

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT-ROSWELL FIELD OFFICE**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT # NM-510-07-184 FOR Taurus Federal #1H & Polaris Federal #1H**  
(8/3/07) Element Checklist and Table 3.0 – Affected Environment and Basis for Determination No Further Analysis

Resources	Not Present On Site	No Impacts	May Be Impacts*	Mitigation Included	BLM Reviewer	Date
<b>CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT</b> *Must address in document						
Air Quality			√	√	Hydrologist	8/28/07
Floodplains	√				/s/ Michael McGee	
Water Quality - Surface			√	√		
Water Quality – Ground			X	X	Geologist /s/ John S. Simitz	9/3/07
Cultural Resources	X				Archaeologist Pat Flanary 07-R-049-A & 08-R-013-B	8/28/07
Native American Religious Concerns		X				12/06/07
Environmental Justice		X			Environ. Prot. Spec. Richard G. Hill	8/13/07
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	X				Plan & Environ. Coord. /s/ J H Parman	8/14/07
Farmlands, Prime or Unique	X				Realty /s/ Judy Yslas	8/14/07
Invasive, Non-native Species			√	√	Range Mgmt. Spec. /s/ Joseph M. Navarro	8/16/07
Wastes, Hazardous or Solid		X			Environ. Prot. Spec. Richard G. Hill	8/13/07
Threatened or Endangered Species	X				Biologist Melvin Moe	8/17/07
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	X					
Wild and Scenic Rivers	X				Outdoor Rec. Planer /s/ Paul Happel	8/14/07
Wilderness	X					
<b>NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS</b>						
General Topography/Surface Geology		X			Environ. Prot. Spec. Richard G. Hill	8/13/07
Solid Mineral Resources		√			Geologist /s/ Jerry Dutchover	08/17/07
Fluid Mineral Resources		X			Geologist /s/ John S. Simitz	9/3/07
Paleontology		X			Archaeology Pat Flanary	8/28/07 12/06/07
Soil			√	√	Hydrologist /s/ Michael McGee	8/28/07
Watershed/Hydrology			√	√		
Vegetation			√	√	Range Mgmt. Spec. /s/ Joseph M. Navarro	8/16/07
Livestock Grazing			√	√		
Special Status Species	X				Biologist Melvin Moe	8/17/07
Wildlife			X	X		
Recreation		X			Outdoor Rec. Planer /s/ Paul Happel	8/14/07
Visual Resources			X			
Cave/Karst			X			
Public Health and Safety		X			Environ. Prot. Spec. Richard G. Hill	8/13/07

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1.0 Introduction

COG Operating, LLC. has filed two (2) applications for permit to drill the Taurus Federal #1H oil well in Section 10 and the Polaris Federal #1H oil well in Section 15, T. 15 S., R. 31 E.. Both wells are on private surface and the two (2) wells will be horizontally drilled.

This site-specific analysis tiers into and incorporates by reference the information and analysis contained in the Roswell Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS). This document is available for review at the Roswell Office. This project EA addresses site-specific resources and/or impacts that are not specifically covered within the PMP/FEIS, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (Public Law 91-90, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

1.1 Purpose and Need

The purpose for the proposals is to define and produce oil or natural gas on one or more valid Federal mineral lease(s) issued to the applicant by the BLM. It is the policy of the BLM to make mineral resources available for disposal and to encourage development of mineral resources to meet National, regional, and local needs. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (MLA), as amended [30 USC 181 et seq.], authorizes the BLM to issue oil and gas leases for the exploration of oil and gas, and permit the development of those leases. The approved Applications for Permit to Drill (APD), issued by the BLM, would authorize the applicant to construct and drill the wells.

1.2 Conformance with Applicable Land Use Plan and Other Environmental Assessments

Pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.28 and 1502.21, this site-specific EA tiers to and incorporates by reference the information and analysis contained in the Roswell Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS, BLM [January 1997]), which was approved as the Approved Resource Management Plan for the Roswell Field Office (RFO) of the BLM by the Record of Decision (ROD) signed October 10, 1997. The PRMP/FEIS and ROD are available for review at the Roswell Field Office, Roswell, New Mexico. This EA addresses the resources and impacts on a site-specific basis as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (Public Law 91-90, 42 USC 4321 et seq.). The proposed project would not be in conflict with any State, local, or county plans.

1.3 Federal, State or Local Permits, Licenses or Other Consultation Requirements

Under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (as amended), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was directed to develop a phased approach to regulate storm water discharges under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. Industrial activities disturbing land may require permit coverage through a NPDES storm water discharge. Depending on the acreage disturbed, either a Phase I industrial activity (5 or more acres disturbance) or a Phase II small construction activities (between 1 and 5 acres disturbance) permit may be required. Additionally, an U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit for the discharge of dredge and fill materials may also be required. Additionally, a New Mexico

Surface Water Quality Bureau 401 certification may also be required under a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit. Operators are required to obtain all necessary permits and approvals prior to any disturbance activities.

Roswell Field Office staff reviewed the proposed action and determined it would be in compliance with threatened and endangered species management guidelines outlined in the 1997 Biological Assessment (Cons. #2-22-96-F-102). No further consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required.

Compliance with Section 106 responsibilities of the National Historic Preservation Act are adhered to by following the BLM – New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer protocol agreement, which is authorized by the National Programmatic Agreement between the *BLM*, the *Advisory Council on Historic Preservation*, and the *National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers*, and other applicable BLM handbooks.

Additionally, the Operator is required to:

- Comply with all applicable Federal, State and local laws and regulations.
- Obtain the necessary permits for the drilling, completion and production of these wells including water rights appropriations, the installation of water management facilities, water discharge permits and relevant air quality permits.
- Certify that a Surface Use Agreement has been reached with private landowners where required.

## 2.0 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

### 2.1 Alternative A - No Action

The BLM NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1) and the National Environmental Policy Act and associated Code of Federal Regulations state that for EAs on externally initiated proposed actions, the No Action Alternative means that the proposed activity would not take place. The No Action Alternative is presented for baseline analysis of resource impacts, and if selected, would deny the approval of the proposed application. Current land and resource uses would continue to occur in the proposed project area. No mitigation measures would be required.

### 2.2 Alternative B Proposed Action

COG Operating, LLC submitted two (2) Applications for Permit to Drill on 9/27/07. COG Operating, LLC submitted two (2) Notices of Staking on 8/3/07, to drill the Taurus Federal #1H and the Polaris Federal #1H oil wells.

The proposed electric lines that will be constructed on private surface were issued archaeological survey number 08-R-013-B and were cleared by the RFO Archaeologist. The proposed electric lines would service both the Taurus Federal #1H and the Polaris Federal #1H oil wells.

1. **Taurus Federal #1H** – Beginning from the Tower State Road (SR 172) an existing two-track will be utilized for the proposed access road to the well pad and it is approximately 4,970.6 feet in length. The entire road system is divided between state lands and private surface. The two-track road would have a driving surface (travelway) of 14 feet, with a maximum surface disturbance width of 30-feet allowed for road construction. The existing two-track access road would be renovated and maintained in a good or better condition than it was prior to the commencement of drilling operations. A cattleguard would be constructed and installed at the fence crossing in the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Sec. 10 - T. 15 S. -R. 31 E.. The cattleguard is also in concurrence with the private surface landowner agreement.

The original proposed road route was changed in accordance with the private surface landowner agreement. The surface landowner wants the operator to utilize an existing two-track that would avoid as much as possible the use of the main ranch road that goes to the private surface landowner's ranch house.

The construction of the proposed well pad would be 320 feet long by 250 feet wide (plus stinger 30' X 30'). The construction of the reserve pit would be about 160 feet by 160 feet and dug 3 feet below ground level. The reserve pit would be located on the north side of the well pad. A rotary drilling rig would be used to drill the well to a depth of 13,300' MD (measured distance) and 8,680' TVD (true vertical distance).

2. **Polaris Federal #1H** – Beginning from the Tower State Road (SR 172) to the well pad, the entire road system is 7,965.9 feet in length and it is divided between state lands and private surface. The access road would include the renovation of an existing two-track that is 4,970.6 feet in length, with an additional 590.3 feet of new road construction that will connect the two-track road with the main ranch road that is 2,291.1 in length, with another 113.9 feet of new road construction that will access the southeast corner of the well pad. The entire road would have a driving surface (travelway) of 14 feet, with a maximum surface disturbance width of 30-feet allowed for road construction. The existing two-track access road would be renovated and the main ranch road will be maintained in a good or better condition than it was prior to the commencement of drilling operations. A cattleguard would be constructed and installed at the fence crossing in the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Sec. 10 - T. 15 S. - R. 31 E.. The cattleguard is also in concurrence with the private surface landowner agreement.

The original proposed road route was changed in accordance with the private surface landowner agreement. The surface landowner wants the operator to utilize an existing two-track that would minimize as much as possible the use of the main ranch road that goes to the private surface landowner's ranch house.

The construction of the proposed well pad would be 320 feet long by 250 feet wide (plus stinger 30' X 30'). The construction of the reserve pit would be about 160 feet by 160 feet and dug 4 feet below ground level. The reserve pit would be located on the north side of the well pad. A rotary drilling rig would be used to drill the well to a depth of 13,300' MD (measured distance) and 8,680' TVD (true vertical distance).

3. Standard oilfield construction equipment consisting of; track-type tractors, motor graders, dump trucks and water trucks would be used to construct the access roads and well pads. Associated production facilities (e.g., pipeline, separator, storage tanks, etc.) would be installed during the production phase of these wells.

4. A review of the MTP records shows that the roads accessing these wells do not cross public land. The records were checked from the point that the road leaves the dedicated road to the point where it enters the well locations. No road rights-of-way are required on private surface.

Proposed Well Information:

Well Name	Number	Township	Range	Section	Lease Number	Date Lease Issued
Taurus Federal	1H	15 S.	31 E.	10	NM-105885	02/09/2001
Polaris Federal	1H	15 S.	31 E	15	NM-105885	02/09/2001

County: Chaves County New Mexico

Applicant: COG Operating, LLC

Surface Owners: New Mexico State Surface & Private Surface and Bureau Of Land Management Minerals

2.3 Alternative C

Modifications, or alternatives, to the original proposal that was received from the operator, were identified as the result of the onsite inspection(s) (8/17/07). At the on-sites, all areas of proposed surface disturbance were inspected to ensure that potential impacts to natural resources would be minimized. Changes were made as described below to alleviate or minimize environmental impacts. Alternatives to the different aspects of the proposed action are always considered and applied as preapproval changes, site specific mitigation and/or Conditions of Approval, if they will alleviate or minimize environmental impacts of the operator’s proposal. The change made on the onsite includes the following: the private surface landowner requested that the proposed access road be rerouted, and the road reroute is considered a preferred alternative to the original proposed access road by the operator. The specific changes to the road are identified for the (**Taurus Federal #1H**) and are listed below under 2.3.1:

The Polaris Federal #1H APD will be approved as proposed. No modifications, or alternatives, to the original proposal received from the operator, were identified as the result of the onsite inspection(s) (08/17/07).

