Figure 1. Table of Proposed Projects

PROPOSED PROJECT NAME	WHAT IS PROPOSED	PURPOSE	LENGTH ON NATIONAL FOREST (Miles)	NUMBER OF ACRES	FORESTED ACRES CONVERTED TO HERBACEOUS PLANT COVER
Allegheny Pipeline Proposal	To construct a buried natural gas pipeline	To transport natural gas from a productive gas well on private land to an existing gas pipeline	0.85 Miles	3.4 Acres	1.6 Acres
Nichols Pipeline and Access Road Proposal	• To construct a buried natural gas pipeline • Construct new road (200') and reconstruct an existing road to Forest Service standards	• To transport natural gas from a planned gas well on private land to an existing gas pipeline • To provide access to drill a gas well on private land	• 0.75 Miles (400' in road) • 0.12 Miles	• 2.75 Acres • 0.4 Acres	• 2.0 Acres • 0.3 Acres
Lead Mine Seismic Program Proposal	Temporary use of National Forest land to conduct geophysical exploration using vibroseis and shothole methods	To gather information about the shape and properties of the subsurface to determine potential for the occurrence of natural gas	Approximately 46 Miles	N/A	0

Figure 1. Table of Proposed Projects

ALLEGHENY PIPELINE PROPOSAL

Purpose and Need for Action

The Monongahela National Forest has received an application from Horseshoe Run Services, LLC ("Horseshoe") for a Special Use Permit to install, operate and maintain a buried, natural gas pipeline on National Forest System land.

In September 2003, Horseshoe drilled a natural gas well on private land southwest of the town of Parsons. Horseshoe has determined that the well will yield economic quantities of natural gas, which they want to transport to the point of sale. Horseshoe has determined that the existing gas transmission line is the only reasonably nearby gas pipeline and that the proposed pipeline is necessary to connect the well to the existing interstate gas transmission system, which would require crossing Forest System lands. The proposed pipeline is optimally located to meet their objectives of being both technically feasible and economically reasonable, and represents the most direct route with the least disturbance to previously undisturbed areas.

The USDA Forest Service is taking action in response to the Special Use Permit application because it recognizes that special uses may be allowed if compatible with National Forest objectives and sound resource management (Monongahela National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, 1986, page 27, hereinafter referred to as MNF Plan) and would contribute to the improved quality of life for local residents (MNF Plan page 39).

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to authorize Horseshoe Run Services, LLC to install, operate and maintain a buried natural gas pipeline on Forest System lands. A Special Use Permit would be issued to document the authorization. The proposed operation would be within the boundary of the Cheat/Potomac Ranger District on the Monongahela National Forest in Tucker County, West Virginia.

Pipeline Project Description

Horseshoe proposes to install operate and maintain a buried 4" natural gas pipeline, which would originate on private property, cross Forest System lands, and tie into the terminus on an existing pipeline on private property. Approximately 4700' of pipeline would be constructed on National Forest System land, and when in operation, the pipeline would transport up to 2 million cubic feet of natural gas per day.

The attached map *(Attachment 1, Allegheny Pipeline)* indicates the location of the proposed gas line. The pipeline would begin at a gas well on private land and would be located on private land until it enters National Forest land. The line would then follow an existing woods road for about 1,600 feet, then veer off of the existing road to the northeast and pass through about 300 feet of mixed hardwoods until it meets an existing cleared and maintained Allegheny Power powerline easement. The proposed pipeline would follow this easement until it reaches a newly excavated road on private property.

Tree clearing totaling 1.6 acres would be required on National Forest land from US 219 to the existing power line right-of-way. Herbaceous vegetation in the existing power line right-of-way would also be removed for pipeline installation. The total area of use and earth disturbance on National Forest would be 3.4 acres. The pipeline would be buried under a minimum of 36 inches of cover. The proposed line would be designed, constructed, operated and maintained in accordance with the Department of Transportation Federal Safety Standards. These standards specify material selection and qualification, minimum design requirements and protection from internal, external and atmospheric corrosion.

