

# United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Environmental Assessment WY-020-EA08-117  
Case File Number: WYW-175579X

## Finding of No Significant Impact

### *Bill Barrett Corporation Rocktober Unit Project, Seven Exploratory Wells and Associated Facilities*

*Location: 6<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, T. 52-53 N., R. 98-99 W., SECTIONS Various, Park County Wyoming.*

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Cody Field Office  
P.O. Box 518  
Cody, WY 82901  
Phone: 307-578-5900  
FAX: 307-578-5939

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## **Finding of No Significant Impact**

### **Cody Field Office**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has conducted an environmental analysis, (EA No. WY-020-E08-117). The proposed action is for a seven natural gas wells, access roads, pipelines, and compressor station in the McCullough Peaks area, in Park County. The proponent/applicant is, Bill Barrett Corporation. The project location is, T.52- 53 N., R. 98-99 W., various sections.

Alternatives analyzed in detail:

- A. The Proposed Action
- B. No Action Alternative

Several alternatives were considered but eliminated from further analysis. These are: 1) drilling multiple wells from a single pad (directional drilling), 2) phased drilling, 3) locate the compressor station north of Highway 14-16-20, 4) Centralized storage for produced water and liquid hydrocarbons (closed loop), and 5) use of remote telemetry to monitor producing wells.

The first alternative entails the proponent's proposal for development along with mitigation measures and conditions of approval (Appendix G of the EA) along with BLM Best Management Practices.

The no action alternative would be to not approve this Application for Permit to Drill (APD)

The EA is available at the Cody Field Office, and is incorporated by reference for this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

#### **PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY:**

The proposed action and alternatives have been reviewed and found to be in conformance with one or more of the following BLM Land Use Plans and the associated decision(s):

The proposed action is in conformance with the Cody Resource Area, Record of Decision (ROD) and Resource Management Plan, dated November 8, 1990; page 21 of the ROD states, "...the planning area is open to oil and gas leasing, subject to appropriate restrictions for surface-disturbing activities." All aspects of this project will follow timing restrictions set forth in the Cody RMP. Sage grouse nesting, brooding, rearing season are between the dates of Feb. 1 and July 31.

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT DETERMINATION:**

Based upon a review of the EA and the supporting documents, I have determined that the project is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. Environmental effects do not meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27 and do not exceed those effects described in the Cody RMP/FEIS. ***Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed.*** This finding is based on the context and intensity of the project as described:

**Intensity:** The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27, BLM NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1), and supplemental Instruction Memoranda, Acts, regulations and Executive Orders. The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for this proposal:

1. **Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse.** The proposed action would impact resources as described in the EA. Those resources analyzed are: cultural/historic resources, paleontological resources, water resources (ground and surface), soils, vegetation (including invasive species), wetland/riparian, wildlife resources, special statues species, migratory birds, livestock grazing, wild horses, recreation, air quality, visual resources, noise and odor.

Mitigating measures to reduce impacts have been incorporated into the proposed action in the form of Best Management Practices (BMPs). The COAs are listed in Appendix G of the EA.

2. **The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety.** The proposed action is designed to have minimum impact on public health. Transportation of equipment to the project location will be in conformance with state and federal laws. Oil and gas regulation requirements for public safety will be met.
3. **Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.** Potential impacts have been mitigated in the design of the proposed action an implementation of BMPs and COA's.
4. **The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.** Eighty comments were received during public scoping. The comments listed several issues/concerns wildlife, sage grouse, water quality, visual impacts, wild horses, paleontology, hazardous materials, and the quality of the environment in the McCullough Peaks area. The comment matrix is attached to the EA in Appendix B.

5. **The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.** The project is not unique or unusual. The BLM has experience implementing similar actions in similar areas.

The environmental effects to the human environment are fully analyzed in the EA. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks

6. **The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.** The actions considered in the selected alternative were considered by the interdisciplinary team within the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the selected alternative and all other alternatives are described in Chapter 4 of the EA.
7. **Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts – which include connected actions regardless of land ownership.** The interdisciplinary team evaluated the possible actions in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete disclosure of the effects of the project is contained in Chapter 4 of the EA.
8. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.** The project will not affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. A cultural inventory has been completed for the proposed action, and resources are being avoided. Consultation with SHPO has been completed in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA and the Programmatic Agreement between the Wyoming BLM and SHPO.
9. **The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, or the degree to which the action may adversely affect: 1) a proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species or its habitat, or 2) a species on BLM's sensitive species list.** Mitigating measures and seasonal restrictions to reduce impacts to wildlife have been incorporated into the design of the proposed action. Although sage grouse, golden eagles, burrowing owls, grey wolf, long billed curlew, mountain plover, and white-tailed prairie dog species may occupy habitat within the project boundary, it has been determined that they will not be affected because of measures outlined in the COAs and BMPs which have been incorporated in the project

design. No other threatened or endangered plants or animals are known to occur in the area.

10. **Whether the action threatens a violation of a federal, state, local, or tribal law, regulation or policy imposed for the protection of the environment, where non-federal requirements are consistent with federal requirements.** The project does not violate any known federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

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Michael P. Stewart  
Cody Field Manager

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Date

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