

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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

**Project/Well Name:** Don 17-1H SWD

**Operator:** Hydra MT, LLC

**Location:** SE SW Section 17 T26N-R59E

**County:** Richland **MT;** **Field (or Wildcat):** Elm Coulee, Northeast

**Proposed Project Date:** 10/6/24

### I. DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

Hydra MT LLC plans to drill a well to use as a class II injection well in the Dakota Formation. Surface casing to be set at 2,185'. Proposed TD is 9,745' MD / 5,870' TVD.

### II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

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

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

US Fish and Wildlife, Region 6 website

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

Montana Natural Heritage Program Website (FWP)

Heritage State Rank= S1, S2, S3, T26N R59E

Montana Cadastral Website

Surface Ownership and surface use Section 17 T26N R59E

Montana Department of Natural Resources MEPA Submittal

#### 2. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

No Action Alternative: The proposed well would not be drilled for use as a class II injection well.

Action Alternative: Hydra MT LLC would have permission to drill the well for use as a class II injection well.

### III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

#### 3. AIR QUALITY

Long drilling time: No, 5-7 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  
Air quality permit for flaring/venting: No, this is a disposal well.

Comments: No special concerns – using rig to drill to 9,745' MD / 5,870' TVD for use as a class II injection well.

#### 4. WATER QUALITY

Salt/oil based mud: freshwater to be used on surface hole. An oil-based mud will be used on intermediate hole.

High water table: No.

Surface drainage leads to live water: No, the nearest drainage is Berry Creek about 1/10 of a mile to the west. The Missouri River is located about 1.3 miles to the east.

Water well contamination: No. GWIC reports a 180' deep domestic water well just under ½ mile to the northeast from the surface location.

Porous/permeable soils: No, sandy clay.

Class I stream drainage: No.

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 is set at 2,185' to protect ground water. (Rule 36.22.1001).

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

Vegetation: Grassland.

Stream crossings: None anticipated.

High erosion potential: Slight, medium cut of 13.1' and medium fill of 12.4' required.

Loss of soil productivity: No, location to be restored after drilling, if plugged.

Unusually large wellsite (Describe dimensions): A large wellsite to accommodate four wells, 782' by 565'.

Damage to improvements: Slight.

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

Access Road: Access will be off CR 147, 351 and existing dirt road. A new access of 645' will be built into location.

Drilling fluids/solids: While drilling, cuttings will be collected, dried, and hauled to a commercial disposal site. After drilling, the liquids will be hauled to a commercial disposal site.

## 6. HEALTH HAZARDS/NOISE

Proximity to public facilities/residences: No residences within a ½ mile radius. Nearest town is Fairview, MT and is about 3.6 miles to the northeast.

Possibility of H2S: None anticipated.

Size of rig/length of drilling time: Triple derrick, 5-7 days drilling time.

Mitigation:

- Proper BOP equipment
- Topographic sound barriers
- H2S contingency and/or evacuation plan
- Special equipment/procedures requirements
- Other:

## 7. WILDLIFE/RECREATION

Sage Grouse: No.

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

Proximity to recreation sites: None.

Creation of new access to wildlife habitat: None.

Conflict with game range/refuge management: None.

Threatened or endangered Species: Species listed as threatened or endangered in Richland County, MT are the Pallid Sturgeon, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Piping Plover, Whooping Crane, and Northern Myotis.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program lists fifteen (15) species of concern, Northern Myotis, Black-billed Cuckoo, Great Blue Heron, Least Tern, Piping Plover, Whooping Crane, Blue Sucker, Iowa Darter, Northern Redbelly Dace, Paddlefish, Pallid Sturgeon, Sauger, Shortnose Gar, Sicklefin Chub, and Sturgeon Chub.

Mitigation:

- Avoidance (topographic tolerance/exception)
- Other agency review (DFWP, federal agencies, DNRC Trust Lands)
- Screening/fencing of pits, drillsite
- Other:

Comments: Private Grassland. 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 is discovered at this location. The Board of Oil & Gas has no jurisdiction over private surface lands. No concerns.

**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> 09/14/23
	<b>Title:</b> Chief Field Inspector	