

Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation
Environmental Assessment

Operator: Fidelity Exploration and Production Co.
Well Name/Number: Holmes 31C -2391
Location: NW NE 23 T9S R41E
County: Big Horn, **MT;** **Field (or Wildcat)** Wildcat

Air Quality

(possible concerns)

Long drilling time no
Unusually deep drilling (high horsepower rig) no
Possible H2S gas production No
In/near Class I air quality area no
Air quality permit for flaring/venting (if productive) no

Mitigation:

- Air quality permit (AQB review)
- Gas plants/pipelines available for sour gas
- Special equipment/procedures requirements
- Other: _____

Comments: wells flare methane gas temporarily during initial stages of production. Flaring of commercial quantities of gas is prohibited.

Water Quality

(possible concerns)

Salt/oil based mud No
High water table no
Surface drainage leads to live water Tongue River
Water well contamination no
Porous/permeable soils localized
Class I stream drainage no

Mitigation:

- Lined reserve pit
- Adequate surface casing
- Berms/dykes, re-routed drainage
- Closed mud system
- Off-site disposal of solids/liquids (in approved facility)
- Other: _____

Comments: will use fresh water, native clay mud. Water/mud re-cycled to next location. Exploration well – may not produce until included in development POD.

Soils/Vegetation/Land Use

(possible concerns)

Stream crossings no
High erosion potential no
Loss of soil productivity no
Unusually large wellsite no
Damage to improvements no
Conflict with existing land use/values no

Mitigation

- Avoid improvements (topographic tolerance)
- Exception location requested
- Stockpile topsoil
- Stream Crossing Permit (other agency review)
- Reclaim unused part of wellsite if productive
- Special construction methods to enhance reclamation
- Other: _____

Comments: No special concerns for this site. Very small location and pit area. Truck mounted rig does not require much location preparation.

Health Hazards/Noise

(possible concerns)

Proximity to public facilities/residences over ½ mile

Possibility of H2S No

Size of rig/length of drilling time

Mitigation:

Proper BOP equipment

Topographic sound barriers

H2S contingency and/or evacuation plan

Special equipment/procedures requirements

Other: _____

Comments: no special concerns for this area.

Wildlife/recreation

(possible concerns)

Proximity to sensitive wildlife areas (DFWP identified) no

Proximity to recreation sites none in immediate area

Creation of new access to wildlife habitat no

Conflict with game range/refuge management no

Threatened or endangered Species no

Mitigation:

Avoidance (topographic tolerance/exception)

other agency review (DFWP, federal agencies, DSL)

Screening/fencing of pits, drillsite

Other: _____

Comments: Tongue River Reservoir is closest public recreation area

Historical/Cultural/Paleontological

(possible concerns)

Proximity to known sites none identified

Mitigation

avoidance (topographic tolerance, location exception)

other agency review (SHPO, DSL, federal agencies)

Other: _____

Comments: location on fee surface - no sites reported

Social/Economic

(possible concerns)

Substantial effect on tax base

Create demand for new governmental services

Population increase or relocation

Comments: Exploration test well targeted to test Carney coal beds at 694'. May not produce until included in an approved Plan of Development, therefore no social or economic impacts are likely—cumulative effects on socio-economics of the region are described in 2003 Statewide EIS.

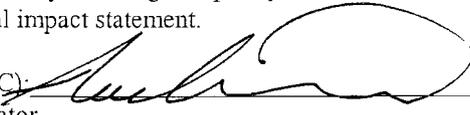
Remarks or Special Concerns for this site

Well is a shallow coal bed methane test. Wells are drilled with small rig and casing set to top of coal. Seven inch casing is cemented to surface. Partial de-watering of the coal bed is required to reduce pressure and release methane gas to the cleat system; this partial de-watering is expected to reduce, but not eliminate water in the coal aquifer. The water quality in coal bed aquifer wells is variable—this test well will provide water quality data for the tested interval.

Summary: Evaluation of Impacts and Cumulative effects

Relatively minor impacts associated with this well, which cannot produce until included in an approved POD. Well is part of ongoing development in and near CX Field and will eventually use existing production facilities and compressors. No impacts are expected which differ significantly from those described in the EIS.

I conclude that the approval of the subject Notice of Intent to Drill (does/**does not**) constitute a major action of state government significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and (does/**does not**) require the preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Prepared by (BOGC): 

(title:) Administrator

Date: July 21, 2004

Other Persons Contacted:

(Name and Agency)

(subject discussed)

(date)

If location was inspected before permit approval:

Inspection date: _____

Inspector: _____

Others present during inspection: _____