2.3.1 Changes on the proposed access road as a result of the surface landowner agreements:

The **Taurus Federal #1H** access road was rerouted because the surface landowner wants to minimize the use of the main ranch road, from the Aberdeen Highway entrance. The road is his private access to the ranch house and the surface landowner would rather the operator utilize another route to access the well pad. The surface landowner wants the operator to use an existing two-track road that can access the well pad from a different direction via the Tower State Road (SR 172). The rerouted road would now access the well pad from an easterly direction, utilizing an existing two-track road, in accordance with the private surface landowner’s requests; it would minimize the vehicular travel on the main ranch road. The two-track borders on state and private lands. At the fence crossing a cattleguard will be constructed with a swinging gate.

The above changes and mitigation measures to the proposed action resulting from the surface landowner agreements on private surface will be analyzed in Alternative C.

## 2.4 Alternatives Considered But Not Analyzed In Detail

Relocate the Proposed Action:

The well locations are determined on the basis of subsurface geologic information. No other alternative locations would have significantly fewer impacts than, or have a clear advantage over, the projected locations. Therefore, the alternatives of changing the locations involved in these actions are not analyzed further in this EA.

## 3.0 Description of Affected Environment

This section describes the environment that would be affected by implementation of the alternatives described in Section 2. Aspects of the affected environment described in this section focus on the relevant major resources or issues. Certain critical environmental components require analysis under BLM policy. These items are included below in Table 3.0, found as the first page of this document. Following the table, only the aspects of the affected environment that are potentially impacted are described.

### **3.1 Air Quality**

The areas of the proposed actions are considered Class II air quality areas. A Class II area allows moderate amounts air quality degradation. The primary sources of air pollution are dust from blowing wind on disturbed or exposed soil and exhaust emissions from motorized equipment.

### **3.2 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)**

The proposed actions would not be located within any ACEC presently designated by the RMP.

### **3.3 Cultural Resources**

A cultural inventory survey, 07-R-049-A revealed no archeological or historic sites that could be impacted by well pads and access roads construction. An additional cultural inventory survey, 08-R-013-B recorded no cultural resources for a powerline on private surface.

### **3.4 Native American Religious Concerns**

A review of existing information indicates the proposed actions are outside any known Traditional Cultural Property.

### **3.5 Environmental Justice**

Executive Order 12898 requires Federal agencies to assess projects to ensure there is no disproportionately high or adverse environmental, health, or safety impacts on minority and low-income populations.

### **3.6 Farmlands, Prime or Unique - Not Present.**

### **3.7 Floodplains – Not Present.**

### **3.8 Invasive & Noxious Weeds**

There are no known populations of invasive or noxious weed species on the proposed access roads and well pads.

Infestations of noxious weeds can have a disastrous impact on biodiversity and natural ecosystems. Noxious weeds affect native plant species by out-competing native vegetation for light, water and soil nutrients. Noxious weeds cause estimated losses to producers \$2 to \$3 billion annually. These losses are attributed to: (1) Decreased quality of agricultural products due to high levels of competition from noxious weeds; (2) decreased quantity of agricultural products due to noxious weed infestations; and (3) costs to control and/or prevent the noxious weeds.

Further, noxious weeds can negatively affect livestock and dairy producers by making forage either unpalatable or toxic to livestock, thus decreasing livestock productivity and potentially increasing producers' feed and animal health care costs. Increased costs to operators are eventually borne by consumers.

Noxious weeds also affect recreational uses, and reduce realty values of both the directly influenced and adjacent properties.

Recent federal legislation has been enacted requiring state and county agencies to implement noxious weed control programs. Monies would be made available for these activities from the federal government, generated from the federal tax base. Therefore, all citizens and taxpayers of the United States are directly affected when noxious weed control prevention is not exercised.

### **3.9 Threatened or Endangered Species**

Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended), the BLM is required to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on any proposed action which may affect Federal listed threatened or endangered species or species proposed for listing. RFO reviewed and determined the proposed actions are in compliance with listed species management guidelines outlined in the 1997 Biological Assessment (Cons. #2-22-96-F-102). No further consultation with the Service is required.

There are no known threatened or endangered species of plant or animals within the project areas. The list of federal threatened, endangered and candidate species reviewed for this EA can be found in Appendix 11 of the Roswell Approved RMP (AP11-2).

### **3.10 Wastes, Hazardous or Solid**

No waste material will be removed from the project areas and upon reclamation of the reserve pits the NMOCD rules will be imposed and the reserve pit contents will be encapsulated.

### **3.11 Water Quality**

Surface:

Surface water within the area is affected by geology, precipitation, and water erosion. Factors that currently affect surface water resources include livestock grazing management, oil and gas development, recreational use and brush control treatments. No perennial surface water is found on public land in the areas. Ephemeral surface water within the areas may be located in tributaries, playas, alkali lakes and stock tanks.

Ground:

Groundwaters within the areas are affected by geology and precipitation. Factors that currently affect groundwater resources in the areas include livestock grazing management, oil and gas development, groundwater pumping and possible impacts from brush control treatments. State Engineers' water listing shows fresh water for stock in the Quaternary Alluvium. Surrounding townships and historical well files suggest water at approximate depths of 80 ft to 320 ft.. The interval at 280 to 320 seems to be used for domestic, stock and secondary recovery of oil. Deepest Expected Fresh Water: 320 ft..

**3.12 Wetlands /Riparian Zones** - Not present.

### **3.13 General Topography/Surface Geology**

The topographic characteristics and/or regional setting of the project area are: The proposed wells are on top of the escarpment and the areas are basically located on flatlands. The wells will be constructed on gravelly and sandy type soils with some minor rock outcrops. There are no major land features that would be impacted by the proposed projects.

### **3.14 Mineral Resources**

There are no known nearby sources of federally owned construction material (caliche/gravel) for surfacing the access roads and pads. However, material could be obtained from abandoned oil and gas pads or a private source.

**3.15 Paleontology** - These undertakings are unlikely to affect paleontological resources.

### **3.16 Soil**

The *Soil Survey of Chaves County, New Mexico, Southern Part (USDA Soil Conservation Service 1980)* was used to describe and analyze impacts to soils from the proposed actions. The soil map units represented in the project areas are:

Kimbrough-Stegall-Slaughter complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes (Kt) For the Kimbrough soil runoff is medium. For Stegall and Slaughter soils runoff is slow. The hazard of erosion for this complex is slight.

### **3.17 Watershed – Hydrology**

The watershed and hydrology in the areas are affected by land and water use practices. The degree

to which hydrologic processes are affected by land and water use depends on locations, extent, timing and the type of activity. Factors that currently cause short-lived alterations to the hydrologic regime in the areas include livestock grazing management, recreational use activities, groundwater pumping and also oil and gas developments such as well pads, permanent and temporary roads, pipelines and powerlines.

### **3.18 Vegetation: GRASSLAND Community**

This lease is within the Grassland community as identified in the Roswell Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS). Appendix 11 of the Draft RMP/EIS describes the Desired Plant Community (DPC) concept and identifies the components of each community.

The native vegetation is mainly grasses and shrubs. The present vegetation in most areas is mainly hairy grama (*Bouteloua hirsuta*), wolftail (*Lycurus phleoides*), blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*) and broom snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*). Inter-mixed are also a variety of shrub species including yucca (*Yucca* spp.), javelinabush (*Condalia* spp.), sumac (*Rhus* spp.). Some invaded areas may also contain encroachments of mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*). Biological crusts are also a component within this community with gyp inclusions and vegetation comprising of gyp grama (*Bouteloua brevesita*), alkali sacaton (*Sporobolus airoides*) and coldenia (*Coldenia* spp.).

The Ecological Site Description for the well pads and access roads is HP-3 Shallow (Southern High Plains).

### **3.19 Livestock Grazing/Range**

These proposed actions are located on BLM grazing allotment #65548 Upper Caprock 15, permitted to B.M. Medlin & Sons, Box 1268, Maljamar, NM 88264. Current permitted use is 6 AU's year long @ 100% public land for 72 AUM's Animal Unit Months. Cattle are the class of livestock authorized.

### **3.20 Wildlife**

The vegetation found at these sites provide habitat to a large range of wildlife species. Some of the common mammals are mule deer, pronghorn, badger, coyote, fox, jackrabbit, cottontails, kangaroo rats, and pocket gophers. It also provides habitat for a variety of grassland and desert birds. Important passerine birds include meadowlarks, horned larks, lark buntings, Cassins sparrows, lark sparrows, Chihuahuan ravens, and loggerhead shrikes. Other birds include scaled quail, mourning doves, roadrunners, common nighthawks, killdeer, and a variety of raptors including red tailed and Swainsons hawks, northern harriers, great horned owls, and burrowing owls. It also provides habitat to a large variety of common lizards and snakes.

**3.21 Special Status Species** - There are no known special status species in the project areas.

### **3.22 Visual Resources**

Visual Resource Management (VRM) on public land is conducted in accordance with BLM Handbook 8410 and BLM Manual 8411. These projects are on private surface and are in a visual class III areas.

**3.23 Recreation** - The proposed actions are on private surface so no public lands recreation applies.

### **3.24 Cave/Karst**

No surface cave/karst features were observed in the immediate vicinity of the proposed actions. However, the proposed actions are located in the (*Low Karst Potential Area*).

### **3.25 Public Health and Safety**

The projects will not be detrimental to public health. The operator will insure that all phases of the project operations are conducted in workman like manner. Precautionary procedures and/or measures will be strictly adhered to in order provide a safe and sound working environment for the life of the wells.

## **4.0 Environmental Consequences and Proposed Mitigation Measures**

### No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the proposed wells would not be drilled. There would be no new impacts from oil and gas production to the resources. The No Action Alternative would result in the continuation of the current land and resource uses in the project areas and is used as the baseline for comparison of alternatives.

### Alternative B

Under Alternative B, the Proposed Actions, the Polaris Federal 1H well would be drilled as originally proposed, without changes to reduce the potential impact to the environment. A summary of potential surface disturbance is presented in Table 4.0. The descriptions of potential impacts to individual resources for the proposed action alternatives are presented in the following text. Also described are mitigation measures that could be incorporated by the BLM where appropriate as Conditions of Approval attached to the permit. Because of the action in rerouting the access road for the Taurus Federal 1H now incorporates a change; this alternative will be evaluated further in Chapter 4.

### Alternative C - Preferred Alternative

A summary of potential surface disturbance is presented in Table 4.0. The descriptions of potential impacts to individual resources for the proposed action alternatives are presented in the following text. Also described are mitigation measures that could be incorporated by the BLM where appropriate as Conditions of Approval attached to the permit. The changes to the proposed actions which resulted in development of Alternative C as the preferred alternative have reduced the potential impact to the environment which will result from these actions.