Pipeline construction proceeds like an "assembly line" process in which crews, with specialized assignments, work in sequence along the right-of-way to completely construct the pipeline. The construction crews perform the following activities: clearing and grading, trenching, pipe stringing, pipe bending, lineup, welding and x-raying, lowering in, backfilling, final cleanup, and testing. (*Figure 2, Typical Pipeline Construction Spread*). The construction phase is estimated to take approximately 45 days and would be expected to be completed before November 15, 2004. When complete, the pipeline would be in operation 365 days per year, for an estimate of 50 years.

Post-Construction Activity

The clean up and restoration of the disturbed areas would take place upon completion of the installation. The topography of the construction corridor would be returned to its original contour and vegetated with non-aggressive native genera seed, according to a Forest Service approved plan. It is estimated that this activity would take approximately 5 days to complete, however a final inspection and approval by the National Forest Service would be required. A 10-foot wide herbaceous corridor would be maintained for the life of the pipeline, which would be sufficient to allow pipeline maintenance activities. Except for the powerline right-of-way, the remainder of the corridor would be allowed to revert to woody vegetation.

Decision to be Made

The Forest Supervisor will decide whether to

- authorize (via Special Use Permit) the installation, operation and maintenance of a natural gas pipeline as submitted in Horseshoe Run Services, LLC's Special Use Application,
- authorize (via Special Use Permit) Horseshoe Run Service's applied-for use subject to conditions needed to comply with Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines to meet the above-stated purpose and need for action, or
- not authorize Horseshoe (deny a Special Use Permit) to construct, operate and maintain a gas pipeline on Forest System lands.

Figure 2. Typical Pipeline Construction Spread

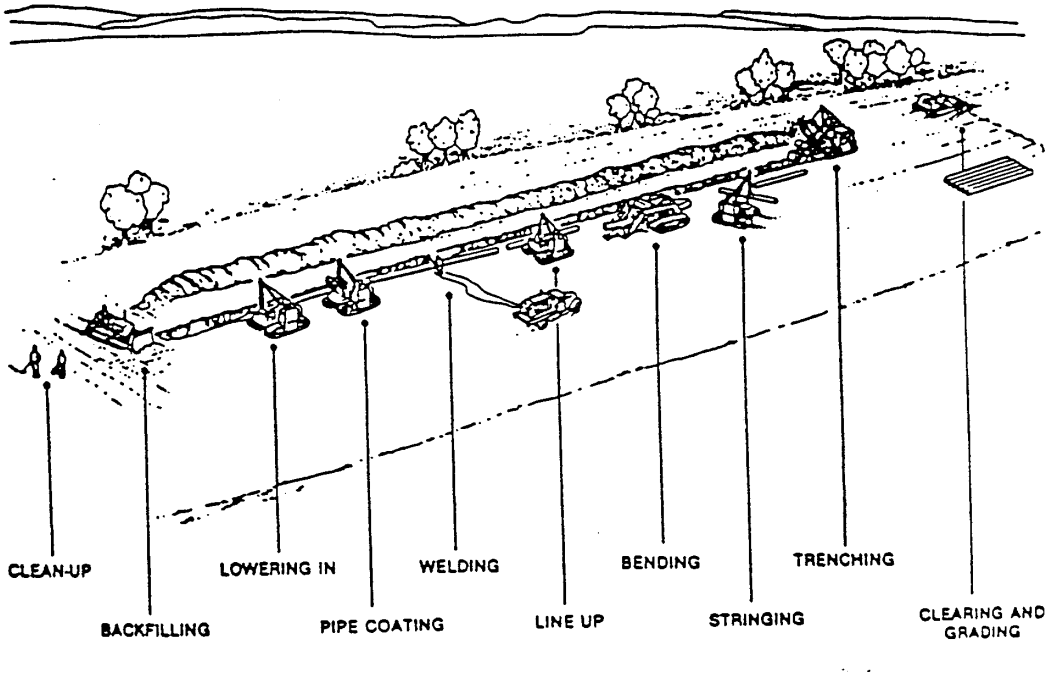

Figure 2. Typical Pipeline Construction Spread

NICHOLS PIPELINE AND ACCESS ROAD PROPOSAL

Purpose and Need for the Action

The Monongahela National Forest has received applications for Special Use Permits from:

1) MegaEnergy Operating, Inc. ("Mega") to improve an existing woods road and to construct a short distance of new road, and from
2) Horseshoe Run Services, LLC ("Horseshoe") to install, operate and maintain a buried, natural gas pipeline on National Forest System land.

