoir quality. Zones of high acoustic  
104 impedance represent low quality or tight zones and vice-versa. The acoustic impedance volume was  
105 derived from inversion of 3D seismic data acquired for site characterisation. Acoustic impedance is  
106 a good proxy for reservoir quality in this case because the primary cause of poor reservoir quality  
107 in the upper units of the Mt. Simon is Quartz cementation (Freiburg et al., 2014), which typically  
108 results in higher P-wave velocities by stiffening the rock frame. Cementation also means porosity  
109 destruction, which raises rock bulk densities.

## 110 **Capillary and permeability barriers and vertical CO<sub>2</sub> containment**

111 Early modelling attempts at the Decatur site evaluated the risk of extensive lateral migration as  
112 low and expected a more vertical filling of the lower Mt. Simon sandstone by the injected CO<sub>2</sub>  
113 (Finley et al., 2013). This informed the design of the time-lapse VSP surveys used for studying the  
114 plume development (Couëslan et al., 2009). From observation of the time-lapse saturation logs, it  
115 can be interpreted that contrary to those expectations, the injected CO<sub>2</sub> preferentially fills the high  
116 quality reservoir sandstones and avoids poorer quality or tight sandstones (Figure 3). We define tight  
117 sandstones as those with low porosity, low permeability and high capillary entry pressure. Strandli  
118 and Benson, 2013 and Strandli et al., 2014 show that there is excellent pressure communication  
119 between the two zones where the fingers of the plume are detected in VW1 (zones 2 and 3 in Figure  
120 3), with both bottomhole pressure gauges showing identical behaviours and near-instantaneous  
121 responses to varying injection rates. Nonetheless, the lower finger does not at any point buoyantly  
122 rise and coalesce with the upper finger, even after injection had ceased, as it is held back by a tight  
123 zone at 6294 ft (Figure 3). The upper finger is also contained by another tight zone at 6251 ft. These  
124 tight zones clearly have sufficient permeability to allow good pressure communication across and  
125 even allow the flow of displaced brine as shown by Strandli et al., 2014. This suggests that these  
126 tight zones are capillary barriers rather than permeability barriers.

127 We however do not discount the presence of permeability barriers in the lower Mt. Simon. One  
128 such barrier is a mudstone layer of about 1.8 m thickness at 6182-6186 ft in VW1. Strandli et al.,  
129 2014 show that this layer restricts pressure propagation between zones 2 and 3 below it and zone  
130 4 above it. However, this mudstone layer is discontinuous; it is missing in the injection well and is  
131 penetrated by only two out of the four wells at the site. These mudstones have been interpreted by  
132 Leetaru and Freiburg, 2014 to be interbedded within the Mt. Simon A formation but having a low



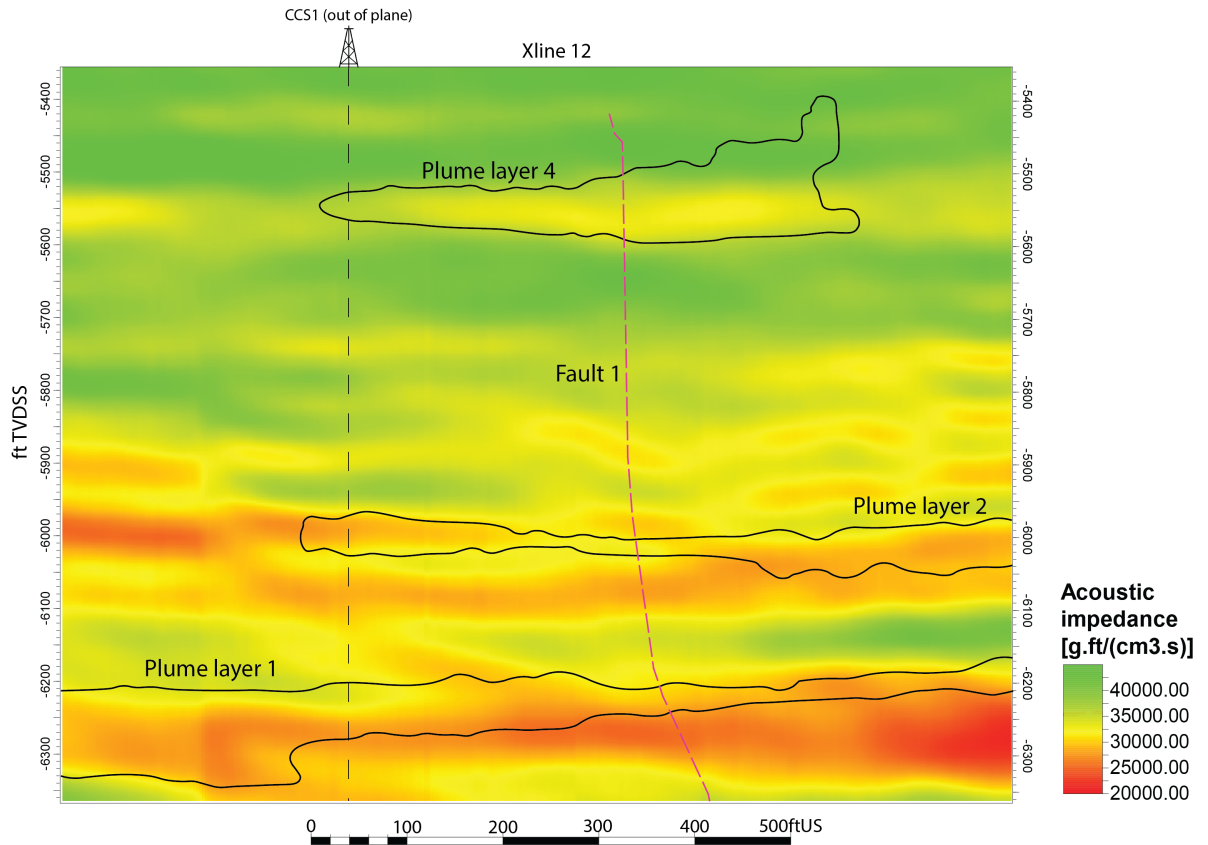
**Fig. 3** Well log panels for the injection and monitoring wells showing reservoir properties and repeat saturation logging measurements from pre-injection, through the injection period to post-injection.