Table 4.0 Summary of Disturbance

Facility	Number of Miles	Acreage of Disturbance	Duration of Disturbance
Well Pad – Taurus Federal #1H		2.5	Long Term
New Road Construction – Taurus Federal #1H	0.9	3.4	Long Term
Well Pad – Polaris Federal #1H		2.5	Long Term
New Road Construction – Polaris Federal #1H	1.5	5.5	Long Term

Short-term impacts are those which can be stabilized or mitigated rapidly (within 5 years). Long-term impacts are those that would substantially remain for more than 5 years.

#### 4.1 Air Quality

The areas of the proposed actions are considered Class II air quality areas. A Class II area allows moderate amounts air quality degradation. The primary sources of air pollution are dust from blowing wind on disturbed or exposed soil and exhaust emissions from motorized equipment.

##### 4.1.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

Air quality would temporary be directly impacted with pollution from exhaust emissions, chemical odors, and dust that would be caused by the motorized equipment used to construct the access roads, well pads, and by the drilling rig that will be used to drill the wells. Dust dissemination would discontinue upon completion of the construction phases of the access roads and well pads. Air pollution from the motorized equipment would discontinue at the completion of the drilling phases of the operations. The winds that frequent the southeastern part of New Mexico generally disperse the odors and emissions. The impacts to air quality would be greatly reduced as the construction and drilling phases are completed. Other factors that currently affect air quality in the areas include dust from livestock herding activities, dust from recreational use, and dust from use of roads for vehicular traffic.

The federal Clean Air Act requires that air pollutant emissions be controlled from all significant sources in areas that do not meet the national ambient Air quality standards. The New Mexico Air Quality Bureau (NMAQB) is responsible for enforcing the state and national ambient air quality standards in New Mexico. Any emission source must comply with the NMAQB regulations (USDI, BLM 2003b). At the present time, the counties that lie within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Roswell Field Office are classified as in attainment of all state and national ambient air quality standards as defined in the Clean Air Act of 1972, as amended (USDI, BLM 2003b).

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), on October 17, 2006, issued a final ruling on the lowering of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for particulate matter ranging from 2.5 micron or smaller particle size. This ruling became effective on December 18, 2006, stating that the 24-hour standard for PM<sub>2.5</sub>, was lowered to 35 ug/m<sup>3</sup> from the previous standard of 65 ug/m<sup>3</sup>. This revised PM<sub>2.5</sub> daily NAAQS was promulgated to better protect the public from short-term particle exposure. The significant threshold of 35 ug/m<sup>3</sup> daily PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS is not expected to be exceeded under the proposed actions.

#### 4.1.2 Mitigation

The significant threshold of 35 ug/m<sup>3</sup> daily PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS is not expected to be exceeded under the proposed actions. The state and national ambient air quality standards as defined in the Clean Air Act of 1972, as amended (USDI, BLM 2003b) are not expected to be exceeded under the proposed actions.

#### 4.2 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - Not Present

#### 4.3 Cultural Resources

##### 4.3.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

There should be no direct or indirect impacts to cultural resources caused by this undertaking.

#### 4.4 Native American Religious Concerns

To date, the area to be affected by projects construction has not been identified by interested tribes as being important to them.

#### 4.5 Environmental Justice

##### 4.5.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

No minority or low income populations would be directly affected in the vicinity of the proposed actions. Indirect impacts could include impacts due to overall employment opportunities related to the oil and gas and service support industry in the region, as well as the economic benefits to State and County governments related to royalty payments and severance taxes. Other impacts could include a small increase in activity and noise disturbance in areas used for grazing, wood gathering or hunting. However, these impacts would apply to all public land users in the project areas.

#### 4.6 Farmlands, Prime or Unique - Not Present

#### 4.7 Floodplains - Not Present

##### 4.7.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

Surface disturbance from the development of the well pads, access roads, pipelines, and powerlines can result in impairment of the floodplain values from removal of vegetation, removal of wildlife habitat, impairment of water quality, decreased flood water retention and decreased groundwater recharge.

##### 4.7.2 Mitigation

The operator will stockpile the topsoil from the surface of the well pads which will be used for surface reclamation of the well pads. Upon abandonment of the wells and/or when the access roads are no longer in service the Authorized Officer will issue instructions and/or orders for surface reclamation/restoration of the disturbed areas as described in the attached Conditions of Approval.

## **4.8 Invasive, Non-native Species**

### 4.8 .1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

The construction of an access roads and well pads may unintentionally contribute to the establishment and spread of noxious weeds. Noxious weed seed could be carried to and from the project areas by construction equipment, the drilling rig and transport vehicles. The main mechanism for seed dispersion on the roads and well pads is by equipment and vehicles if they were previously used and or driven across or through noxious weed infested areas. The potential for the dissemination of invasive and noxious weed seed may be elevated by the use of construction equipment typically contracted out to companies that may be from other geographic areas in the region. Washing and decontaminating the equipment prior to transporting onto and exiting the construction areas would minimize this impact.

Impacts by noxious weeds will be minimized due to requirements for the company to eradicate the weeds upon discovery. Multiple applications may be required to effectively control the identified populations.

### 4.8 .2 Mitigation

In the event noxious weeds are discovered after the construction of the access roads and well pads, measures will be taken to mitigate those impacts.

## **4.9 Threatened or Endangered Species - Not present**

## **4.10 Wastes, Hazardous or Solid**

### 4.10.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

The lease action falls under environmental regulations that impact exploration and production waste management and disposal practices that impose responsibility and liability on the operator for the protection of human health and the environment from harmful waste management practices or discharges.

4.10.2 Mitigation - The COAs have mitigation measures that would minimize any potential impacts.

## **4.11 Water Quality:**

### **Surface;**

#### 4.11.1A Direct and Indirect Impacts

Surface disturbance from the construction of the well pads access roads, pipelines, and powerlines can result in degradation of surface water quality and groundwater quality from non-point source pollution, increased soil losses, and increased gully erosion.

Potential direct impacts that would occur due to construction of the well pads, access roads, pipelines, and powerlines include increased surface water runoff and off-site sedimentation brought

about by soil disturbance: increased salt loading and water quality impairment of surface waters; channel morphology changes due to road and pipeline crossings; and possible contamination of surface waters by produced water. The magnitude of these impacts to water resources would depend on the proximity of the disturbance to the drainage channel, slope aspect and gradient, degree and areas of soil disturbance, soil character, duration and time within which construction activity would occur, and the timely implementation and success or failure of mitigation measures.

Direct impacts would likely be greatest shortly after the start of construction activities and would likely decrease in time due to natural stabilization, and reclamation efforts. Construction activities would occur over a relatively short period; therefore, the majority of the disturbance would be intense but short lived. Direct impacts to surface water quality would be minor, short-term impacts which may occur during storm flow events. Indirect impacts to water-quality related resources, such as fisheries, would not occur.

Petroleum products and other chemicals, accidentally spilled, could result in surface and groundwater contamination. Similarly, possible leaks from reserve and evaporation pits could degrade surface and ground water quality. Authorization of the proposed projects would require full compliance with BLM directives and stipulations that relate to surface and groundwater protection.

#### 4.11.2A Mitigation

The use of a plastic-lined reserve pits would reduce or eliminate seepage of drilling fluid into the soil and eventually reaching groundwater. Spills or produced fluids (e.g., saltwater, oil, and/or condensate in the event of a breach, overflow, or spill from storage tanks) could result in contamination of the soil onsite, or offsite, and may potentially impact surface and groundwater resources in the long term.

### **B. Groundwater;**

#### 4.11.1B Direct and Indirect Impacts

Petroleum products and other chemicals, accidentally leaked through casing, could result in surface and groundwater contamination. Similarly, possible leaks from reserve and evaporation pits could degrade surface and ground water quality.

#### 4.11.2B Mitigation

The casing and cementing requirements imposed on the proposed wells would reduce or eliminate the potential for groundwater contamination from drilling muds and other surface sources.

The use of a plastic-lined reserve pits would reduce or eliminate seepage of drilling fluid into the soil and eventually reaching groundwater. Spills or produced fluids (e.g., saltwater, oil, and/or condensate in the event of a breach, overflow, or spill from storage tanks) could result in contamination of the soil onsite, or offsite, and may potentially impact surface and groundwater resources in the long term.

### **4.12 Wetlands/Riparian Zones – Not present**

### **4.13 Wild and Scenic Rivers - Not Present**

#### **4.14 Wilderness - Not Present**

#### **4.15 General Topography/Surface Geology**

The surface disturbance anticipated from the construction of the well pads and access roads would have minimal impacts on the area of the operations. No major land or soil displacement would occur from the cradle to grave operations associated with construction of the access roads and well pads.

##### **4.15.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts**

Direct impacts would result from the removal of the surface soils (topsoil) during construction of the well pads and access roads. The consequential earth moving activities would indirectly impact the vegetation and would cause the fragmentation of the surface habitat where small animals live in the project areas.

##### **4.15.2 Mitigation**

The inclusion of mitigation measures to conserve the landscape as much as possible in the Conditions of Approval would lessen the impacts from the surface disturbance activities on these projects.

#### **4.16 Mineral Resources – No impacts**

#### **4.17 Paleontology**

4.17.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts – No direct or indirect impacts are anticipated.

#### **4.18 Soil**

##### **4.18.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts**

The construction of the access roads, well pads, and reserve pits would physically disturb the topsoil and would expose the substratum soil. (See -Table 4.0 for Summary of Disturbance).

Direct impacts resulting from the oil and gas construction of the well pad, access roads, and reserve pits include removal of vegetation, exposure of the soil, mixing of horizons, compaction, loss of top soil productivity and susceptibility to wind and water erosion. Wind erosion would be expected to be a minor contributor to soil erosion with the possible exception of dust from vehicle traffic. These impacts could result in increased indirect impacts such as runoff, erosion and off-site sedimentation. Activities that could cause these types of indirect impacts include construction and operation of well sites, access roads, gas pipelines and facilities.

Contamination of soil from drilling and production wastes mixed into soil or spilled on the soil surfaces could cause a long-term reduction in site productivity. Some of these direct impacts can be reduced or avoided through proper design, construction and maintenance and implementation of best management practices.

Additional soil impacts associated with lease development would occur when heavy precipitation causes water erosion damage. When water saturated segment(s) on the access road become impassable, vehicles may still be driven over the roads. Consequently, deep tire ruts would develop. Where impassable segments are created from deep rutting, unauthorized driving may occur outside the designated routes of the access roads.

#### 4.18.2 Mitigation

The operator shall stockpile the topsoil from the surface of the well pads which will be used for surface reclamation of the well pads. The impact to the soil would be remedied upon reclamation of the well pads when the stockpiled soil that was specifically conserved to establish a seed bed is spread over the well pads and vegetation re-establishes.

The reserve pits shall be recontoured and reseeded as described in the attached Conditions of Approval. Upon abandonment of the wells and/or when the access roads are no longer in service the Authorized Officer shall issue instructions and/or orders for surface reclamation/restoration of the disturbed areas as described in the attached Conditions of Approval.