MegaEnergy Operating, Inc. plans to drill and maintain an exploratory natural gas well to test the Oriskany and Tuscarora formations on private land northwest of the village of Lead Mine, West Virginia. They anticipate that the well will yield economic quantities of natural gas, which they would want to transport to the point of sale. They want to link this well on private land to an existing well and pipeline (Horseshoe application) on private land, which is the only reasonably nearby gas pipeline. The private property is surrounded entirely by National Forest Systems lands, thus would require crossing Forest System land.

Mega wants to upgrade an existing woods road and construct a new section to access the well site location in order to transport equipment to the site for drilling, completing and maintaining the well. The proposed reconstruction of an already existing woods road is the closest point of access. Both the access road and Horseshoe's proposed pipeline are optimally located to meet their objectives of being both technically feasible and economically reasonable, and represent the most direct routes with the least disturbance to previously undisturbed areas. The access road to the well site on private land would be constructed first, and if the exploratory well were unsuccessful, the proposed pipeline would not be constructed.

The USDA Forest Service is taking action in response to the Special Use Permit applications because it recognizes that special uses may be allowed if compatible with National Forest objectives and sound resource management (MNF Plan, page 27) and would contribute to the improved quality of life for local residents (MNF Plan page 39).

Proposed Actions

The proposed actions are to authorize MegaEnergy Operating, Inc. to improve an existing woods road and construct a short new section to access private land for their well-drilling operation, and to authorize Horseshoe Run Services, LLC to install, operate and maintain a buried natural gas pipeline on Forest System lands. Special Use Permits would be issued to each of the applicants to document authorization. The proposed operations would be within the boundary of the Cheat/Potomac Ranger District on the Monongahela National Forest in Tucker County, West Virginia, northwest of the village of Lead Mine, West Virginia.

Project Descriptions

Mega proposes to improve and maintain a short distance of existing woods road (about .08 miles) and to construct and maintain a new length of road (about .04 miles) to connect FR 929 to the Nichols well site location on private land. The attached map *(Attachment 2, Page 1 Nichols Pipeline and Access Road)* indicates the location of the proposed access road. The access road would originate at FR 929 and would cross Forest System land, then would enter private land, where it would terminate at the Nichols well site. Total length of the road on Forest System land would be approximately 0.12 miles.

Horseshoe proposes to install and operate a buried 4" natural gas pipeline, which would originate on private property, cross Forest System lands, and tie into an existing pipeline on private property. Approximately 4000' of pipeline would be constructed on National Forest System land, and when in operation, would transport up to 2 million cubic feet of natural gas per day.

The attached map *(Attachment 2, Page 2, Nichols Pipeline and Access Road)* indicates the location of the proposed gas pipeline. The pipeline would begin at the planned Nichols gas well site on private land and would be located on private land until it enters National Forest land, at which time it would be constructed in the access road. It would divert from the road for approximately 100 feet to run through a stand of mixed

hardwoods to meet a previously disturbed skid road, until it met FR929, which it would cross. It would then continue through a previously disturbed wildlife opening. Upon leaving the open area, the pipeline would continue up a slight incline in a former skid road clearing, which would be not only the most direct route but would utilize yet another previously-disturbed area.