133 preservation potential in an ephemeral fluvial environment. This is evidenced by occasional mudstone  
 134 clasts observed in core from well VW1, likely the eroded remnants of the original mudstone deposits  
 135 (Leetaru & Freiburg, 2014). This is in addition to their complete absence in two wells. Therefore,  
 136 the general vertical containment of CO<sub>2</sub> within the lower unit of the Mt. Simon A formation (the  
 137 injection interval) cannot plausibly be attributed to them.

### 138 CO<sub>2</sub> migration along faults locally within the Mt. Simon and subsequent 139 emergence

140 We interpret CO<sub>2</sub> flow along faults within the Mt. Simon, while it remains contained within high  
 141 quality zones, all below the sealing primary caprock. As shown in Figure 4, the main plume of CO<sub>2</sub>  
 142 in the injection interval is contained within the lower unit of Mt. Simon A. The acoustic impedance  
 143 slice representing reservoir quality shows the lack of high quality pathways through the rock matrix  
 144 for CO<sub>2</sub> to migrate upwards from the injection interval. Saturation logs in CCS1 confirm this as  
 145 they show no continuous CO<sub>2</sub> saturation along the rest of the profile between the detections of layer  
 146 1 and layer 3 (Figure 3). The origin of the CO<sub>2</sub> detected in the overlying zones, therefore, requires  
 147 an alternative explanation. We thus interpret that at least the east-west trending fault 1 shown in  
 148 Figure 1 to be hydraulically conductive and transmitting CO<sub>2</sub> upwards along its apertures under  
 149 gravity, and feeding the upper plume layers from layer 1. Buoyant CO<sub>2</sub> fluid contained within layer  
 150 1 preferentially channels upwards along the fault rather than through the overlying capillary barrier.

151 CO<sub>2</sub> entry into the fault implies a lower capillary entry pressure through the fault apertures. We  
 152 propose that CO<sub>2</sub> flows through the fault and emerges when it reaches a point where the reservoir  
 153 is of high quality, or a point beyond which the fault zone has lower permeability. This is illustrated  
 154 in Figure 4.



**Fig. 4** Acoustic impedance from 3D seismic inversion used as a proxy for reservoir quality. Interpreted plume outlines are shown to be prevented from buoyantly rising by tight zones or capillary barriers (green regions) and instead channel through permeable faults.

155 We interpret fault 2 and fault 3 (Figure 2) to be non-conductive. This is because we do not detect  
 156 the emergence of CO<sub>2</sub> around the faults in the high quality zone at the eastern flank of the monitored  
 157 area. This could be because the faults are kept closed by compressive stresses. The Illinois Basin lies  
 158 within the east-northeast to west-southwest compressive stress field of the eastern part of the North  
 159 American plate, with the maximum horizontal stress orientation ranging between N60°E to N80°E  
 160 (Lahann et al., 2017). This could provide a reasonable explanation as to the non-conductive nature  
 161 of these faults, which are sub-perpendicular to the direction of maximum horizontal stress. The  
 162 generally east-west trending fault 1, conversely, appears conductive and probably solely responsible