Road constructions requirements and regular maintenance would alleviate potential impacts to the access roads from water erosion damage.

### **4.19 Watershed - Hydrology**

#### 4.19.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

Construction and surface disturbance activities from the construction of the well pads, access roads, pipelines and powerlines can result in long term and short term alterations to the hydrologic regime. Peak and low flow of perennial streams, ephemeral, and intermittent rivers and streams would be directly affected by an increase in impervious surfaces resulting from the construction of the well pads and roads. The potential hydrologic effects to peak flow is reduced infiltration where surface flows can move more quickly to perennial or ephemeral rivers and streams, causing peak flow to occur earlier and be larger. Increased magnitude and volume of peak flow can cause bank erosion, channel widening, downward incision and disconnection from the floodplain. The potential hydrologic effects to low flow is reduced surface storage and groundwater recharge, resulting in reduced baseflow to perennial, ephemeral, and intermittent rivers and streams. The direct impact would be that hydrologic processes may be altered where the perennial, ephemeral, and intermittent river and stream system responds by changing physical parameters, such as channel configuration. These changes may in turn impact chemical parameters and ultimately the aquatic ecosystem.

Long term direct and indirect impacts to the watershed and hydrology would continue for the life of the wells and would decrease once all well pads and road surfacing material has been removed and reclamation of the well pads, access roads, pipelines, and powerlines has taken place. Short term direct and indirect impacts to the watershed and hydrology from access roads that are not surfaced with material would occur and would likely decrease in time due to reclamation efforts.

#### 4.19.2 Mitigation

The operator will stockpile the topsoil from the surface of the well pads which will be used for

surface reclamation of the well pads. Upon abandonment of the wells and/or when the access roads are no longer in service the Authorized Officer will issue instructions and/or orders for surface reclamation/restoration of the disturbed areas as described in the attached Conditions of Approval.

## **4.20 Vegetation**

### **4.20.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts**

The construction of the access roads and well pads would remove native vegetation. (See - Table 4.0 for Summary of Disturbance).

If the wells are producers, reclamation would not commence until the wells are depleted producers and are plugged and abandoned. Vegetative recovery on the access roads and well pads would depend on life of the wells. Native vegetation would encroach on the well pads over time with only high traffic areas remaining unvegetated. If either well is drilled as a dry hole and is plugged, reclamation of the access roads and well pads would immediately follow. Vegetative impacts would be short-term when the access roads and well pads re-vegetate within a few years, and reclamation of the access roads and well pads are successful.

### **4.20.2 Mitigation**

No impact to vegetation is anticipated. However measures will be taken in the event impacts to vegetation are found.

## **4.21 Livestock Grazing/Range**

### **4.21.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts**

There would be some minor disruption of livestock grazing in the pasture, specifically on the well pads, during the construction and drilling phase of the wells. Vehicle traffic would increase in the areas, which may lead to conflicts with livestock.

### **4.21.2 Mitigation**

If any conflicts with livestock do arise as a result of the access roads and well pad construction, mitigation measures will be taken, and consultation with the allottee will mitigate those impacts.

## **4.22 Special Status Species – Not present.**

## **4.23 Wildlife**

### **4.23.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts**

Some small wildlife species may be killed and their dens or nests destroyed during construction of the access roads and well pads. The construction of the access roads and well pads could cause fragmentation of wildlife habitat. The short-term negative impact to wildlife would occur during the construction phase of the operations would be due to noise and habitat destruction. In general, most

wildlife species would become habituated to the new facilities. For other wildlife species with a low tolerance to activities, the operations on the well pads would continue to displace wildlife from the areas due to ongoing disturbances such as vehicle traffic and equipment maintenance. Upon abandonment of the wells, the areas would revegetate and wildlife would return to previous levels.

#### 4.23.2 Mitigation

The conditions of approval would alleviate most losses of wildlife species, such as; netting storage tanks, installation or other modifications of cones on separator stacks, and timing stipulations.

**4.24 Recreation** - The proposed actions are on private surface so no public lands recreation applies.

4.24.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts - None

4.24.2 Mitigation - None

#### 4.25 Visual Resources

Facilities, such as produced water, condensate or oil storage tanks that rise above eight feet, would provide a geometrically strong vertical and horizontal visual contrast in form and line to the characteristic landscape and vegetation, which have flat, horizontal to slightly rolling form and line. The construction of an access road, well pad and other ancillary facilities, other than facilities greater in height than eight feet, would slightly modify the existing area visual resources.

The Class III objective is to: Partially retain existing landscape character. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate a casual observer's view. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Facilities, such as condensate and produced water or oil storage tanks that rise above eight feet, would provide a geometrically strong vertical and horizontal visual contrast in form and line to the characteristic landscape and vegetation, which have flat, horizontal to slightly rolling form and line.

Under visual resource Class III, the method for repeating the basic elements would be to remove strong vertical and horizontal contrast through use of low-profile facilities as reflected in the Roswell RMP (1997, p. AP1-4). Depending on the production nature of the well site, multiple low-profile condensate and/or oil or produced water tanks would be necessary to accommodate the project.

Through color manipulation, by painting well facilities to blend with the rolling to flat vegetative and/or landform setting with a gray-green to brownish color, the view is expected to favorably blend with the form, line, color and texture of the existing landscape. The flat color (Juniper Green (olive drab) from the standard or supplemental environmental colors also closely approximates the color of the setting. All facilities, including the meter building, would be painted this color.

#### 4. 25.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

Through color manipulation, by painting well facilities to blend with the rolling to flat vegetative and/or landform setting with a gray-green to brownish color, the view is expected to favorably blend with the form, line, color and texture of the existing landscape

#### 4.25.2 Mitigation

The flat color Olive Drab 18-0622 TPX from the Supplemental Environmental Colors Chart is to be used on all facilities to closely approximate the vegetation within the setting. All facilities, including the meter building, would be painted this color. Low profile facilities are required on this location because of the visual impacts caused by the proposed facilities.

### **4.26 Cave/Karst**

There would be no impact to known cave entrances, or karst features within the areas of the proposed actions. The proposed actions are located in a low karst potential area.

#### 4. 26.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts - None

#### 4. 26.2 Mitigation - None

### **4.27 Public Health and Safety**

#### 4.27.1 Direct and Indirect Impacts

The construction and drilling operations will be conducted in a safe workman like manner and no impacts are anticipated to occur when the operations are conducted in a professional constructive manner.

#### 4.27.2 Mitigation - Non-required

### **4.28 Cumulative Impacts**

The leased area of the proposed actions has been industrialized with oil and gas well development. The surface disturbance for each project that has been permitted has created a spreading out of land use fragmentation. The cumulative impacts fluctuate with the gradual reclamation of well abandonments and the creation of new additional surface disturbances in the construction of new access roads and well pads. The on going process of restoration of abandonments and creating new disturbances for drilling new wells gradually accumulates as the minerals are extracted from the land. Preserving as much land as possible and applying appropriate mitigation measures will alleviate the cumulative impacts.

While it is likely that there will be no significant cumulative impact from the proposed actions, continued oil and gas development, and other surface-disturbing activities in these areas, may potentially have negative cumulative impacts on vegetation, soil, water, livestock, wildlife and visual resources.

## 5.0 Consultation/Coordination

This section includes individuals or organizations from the public and its' users, the interdisciplinary team, and permittees that were contacted during the development of this document. Onsite inspection(s) was conducted on (8/17/07)

Table 5.1 Summary of Public Contacts Made During Preparation of Document and Interdisciplinary Team

Public Contact	Title	Organization	Present at Onsite?
Mr. Dwaine Moore Sr.	Agent	COG Op., LLC	Present
Mr. Dwaine Moore	Agent	COG Op., LLC	Present
Mr. Bobby Kays	basin surveys – Crew Chief	COG Op., LLC	Present
ID Team Member	Title	Organization	Present at Onsite?
Richard G. Hill	Environmental Protection Specialist	RFO	Present
Pat Flanary	Archaeologist	RFO	Present

## 6.0 Appendices

The Roswell Field Office; Well Location Map (Exhibit A), **Pecos District-RFO, Conditions of Approval**, and the special requirements derived from this EA, would be applied to each proposed action to minimize the surface disturbance and conserve the surrounding landscape.

### 6.1 References

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. January 1997, *Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement*. Roswell, New Mexico.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. October 10,1997, *Resource Management Plan Record of Decision*. Roswell, New Mexico.

#### 6.1.1 APD, Complete

#### 6.1.2 Authorities

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 3160

40 CFR All Parts and Sections inclusive Protection of Environment, Revised as of July 1, 2001.

43 CFR, All Parts and Sections inclusive - Public Lands: Interior. Revised as of October 1, 2000.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management and Office of the Solicitor (editors). 2001. *The Federal Land Policy and Management Act, as amended*. Public Law 94-579.

#### 6.1.3 Other Supporting Information

# Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management

Roswell Field Office  
2909 W. Second Street  
Roswell, New Mexico 88201

Applicant: COG Operating, LLC  
Lease Number: NM-105885  
Roswell Field Office: (505) 627-0272

EA Log Number: NM-510-07-184  
File Code: 3160

Project: Taurus Federal #1H  
Location: Section: 10, T. 15 S., R. 31 E.

Project: Polaris Federal #1H  
Location: Section: 15, T. 15 S., R. 31 E

## Finding of No Significant Impact

Impact identification and analysis of approving the project proposal and/or alternative(s) has been completed. A complete and comprehensive environmental analysis has been conducted. Completion of the environmental assessment, along with implementation of required stipulations and/or mitigating measures outlined in the environmental assessment and Application for Permit to Drill (APD) conditions of approval, will result in (projected) impacted resources values being restored to pre-project conditions and/or acceptable post-project standards. Further analysis in an environmental impact statement is not needed.

## Decision Record

Based upon the analysis, the BLM, Pecos District, Roswell Field Office is approving the **Taurus Federal #1H** oil well and the decisions regarding the other well analyzed in the EA is pending;

The **Taurus Federal #1H** oil well, located in the SL: SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, 330' FSL & 330' FWL, Unit Letter M, & BHL: SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, 330' FSL & 330' FEL, Unit Letter P, in Section 10 T. 15 S., R. 31 E., is approved.

The **Polaris Federal #1H** oil well, located in the SL: SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, 1980' FNL & 330' FWL, Unit Letter E, & BHL: SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, 1980' FNL & 330' FEL, Unit Letter H in Section 15, T. 15 S., R. 31 E., is approved.

The Bureau of Land Management's approval of the APD does not relieve the lessee and operator from obtaining required authorizations from the private surface owner.

Rational: The amount of new long-term disturbance will be limited to the well pads and access roads. Short-term impacts will last approximately one growing season or until there is successful plant growth on the rehabilitated portions.

The Bureau of Land Management staff has reviewed the environmental assessment and identified site-specific mitigation measures to avoid or minimize surface impacts resulting from the construction of these projects. The well pads and access roads will remain as long term impacts. The cumulative impacts to the environment from existing and new development have been identified. During construction activities, machinery emissions, disturbed ground, drilling and construction equipment will result in short-term visual impacts. These impacts will be minimized by a rapid construction schedule and site restoration.

