



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
RAWLINS FIELD OFFICE



AUGUST 3, 2007

TIERED EA, FONSI, AND DR FORM

Tiered to & Referencing the Atlantic Rim Natural Gas Development Project Environmental Impact Statement

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

EA NUMBER: WY-030-07-EA-259

Lease Numbers: WYW-131275, WYC-075345A

Proposed Action:

Catalina B POD: Access Road Re-Alignment and Water Transfer Pipeline

Location of Proposed Action (BLM-administered public lands):

Township 16 North, Range 91 West, 6th P.M., Section 6
Township 16 North, Range 92 West, 6th P.M., Sections 1 & 12

See project map, Figure 1.

Applicant/Proponent: Double Eagle Petroleum Company (Double Eagle)

Conformance with Land Use Plan

This proposed action is in conformance with the Great Divide Resource Management Plan (RMP) that was approved on November 8, 1990. The RMP has been reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms to the land use plan terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 1610.5. Development of oil and gas reserves is in conformance with the RMP. On page 30, the RMP states "The entire planning area [Great Divide Resource Area] is open to oil and gas leasing".

The development of this project will not affect the achievement of the Wyoming Standards for Healthy Rangelands (August 1997).

Remarks:

In July 2007, the proponent submitted two Sundry Notices for the proposed action. The Sundry Notices and supporting documentation submitted by Double Eagle, with Conditions of Approval, contain a complete description of the proposed action.

The Atlantic Rim Area Natural Gas Field Development Project Environmental Impact Statement (AREIS) was written to assess the potential foreseeable and cumulative effects of drilling operations and associated activities in the Project area. The Record of Decision (ROD) for this project was approved on March 23, 2007. The proposed action is in conformance with the AREIS.

The AREIS ROD provides for the drilling of natural gas wells and associated infrastructure, limiting total surface disturbance to 7,600 acres at any one time (not including surface disturbance that occurred prior to implementation of the Interim Drilling Policy). The ROD establishes a goal for per-well surface disturbance of 6.5 acres of short-term disturbance (less in "Category A" areas).

The surface disturbance cap is allocated to operators "...on a prorated mineral leasehold basis." (ROD at Page 2), and development is limited to no more than 8 well sites per 640-acre section. If, in the event an Operator reaches its surface disturbance cap allocation, than "...further disturbance on federal minerals will not be permitted." (ROD at Page 3). The RFO will monitor and track disturbance areas for future proposals, in order to ascertain whether the disturbance cap would be exceeded by future authorizations.

The project is located entirely within a Federal Oil & Gas Unit. No additional rights-of-way are necessary for the proposed action.

Purpose and Need for Proposed Action

Domestic natural gas production is an integral part of U.S. energy development and conservation plans due to its availability and the presence of existing market delivery infrastructure. Domestic production reduces immediate dependence upon foreign sources of energy, and maintains an adequate and stable supply of fuel to maintain economic well-being, industrial production, and national security. The environmental advantages of burning natural gas are emphasized in the Clean Air Act amendments of 1990.

In addition, the proposed action would allow Double Eagle, as leaseholder, to exercise lease rights to explore and develop oil & gas resources within the project lease areas.

The changes to the original POD authorization are necessary to (1) provide redundancy for water reinjection transfer capabilities between POD A and POD B, and (2) change the location of a road watercourse crossing that was originally authorized and later determined to be less safe for transport of drilling rigs & associated equipment than the revised alignment/crossing location.

Description of Proposed Action Alternative

The proposed action entails (1) the construction and/or reconstruction of access roads for the purpose of providing access to the CDP and several wells in POD B and the elimination of the originally-authorized route, and (2) the construction and operation of an adjacent and parallel pipeline for transfer of produced water between POD A and POD B, allowing the proponent operational flexibility in directing water to approved disposal locations.

Onsite inspections of the proposal were conducted on July 31, 2007. Potential impacts to resources were considered and alternate locations considered. As a result of this field inspection, several project components were moved to reduce potential impacts to soil and water resources.

The location of the proposed development is approximately 28 miles northeast of Baggs, Wyoming, west of Highway 789. Access to the area will be from existing access roads off of 789.

A discussion of the actions generally associated with drilling a well, including (1) a plan of operations, (2) construction of the access road and drilling pad, and (3) pipeline installation, can be located in the following portions of the AREIS or ROD:

- Chapter 2, *Proposed Action and Alternatives (AREIS)*
- Chapter 4, *Analysis of Environmental Consequences (AREIS)*
- Appendix A, *Project Reclamation Plan (ROD)*
- Appendix C, *Operator-Committed Practices (ROD)*

Mitigation and reclamation measures are described in Chapter 4 and Appendix B of the ROD (*Project Performance-Based Monitoring and Best Management Practices*). The following narratives summarize elements specific to the proposed action for this EA.

Disturbance Area (See Figure 1)

Component	Length (ft.)	Width (ft.)	Acres
Xfer Pipeline (Parallel/Adjacent) ¹	9,110	30	6.3
Xfer Pipeline (Not Parallel/Adjacent) ²	1,790	50	2.1
Road Realignment-Proposed ³	2,160	50	2.5
Original Road Alignment ⁴	1,910	30	-1.3
Net Additional Disturbance:			9.6

¹Water transfer pipeline segments aligned parallel and adjacent to revised access road realignment

²Water transfer pipeline segments NOT aligned parallel and adjacent to revised access road realignment

³Revised access road located primarily on an existing two-track access road

⁴Original road alignment to be eliminated, eliminating disturbance previously authorized (50' wide corridor for pipelines still proposed, resulting in a net reduction of disturbance width for this length of 30')

The proposed action will result in approximately 9.6 acres of additional short-term disturbance.

The original average per-well disturbance for POD B was 6.1 acres (147.0 acres/24 CBM wells). With the additional disturbance, the average per-well disturbance for POD B is now 6.5 acres (156.6 acres/24 CBM

wells). The proposed action is located outside of "Category A" area, and thus is subject to a "disturbance goal" of 6.5 acres per well. This PODs, then, still exactly meets the disturbance goal provided in the AREIS ROD.

Access

The revised access road will be constructed to BLM specifications for a "Resource Road", as specified in BLM Manual Section 9113. Adequate drainage structures will be constructed or installed. The travelway will be at least 14 feet wide and will have an average right-of-way width of 50 feet (80 feet, including adjacent & parallel pipeline/utility corridors., where applicable). The access roads would be reclaimed during production operations to the maintenance width, or to approximately 30 feet in width. Upon completion of the project, unnecessary access roads would be recontoured, ripped, seeded, and revegetated.

Pipeline/Utility Corridors

The pipeline would be buried after construction and the disturbed area reclaimed as soon after construction as reasonable. Upon completion of the project, the pipeline would be evacuated and abandoned in-place.

No Action Alternative

NEPA regulations require that alternative analyses in NEPA documents "include the alternative of no action" (40 CFR 1502.14(d)). For this analysis, "no action" means that the BLM would reject the proponent's proposal and "the proposed activity would not take place."

Potential Environmental Impacts- Proposed Action Alternative

Critical Element	Affected		Critical Element	Affected	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
Air Quality		X	T & E Species		X
ACEC's		X	Wastes, Hazardous/Solid		X
Cultural Resources	X		Water Quality		X
Prime/Unique Farmlands		X	Wetlands/Riparian Zones	X	
Floodplains		X	Wild & Scenic Rivers		X
Native Amer. Rel. Concerns		X	Wilderness		X
Environmental Justice		X	Invasive, Nonnative Species	X	

In addition to the critical elements referenced above, reviews of potential effects upon soil-, vegetation-, and wildlife-resources were conducted.

The affected environment and analysis of environmental impacts are discussed in the AREIS to which this EA is tiered.

Class III cultural resources inventory were conducted for the project areas. Archaeological resources identified will be avoided.

Halogeton and other noxious weeds are a significant concern for this project area. COAs have been added to control the spread, establishment, and plant community changes associated with weed infestation.

Portions of the proposed action are located within protection buffers of nesting raptors. Two sage grouse leks are known to exist within two miles of the project area. No mountain plover habitat was identified as being affected within the project area. Seasonal restrictions have been added to the Sundry Notice authorizations, as appropriate:

In some instances, the proponent may request consideration of a temporary exception to wildlife seasonal restrictions. Such an exception may be granted if a determination is made that the wildlife resource will not be adversely impacted.

Site-specific findings by the interdisciplinary review team are provided on the attached review documents.

Description of Impacts:

A discussion of the actions generally associated with drilling projects and their associated impacts may be found in the Atlantic Rim Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision.

Hazardous Materials

It is possible that wastes created or transported during implementation of the proposed action (i.e., waste motor oils, drilling/completion additives) could be accidentally released to the environment. The operator will be required to comply with the Hazardous Materials Management Plan provided in Appendix C of the AREIS. Numerous State and Federal rules and regulations also apply that govern the handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances.

Double Eagle or any contracted company working for Double Eagle will have Material Data Safety Sheets available for all chemicals, compounds, or substances which are used during the course of construction, drilling, completion, and production operations for this project. Additionally, all chemicals will be handled in an appropriate manner to minimize the potential for leaks or spills to the environment.

Impacts to soils, surface and groundwater resources, wildlife, vegetation, and human health could result from the accidental exposure of hazardous materials. However, since the project operations will strictly comply with all applicable federal and state laws concerning hazardous materials, the Hazardous Materials Management Plan for this project, and the operator's Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan, no significant impacts are anticipated.

Reclamation

Reclamation typically commences within 6 months of construction of access roads and pipelines. Appendix A of the ROD contains the reclamation success criteria by which the reclamation status will be judged. The approved Master Surface Use Plan and Conditions of Approval also contain reclamation measures pertaining to reclamation standards.

Description of Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts:

Mitigation of potential effects is part of the proposed action, and specific mitigation details can be found in the Sundry Notice applications and approved Master Plan Elements including the Conditions of Approval.

Potential Environmental Impacts- No Action Alternative

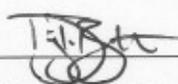
Under the No-Action Alternative, the proposed action would not be authorized. Existing development would continue to occupy the project area, along with impacts associated from the existing development.

Residual Impacts/Cumulative Impacts:

The potential residual and cumulative impacts are discussed in the AREIS, Chapter 5, *Cumulative Impacts Analysis*. The proposed action entails the addition of 40 CBNG wells and appurtenant facilities.

Standard mitigation guidelines are addressed in the ROD's Appendix A, *Project Reclamation Plan*. Additional mitigation measures are also provided in Appendix B, *Performance-Based Monitoring and Best Management Practices*, and Appendix C, *Operator-Committed Practices*. All needed mitigation, for that portion of the proposed action on public land, is part of the proposed action.

The access roads may remain visible for a period of approximately 20 to 30 years after they are abandoned and reclaimed. All needed mitigation is part of the proposed action.

Prepared By:	
	<u>08/13/2007</u>
Travis Bargsten, Natural Resource Specialist	Date