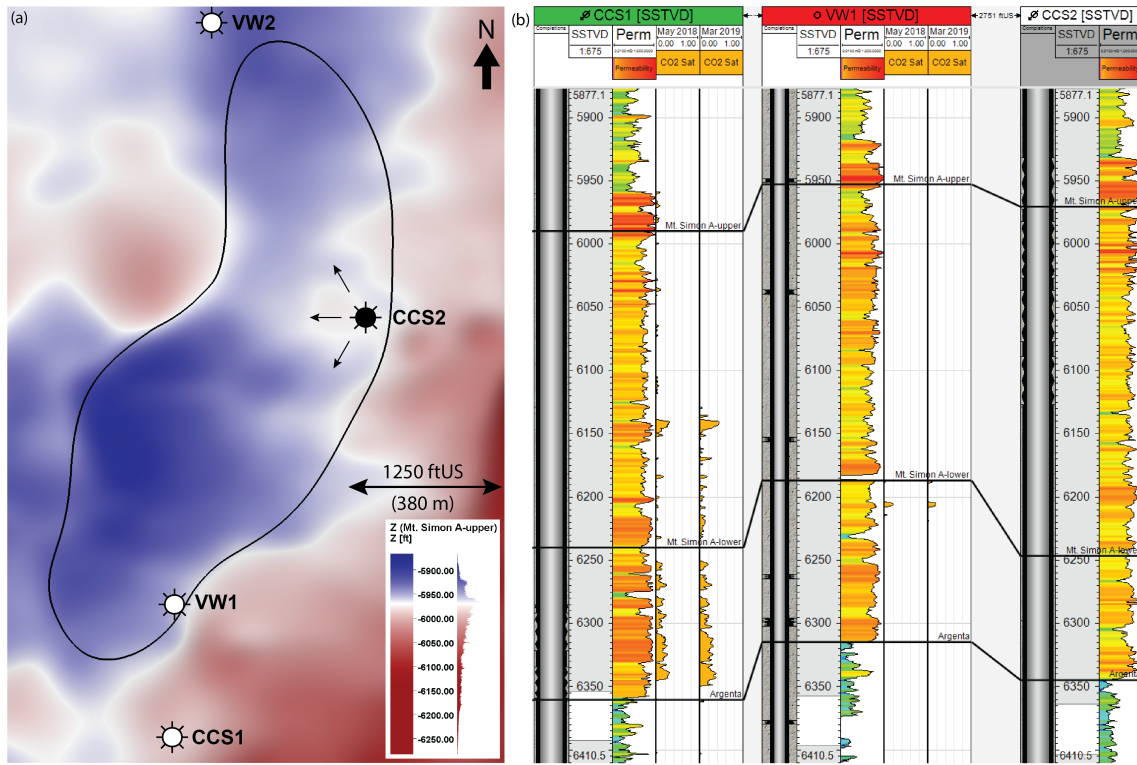


163 for feeding the overlying plume layers. The behaviour of CO<sub>2</sub> emergence in a high quality zone  
164 could mitigate leakage up conductive faults as the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that continues to migrate up a  
165 fault is progressively reduced with each encountered high quality zone. Where the conductive faults  
166 are intra-reservoir and do not traverse the seal, they would merely serve to provide access to other  
167 good quality zones of the reservoir, distributing the CO<sub>2</sub> among them, as has been shown through  
168 modelling (Yang et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2024). Such is the case for the Decatur project; the  
169 fault provides flow pathways to overlying good quality zones of the Mt. Simon formation, which the  
170 injected CO<sub>2</sub> is unable to access normally due to capillary barriers.

### 171 **Origins of late CO<sub>2</sub> arrival at injection well post-injection**

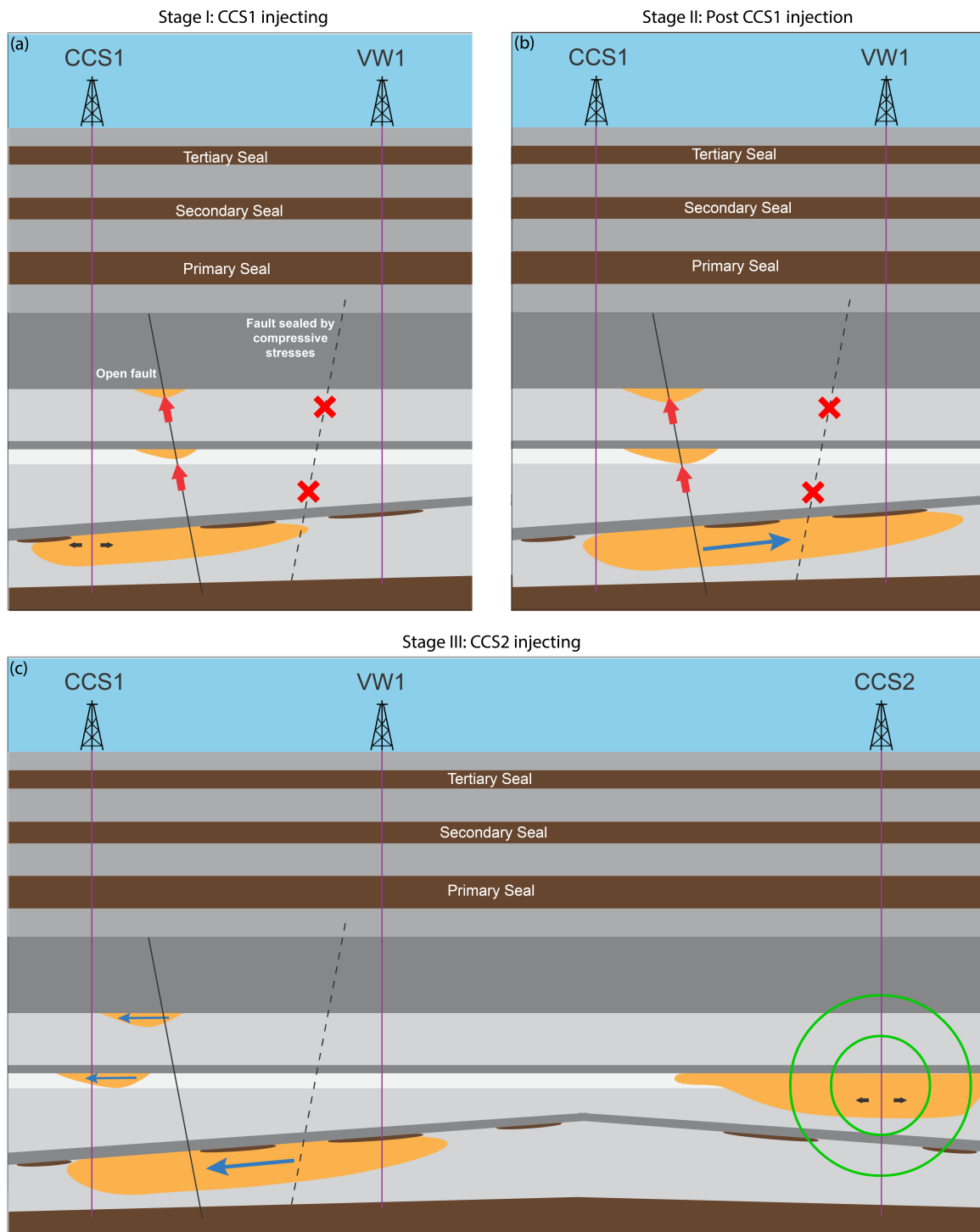
172 An isolated finger of CO<sub>2</sub> was detected in the injection well during the post-injection period of the  
173 project in May 2018. This CO<sub>2</sub> was detected in the upper unit of the Mt. Simon A formation, and it  
174 increased in saturation in the March 2019 survey (Figure 5). The saturation logging report (Swager,  
175 2019) suggested the origins of the CO<sub>2</sub> to be the Illinois Industrial Carbon Capture and Storage  
176 project located about 1100 m north of well CCS1. The injection well at this secondary project, well  
177 CCS2, had been injecting into the upper unit of the Mt. Simon A formation for 13 months at the  
178 time of detection.