VRM - The Bureau of Land Management has developed a visual resource management (VRM) classification system designed to enhance visual qualities and describe degrees of modification to the landscape. The proposed project area is classified as a class III VRM. The III VRM allows for minor through major modifications of the existing landscape and the level of change in the basic landscape from depending of the VRM Classification.

A cultural and historic resource category 3 inventory was conducted on August 4, 2007. A total of 21.11 acres of private land and 6.31 acres of NM State land were inventoried for the proposed wells and access roads. No sites were recorded that could be impacted. Standard stipulations will be required on the project. See Cultural Resource Stipulations attached to the APD. A cultural clearance was granted on August 28, 2007. An additional cultural inventory survey for powerlines on private surface was conducted on November 11, 2007 and totaled 7.31 acres. The final cultural approval was granted on December 06, 2007.

The operator would be allowed to drill these wells as part of the further development of, and in accordance with, terms of their Federal lease.

A bond is required for all Federal leases. The bond must guarantee performance and compliance with the lease terms and cover all liabilities arising from, or related to drilling operations on a Federal lease including the restoration of any land or surface waters adversely affected by lease development.

Production history in the Permian Basin has demonstrated that there are no unique or unknown risks. The effects of oil and gas exploration and production are known, and based on experience, mitigation measures and stipulations have been developed to avoid, minimize or eliminate impacts.

The effects on the human environment have not been controversial in the past and the public has not voiced opposition to new wells being drilled in the areas.

Secondary effects on soil, erosion, vegetation, cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreation resources were considered. Partial reclamation will occur during the production phase and full reclamation will occur after final abandonment. Residual impacts that remain after mitigation measures and implemented are found acceptable.

These proposed actions are in compliance with the Roswell Resource Management Plan and Final

Environmental Management Plan that was approved October 10, 1997. These plans have been reviewed to determine if the proposed actions conform with the land-use planning terms and conditions required by 43 CFR 1610.5. County and local planning: No land-use planning or zoning exists in Chaves County that will affect these actions.

Stipulations

Mitigating measures were considered and analyzed in the Environmental Assessment. Based on impact analysis, specific stipulations and/or mitigating measures have been selected and are attached to the approved APD/Sundry. The applicant is responsible for implementing these mitigating measures to prevent and/or reduce impacts projected to occur during and after project completions.

Administrative Review and Appeal: Under BLM regulations, this Decision Record (DR) is subject to administrative review in accordance with 43 CFR 3165. Any request for administrative review of this DR must include information required under 43 CFR 3165.3(b) (State Director Review), including all supporting documentation. Such a request must be filed in writing with the State Director, Bureau of Land Management, 1474 Rodeo Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505, no later than 20 business days after this DR is received or considered to have been received.

Any party who is adversely affected by the State Director's decision may appeal that decision to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, as provided in 43 CFR 3165.4.

Prepared by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Environmental Protection Specialist

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant Field Manager, Lands & Minerals

# **PECOS DISTRICT - RFO**

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

OPERATORS NAME: COG Operating, LLC  
LEASE NO.: NM-105885  
WELL NAME & NO: Taurus Federal #1H  
SURFACE HOLE FOOTAGE: 330' FSL & 330' FWL  
BOTTOM HOLE FOOTAGE: 330' FSL & 330' FEL  
LOCATION: Section 10, T. 15 S., R. 31 E., NMPM  
COUNTY: Chaves County, New Mexico

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

The approval of the Application For Permit To Drill (APD) is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations: 43 Code of Federal Regulations 3160, the lease terms, Onshore Oil and Gas Orders, Notices To Lessees, New Mexico Oil Conservation Division (NMOCD) Rules, National Historical Preservation Act As Amended, and instructions and orders of the Authorized Officer. Any request for a variance shall be submitted to the Authorized Officer on Form 3160-5, Sundry Notices and Report on Wells.

### **I. PERMIT EXPIRATION**

If the permit terminates prior to drilling and drilling cannot be commenced within 60 days after expiration, an operator is required to submit Form 3160-5, Sundry Notices and Reports on Wells, requesting surface reclamation requirements for any surface disturbance. However, if the operator will be able to initiate drilling within 60 days after the expiration of the permit, the operator must have set the conductor pipe in order to allow for an extension of 60 days beyond the expiration date of the APD (Filing of a Sundry Notice is required for this 60 day extension).

### **II. ARCHAEOLOGICAL, PALEONTOLOGY & HISTORICAL SITES**

Any cultural and/or paleontological resource discovered by the operator or by any person working on the operator's behalf shall immediately report such findings to the Authorized Officer. The operator is fully accountable for the actions of their contractors and subcontractors. The operator shall suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the Authorized Officer. An evaluation of the discovery shall be made by the Authorized Officer to determine the appropriate actions that shall be required to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values of the discovery. The operator shall be held responsible for the cost of the proper mitigation measures that the Authorized Officer assesses after consultation with the operator on the evaluation and decisions of the discovery. Any unauthorized collection or disturbance of cultural or paleontological resources may result in a shutdown order by the Authorized Officer.

### **III. NOXIOUS WEEDS**

The operator shall be held responsible if noxious weeds become established within the areas of operations (access road and/or well pad). Weed control shall be required on the disturbed land where noxious weeds exist, which includes the roads, pads, associated pipeline corridor, and adjacent land affected by the establishment of weeds due to this action. The operator shall consult with the Authorized Officer for acceptable weed control methods, which include following EPA and BLM requirements and policies.

### **IV. CONSTRUCTION**

#### **A. NOTIFICATION:**

The BLM shall administer compliance and monitor construction of the access road and well pad. Notify the Roswell Field Office at (505) 627-0247 at least 3 working days prior to commencing construction of the access road and/or well pad.

When construction operations are being conducted on this well, the operator shall have the approved Application for Permit to Drill and Conditions of Approval on the well site and they shall be made available upon request by the Authorized Officer.

#### **B. TOPSOIL:**

The operator shall stockpile the topsoil of the well pad. The topsoil to be stripped is approximately 6 inches in depth. The topsoil shall not be used to backfill the reserve pit and will be used for interim and final reclamation. The topsoil shall be stockpiled on the southeast corner of the well pad.

#### **C. RESERVE PITS:**

The reserve pit shall be constructed and closed in accordance with the NMOCD rules.

The reserve pit shall be constructed 160' X 160' on the NORTH side of the well pad.

The reserve pit shall be constructed, so that upon completion of drilling operations, the dried pit contents shall be buried a minimum depth of three feet below ground level. Should the pit content level not meet the three foot minimum depth requirement, the excess contents shall be removed until the required minimum depth of three feet below ground level has been met. The operator shall properly dispose of the excess contents at an authorized disposal site.

The reserve pit shall be constructed and maintained so that runoff water from outside the location is not allowed to enter the pit. The berms surrounding the entire perimeter of the pit shall extend a minimum of two (2) feet above ground level. At no time will standing fluids in the pit be allowed to rise above ground level.

The reserve pit shall be fenced on three (3) sides during drilling operations. The fourth side shall be fenced immediately upon rig release.

**D. FEDERAL MINERAL MATERIALS PIT:**

If the operator elects to surface the access road and/or well pad, mineral materials extracted during construction of the reserve pit may be used for surfacing the well pad and access road and other facilities on the lease.

Payment shall be made to the BLM prior to removal of any additional federal mineral materials from any site other than the reserve pit. Call the Roswell Field Office at (505) 627-0236.

**E. WELL PAD SURFACING:**

Surfacing of the well pad is not required.

If the operator elects to surface the well pad, the surfacing material may be required to be removed at the time of reclamation.

The well pad shall be constructed in a manner which creates the smallest possible surface disturbance, consistent with safety and operational need.

**F. ON LEASE ACCESS ROADS:**

**Road Width**

The access road shall have a driving surface that creates the smallest possible surface disturbance and does not exceed fourteen (14) feet in width. The maximum width of surface disturbance, when constructing the access road, shall not exceed thirty (30) feet.

**Surfacing**

Surfacing material is not required on the new access road driving surface. If the operator elects to surface the new access road or pad, the surfacing material may be required to be removed at the time of reclamation.

Where possible, no improvements should be made on the unsurfaced access road other than to remove vegetation as necessary, road irregularities, safety issues, or to fill low areas that may sustain standing water.

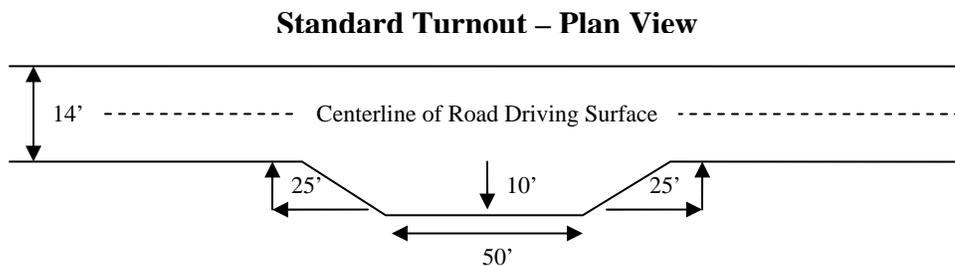
The Authorized Officer reserves the right to require surfacing of any portion of the access road at any time deemed necessary. Surfacing may be required in the event the road deteriorates, erodes, road traffic increases, or it is determined to be beneficial for future field development. The surfacing depth and type of material will be determined at the time of notification.

## Crowning

Crowning shall be done on the access road driving surface. The road crown shall have a grade of approximately 2% (i.e., a 1" crown on a 14' wide road). The road shall conform to Figure 1; cross section and plans for typical road construction.

## Turnouts

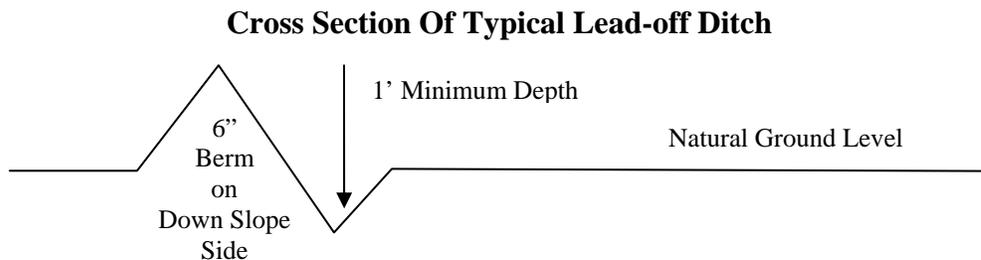
Vehicle turnouts shall be constructed on the road. Turnouts shall be intervisible with interval spacing distance less than 1000 feet. Turnouts shall be constructed on all blind curves. Turnouts shall conform to the following diagram:



## Drainage

Drainage control systems shall be constructed on the entire length of road (e.g. ditches, sidehill outcropping and insloping, lead-off ditches, culvert installation, and low water crossings).

