

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
LANDER, RAWLINS, AND ROCK SPRINGS FIELD OFFICES
1335 MAIN STREET (PO BOX 589)
LANDER, WY 82520**

SCOPING NOTICE

October 24, 2001

The Lander Field Office has received from WesternGeco, a Colorado based company, a Notice of Intent to Conduct Geophysical Operations (NOI). The NOI would involve a two dimensional (2D) seismic project of five lines (AR1- AR5) covering approximately 102 linear miles across public, state and private lands in Fremont and Sweetwater Counties. Refer to the attached map of the project area. The longest line of the project would cover lands starting just east of the Bison Basin oil field and continuing west for about 35 miles ending about 4 miles north of Oregon Buttes. The remaining lines run north to south and northwest to southeast starting on land to the southeast of the Sweetwater Canyon near the historical Seminoe Cutoff segment of the Emigrant Trail, south across the Continental Divide Trail, east of St. Mary's Peak, south across the North and South Forks of Sulfur Creek, passing near Pickett and Scotty Lakes, and ending near Five Fingers Butte. The project involves lands in the Rawlins, Rock Springs and Lander Field Offices. WesternGeco anticipates the project to take 3 weeks to complete.

The proposed geophysical operation would be a vibroseis project, using 4 buggy vibrators as an energy source with the potential of drill holes and explosives in specific locations where access prohibits the use of vibrator buggies. The drill(s) would be transported using a helicopter, as would all recording cables and seisphones. The recording crews would set cables and seisphones utilizing all terrain vehicles and foot traffic. Existing roads and trails would be utilized where possible and off- highway vehicle operations would employ a staggered-spread pattern in order to avoid excessive compaction of vegetation and soils. The vibrators would be equipped with all terrain, low pressured, rubber tires so as to minimize surface impressions and impacts. The Seminoe Cutoff would be crossed at designated locations on existing two-track trails and the historic trail would not be used for primary access at any time.

Known resource concerns that will be addressed in the environmental assessment on the public lands include the Seminoe Cutoff of the Emigrant National Historic Trail and Continental Divide National Scenic Trail; big game, raptor nesting, sage grouse breeding and nesting, and potential mountain plover habitat; slopes in excess of 25%; wetlands and riparian habitat.

Approximately 15 miles of line AR4 is located within the Jack Morrow Hills Coordinated Activity Plan (JMHCAP) area within the Rock Springs Field Office. Proposed actions need to comply with the interim management criteria while the JMHCAP is being prepared. Proposed actions will not be allowed to proceed if they occur in the following areas: a) Slopes greater than 20%; b) forest type areas such as juniper, limber pine, and aspen; c) badland areas with highly erodible soils; d) all mountain shrub communities such as mountain mahogany, bitter brush, and service berry (usually associated with 20% slopes); e) all big game severe winter relief/crucial winter range areas and big game birthing areas; or, f) other sensitive areas and situations identified.

Please submit written comments on the project proposal to the Bureau of Land Management, Lander Field Office, P.O. Box 589, Lander, WY 82520. Your comments must be in this office by November 23, 2001. Should you have any questions about the project, please contact Fred Georgeson at 307/ 332-8415.

Attachment Location Map