Construction Activities

Mega would contract professional construction companies for the improvement and construction of the road. The proposed access road would be constructed to standards and guidelines of the Monongahela National Forest. There would be a short-term increase in noise levels during road construction. Surface soil and vegetation would be disturbed during construction, however, erosion and sediment controls would be in place to retain soil stability. Estimated construction time is 15 days, and construction of the access road would be expected to occur before September 15, 2004. If the exploratory Nichols gas well proves productive, the proposed Horseshoe Run Services, LLC pipeline installation would follow. If the exploratory well drilling were unsuccessful, the gas pipeline would not be constructed.

Horseshoe also would contract a professional pipeline construction company to prepare the site and build the pipeline. Preparation would require some forest clearing to widen the project area to 30 feet in some areas. *(Attachment 2, Nichols Pipeline and Access Road)*. The surface would be temporarily disturbed while the trench was being dug, then the pipeline would be buried under a minimum of 36 inches of cover. The proposed line would be designed, constructed, operated and maintained in accordance with the Department of Transportation Federal Safety Standards. (These standards specify material selection and qualification, minimum design requirements and protection from internal, external and atmospheric corrosion.) Pipeline construction proceeds like an "assembly line" process in which crews, with specialized assignments, work in sequence along the right-of-way to completely construct the pipeline. The construction crews perform the following activities: clearing and grading, trenching, pipe stringing, pipe bending, lineup, welding and x-raying, lowering in, backfilling, final cleanup, and testing. *(*See *Figure 2, Typical Pipeline Construction Spread)*. The construction phase is anticipated to take approximately 45 days, and would take place prior to November 30, 2004. When complete, the pipeline would be in operation 365 days per year, for an estimated 50 years.

Post-Construction Activity

Professional contractors would maintain the road. Clean up and restoration of disturbed areas would take place upon construction completion. Areas disturbed during construction would be vegetated with non-aggressive native genera seed, according to a Forest Service approved plan. It is estimated that this activity would take approximately 5 days to complete, however a final inspection and approval by the National Forest Service would be required. A 10-foot wide herbaceous corridor would be maintained for the life of the pipeline, which would be sufficient to allow pipeline maintenance activities. The remainder of the corridor would be allowed to revert to woody vegetation.

Decisions to be Made

The Forest Supervisor will decide whether to

- authorize (via Special Use Permit) the upgrading/reconstruction of an existing woods road and construction of a new section of road as submitted in Mega's Special Use Application,
- authorize (via Special Use Permit) MegaEnergy's applied-for use subject to conditions needed to mitigate effects to National Forest land or resources that would still meet the above-stated purpose and need for action, or
- not authorize Mega (deny a Special Use Permit) to construct and reconstruct a new road and an existing woods road on Forest System lands.

and

- authorize (via Special Use Permit) the installation, operation and maintenance of a natural gas pipeline as submitted in Horseshoe's application,
- authorize (via Special Use Permit) Horseshoe's applied-for use subject to conditions needed to comply with Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines would still meet the above-stated purpose and need for action, or
- not authorize Horseshoe (deny a Special Use Permit) to construct, operate and maintain a gas pipeline on Forest System lands.

LEAD MINE SEISMIC PROGRAM PROPOSAL

Purpose and Need for Action

The Cheat/Potomac Ranger District of the Monongahela National Forest has received an application for a temporary Geophysical Exploration Permit from MegaEnergy Operating, Inc. ("Mega"). Mega has requested authorization to conduct seismic surveys on lands managed by the USDA Forest Service. The data collected from the survey would provide information for Mega about the subsurface rock structure and locations of potential gas reservoirs, and would be used to determine the potential to develop the gas resource in the area.

This Geophysical Permit request is consistent with the MNF Plan, Management Prescription 3.0 (FSM Ref 2800) that allows surface-disturbing exploration for minerals of the kind included in this proposal.

Proposed Action

The proposed action is to issue a temporary Geophysical Exploration Permit to MegaEnergy Operating, Inc. to conduct seismic surveys on USDA Forest System lands. The proposed operation would be within the boundary of the Cheat/Potomac Ranger District on the Monongahela National Forest in Tucker County, and would be located west of State Route 7 (Horseshoe Run Road) and east of State Route 5 between Stemple Ridge and Camp Kidd, Shafer and St. George, respectively. *(Attachment 3, Lead Mine Seismic Program Vicinity Map.)*

Project Description

Three types of seismic survey methods are proposed: (1) vibroseis, (2) shot hole, and (3) cables/geophone surveys. The attached maps (*Attachment 4, Lead Mine Seismic Program, Maps1-5*) show the locations of proposed vibroseis, shot hole and cable/geophone lines.