179 A simplified mass and volume balance analysis shows it is unlikely that enough CO<sub>2</sub> had been  
180 injected in well CCS2 to have reached well CCS1 at the time of detection. We consider flow through  
181 only one-third the thickness of the injection zone at a conservative CO<sub>2</sub> saturation of 0.2 and with  
182 no dissolution. The resulting plume footprint equivalent to 687,000 t of CO<sub>2</sub> that had been injected  
183 at the time is shown in Figure 5 (a). In addition, the uppermost part of the A-Upper unit (c. 5950  
184 ft in well CCS2) has the highest reservoir quality throughout the entire Mt. Simon sandstone, with  
185 permeabilities up to 1000 mD. Given the excellent correlation of this interval across the three wells,  
186 it is the most likely pathway for any rapid migration of CO<sub>2</sub>. However, the late arriving CO<sub>2</sub> was  
187 detected instead in an interval in the lower half of the unit at a depth of 6150 ft. This interval  
188 is deeper than the injection zone in CCS2, which would require the CO<sub>2</sub> to flow downdip. This  
189 is unlikely outside the viscous region due to buoyancy forces. Moreover, no CO<sub>2</sub> was detected in  
190 the corresponding interval of well VW1, which is located between wells CCS2 and CCS1. This is  
191 summarised in Figure 5 (b).



**Fig. 5** (a) CO<sub>2</sub> plume footprint equivalent to 687,000 t of CO<sub>2</sub> derived using a simplified mass and volume balance. (b) Well correlation panel showing wells CCS1, CCS2 and VW1 with no CO<sub>2</sub> detection at VW1.

192 We present an alternative hypothesis based on plume interpretations from seismic time shift  
 193 analysis and pressure and saturation logging data. We propose that the CO<sub>2</sub> instead originated from  
 194 the CCS1 well – the same well it was detected in – but from layer 1 in the underlying injection  
 195 interval. The evidence supports that the CO<sub>2</sub> travelled vertically through Fault 2, forming layer 2  
 196 as shown in Figure 1. Over time, layer 2 got larger as more CO<sub>2</sub> pooled. Once injection began at  
 197 the nearby Illinois Industrial Carbon Capture and Storage project, the pressure gradient induced  
 198 as a result of active CO<sub>2</sub> injection in well CCS2 then forces layer 2 to flow across the face of  
 199 CCS1, resulting in this new detection. We argue this given that bottomhole pressure data shows  
 200 good pressure communication between wells CCS1 and CCS2. Our interpretation of the overall  
 201 CO<sub>2</sub> migration behaviour during the three stages of CCS1 injection, post CCS1 injection and CCS2  
 202 injection is summarised in Figure 6.



**Fig. 6** A conceptual schematic summarising the overall plume behaviour during (a) CCS injection, (b) post CCS1 injection, and (c) CCS2 injection. Reservoir quality is indicated in grayscale with darker tones representing tight zones. Faults are classified as either open or sealed depending on the orientation of their planes with respect to the direction of maximum horizontal stress.

