

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Bureau of Land Management
Rock Springs Field Office

Case File No.: WYW167741

EA Number: WY-040-EA10-110

Proposed Action Title/Type: North Dutch John 2D Seismic Project

Location of Proposed Action: The project area is located approximately 50 miles southwest of Rock Springs, Wyoming, in sections 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, T12N-R107W; section 6, T12N-R106W; sections 35 and 36, T13N-107W; and section 31, T13N-R106W in Sweetwater County.

Applicant: Azalea Oil Company
7273 Lemon Gulch Way
Castle Rock, CO 80108

BACKGROUND

Azalea Oil Company (Azalea) proposes to conduct geophysical operations consisting of a 2-dimensional (2D) seismic survey for oil and gas resources in Sweetwater County, Wyoming. Azalea owns 100% interest in oil and gas leases under sections 1, 2, 3, 10, & 11 T12N-R107W. Approximately 7.5 miles of the 10.2 mile seismic program (74%) would be acquired on these leases. The Proposed Action involves a 2D seismic survey consisting of receiver stations (geophones) every 110 feet and source locations (shot points) every 440 feet. No permanent facilities are proposed for this project. This project would involve three distinct phases: 1) surveying in shot hole and receiver locations, 2) drilling (using a buggy drill) and loading of shot holes and 3) laying out the receiver lines and geophones, detonating the charges, and recording the data. Locations of the seismic lines have been sited in a manner that maximizes the use of existing roads and two-tracks for access as much as possible. Portions of the seismic lines may be moved in order to avoid sensitive resources, steep slopes, etc.

Shot hole drilling and seismic recording are proposed to occur during July and August 2010 to avoid big game hunting seasons to the extent feasible and to minimize impacts to seasonal streams and riparian areas. Surface disturbance would be temporary in nature, with the majority of disturbance limited to minor soil compaction and vegetation trampling. The total length of time that seismic activities would occur at the site is expected to be less than 4 weeks, although this timeframe would not be continuous and may vary due to weather conditions.

CONFORMANCE WITH LAND USE PLAN

The proposed action is in conformance with the Green River Resource Management Plan (RMP), signed August 8, 1997. The project is located within the Sugarloaf Basin Management Area, which is open to mineral leasing and related exploration and development activities with appropriate mitigation requirements applied to protect all other resource values.

The Proposed Action includes design features developed in consideration of the objectives of the Sugarloaf Basin Management Area, which include limiting vehicle travel outside designated roads for vehicles other than the buggy drills, specified seismic drilling setbacks for water resources and riparian areas, and a schedule which would avoid interruptions to most recreation users. As stated on p. 41 of the 1997 Green River RMP, "Any actions proposed in the Sugarloaf Basin area will be considered and analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Controls may be placed on the amount, sequence, timing, or level of activity or development that may occur to assure that the actions will be consistent with or help to meet the management objectives for the area."

BLM has determined that appropriate controls and mitigation measures have been implemented and that potential impacts from the exploration activities would be minor and therefore would not interfere with the objectives of the Sugarloaf Basin Management Area.

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Based upon the information contained in the attached environmental assessment, 'North Dutch John 2D Seismic Project', and all other information available to me, it is my determination that: (1) the implementation of the Proposed Action will not have significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the Green River Resource Management Plan (GRRMP) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); (2) the Proposed Action is in conformance with the GRRMP; and (3) the Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

This finding is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 CFR 1508.27), both with regard to the context and to the intensity of the impacts described in the EA or as articulated in the letters of comment.

The Proposed Action has been designed to avoid or minimize environmental impacts to the extent feasible. These design features, such as standard operating procedures, stipulations, and best management practices that Azalea has voluntarily agreed to can be found in Section 2.1.2 of the attached EA. Additional mitigation measures that will be implemented for the proposed action are identified in Sections 4.8.4 (Special Status Plants), 4.10.4 (Cultural Resources), 4.11.4 (Recreation), and 4.14.4 (Range Resources) and the identified Conditions of Approval are included as Appendix D of the EA.

Authorized Official:



Lance Porter
Field Manager
Rock Springs Field Office

16 July 2010
Date