1. Vibroseis:

Vibroseis seismic operations are conducted on and along existing roads. Vibration points are surveyed and marked with temporary flagging. Cables and geophones (small, passive listening devices) are laid along the surveyed vibroseis route. Trucks equipped with bottom-mounted pads are driven along the road, stop at each vibration point, and vibrate the road surface for a duration of about 6 seconds. The vibration sends a low frequency signal into the earth that is reflected back to the surface, "heard" by the geophones and transmitted to a recording device through the cables. Approximately 14 miles of vibroseis line are proposed on National Forest System Land.

2. Shot Holes:

In this instance, small explosive charges or "shots" are used to send a signal into the earth instead of vibrating trucks. (See *Figure 3, Basic Seismic Operation)* Shot points are surveyed and marked with temporary flagging. Using hand tools, brush would be cut on cross-country sections so that a line of sight could be established for surveying. Cables and geophones would be laid out along the surveyed shot hole line. Three methods of shots are proposed:

1. Articulated wheeled drill buggy or tracked drill buggy: Holes 30 feet deep would be drilled with an air hammer, and one 5-pound charge would be detonated every 110 feet along the survey line.
2. Bobcat: Holes 10 feet deep would be drilled by a Bobcat drill (auger) and 3 one-half pound charges would be detonated over 110 feet (one shot about every 36 feet)
3. Cross-country mini-holes: Using a portable backpack drill, holes 6 feet deep would be drilled and 5 one-third pound charges would be detonated over 110 feet (one shot about every 22 feet).

Approximately 23 miles of shot hole line are proposed on National Forest System Land.

3. Cables/Geophones only:

Cables and geophones for listening would be laid along cross-country routes that are not authorized for shot hole detonation, and would be accessed on foot only. Approximately 9 miles of cables/geophones only line are proposed on National Forest System Land.

