

SCOPING NOTICE
for
Veritas DGC Land Incorporated
LaBarge 3D Geophysical Project

Bureau of Land Management
Pinedale Field Office

Description of Project

Veritas DGC Land Incorporated has filed a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Conduct Geophysical Operations with the BLM-Pinedale Field Office.

The proposed LaBarge 3D project would be located west of LaBarge, Wyoming in portions of Sublette and Lincoln Counties. The general project boundaries would be LaBarge Creek on the south, South Piney Creek on the north, the Calpet Highway (State Highway 235 and Sublette County Road 134) on the east, and the BLM-U.S. Forest Service boundary on the west. Prominent features within the project area include Rock Creek, the Hogsback, Cretaceous Mountain, and Pine Grove Ridge. The project area would approximately 7½ miles wide and 21 miles long. Total surface area within the project boundary would be about 137 square miles.

Roughly 74 percent of the project would occur on BLM administered land. The rest would be on state or private lands. Those portions of the project occurring on state and private lands are not subject to BLM authorization. Veritas will contact individual landowners for permission.

The project would consist of 50 percent vibroseis operations and 50 percent drilled shot holes. The vibroseis operations would be conducted by two sets of vibroseis buggies with four buggies to a set. The buggies would operate in an offset or side-by-side pattern and would be equipped with all-terrain, low ground pressure tires to minimize surface impact. The offset/side-by-side pattern is designed to prevent multiple passes over the same piece of ground. The shot holes would be drilled by small portable drill rigs transported to the individual shot-hole site by helicopter or by land-based drill buggies equipped with high-flotation tires. The shot hole drilling would occur in forested areas, on steep slopes, in the Lake Mountain WSA, and in other areas where terrain is too rough or too soft to support vibroseis buggies, or otherwise inaccessible to vibroseis units. The recording cable and geophones would be deployed by helicopters, ATVs and people on foot. Recording operations are proposed to commence in September.

Known environmental and resources values in the project area include: Lake Mountain wilderness study area, rural subdivisions, visual resources, crucial big game winter range for mule deer, elk, and moose; elk calving habitat; raptor nesting habitat; sage grouse nesting habitat, sage grouse leks; fisheries, including Colorado River cutthroat trout; cultural resources; sensitive soils; slopes steeper than 25%; wetlands/riparian habitat, potential habitat for Threatened and Endangered species (Canada lynx); recreational use; and heavily forested areas.

BLM is soliciting substantive input from the public relating to issues, technological advances,

analysis data, and the accuracy of inventory information to be used in the environmental assessment for the LaBarge 3D project. Comments can be mailed to: Field Manager, Pinedale Field Office, P.O. Box 768, Pinedale, Wyoming, 82941 or can be emailed to: pinedale_wymail@blm.gov (please include LaBarge 3D in subject line). **Comments are due by close of business August 4, 2003.** These comments, including name and address, will be available for public review. If you wish to withhold your name and/or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. Comments received after August 4, 2003 will be deemed not timely received and will not be incorporated into the official record for the LaBarge 3D Project.

If you have any questions concerning this project, please contact Bill Lanning at the Pinedale BLM at 307.367.5318.