## 203 **Conclusion**

204 We have re-interpreted data from seismic surveys at the Illinois Decatur Basin Project and shown  
205 that the CO<sub>2</sub> plume has been migrating along major faults between high quality units of the  
206 reservoir, and moving laterally in response to injection at a neighbouring site. The analysis pro-  
207 vides an important dataset of previously theorised plume migration behaviour between fault zones  
208 and reservoir units. This interpretation was otherwise not possible using a conventional analysis  
209 of amplitude attributes. Survey repeatability issues including source point co-location difficulties  
210 and changing ground conditions introduced spurious amplitude anomalies that subtle fluid-related  
211 amplitude anomalies were indistinguishable from. Furthermore, although the lower Mt. Simon reser-  
212 voir is thick, the CO<sub>2</sub> plume does not fill it uniformly and instead forms thin layers that are not fully  
213 resolvable by the seismic data which therefore suffers from tuning of amplitudes. These factors may  
214 occur commonly in projects and are unfavourable to an amplitude-based interpretation, especially in  
215 onshore settings. The much clearer picture of CO<sub>2</sub> plume anomalies provided by time shifts enabled  
216 the overall analysis by allowing a meaningful integration of multiple independent measurements to  
217 produce a coherent interpretation of the migration behaviour of injected CO<sub>2</sub> at the Decatur site.  
218 We were able to identify an interplay of capillary heterogeneity and upward flow of CO<sub>2</sub> along per-  
219 meable faults under buoyancy forces. In addition, we identify the role of pressure gradients resulting  
220 from CO<sub>2</sub> injection at a neighbouring project in causing the re-mobilisation and flow of CO<sub>2</sub> at the  
221 Decatur project post-injection. These behaviours and their impacts have been previously theorised  
222 and the observations provided from an industry scale geological CO<sub>2</sub> storage site provides important  
223 validation of these theories and data from which future projects may be designed.

## 224 **Methods**

### 225 **Monitoring Data from the Illinois Basin - Decatur Project**

226 The Illinois Basin - Decatur Project injected 1 Mt of CO<sub>2</sub> over three years from 2011 to 2014, into  
227 the Mt. Simon sandstone at a depth of c. 2100 m. The Mt. Simon sandstone is a Cambrian-age  
228 saline aquifer and is one of the major CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration resources in the United States. It is over  
229 450 m thick at the Decatur site. Leetaru and Freiburg, [2014](#) and Freiburg et al., [2014](#) provide a  
230 detailed depositional and diagenetic characterisation of it at Decatur. It is unconformably overlain  
231 by the Eau Claire Formation, which is a predominantly shale formation over 90 m thick at the  
232 Decatur site and serves as the primary caprock for the storage unit. The Mt. Simon Sandstone is

233 subdivided into upper, middle and lower formations. The best reservoir quality occurs in the lower  
234 Mt. Simon formation, with porosities of up to 28% and permeabilities of up to 1000 mD, and an  
235 average porosity and permeability of 22% and 200 mD. The lower unit of this formation is the  
236 injection interval for the project. The project has an injection well (CCS1) and a monitoring well  
237 (VW1). Wells CCS2, VW2 are the injection and monitoring wells for the nearby Illinois Industrial  
238 Carbon Capture and Storage project. The monitoring data and the data previously acquired for  
239 site characterisation form an excellent dataset for studying the complex behaviour of CO<sub>2</sub> plumes  
240 in the field. The dataset comprises in-well and geophysical monitoring data including time-lapse 3D  
241 VSP surveys. The in-well monitoring data includes bottomhole pressures, injection rates and repeat  
242 saturation logs. These logs recorded CO<sub>2</sub> saturation profiles periodically in wells CCS1 and VW1.  
243 They provide a time-lapse 1D profile of CO<sub>2</sub> saturation at the high resolution of wireline logging  
244 tools. Time-lapse 3D VSP surveying was chosen as the main geophysical monitoring technique to  
245 monitor the CO<sub>2</sub> plume in three dimensions. These surveys were meant to provide information on  
246 the plume development over time. They were acquired using surface seismic sources with receivers  
247 permanently installed in a shallow geophysical monitoring well GM1 located 60 m northwest of  
248 the injection well. Surveys were acquired each year from 2012 to 2015, with Baseline 2 being the  
249 reference pre-injection survey. Analysis of the time-lapse vertical seismic profile data is the main  
250 focus of this work. The survey dates, ground conditions during acquisition and injected CO<sub>2</sub> mass  
251 are reported by Couëslan et al., 2013.

## 252 **Amplitude and time shift attributes**

253 Previous investigations used amplitude attributes including normalised RMS (NRMS) and ampli-  
254 tude difference (Bauer et al., 2019; Couëslan et al., 2013). We reproduce those analyses by extracting  
255 both amplitude difference and NRMS. The attributes do not produce distinct CO<sub>2</sub> plume features as  
256 there is a pervasive presence of amplitude anomalies including above the primary seal and below the  
257 reservoir in the pre-Cambrian basement (Figure S.1 in the Supplementary Information). We perform  
258 an analysis of time shifts in an attempt to overcome these difficulties in interpretation. Time shifts  
259 provide a measure of changes in the two-way travel time of a seismic wave between two surveys,  
260 where an increase in travel time results from a slowdown of seismic waves by a lower velocity layer  
261 and vice-versa. These time shifts are induced as a result of changes in fluid content or stress leading  
262 to compaction or extension in the reservoir or the overburden. Landrø and Stammeijer, 2004 define