Figure 3. Basic Seismic Surveying

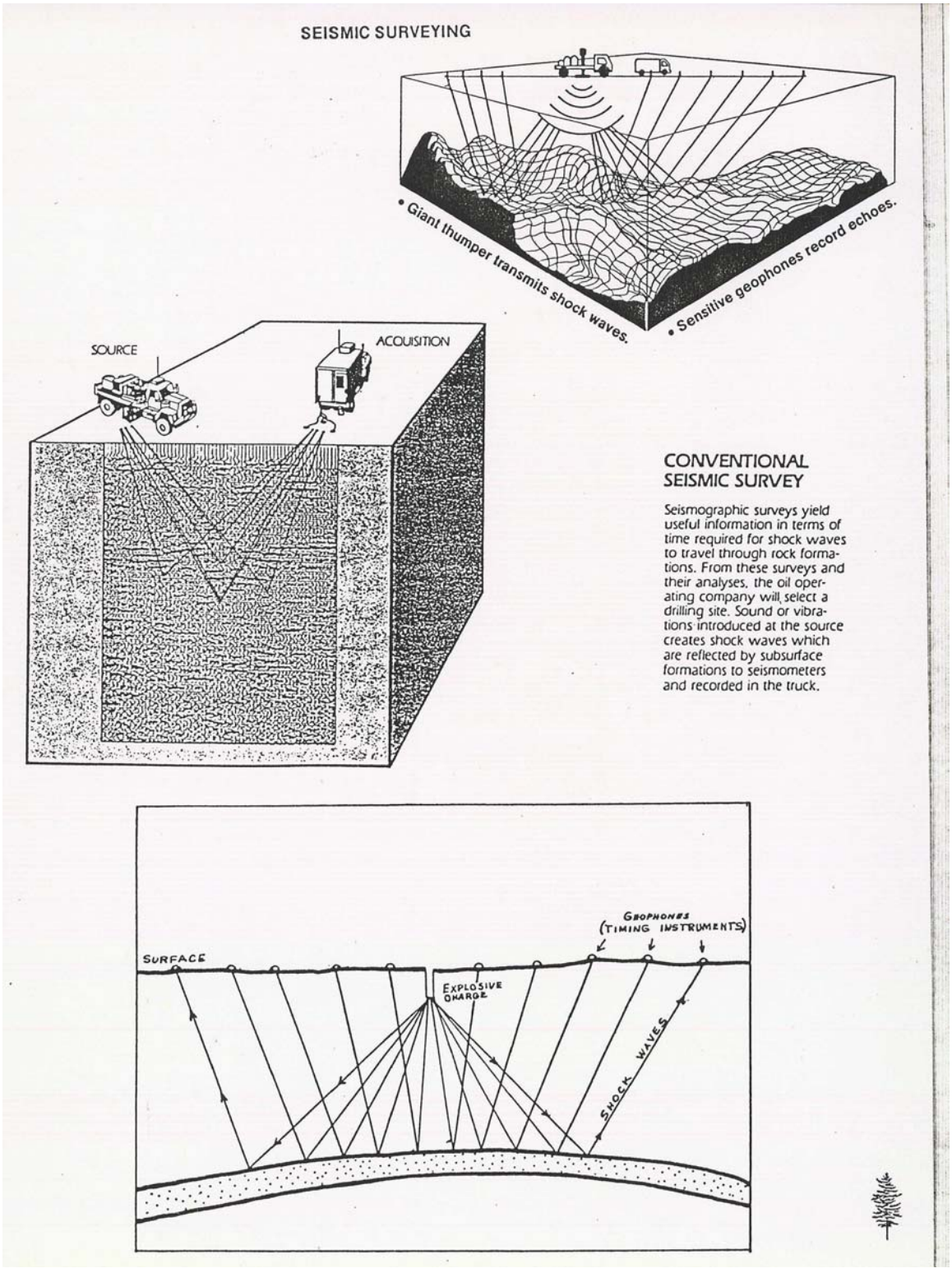

Figure 3. Basic Seismic Operation

Proposed Operating Procedure

Use of system roads would be permitted for equipment and personnel access. Roads that are currently "brushed in" or not drivable would not be cleared. Vibroseis trucks would be used only on roads authorized for Vibroseis trucks. Pick-up trucks, the wheeled drill buggy, the tracked drill buggy, and the Bobcat would be used only on roads authorized for truck traffic or the Vibroseis trucks. ATVs would be used only on roads authorized for ATV use. Project work is expected to be completed in 2004.

Surveyors would survey in all source and receiver lines. Once they have enough source lines surveyed and on the ground, they would bring in the drilling crew to pre-drill the project. Shot holes on the Forest Service roads would be drilled between the road bed and the cut bank, on the inside shoulder of the road. Surveyors would then survey in all source lines for vibroseis. When that is completed, they would survey in all receiver lines. Once the driller and surveyors complete their work, the recording crew would begin their job. They would lay cables and geophones along all of the receiver lines on the grid. The recording truck (doghouse) would connect into the grid and begin troubleshooting the line. Once the grid was “live”, the crew would start to vibroseis all vibe stations on the source lines. The next step would be to detonate the shot hold stations on the source lines. There would be 2 or 3 shooting crews using encoder/decoder shooting boxes. (The source stations are done one at a time in sequence, and then recorded.) An ATF-approved powder truck would transport all explosives, and all explosives would be stored at night in explosive magazines at an approved location off Forest System lands.

All shot holes would be loaded, then plugged and tamped with the cutting from the hole. If any holes did blow out, they would be filled with sand and gravel from off site. Once completed, all cables and geophones would be removed. All survey flagging, survey lath, cap wire and crew debris would be picked up and removed from the site. No roads or trails would be constructed.

