

Finding of No Significant Impact
for
Samson Resources Company
Oil and Gas Field Development Program
in and Adjacent to the Hornbuckle Field
Converse County, Wyoming

Prepared for

Bureau of Land Management
Casper Field Office
Casper, Wyoming

WY-060-EA11-181



BACKGROUND

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Casper Field Office has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA), WY-060-EA11-181, to analyze the effects of exploration drilling for oil and gas proposed by Samson Resources, Company (SRC). SRC plans to further develop hydrocarbon resources within an area encompassing the existing Hornbuckle Field, located approximately twenty-six (26) miles northeast of the town of Glenrock in Townships 37 and 38 North, Range 73 West Field in Converse County, Wyoming.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 requires the Bureau of Land Management (NEPA) to review the environmental impacts of this proposal through the preparation of an environmental analysis; in this case an Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA is available to the public at the Casper Field Office at 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, Wyoming 82604.

PROPOSED ACTION

SRC is proposing to construct approximately 48 additional wells pads, as well as supporting infrastructure, within the Hornbuckle Field and adjacent areas in order to develop existing oil reserves within the Sussex formation as well as determine the potential for commercial oil/gas production from other geologic formations within the overall project area. The project proposal would involve the drilling of a combination of both horizontal and vertical wells within the overall project area to develop and explore the federal mineral estate. As identified in the EA the typical well pad would be designed for two wells to be drilled from each pad so that there could be up to 96 wells drilled from the proposed 48 well pads.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

On the basis of the information contained in WY-060-EA11-181, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: (1) the implementation of the Proposed Action will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the Casper Resource Management Plan approved in December of 2007; (2) the Proposed Action is in conformance with the Resource Management Plan; and (3) the Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA or as articulated in the letters of comment.

“a) Context. This means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Significance varies with the settling of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short-term and long-term effects are relevant”. (40 CFR 1508.27(a))

“(b) Intensity. This refers to the severity of impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action. The following should be considered in evaluation intensity.” (40 CFR 1508.27(b))

I have considered the potential intensity/severity of the impacts anticipated from the proposed action decision relative to each of the ten areas suggested for consideration by the CEQ. With regard to each:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

No beneficial effects were identified. The Proposed Action would affect resources as described in the EA. The project has been designed to reduce impacts to the various resources. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in the EA are considered adverse, nor do the effects exceed those described in the Casper RMP.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

The Proposed Action is designed to have minimum impact on public health and safety and would not pose a significant risk. Transportation of equipment to the project location will conform to all State and Federal Laws.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity of historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

No lands of unique characteristics exist within the proposed project area. The project is in proximity to the Bozeman Trail however, the proposed action and analyzed mitigation limits the impacts to a level of insignificance.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

No anticipated effects have been identified that are scientifically controversial. The Proposed Action is subject to the Record of Decision (ROD) and Casper Resource Management Plan (RMP) approved on December 7, 2007, as referenced in WY-060-EA11-181.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

The extent and degree of uncertainty regarding impacts or unknown risks is not sufficient to warrant preparation of an EIS.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The proposed action will not establish a precedent and does not represent a decision in principle about future considerations.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

The assessed resources, ecosystem and human communities of concern are not approaching conditions where additional stresses associated with the proposed action and past, present, and future foreseeable actions have consequential cumulative effects.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

Currently there are no known cultural properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places which would be adversely affected by the proposed action. If any properties are discovered during the development of the project then any adverse effects would be mitigated by BLM prior to construction. In most cases mitigation is achieved through facility relocation.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

No species listed under the Endangered Species Act or their designated critical habitat would be adversely affected.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The proposed action is consistent with all Federal, State, and local laws.

Assistant Field Manager
Casper Field Office

Date