

# CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**Proposed Action:** Approve Drilling Permit (Form 22)

**Project/Well Name:** State 36-16 CD

**Operator:** Running Foxes Petroleum, Inc.

**Location:** SE SE Section 36 T15N R30E

**County:** Garfield **MT; Field (or Wildcat):** Wildcat

**Proposed Project Date:** 8/17/2020

## I. DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

Running Foxes Petroleum, Inc. plans to drill an Amsden formation test. 2,500' MD/TVD. Surface casing to be set at 250' and cemented to surface.

## II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

### 1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED

Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, GWIC website (Garfield County Wells).

US Fish and Wildlife, Region 6 website

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

Montana Natural Heritage Program Website (FWP)

Heritage State Rank= S1, S2, S3, T15N R30E

Montana Cadastral Website

Surface Ownership and surface use Section 36 T15N R30E

Montana Department of Natural Resources MEPA Submittal

### 2. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

No Action Alternative: The proposed well would not be drilled.

Action Alternative: Running Foxes Petroleum, Inc. would have permission to drill the well.

### III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

#### 3. AIR QUALITY

Long drilling time: No, normal drilling time 2 to 3 days.  
Unusually deep drilling (high horsepower rig): No.

Possible H<sub>2</sub>S gas production: None anticipated.

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

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

Comments: No special concerns – No, using smaller rig to drill to 2,500'TVD/MD. If there are no gas gathering systems nearby, associated gas can be flared under Board Rule 36.22.1220.

#### 4. WATER QUALITY

Salt/oil based mud: Surface casing will be drilled with freshwater and freshwater mud system, as well as the main hole.

High water table: No.

Surface drainage leads to live water: No, an unnamed ephemeral drainage exists about ½ of a mile to the west. Another ephemeral drainage is located about 2/5 of a mile to the southeast. This drainage leads to Sage Hen Creek which is located about 1 mile to the south.

Water well contamination: No water wells within a ½ mile radius.

Porous/permeable soils: Sandy clay soils.

Class I stream drainage: No Class I stream drainages.

Groundwater vulnerability area: 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)

Comments: Steel surface casing will be run and cemented to surface to protect ground water. (Rule 36.22.1001).

#### 5. SOILS/VEGETATION/LAND USE

Vegetation: Grass land.

Stream crossings: No.

High erosion potential: No, location will require a small cut of 8.9' and a small fill of 4.9'.  
Loss of soil productivity: No, location will be restored after drilling, if nonproductive. If productive, at the point and time when the life of the well is over, and the well is plugged, the location will be returned to original grade and productivity per ARM 36.22.1307.

Unusually large wellsite (Describe dimensions): No, 200' X 200'.

Damage to improvements: None.

Conflict with existing land use/values: Slight. Surface use is grazing.

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

Access Road: Access will be off Highway #200 and an existing trail.

Drilling fluids/solids: Reserve pit fluids and solids will be allowed to evaporate/dry and the pit will be backfilled.

## 6. HEALTH HAZARDS/NOISE

Proximity to public facilities/residences: No residences within a 1/2-mile radius.

Possibility of H2S: None anticipated.

Size of rig/length of drilling time: 2 to 3 days.

Mitigation:

Proper BOP equipment : Use of BOP waived. Using Washington Diverter.

Topographic sound barriers

H2S contingency and/or evacuation plan

Special equipment/procedures requirements

Other:

## 7. WILDLIFE/RECREATION

Sage Grouse: Yes, in general area. Program analysis received 08/03/20.

Proximity to sensitive wildlife areas (DFWP identified): None.

Proximity to recreation sites: None.

Creation of new access to wildlife habitat: None.

Conflict with game range/refuge management: None.

Threatened or endangered Species: Threatened or endangered species in Garfield County, MT are listed as: Pallid Sturgeon, Piping Plover, Interior Least Tern, and Whooping Crane. The Montana Natural Heritage Program lists two (2) species of concern, they are the Hoary Bat and Little Brown Myotis.

Mitigation:

Avoidance (topographic tolerance/exception)

Other agency review (DFWP, federal agencies, **DNRC Trust Lands, Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program**)

Screening/fencing of pits, drillsite

Other:

Comments: State of Montana leased grazing surface lands. 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. State of Montana "Trust Lands" minerals and surface. Trust Lands will do surface EA.

**IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION**

**8. HISTORICAL/CULTURAL/PALEONTOLOGICAL**

Proximity to known sites:

Mitigation

avoidance (topographic tolerance, location exception)

other agency review (SHPO, DNRC Trust Lands, federal agencies)

Other:

**9. SOCIAL/ECONOMIC**

Substantial effect on tax base

Create demand for new governmental services

Population increase or relocation

Comments: No concerns.

**IV. SUMMARY**

No long term impacts expected. Some short term impacts will occur, but can be mitigated. 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.

<b>EA Checklist Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> John Gizicki	<b>Date:</b> 08/03/20
	<b>Title:</b> Compliance Specialist	