263 the relative change in elastic wave travel time due to changes in subsurface layer thicknesses (physi-  
 264 cal strain) and velocity as  $\frac{\Delta t}{t} = \frac{\Delta z}{z} - \frac{\Delta v}{v}$ , where  $\frac{\Delta t}{t}$  is the relative time shift or time strain,  $\frac{\Delta z}{z}$  is the  
 265 vertical physical strain, and  $\frac{\Delta v}{v}$  is the relative velocity change, which is a function of the lithology  
 266 of the rock and the magnitude of the saturation change. For small physical strains, the time strain  
 267 approximates to  $\frac{\Delta t}{t} = -\frac{\Delta v}{v}$ . Time shifts were extracted from full stacks of each of the four 3D moni-  
 268 tor surveys relative to the baseline survey. MacBeth et al., 2020 provide a review of various methods  
 269 of measurement of post-stack time-lapse time shifts. Dynamic time warping (DTW) algorithm with  
 270 strain constraints as implemented by Hale, 2013 was used to extract the time shifts in this study. It  
 271 is based on the minimization of the dissimilarity error between two traces:  $e[i, q] = (f[i] - g[i + l])^2$ ,  
 272 where  $i$  is the sample index,  $l$  is the integer lag or time shift between seismic traces, and  $f$  and  $g$   
 273 are the seismic amplitudes of the baseline and monitor traces, respectively.

274 The DTW implementation employed imposes constraints on the rate at which shifts may vary in  
 275 time, i.e., a limit on maximum time strain, and this informs the choice of this algorithm. As relative  
 276 velocity change can be approximated to the negative of time strain for small physical strains, we can  
 277 derive from rock physics modelling the maximum saturation change (from available saturation logs),  
 278 which is then used to model the maximum change in rock velocity. This provides constraints on  
 279 the time strain. The rock physics modelling performed involved Gassmann (Gassmann, 1951) fluid  
 280 substitution of brine with CO<sub>2</sub> following a patchy mixing (Brie et al., 1995). The mixing type was  
 281 informed by field observations of velocity-saturation relationships for CO<sub>2</sub> storage in saline aquifers  
 282 (Caspari et al., 2011). Fluid properties at in-situ conditions were computed using the FLAG fluid  
 283 calculator (Han & Batzle, 2014). Constraints on time shifts and relative velocity change can also be  
 284 derived from analogue datasets such as those published in MacBeth et al., 2019. These constraints  
 285 are crucial for the accuracy of the results. Therefore, the atypical availability of the repeat CO<sub>2</sub>  
 286 saturation logs in this dataset was essential to the successful application of this approach.

## 287 **Results post-processing and noise removal**

288 The obtained time strain volumes were afflicted by noise and artefacts. Most notably, speedup  
 289 anomalies were observed directly beneath the slowdown anomalies. Such artefacts can result from  
 290 data acquisition and processing, and from errors induced in the implementation of the time shift  
 291 algorithms (MacBeth & Izadian, 2023). We removed speedup anomalies ( $\frac{\Delta v}{v} > 0$ ) from the volumes  
 292 as these are normally not expected when CO<sub>2</sub> replaces brine in a reservoir. Nevertheless, residual  
 293 random noise was observed. These are attributed mainly to data acquisition challenges of source

294 point co-location and varying ground conditions which may have introduced spurious time shifts in  
295 addition to amplitude anomalies throughout the volumes. A noise removal algorithm was developed  
296 to remove the residual noise from the time strain volumes. This relies on the availability of multiple  
297 monitor surveys. It tracks and preserves any features that are consistent across all the monitors,  
298 while discarding any non-consistent features. The design of this filter is based on an assumption that  
299 real plume anomalies would be consistent across the surveys while random noise would not. This is  
300 supported by the observed CO<sub>2</sub> plume distributions at well locations which remain largely the same  
301 over the injection period. Points of consistency in anomalies across all the monitors are identified as  
302 seed points, and the noise filter is applied, where the anomalies grow laterally and upwards starting  
303 from those seed points. This algorithm is based on the image segmentation algorithm of Flood Fill,  
304 and in this case effectively mimics the actual growth of the plume.

## 305 Data availability

306 The original dataset used in this study was made publicly available by the National Energy Tech-  
307 nology Laboratory through the Energy Data eXchange, available at [https://doi.org/10.18141/](https://doi.org/10.18141/1854142)  
308 [1854142](https://doi.org/10.18141/1854142).