A typical lead-off ditch has a minimum depth of 1 foot below and a berm of 6 inches above natural ground level. The berm shall be on the down-slope side of the lead-off ditch.



All lead-off ditches shall be graded to drain water with a 1 percent minimum to 3 percent maximum ditch slope. The spacing interval are variable for lead-off ditches and shall be determined according to the formula for spacing intervals of lead-off ditches, but may be amended depending upon existing soil types and centerline road slope (in %);

### **Formula For Spacing Interval Of Lead-off Ditches**

Example - On a 4% road slope that is 400 feet long, the water flow shall drain water into a lead-off ditch. Spacing interval shall be determined by the following formula:

$$400 \text{ foot road with } 4\% \text{ road slope: } \frac{400'}{4\%} + 100' = 200' \text{ lead-off ditch interval}$$

### **Cattleguards**

An appropriately sized cattleguard(s) good enough to handle vehicular traffic for the project shall be installed and maintained at the fence crossing(s) in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 10 - T. 15 S. -R. 31 E.. A swinging arm gate shall be constructed across the cattleguard to close the fenceline.

### **Fence Requirement**

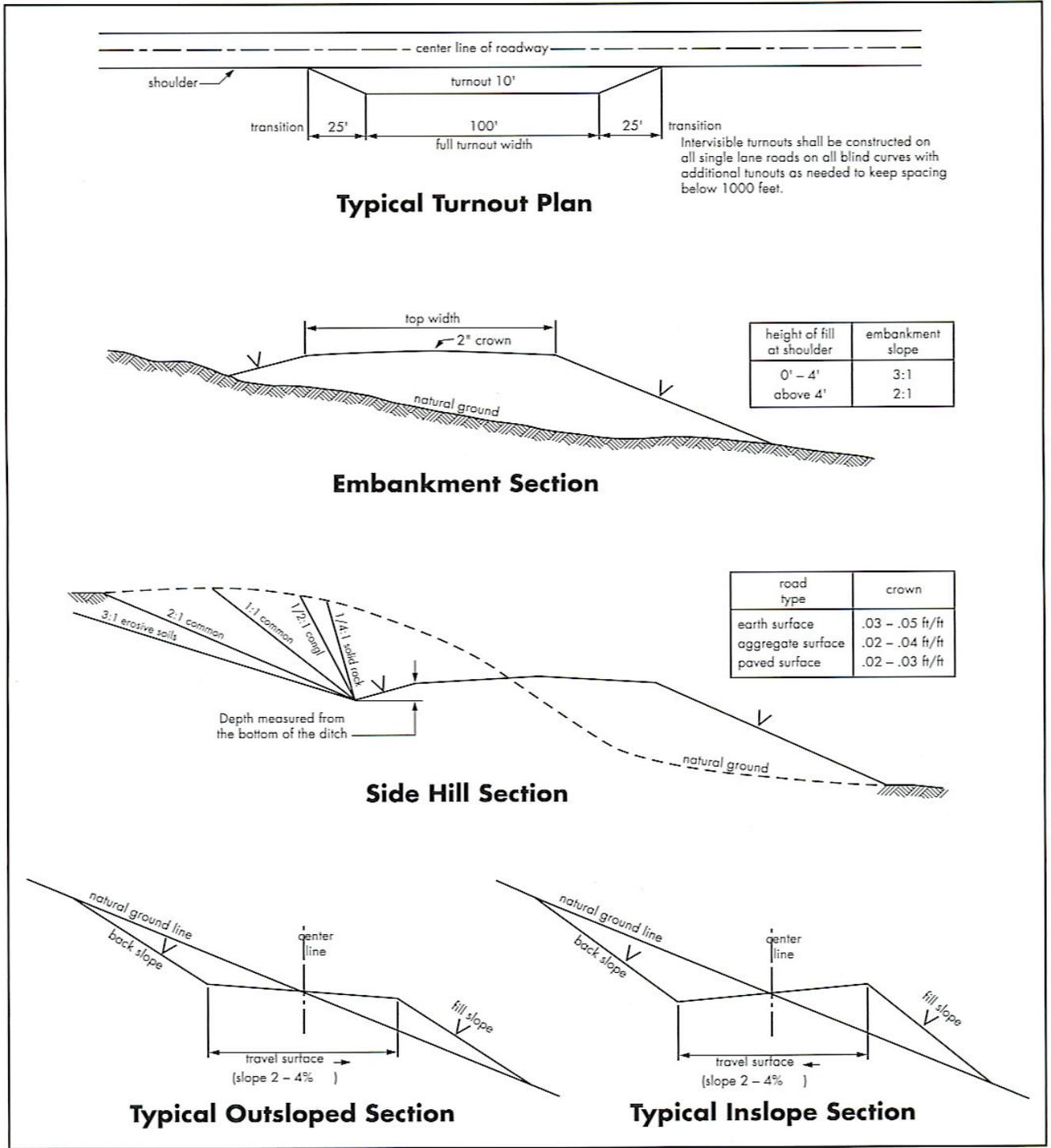
Where entry is required across a fence line, the fence shall be braced and tied off on both sides of the passageway prior to cutting.

The operator shall notify the private surface landowner or the grazing allotment holder prior to crossing any fence(s).

### **Public Access**

Public access on this road shall not be restricted by the operator without specific written approval granted by the Authorized Officer.

**Figure 1 – Cross Sections and Plans For Typical Road Sections**



## **V. DRILLING**

### **A. DRILLING OPERATIONS REQUIREMENTS**

**Chaves County;** call the Roswell Field Office, 2909 West Second St., Roswell NM 88201. 24 hour 505 – 627 - 0205

The BLM is to be notified a minimum of 4 hours in advance for a representative to witness:

- a. Spudding well
  - b. Setting and/or Cementing of all casing strings
  - c. BOPE tests
1. A Hydrogen Sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) Drilling Plan is required for this wellbore.
  2. Unless the production casing has been run and cemented or the well has been properly plugged, the drilling rig shall not be removed from over the hole without prior approval.
  3. When floor controls are required, (3M or Greater) controls will be on the rig floor, unobstructed, readily accessible to the driller and will be operational at all times during drilling and/or completion activities. Rig floor is defined as the area immediately around the rotary table; the area immediately above the substructure on which the draw works are located, this does not include the dog house or stairway area.

### **B. CASING**

1. The 13 3/8 inch surface casing shall be set at 400 feet and cemented to the surface.
  - a. If cement does not circulate to the surface, the appropriate BLM office shall be notified and a temperature survey utilizing an electronic type temperature survey with a surface log readout will be used or a cement bond log shall be run to verify the top of the cement.
  - b. Wait on cement (WOC) time for a primary cement job will be a minimum 18 hours for a water basin, 24 hours in the potash area, or 500 pounds compression strength, whichever is greater. (This is to include the lead cement).
  - c. Wait on cement (WOC) time for a remedial job will be a minimum of 4 hours after bringing cement to surface or 500 pounds compression strength, whichever is greater.
  - d. If cement falls back, remedial action will be done prior to drilling out that string.
2. The minimum required fill of cement behind the 9 5/8 inch intermediate casing is to circulate to surface. If cement does not circulate see B.1.a-d above.

3. The minimum required fill of cement behind the 5 1/2 inch production casing is Tie back into the 9 5/8 inch casing by at least 500 ft. (depth or cement to surface).
  - a. If cement does not circulate, contact the appropriate BLM office for approval of remedial action.
  - b. If cement is required to tie-back into previous casing string, a temperature survey utilizing an electronic type temperature survey with a surface log readout will be used or a cement bond log shall be run to verify the top of the cement.
4. If hardband drill pipe is rotated inside casing, returns will be monitored for metal. If metal is found in samples, drill pipe will be pulled and rubber protectors which have a larger diameter than the tool joints of the drill pipe will be installed prior to continuing drilling operations.

### **C. PRESSURE CONTROL**

1. All blowout preventer (BOP) and related equipment (BOPE) shall comply with well control requirements as described in Onshore Oil and Gas Order No. 2 and API RP 53 Sec. 17.
2. Minimum working pressure of the blowout preventer (BOP) and related equipment (BOPE) required for drilling below the surface casing shoe shall be 3000 psi. A variance to test the surface BOP prior to drilling below the 13 3/8 inch show to 800 psi with the rig pumps is approved.
3. The appropriate BLM office shall be notified a minimum of 4 hours in advance for a representative to witness the tests.
  - a. The tests shall be done by an independent service company.
  - b. The results of the test shall be reported to the appropriate BLM office.
  - c. All tests are required to be recorded on a calibrated test chart. A copy of the BOP/BOPE test chart and a copy of independent service company test will be submitted to the appropriate BLM office.
  - d. The BOP/BOPE test shall include a low pressure test from 250 to 300 psi. The test will be held for a minimum of 10 minutes if test is done with a test plug and 30 minutes without a test plug.

## **VI. PRODUCTION**

### **A. WELL STRUCTURES & FACILITIES**

#### **Placement of Production Facilities**

Production facilities should be placed on the well pad to allow for maximum interim recontouring and revegetation of the well location.

### **Containment Structures**

The containment structure shall be constructed to hold the capacity of the entire contents of the largest tank, plus 24 hour production, unless more stringent protective requirements are deemed necessary by the Authorized Officer.

### **Painting Requirement**

All above-ground structures including meter housing that are not subject to safety requirements shall be painted a flat non-reflective paint color, Olive Drab, Munsell Soil Color Chart 18-0622 TPX.

### **VRM Facility Requirement**

Low profile facilities are required on this location.

## **VII. INTERIM RECLAMATION & RESERVE PIT CLOSURE**

### **A. INTERIM RECLAMATION**

If the well is a producer, interim reclamation shall be conducted on the well site in accordance with the orders of the Authorized Officer. The operator shall submit a Sundry Notices and Reports on Wells (Notice of Intent), Form 3160-5, prior to conducting interim reclamation.

During the life of the development, all disturbed areas not needed for active support of production operations should undergo “interim” reclamation in order to minimize the environmental impacts of development on other resources and uses.

During reclamation, the removal of caliche is important to increasing the success of revegetating the site. Removed caliche may be used in road repairs, fire walls or for building other roads and locations. In addition, in order to operate the well or complete workover operations, it may be necessary to drive, park and operate on restored interim vegetation within the previously disturbed area. Disturbing revegetated areas for production or workover operations will be allowed. If there is significant disturbance and loss of vegetation, the area will need to be revegetated. Communicate with the appropriate BLM office for any exceptions/exemptions if needed.

### **B. RESERVE PIT CLOSURE**

At the time reserve pits are to be reclaimed, operators should work with BLM surface management

specialists to devise the best strategies to reduce the size of the location. Any reductions should allow for remedial well operations, as well as safe and efficient removal of oil and gas.

