



**Bureau of Land Management**

Anchorage Field Office  
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**Categorical Exclusion  
Drilling of a Directional Gas Storage Well**

**Applicant: Union Oil Company of California  
Case File Number: A-028996  
AK-040-06-CX-024**

**Location:**

Section 5, T7N, R9W, Seward Meridian  
Kenai Peninsula Borough, Alaska

**Prepared By:**

Harrison Griffin  
Physical Scientist  
5/23/06

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Anchorage Field Office  
**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (CX) FORM**

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CX No.: AK-040-06-CX-024

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: A-028996

Proposed Action Title/Types: Drilling of a Directional Gas Storage Well

Location of Proposed Action: Section 5, T7N, R9W, Seward Meridian, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Alaska.

Description of Proposed Action:

Union Oil Company of California is proposing to drill a directional gas storage well within the Soldotna Creek Unit of the Swanson River Field. The surface location of the well will be in Section 5, T7N, R9W of the Seward Meridian. The proposed bottom hole location is approximately 580' North of the proposed surface location, and will remain in the same Section as the surface location. Their Notice of Staking was submitted on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006.

The proposed well is within the Soldotna Creek Unit boundaries of the Swanson River Field. The roads in the field are suitable for access by available drilling equipment. The roads leading into the Swanson River Field are suitable for access by drilling equipment. No new roads will need to be constructed to drill the proposed well. Some gravel will be brought in to level off the existing pad during drilling. The drill cuttings will be either ground and injected, or placed into a waste cell. There will be no mud or reserve pit. No permanent ancillary facilities will be installed for this project. The well will be drilled from an existing pad, currently in use. Reclamation of the drilling pad will be performed when the unit agreements have expired and the field is dissolved according to the terms of the Oil and Gas Lease Agreement. The surface estate is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with the mineral estate being managed by BLM as described in ANCSA Section 14(g).

Applicant (if any): Union Oil Company of California

**PART I - PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW**

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This Proposed Action is subject to the following land use plan:

The South-central Planning Area Management Framework Plan, dated March of 1980 encompasses this drilling site, but does not address oil and gas operations in this area. The Proposed Action falls within a Categorical Exclusion provided by the Energy Act of 2005. Therefore, based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal is in accordance with Federal regulations and the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended.

Date Plan Approved: March 1980

The Proposed Action has been reviewed for conformance with this plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM MS 1617.3).

Remarks: The Proposed Action is not inconsistent with the Plan.

**PART II - NEPA REVIEW**

A. Categorical Exclusion Review.  
 This Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under Section 390 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (the "Act") Category 5: Maintenance of a minor activity, other than any construction or major renovation of a building or facility.

B. Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances Review.  
 The following Departmental List of Extraordinary Circumstances applies to individual actions. Departmental instructions mandate that environmental documents MUST BE PREPARED for actions which may: (Mark applicable answer for each item. If "yes", prepare an EA/EIS and append this form to it.)

	YES	NO
1. Have significant adverse impacts on public health or safety.	___	X
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.	___	X
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].	___	X
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	___	X
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	___	X
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	___	X
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.	___	X
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.	___	X

- |   | YES | NO |
|---|-----|----|
| 9. Violate Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.  | ___ | X  |
| 10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).  | ___ | X  |
| 11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).   | ___ | X  |
| 12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112). | ___ | X  |

I certify that none of the Departmental Extraordinary Circumstances listed in the above Part B (516 DM 2, Appendix 2) apply to this action.

Remarks: None

Preparer(s): Harrison Griffin

Date: May 23, 2006

**PART III – DECISION**

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I have reviewed this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required. It is my decision to implement the project, as described, with the mitigation measures either identified below or stipulation(s) attached in this case file.

Mitigation Measures/Other Remarks: None

Mike Zaidlicz  
Acting Field Manager

May 26, 2006