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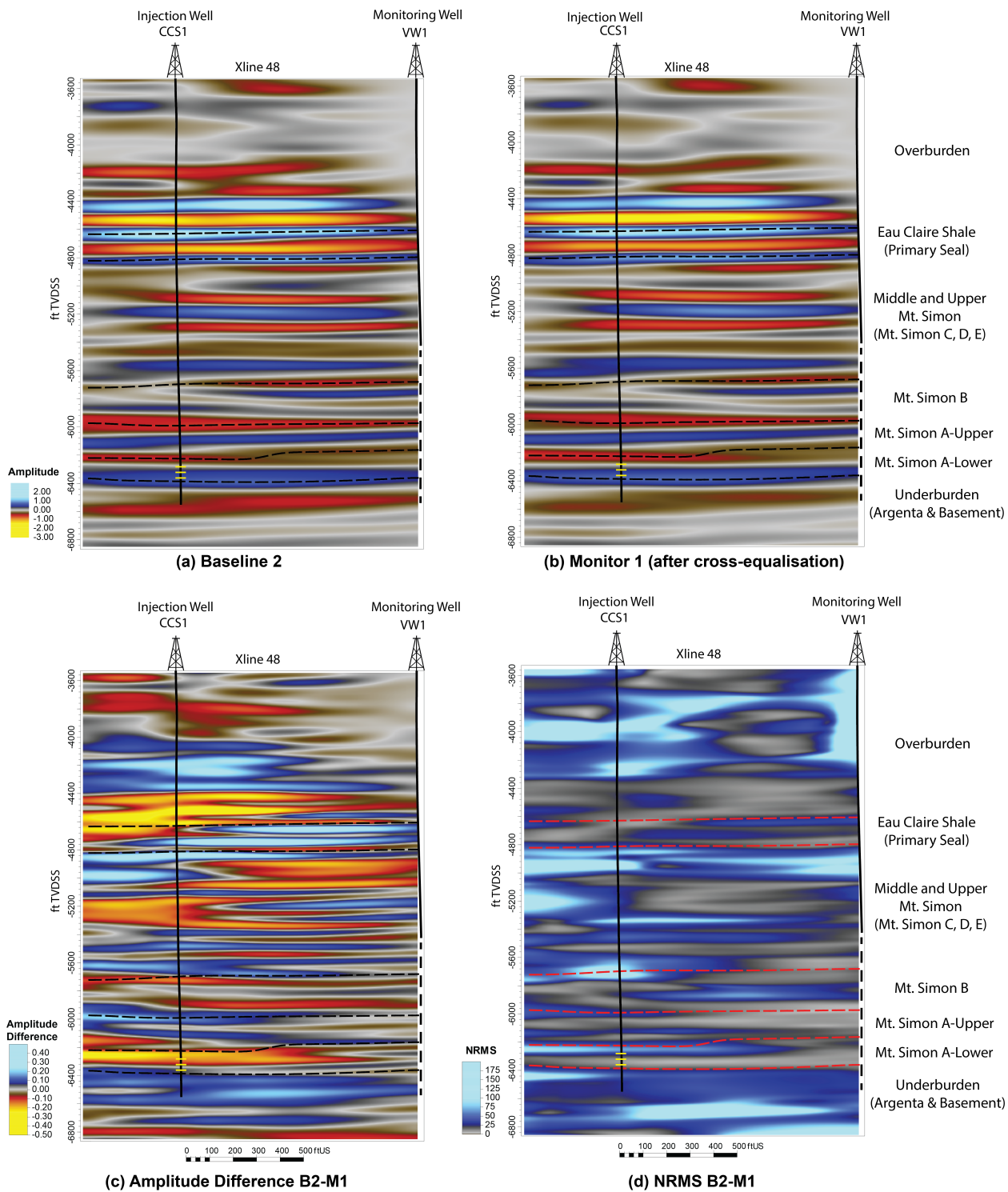
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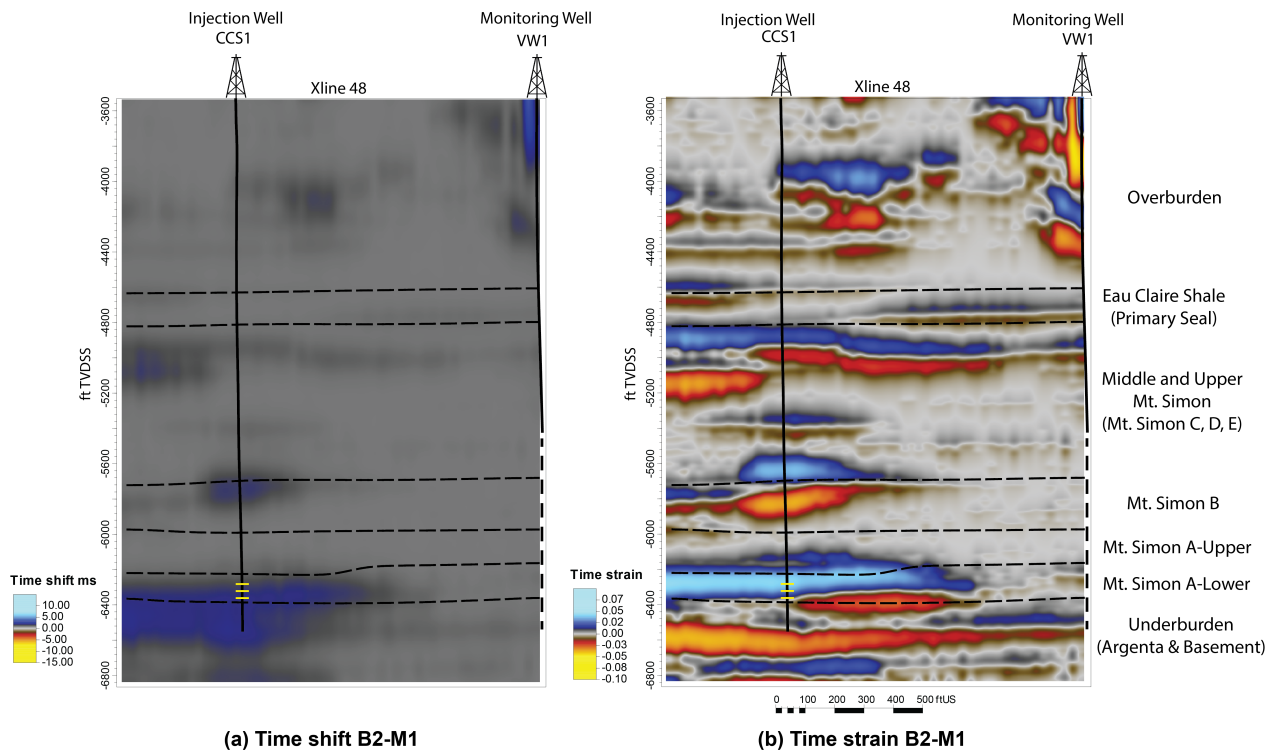
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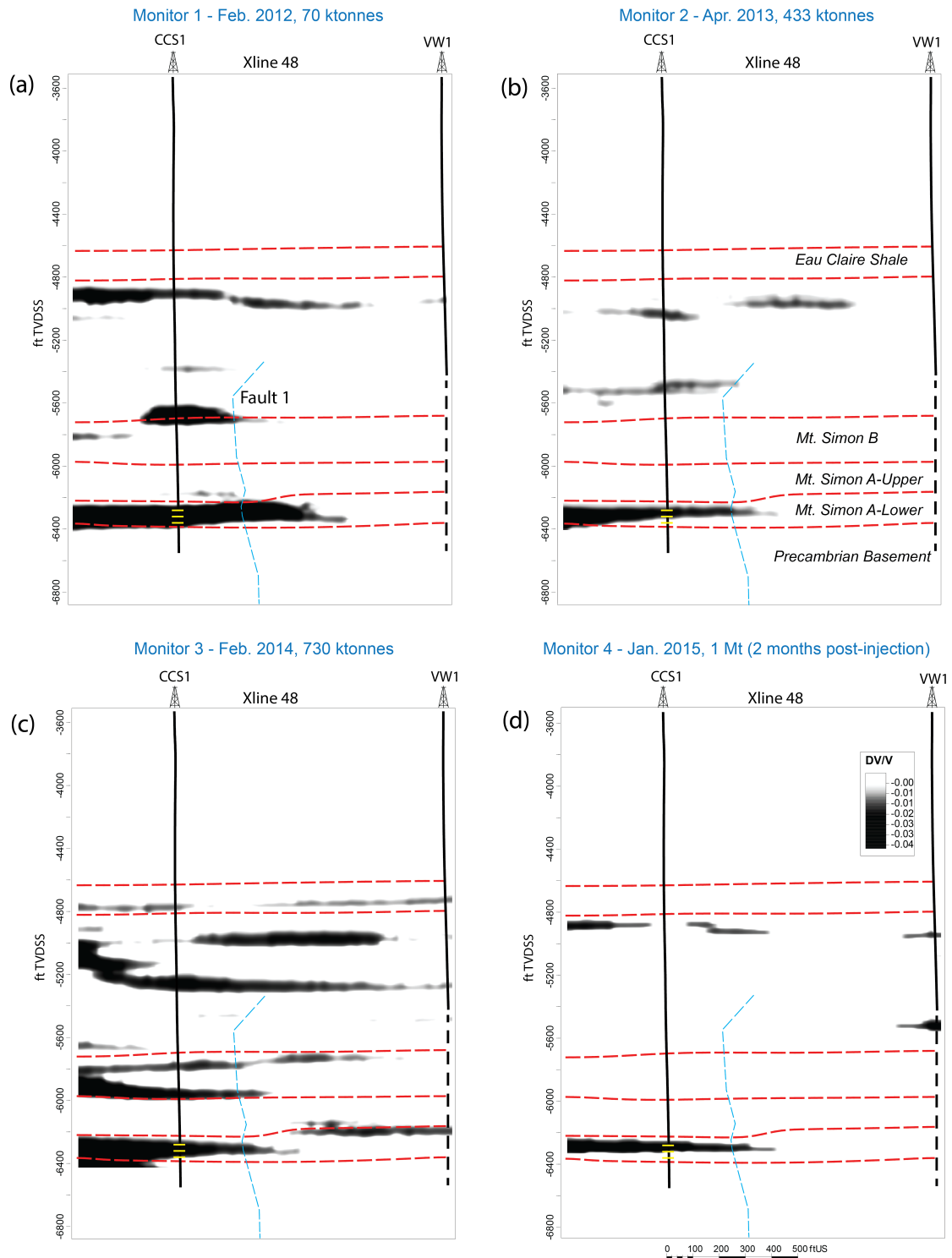
449 **Acknowledgments.** The authors wish to acknowledge support from SLB and Ikon Science for  
450 academic licenses for Petrel and RokDoc. We thank the Petroleum Technology Development Fund  
451 for providing the funding for this research.



**Fig. S.1** Cross-sectional views of (a) Baseline 2 amplitudes, (b) Monitor 1 amplitudes after cross-equalisation, (c) Amplitude difference, and (d) NRMS.



**Fig. S.2** Cross-sectional views of time shift and time strain (first derivative of time shift) between Baseline 2 and Monitor 1. The image is clearer than amplitude difference and NRMS attributes.



**Fig. S.3** Cross-sectional views of interpreted plume layers for all four monitors referenced to the baseline. The plume features are qualitatively very similar as observed within the narrow monitoring cubes.