The reserve pit, when dried and closed, shall be recontoured, all trash removed, and reseeded as follows:

Ecological Site: Sandy HP-3 for Shallow HP-3

<u>Common Name and Preferred Variety</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Pounds of Pure Live Seed Per Acre</u>
Blue grama, var. Lovington	( <i>Bouteloua gracilis</i> )	2.00 lbs.
Sideoats grama var. Vaughn or El Reno	( <i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i> )	3.00 lbs.
Little bluestem	( <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> )	0.50 lb.
Sand dropseed	( <i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i> )	1.00 lb.
Plains bristlegrass	( <i>Setaria macrostachya</i> )	1.00 lb.
Indian blanketflower	( <i>Gaillardia aristata</i> )	0.50 lb.
Desert or Scarlet Globemallow <i>or S. coccinea</i> )	( <i>Sphaeralcea ambigua</i> )	<u>1.00 lb.</u>
TOTAL POUNDS PURE LIVE SEED (pls) PER ACRE		9.00 lbs.

Certified Weed Free Seed. IF ONE SPECIES IS NOT AVAILABLE, INCREASE ALL OTHERS PROPORTIONATELY. No less than four (4) species, including one (1) forb. No less than 9.0 pounds pls per acre shall be applied.

**VIII. FINAL ABANDONMENT & REHABILITATION REQUIREMENTS**

Upon abandonment of the well and/or when the access road is no longer in service the Authorized Officer shall issue instructions and/or orders for surface reclamation and restoration of all disturbed areas.

On private surface/federal mineral estate land the reclamation procedures on the road and well pad shall be accomplished in accordance with the Private Surface Land Owner agreements.

# **PECOS DISTRICT - RFO**

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

OPERATORS NAME: COG Operating, LLC  
LEASE NO.: NM-105885  
WELL NAME & NO: Polaris Federal #1H  
SURFACE HOLE FOOTAGE: 1980' FNL & 330' FWL  
BOTTOM HOLE FOOTAGE: 1980' FNL & 330' FEL  
LOCATION: Section 15, T. 15 S., R. 31 E., NMPM  
COUNTY: Chaves County, New Mexico

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

The approval of the Application For Permit To Drill (APD) is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations: 43 Code of Federal Regulations 3160, the lease terms, Onshore Oil and Gas Orders, Notices To Lessees, New Mexico Oil Conservation Division (NMOCD) Rules, National Historical Preservation Act As Amended, and instructions and orders of the Authorized Officer. Any request for a variance shall be submitted to the Authorized Officer on Form 3160-5, Sundry Notices and Report on Wells.

### **V. PERMIT EXPIRATION**

If the permit terminates prior to drilling and drilling cannot be commenced within 60 days after expiration, an operator is required to submit Form 3160-5, Sundry Notices and Reports on Wells, requesting surface reclamation requirements for any surface disturbance. However, if the operator will be able to initiate drilling within 60 days after the expiration of the permit, the operator must have set the conductor pipe in order to allow for an extension of 60 days beyond the expiration date of the APD (Filing of a Sundry Notice is required for this 60 day extension).

### **VI. ARCHAEOLOGICAL, PALEONTOLOGY & HISTORICAL SITES**

Any cultural and/or paleontological resource discovered by the operator or by any person working on the operator's behalf shall immediately report such findings to the Authorized Officer. The operator is fully accountable for the actions of their contractors and subcontractors. The operator shall suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the Authorized Officer. An evaluation of the discovery shall be made by the Authorized Officer to determine the appropriate actions that shall be required to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values of the discovery. The operator shall be held responsible for the cost of the proper mitigation measures that the Authorized Officer assesses after consultation with the operator on the evaluation and decisions of the discovery. Any unauthorized collection or disturbance of cultural or paleontological resources may result in a shutdown order by the Authorized Officer.

## **VII. NOXIOUS WEEDS**

The operator shall be held responsible if noxious weeds become established within the areas of operations (access road and/or well pad). Weed control shall be required on the disturbed land where noxious weeds exist, which includes the roads, pads, associated pipeline corridor, and adjacent land affected by the establishment of weeds due to this action. The operator shall consult with the Authorized Officer for acceptable weed control methods, which include following EPA and BLM requirements and policies.

## **VIII. CONSTRUCTION**

### **A. NOTIFICATION:**

The BLM shall administer compliance and monitor construction of the access road and well pad. Notify the Roswell Field Office at (505) 627-0247 at least 3 working days prior to commencing construction of the access road and/or well pad.

When construction operations are being conducted on this well, the operator shall have the approved Application for Permit to Drill and Conditions of Approval on the well site and they shall be made available upon request by the Authorized Officer.

### **B. TOPSOIL:**

The operator shall stockpile the topsoil of the well pad. The topsoil to be stripped is approximately 6 inches in depth. The topsoil shall not be used to backfill the reserve pit and will be used for interim and final reclamation. The soil shall be stockpiled on the southeast corner of the well pad.

### **C. RESERVE PITS:**

The reserve pit shall be constructed and closed in accordance with the NMOCD rules.

The reserve pit shall be constructed 160' X 160' on the NORTH side of the well pad.

The reserve pit shall be constructed, so that upon completion of drilling operations, the dried pit contents shall be buried a minimum depth of three feet below ground level. Should the pit content level not meet the three foot minimum depth requirement, the excess contents shall be removed until the required minimum depth of three feet below ground level has been met. The operator shall properly dispose of the excess contents at an authorized disposal site.

The reserve pit shall be constructed and maintained so that runoff water from outside the location is not allowed to enter the pit. The berms surrounding the entire perimeter of the pit shall extend a minimum of two (2) feet above ground level. At no time will standing fluids in the pit be allowed to rise above ground level.

The reserve pit shall be fenced on three (3) sides during drilling operations. The fourth side shall be fenced immediately upon rig release.

**D. FEDERAL MINERAL MATERIALS PIT:**

If the operator elects to surface the access road and/or well pad, mineral materials extracted during construction of the reserve pit may be used for surfacing the well pad and access road and other facilities on the lease.

Payment shall be made to the BLM prior to removal of any additional federal mineral materials from any site other than the reserve pit. Call the Roswell Field Office at (505) 627-0236.

**E. WELL PAD SURFACING:**

Surfacing of the well pad is not required.

If the operator elects to surface the well pad, the surfacing material may be required to be removed at the time of reclamation.

The well pad shall be constructed in a manner which creates the smallest possible surface disturbance, consistent with safety and operational need.

**F. ON LEASE ACCESS ROADS:**

**Road Width**

The access road shall have a driving surface that creates the smallest possible surface disturbance and does not exceed fourteen (14) feet in width. The maximum width of surface disturbance, when constructing the access road, shall not exceed thirty (30) feet.

**Surfacing**

Surfacing material is not required on the new access road driving surface. If the operator elects to surface the new access road or pad, the surfacing material may be required to be removed at the time of reclamation.

Where possible, no improvements should be made on the unsurfaced access road other than to remove vegetation as necessary, road irregularities, safety issues, or to fill low areas that may sustain standing water.

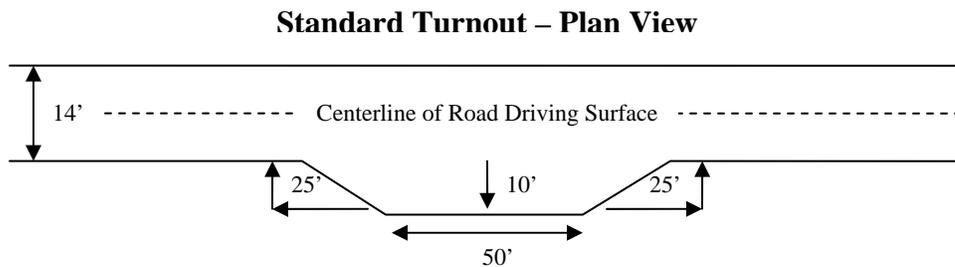
The Authorized Officer reserves the right to require surfacing of any portion of the access road at any time deemed necessary. Surfacing may be required in the event the road deteriorates, erodes, road traffic increases, or it is determined to be beneficial for future field development. The surfacing depth and type of material will be determined at the time of notification.

## Crowning

Crowning shall be done on the access road driving surface. The road crown shall have a grade of approximately 2% (i.e., a 1" crown on a 14' wide road). The road shall conform to Figure 1; cross section and plans for typical road construction.

## Turnouts

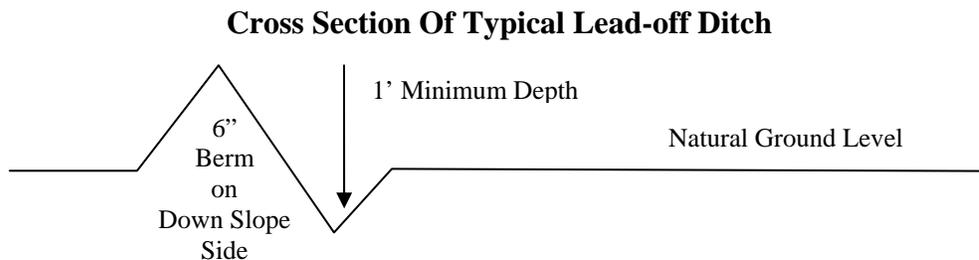
Vehicle turnouts shall be constructed on the road. Turnouts shall be intervisible with interval spacing distance less than 1000 feet. Turnouts shall be constructed on all blind curves. Turnouts shall conform to the following diagram:



## Drainage

Drainage control systems shall be constructed on the entire length of road (e.g. ditches, sidehill out sloping and insloping, lead-off ditches, culvert installation, and low water crossings).

A typical lead-off ditch has a minimum depth of 1 foot below and a berm of 6 inches above natural ground level. The berm shall be on the down-slope side of the lead-off ditch.



All lead-off ditches shall be graded to drain water with a 1 percent minimum to 3 percent maximum ditch slope. The spacing interval are variable for lead-off ditches and shall be determined according to the formula for spacing intervals of lead-off ditches, but may be amended depending upon existing soil types and centerline road slope (in %);

### **Formula For Spacing Interval Of Lead-off Ditches**

Example - On a 4% road slope that is 400 feet long, the water flow shall drain water into a lead-off ditch. Spacing interval shall be determined by the following formula:

$$400 \text{ foot road with } 4\% \text{ road slope: } \frac{400'}{4\%} + 100' = 200' \text{ lead-off ditch interval}$$

### **Cattleguards**

An appropriately sized cattleguard(s) good enough to handle vehicular traffic for the project shall be installed and maintained at the fence crossing(s) in the NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Sec. 10 - T. 15 S. -R. 31 E.. A swinging arm gate shall be constructed across the cattleguard to close the fenceline.

