

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

LUL 8458	
Project Name: Liberty County 2-D Gravity Geophysical Survey	Proposed Implementation Date: Summer 2004
Proponent: Athena Energy LLC. P.O. Box 4247 Butte, MT 59702 (406) 723-1234	
Type and Purpose of Action: To conduct a 2-D gravity survey in order to locate potential oil and gas targets at depth.	
Location: T35N, R4E, Sec 35 SENE T35N, R4E, Sec 36 All	County: Liberty

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I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT		LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY OFFICE
<p>1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.</p>	<p>T35N, R4E, Sec 35: SENE Surface Owner: State of Montana, DNRC, Helena, MT Mineral Owner: NA Surface Lessee: Warren Wickum, Box42 Chester, MT 59522 (406) 432-5873 Lease # 5794</p> <p>T35N, R4E, Sec 36: ALL Surface Owner: State of Montana, DNRC, Helena, MT Mineral Owner: State of Montana, DNRC, Helena, MT Mineral Lessee: Proponent: Athena Energy LLC. Box 4247 Butte, MT 59702 Surface Lessee: Kathryn Jensen, Box 353 Chester, MT 59522 (406) 432-5562 Lease # 355</p>	
<p>2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:</p>	<p>DS-426 Permit: Allows Seismic Exploration For Oil & Gas On Lands Owned By The State of Montana, DNRC. Land Use License (LUL) issued by State of Montana, DNRC.</p>	
<p>3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:</p>	<p>Reject the request</p>	

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
RESOURCE	[Y/N]	POTENTIAL IMPACTS
<p>N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)</p>		
<p>4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?</p>	<p>[N]</p>	<p>Both tracts are native sod. Impacts to the surface are expected to be minimal. This type of gravity survey does not require any surface disturbance. There will be some ATV 4-wheeler traffic on the two tracts but not excessive. Surface reclamation is not anticipated as a result of this project.</p>

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?	[N] Horse Creek cuts the southwest quarter of section 36. This is an intermittent stream and was dry at the time of this evaluation. Impacts to both surface and ground water are expected to be non-existent as a result of this project.
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	[N] The proposed action will not alter air quality within the immediate or surrounding areas.
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	[Y] There will be 4-wheeler tracks evident within the vegetation as a result of this project. After the vegetation reaches the peak growth stage evidence of 4-wheeler tracks will be eliminated. This will be a very short-term impact.
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	[N] The proposed action will not impact wildlife forage, cover, or traveling corridors for wildlife species. Nor will this action change the juxtaposition of wildlife forage, water, or hiding and thermal cover. Wildlife usage is expected to return to "normal" (pre-action usage) following the survey. The proposed action will not have long-term negative effects on existing wildlife species and/or wildlife habitat because of its relatively small scale and low anticipated impacts.
9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?	[N] The proposed project site is not expected to cause adverse impacts on threatened or endangered species. There is no confirmed use of the area by a threatened or endangered species, but the potential of occasional use could exist. There are no other species of special concern, or any sensitive habitat types associated with the proposed project area.
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	[Y] During the field inspection there was some stone circles and rock cairns observed above horse creek.
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	[N] The proposed action is a small-scale project and will occur in a remote area. This geophysical survey will not cause a large change in the aesthetic character of the land.
12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	[N] The demand on environmental resources such as land, water, air, or energy will not be affected by the proposed action. The proposed action will not consume resources that are limited in the area. There are no other projects in the area that will affect the proposed project.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	[Y] A major gas production line is currently being installed within this area. Conflicts between projects are not anticipated, as both projects are complimentary.
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III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	[N] This project will not affect human health or human safety in the area.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	[Y] The proposed action could likely increase the potential for future oil and gas production within the area.
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	[Y] This project will create temporary employment for a few contractors within the geologic field. If the project is successful there could be some significant chance for further employment.
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	[Y] The proposed action will create some local tax base in the short term. Long-term tax base could become significant if the project is successful.
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	[N] No additional governmental services will be needed as a result of the proposed action.
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	[N] The proposed action is in compliance with State and County laws. No other management plans are in effect for the area.
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	[N] No impacts on recreational activities are anticipated as a result of the proposed action.
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	[N] The proposed action will not change the human population distribution or the housing requirements in the area.
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	[N] The proposed action will not alter the social structure of surrounding native communities.
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	[N] The proposed action will not impact the cultural uniqueness and/or the cultural diversity of the area.
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	[Y] The proposed action could significantly increase the potential for future oil and gas development in the area. Therefore, the school trust revenues will likely increase due to this action.

EA Checklist Prepared By: 
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Land Use Specialist - CLO
Title

Date: April 27, 2004

