

# Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation

## Environmental Assessment

**Operator:** Slawson Exploration Company, Inc.  
**Well Name/Number:** Boomerang 1-4H  
**Location:** SE SE Section 36 T21N R59E  
**County:** Richland, MT; Field (or Wildcat) Wildcat (Bakken Horizontal)

### Air Quality

(possible concerns)

Long drilling time: No, 25-35 days drilling time.

Unusually deep drilling (high horsepower rig): Triple derrick rig to drill a single lateral horizontal Bakken well test, 15,436' MD/10,441' TVD.

Possible H<sub>2</sub>S gas production: Slight chance H<sub>2</sub>S gas production from the Mississippian Formations.

In/near Class I air quality area: No Class I air quality area in the area of review.

Air quality permit for flaring/venting (if productive): Yes, DEQ air quality permit required under 75-2-211.

Mitigation:

Air quality permit (AQB review)

Gas plants/pipelines available for sour gas

Special equipment/procedures requirements

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: If there are existing pipelines for natural gas in the area then gas must be tied into system or if no gathering system nearby associated gas can be flared under Board Rule 36.22.1220. This is a single lateral, 15,436' MD/10,441' TVD, Bakken Formation horizontal well.

### Water Quality

(possible concerns)

Salt/oil based mud: Yes intermediate string casing hole will be drilled with oil based invert drilling fluids. Brine water will be utilized to drill the horizontal lateral. Surface casing hole will be drilled with freshwater and freshwater mud.

High water table: No high water table expected in the area of review.

Surface drainage leads to live water: Yes, closest drainages are an unnamed ephemeral tributary drainage to O'Brien Creek, about 1/8 of a mile to the south and about 1/4 mile to the west from this location. Within this ephemeral drainage is a stock pond, about 1.5 miles to the north northwest from this location.

Water well contamination: No, closest nearby water well is about 1/2 of a mile to the southeast from this location, all other water wells are 1 mile and further away from this location. Depth of this well is unknown, but appears to be a shallow stock water well. Operator's permit states surface casing to be set at 1714'. This surface casing amount appears to be deep enough to ensure that the Base of the Fox Hills formation is covered. Surface hole will be drilled with freshwater and surface casing will be cemented to surface from 1714'.

Porous/permeable soils: No, silty sand clay soils.

Class I stream drainage: No, Class I stream drainages in the area of review.

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: Lined surface cuttings pit will be dug for cuttings. Cuttings will either be buried on wellsite or trucked to a authorized facility.

Comments: 1714' surface casing to be set to protect freshwater zones and to cover the Fox Hills

aquifer. Adequate surface casing and operational BOP equipment should prevent any problems.

### Soils/Vegetation/Land Use

(possible concerns)

Stream crossings: None, crossing only ephemeral drainages anticipated.

High erosion potential: Yes location has a high erosion potential, location will require moderate cut, up to 25.3' and moderate fill, up to 17.9', required.

Loss of soil productivity: None, location to be restored after drilling well, if nonproductive. If productive unused portion of drillsite will be reclaimed.

Unusually large wellsite: No, a very large well site 475'X405'. Location will accommodate the Boomerang 1-4H and Snare 1-36H locations.

Damage to improvements: Slight, surface use is grassland.

Conflict with existing land use/values: Slight

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: Access will be over existing county road, #116 and #354. An access road will be built into location off the existing county road, #354, about 660' new road will be built into this location. Cuttings will either be buried and solidified in the lined cuttings pit or trucked to an authorized disposal site. Oil based invert drilling fluids will be recycled. Completion fluids will be hauled to a Class II disposal. Pit will be allowed to dry before being backfilled. No concerns.

### Health Hazards/Noise

(possible concerns)

Proximity to public facilities/residences: Closest residence is about 1.25 miles to the northeast from this location.

Possibility of H2S: Slight chance H2S from Mississippian Formations.

Size of rig/length of drilling time: Triple drilling rig 25 to 35 days drilling time.

Mitigation:

Proper BOP equipment

Topographic sound barriers

H2S contingency and/or evacuation plan

Special equipment/procedures requirements

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: Adequate surface casing cemented to surface with working BOP stack should mitigate any problems. Distance is sufficient to mitigate noise problems.

### Wildlife/recreation

(possible concerns)

Proximity to sensitive wildlife areas (DFWP identified): Little Missouri National Grasslands, about 1.75 miles to the east from this location.

Proximity to recreation sites: Little Missouri National Grasslands, about 1.75 miles to the east from this location.

Creation of new access to wildlife habitat: No

Conflict with game range/refuge management: No

Threatened or endangered Species: Threatened or endangered species listed in Richland county by USFW service are Pallid Sturgeon, Piping Plover, Interior Lease Tern and Whooping Crane. Candidate species

are the Greater Sage Grouse and the Sprague's Pipit. NH tracker website lists the following as "Species of Concern": one (1) is listed as follows: Meadow Jumping Mouse.

Mitigation:

- Avoidance (topographic tolerance/exception)
- Other agency review (DFWP, federal agencies, DSL)
- Screening/fencing of pits, drillsite
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: Surface is State of Montana "Trust Lands" grassland. Trust Lands Division will do surface EA. There may be species of concern that maybe impacted by this wellsite. We ask the operator to consult with the surface owner as to what he would like done, if a species of concern are discovered at this location.

**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: Surface is State of Montana "Trust Lands" grassland. Trust Lands Division will do surface EA. There may be possible historical/cultural/paleontological sites that maybe impacted by this wellsite. We ask the operator to consult with the surface owner as to his desires to preserve these sites or not, if they are found during construction of the wellsite.

**Social/Economic**

(possible concerns)

- Substantial effect on tax base
- Create demand for new governmental services
- Population increase or relocation

Comments: Wildcat well. No concerns.

**Remarks or Special Concerns for this site**

A single lateral Bakken horizontal well test, 15,436'MD/10,441'TVD.

**Summary: Evaluation of Impacts and Cumulative effects**

No long term impacts expected. Some short term impacts will occur.

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): /s/Steven Sasaki

(title:) Chief Field Inspector

Date: March 31, 2012

Other Persons Contacted:

\_\_\_\_\_

(Name and Agency)

Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, Groundwater Information Center website.

(subject discussed)

Water wells in Richland County

(date)

January 13, 2012

US Fish and Wildlife, Region 6 website

(Name and Agency)

ENDANGERED, THREATENED, PROPOSED AND CANDIDATE SPECIES MONTANA COUNTIES, Richland County

(subject discussed)

March 31, 2012

(date)

Montana Natural Heritage Program Website (FWP)

(Name and Agency)

Heritage State Rank= S1, S2, S3, T21N R59E

(subject discussed)

March 31, 2012

(date)

If location was inspected before permit approval:

Inspection date: \_\_\_\_\_

Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_

Others present during inspection: \_\_\_\_\_