### **Fence Requirement**

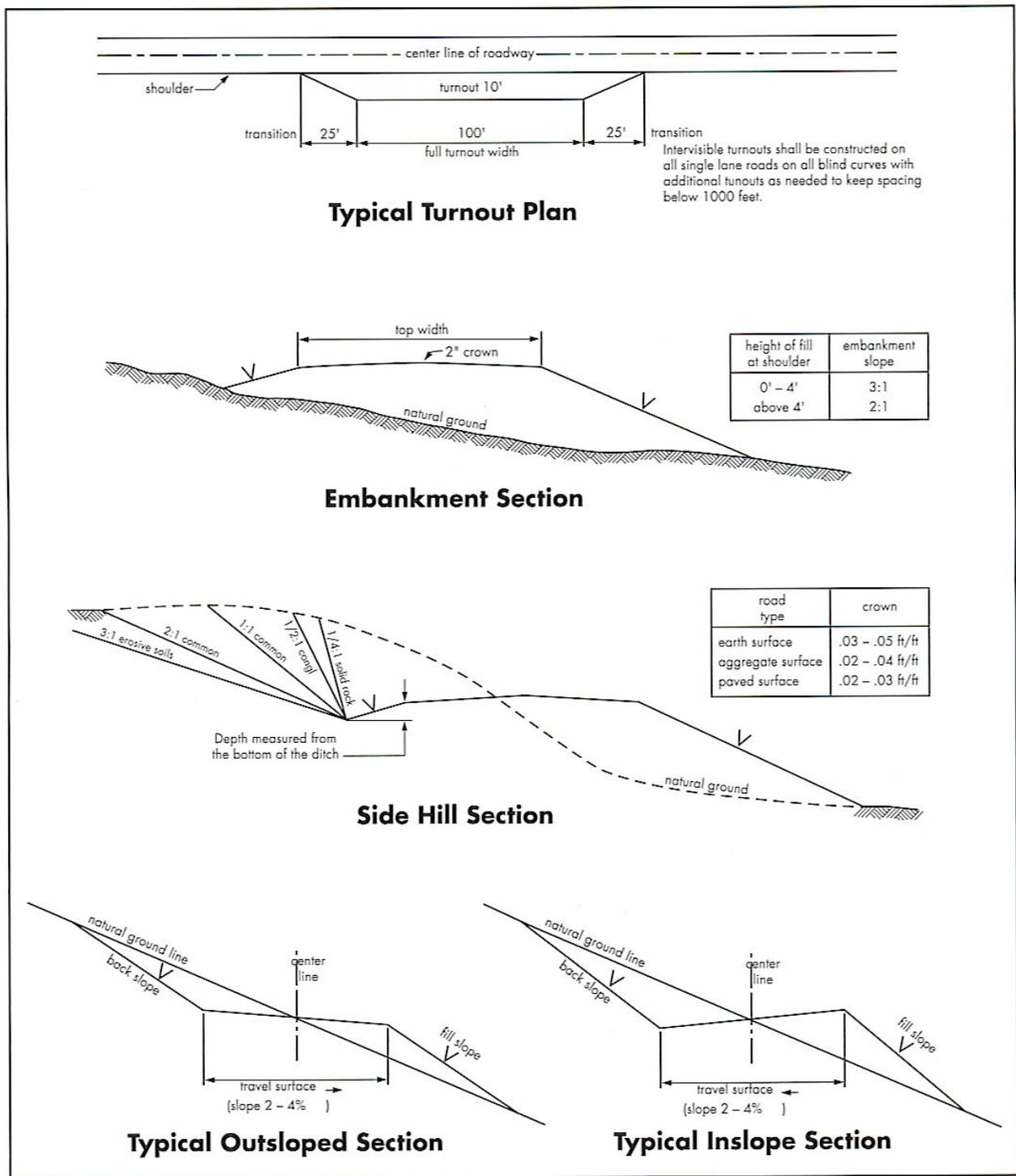
Where entry is required across a fence line, the fence shall be braced and tied off on both sides of the passageway prior to cutting.

The operator shall notify the private surface landowner or the grazing allotment holder prior to crossing any fence(s).

### **Public Access**

Public access on this road shall not be restricted by the operator without specific written approval granted by the Authorized Officer.

**Figure 1 – Cross Sections and Plans For Typical Road Sections**



## **V. DRILLING**

### **A. DRILLING OPERATIONS REQUIREMENTS**

Call the Roswell Field Office, 2909 West Second St., Roswell NM 88201. 24 hour 505 – 627 – 0205.

1. The BLM is to be notified a minimum of 4 hours in advance for a representative to witness:
  - a. Spudding well
  - b. Setting and/or Cementing of all casing strings
  - c. BOPE tests
2. Unless the production casing has been run and cemented or the well has been properly plugged, the drilling rig shall not be removed from over the hole without prior approval.
3. A Communitization Agreement covering the acreage dedicated to this well must be filed for approval with the BLM. The effective date of the agreement shall be prior to any sales.

### **B. CASING**

1. The 13-3/8 inch surface casing shall be set at 400 feet and cemented to the surface.
  - a. If cement does not circulate to the surface, the appropriate BLM office shall be notified and a temperature survey utilizing an electronic type temperature survey with a surface log readout will be used or a cement bond log shall be run to verify the top of the cement.
  - b. Wait on cement (WOC) time for a primary cement job will be a minimum 18 hours for a water basin, 24 hours in the potash area, or 500 pounds compression strength, whichever is greater. (This is to include the lead cement).
  - c. Wait on cement (WOC) time for a remedial job will be a minimum of 4 hours after bringing cement to surface or 500 pounds compression strength, whichever is greater.
  - d. If cement falls back, remedial action will be done prior to drilling out that string.
2. The minimum required fill of cement behind the 9-5/8 inch intermediate casing is to be cemented to the surface. If cement does not circulate see B.1.a-d above.
3. The minimum required fill of cement behind the 5-1/2 inch production casing is to reach at least 500 feet above the top of the uppermost hydrocarbon productive interval.

4. If hardband drill pipe is rotated inside casing, returns will be monitored for metal. If metal is found in samples, drill pipe will be pulled and rubber protectors which have a larger diameter than the tool joints of the drill pipe will be installed prior to continuing drilling operations.

### **C. PRESSURE CONTROL**

1. All blowout preventer (BOP) and related equipment (BOPE) shall comply with well control requirements as described in Onshore Oil and Gas Order No. 2 and API RP 53 Sec. 17.
2. Minimum working pressure of the blowout preventer (BOP) and related equipment (BOPE) required for drilling below the surface casing shoe shall be 3000 (3M) psi.
3. The appropriate BLM office shall be notified a minimum of 4 hours in advance for a representative to witness the tests.
  - a. The tests shall be done by an independent service company.
  - b. The results of the test shall be reported to the appropriate BLM office.
  - c. All tests are required to be recorded on a calibrated test chart. A copy of the BOP/BOPE test chart and a copy of independent service company test will be submitted to the appropriate BLM office.
  - d. The BOP/BOPE test shall include a low pressure test from 250 to 300 psi. The test will be held for a minimum of 10 minutes if test is done with a test plug and 30 minutes without a test plug.

### **D. DRILLING MUD**

Mud system monitoring equipment, with derrick floor indicators and visual and audio alarms, shall be operating before drilling into the Wolfcamp formation, and shall be used until production casing is run and cemented.

1. Recording pit level indicator to indicate volume gains and losses.
2. Mud measuring device for accurately determining the mud volumes necessary to fill the hole during trips.
3. Flow-sensor on the flow line to warn of abnormal mud returns from the well.

### **E. DRILL STEM TEST (optional)**

If drill stem tests are performed, Onshore Order 2.III.D shall be followed.

Engineer on call phone (after hours only): Roswell: (505) 626-5749

## **VI. PRODUCTION**

### **A. WELL STRUCTURES & FACILITIES**

#### **Placement of Production Facilities**

Production facilities should be placed on the well pad to allow for maximum interim recontouring and revegetation of the well location.

#### **Containment Structures**

The containment structure shall be constructed to hold the capacity of the entire contents of the largest tank, plus 24 hour production, unless more stringent protective requirements are deemed necessary by the Authorized Officer.

#### **Painting Requirement**

All above-ground structures including meter housing that are not subject to safety requirements shall be painted a flat non-reflective paint color, Olive Drab, Munsell Soil Color Chart 18-0622 TPX.

#### **VRM Facility Requirement**

Low profile facilities are required on this location.

## **VII. INTERIM RECLAMATION & RESERVE PIT CLOSURE**

### **A. INTERIM RECLAMATION**

If the well is a producer, interim reclamation shall be conducted on the well site in accordance with the orders of the Authorized Officer. The operator shall submit a Sundry Notices and Reports on Wells (Notice of Intent), Form 3160-5, prior to conducting interim reclamation.

During the life of the development, all disturbed areas not needed for active support of production operations should undergo “interim” reclamation in order to minimize the environmental impacts of development on other resources and uses.

During reclamation, the removal of caliche is important to increasing the success of revegetating the site. Removed caliche may be used in road repairs, fire walls or for building other roads and locations. In addition, in order to operate the well or complete workover operations, it may be necessary to drive, park and operate on restored interim vegetation within the previously disturbed area.

Disturbing revegetated areas for production or workover operations will be allowed. If there is significant disturbance and loss of vegetation, the area will need to be revegetated. Communicate with the appropriate BLM office for any exceptions/exemptions if needed.

**B. RESERVE PIT CLOSURE**

At the time reserve pits are to be reclaimed, operators should work with BLM surface management specialists to devise the best strategies to reduce the size of the location. Any reductions should allow for remedial well operations, as well as safe and efficient removal of oil and gas.

The reserve pit, when dried and closed, shall be recontoured, all trash removed, and reseeded as follows:

Ecological Site: Sandy HP-3 for Shallow HP-3

<u>Common Name and Preferred Variety</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>	<u>Pounds of Pure Live Seed Per Acre</u>
Blue grama, var. Lovington	<i>(Bouteloua gracilis)</i>	2.00 lbs.
Sideoats grama var. Vaughn or El Reno	<i>(Bouteloua curtipendula)</i>	3.00 lbs.
Little bluestem	<i>(Schizachyrium scoparium)</i>	0.50 lb.
Sand dropseed	<i>(Sporobolus cryptandrus)</i>	1.00 lb.
Plains bristlegrass	<i>(Setaria macrostachya)</i>	1.00 lb.
Indian blanketflower	<i>(Gaillardia aristata)</i>	0.50 lb.
Desert or Scarlet Globemallow or <i>S. coccinea</i> )	<i>(Sphaeralcea ambigua)</i>	<u>1.00 lb.</u>
TOTAL POUNDS PURE LIVE SEED (pls) PER ACRE		9.00 lbs.

Certified Weed Free Seed. IF ONE SPECIES IS NOT AVAILABLE, INCREASE ALL OTHERS PROPORTIONATELY. No less than four (4) species, including one (1) forb. No less than 9.0 pounds pls per acre shall be applied

**VIII. FINAL ABANDONMENT & REHABILITATION REQUIREMENTS**

Upon abandonment of the well and/or when the access road is no longer in service the Authorized Officer shall issue instructions and/or orders for surface reclamation and restoration of all disturbed areas.

On private surface/federal mineral estate land the reclamation procedures on the road and well pad shall be accomplished in accordance with the Private Surface Land Owner agreements.