



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Casper Field Office

March 2005



Environmental Assessment for the Cave Gulch Infill Development Project, Natrona County, Wyoming

WY-060-EA05-17





United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Casper Field Office
2987 Prospector Drive
Casper, Wyoming 82604-2968

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MAR 18 2005

Dear Reader:

RE: Cave Gulch-Bullfrog-Waltman Infill Natural Gas Project

Enclosed for your review and comment is the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Cave Gulch Infill Development Project (CGIDP), Natrona County, Wyoming (WY-060-EA05-17). The project area is located in Natrona County, approximately 50 miles west of Casper, Wyoming, and is situated north of the town of Waltman.

Bill Barrett Corporation, Chevron USA Inc., Pogo Producing Company, and Prima Energy Corporation have notified the Casper Field Office (CFO), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), of their intent to continue natural gas exploration and development activities within the boundaries of the Cave Gulch, Bullfrog, and Waltman Fields in western Natrona County, Wyoming. The CFO prepared the *Cave Gulch-Bullfrog-Waltman Natural Gas Development Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (Cave Gulch EIS) in 1997 pursuant to the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA) to analyze the impacts of exploration and development of natural gas within the Cave Gulch-Bullfrog-Waltman project area (Cave Gulch EIS area). The BLM subsequently issued a Final EIS and Record of Decision for the project that approved the drilling of a maximum of 160 wells from 107 new well pads and 24 enlarged existing well pads within the overall Cave Gulch EIS area. The level of surface disturbance originally analyzed in the Cave Gulch EIS has now been reached; however, additional drilling will be required to fully develop known hydrocarbon reserves within the analysis area. To satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, this EA was prepared to analyze potential impacts associated with additional exploration and development of natural gas within the Cave Gulch, Bullfrog, and Waltman Fields.

The Cave Gulch EIS area encompassed approximately 25,093 acres. The CGIDP area for this environmental assessment (EA) would include an additional 1,920 acres (Sections 34, 35, and 36 in Township 36 North [T36N], Range 87 West [R87W]) adjacent to the southwest corner of the original Cave Gulch EIS area, for a total project area of 27,013 acres. The Operators now propose to drill up to 154 additional wells from 110 individual well pads within the CGIDP area over a period of 10 years. Approximately 116 of these wells would be drilled to the Fort Union and Lance Formations, with the majority of the remaining wells drilled to the slightly deeper Cody and Mesaverde Formations.

Additional exploration and development will result in the construction of new roads, well pads, pipelines and water disposal facilities. No additional natural gas compression facilities will be required.

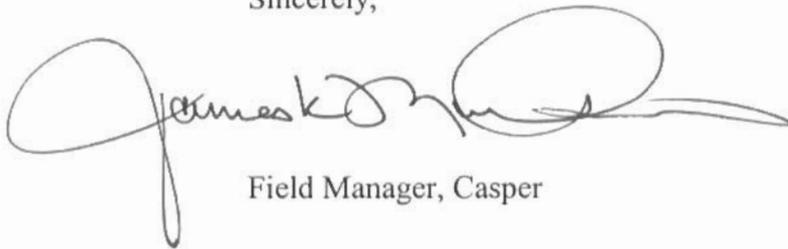
The thirty-day comment period for this EA ends on April 22, 2005. You may submit written comments to Joe Meyer, Project Manager, Bureau of Management, Casper Field Office, 2987 Prospector Drive, Casper, Wyoming, 82604-2986. You may also submit electronic comments to casper_wymail@blm.gov. Please refer to the Cave Gulch Infill Development Project in your comments.

Comments, including names, e-mail addresses, and street addresses of the respondents, will be available for public review and disclosure at the above address during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name, e-mail address, or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this plainly at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

This EA is not the decision document. A decision record detailing the Bureau of Land Management's decision will be prepared and distributed following the end of the thirty-day comment period. The decision on the proposed infill development project will be based upon the analysis in the EA and on public comments. The decision is anticipated to be issued sometime after April 22, 2005.

If you have questions concerning this proposal or if you need additional information, please contact Joe Meyer at the above e-mail address, street address, or by phone at (307) 261-7641.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James K. Meyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Field Manager, Casper