Resource Protection Measure in the Proposal

Forest staff have conducted a field review of these proposed lines and have identified specific concerns. Mega’s proposal includes seismic survey line location and design and specific measures to mitigate resource concerns associated with the proposed seismic survey. Specific mitigation measures are shown in *Attachment 5, Activities to Mitigate Surface Impacts from Seismic Activities, Monongahela National Forest.*

Decision to be Made

The Forest Supervisor will decide whether to

- authorize (via Geophysical Exploration Permit) MegaEnergy Operating, Inc. to conduct seismic surveys
- authorize (via Geophysical Exploration Permit) MegaEnergy’s seismic proposal subject to conditions needed to mitigate adverse effects to National

Forest land or resources that would still meet the above-stated purpose and need for action, or

- not authorize Mega (deny a Geophysical Exploration Permit) to conduct seismic surveys on Forest System lands.

ALLEGHENY PIPELINE PROPOSED ACTION
RESPONSE FORM

Send Comments by July 19, 2004 to: Deb Sholly
USDA Forest Service
P.O. Box 67
Bartow, WV 24920

Questions? Call Deb at 304-456-3335, Ext. 14
or email dsholly@fs.fed.us

Your Name:_____ Date:_____
Organization:_____ Work Phone Number:_____
Address: _____ Home Phone Number:_____
_____

WHAT are you concerned about and **WHERE** in the project area is your concern?
(*Example:* "I am concerned about surface and sediment run-off from the construction of the new pipeline at _____")

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

WHY are you concerned and is there a particular time of year that you are most concerned about the proposed activity occurring?
(*Example:* "I am concerned about earth disturbance associated with construction, particularly during April-May due to the spring thaw and increased potential for sediment run-off.")

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

HOW do you suggest we address your concern? **WHAT** do you recommend?
(*Example:* "I recommend that the construction corridor at _____ not be cleared from April/May because wet ground and spring rainfall could increase the likelihood for sediment run-off and to conduct construction activities during drier months.")

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:_____
_____
_____

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMMENT

NICHOLS PIPELINE and ACCESS ROAD PROPOSED ACTION
RESPONSE FORM

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or email dsholly@fs.fed.us

Your Name:_____ Date:_____
Organization:_____ Work Phone Number:_____
Address: _____ Home Phone Number:_____
_____

WHAT are you concerned about and **WHERE** in the project area is your concern?
(*Example:* "I am concerned about surface and sediment run-off from the construction of the new pipeline at _____")

_____
_____
_____
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_____
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WHY are you concerned and is there a particular time of year that you are most concerned about the proposed activity occurring?
(*Example:* "I am concerned about earth disturbance associated with road construction, particularly during April-May due to the spring thaw and increased potential for sediment run-off.")

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

HOW do you suggest we address your concern? **WHAT** do you recommend?
(*Example:* "I recommend that the construction corridor at _____ not be cleared from April/May because wet ground and spring rainfall could increase the likelihood for sediment run-off and to conduct construction activities during drier months.")

_____
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_____
_____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:_____
_____
_____
_____

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMMENT

LEAD MINE SEISMIC PROGRAM PROPOSED ACTION
RESPONSE FORM

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Bartow, WV 24920

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or email dsholly@fs.fed.us

Your Name:_____ Date:_____
Organization:_____ Work Phone Number:_____
Address: _____ Home Phone Number:_____
_____

WHAT are you concerned about and **WHERE** in the project area is your concern?
(*Example:* "I am concerned about allowing shots near streams due to the potential occurrence of sediment in runoff, particularly near _____")

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

WHY are you concerned and is there a particular time of year that you are most concerned about the proposed activity occurring?
(*Example:* "I am concerned about earth disturbance associated with seismic shots, due to _____")

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

HOW do you suggest we address your concern? **WHAT** do you recommend?
(*Example:* "I recommend that shots occur only during the months of _____because wet ground and rainfall could increase the likelihood for sediment run-off into _____ Creek.")

_____
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_____
_____
_____
_____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:_____
_____
_____
_____

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMMENT