



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Big Piney  
Ranger District

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Hector, AR 72843  
479-284-3150  
FAX 479-284-2015

Hwy 7 North  
P.O. Box 427  
Jasper, AR 72641  
870-446-5122  
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File Code: 1950

Date: September 23, 2014

Dear Interested Party:

SEECO, Inc. is proposing to construct a gas well (*Ozark Highlands Unit 9-16 2-7H6, ARES 52178 & 52179*) on National Forest land on an existing Federal oil/gas lease. The proposed surface disturbing activity is located in Section 7 of T9N, R16W of the Big Piney Ranger District. The site is located approximately 2.5 miles northwest of Cleveland, AR and 0.7 miles north along Brock Creek Road from the junction with Bridge Hill Road in Conway County. See the attached map for the location.

Activities would include road construction to access the well, construction of a drill pad and reserve pit, and drilling of the well. If the well is a producer, production facilities would be installed on the drill pad and maintenance of the remaining surface features would be required and completed by either mechanical means, herbicide use, or both. Production equipment to be installed on the drill pad could consist of, but not be limited to, a wellhead, a separator unit, a meter shed, a produced water tank, and if needed, a compressor and/or dehydrator. Any portion of the drill pad not required for production would be reclaimed for National Forest Management. Upon depletion of reserves or abandonment of the well, the production facility would be removed from the site and the site would be reclaimed by the operator.

If drilling results in a dry hole, the well casing would be plugged with cement below the ground surface in a manner approved by the Arkansas Oil and Gas Commission and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and a dry hole marker installed. The cleared area and the reserve pit would then be reclaimed as specified by the Forest Service.

Drilling operations are expected to begin upon approval from the authorizing agencies. The Forest Service is the surface management agency responsible for approval of surface disturbing activities on National Forest lands. The BLM will approve the drilling plan or “downhole” operations. A cooperative environmental analysis (EA) will be completed that covers both surface and subsurface effects.

Other items included in this proposed action are to allow for herbicide use on two existing well pad sites (ARES51810 10-17 #1-4 & ARES51900 10-19 #1-7) (see attached map) to control

existing populations of non-native invasive species (NNIS) on and around the well pads. The types and kinds of herbicides proposed are the same as what is listed below for the newly proposed well pad in Section 7 of Township 9 North, Range 16 West.

**Proposal for the Well is as follows:**

*Drill Pad and Reserve Pit Construction*

The proposed well pad would be approximately 260' (feet) by 320' for a total of 1.9 acres and have a pit approximately 125' by 125' (0.36 acres). Clearing limits around the location would allow for topsoil stockpiles, erosion control measures, and diversion ditches. Total cleared area would not exceed 5.8 acres. Diversion ditches and waterbars would extend beyond the clearing limits onto undisturbed forest floor no further than necessary to achieve desired results (this could extend outside the 5.8 acres mentioned above). Trees on the location would be marked and sold to SEECO, Inc. through timber settlement at fair market value.

Whether a producing well or a non-producing well, upon completion of the drilling activities, testing of soil and water from the reserve pit would be conducted with the U.S. Forest Service present. If levels test higher than base levels known for this area, mitigation needed to accomplish successful reclamation of the pit would be completed.

Machinery noise that has the potential to disturb wildlife, livestock, and private landowners or neighbors would be managed to reduce sound levels. Suitable mufflers would be installed on all internal combustion engines and certain compressor components. Engineered sound barriers or sound-insulated buildings may be required.

Permanent or semi-permanent gas well equipment left in place after initial drilling will be painted the current specified color, "shale green," to better blend with the surroundings.

*Water Supply*

The source of water required for drilling the proposed well and bringing it into production would be obtained from a municipal water source. The air drilling rig would use approximately 105,000 gallons of municipal water. The water will be trucked into the drill pad and stored on site and used to mist drill and for cement. The re-entry drilling rig would use approximately 42,000 gallons of municipal water. The water would be trucked into the drill pad and stored on site and used for cementing, rig cleaning, and possibly in the mud system.

*Temporary Water Line*

The source of water required for fracture stimulation of the proposed well would be obtained from an off-site private source. Water used for fracture stimulation would be piped through temporary water lines placed along Brock Creek Road for approximately 1.4 miles. The water would be piped through two 10" pipes side by side on the surface of the ground. Total water usage for fracture stimulation would be approximately 5,250,000 gallons of freshwater.

*Lease Road Construction*

The proposed new lease road would be approximately 531' in length on U.S. Forest Service property. The proposed lease road right-of-way would be approximately 50' wide, with the road surface being approximately 12' to 16' wide. There would be approximately 25' of clearing required on each side of the centerline of the access road. The newly constructed lease road would have a 4 – 6% crown with 3:1 slopes from the edges of the road on cut sides and 1.5:1 slopes from the edges on fill slopes. Drainage ditches would be installed on the upslope grade of the lease road with culverts as needed. The ditches would be constructed with a 3:1 slope next to the road and 1:1 back slopes.

#### Road Relocation/Construction/Reconstruction

Approximately 1,000 feet of Forest Service Road 93021B would be relocated south of the proposed gas well location then reconnect to the existing portion of 93021B at a point 400 feet east of the proposed gas well pad. The lease road would spur off of Forest Service Road 93021B and end at the gas well pad. The proposed relocated road right of way would be approximately 30 feet wide with the road surface being approximately 20 feet wide. There would be approximately 15' of clearing required on each side of the centerline of the road. An existing section of Forest Service Road 93021B would be reconstructed from the point where the relocated section ties into it. The reconstructed road would be approximately 500 feet long. The reconstructed road right of way would be approximately 30 feet wide with the road surface being approximately 20 feet wide. A dispersed campsite parking area would be relocated to the end of the reconstructed road. The dispersed campsite would be approximately 150' by 150'. The dispersed campsite parking area would be built to replace an existing dispersed campsite parking area that would be obliterated by the proposed gas well location. Safety signs would be required along roads and trails as directed by the Surface Management Agency.

#### Road Obliteration

Approximately 1,320 feet of existing Forest Service Road 93021B would be obliterated beginning at the junction of Brock Creek Road to approximately 400 feet east of the proposed gas well location. Obliteration would include re-contouring, scarifying, erosion control, construction of berms at each end, seeding, fertilizing, mulching and other necessary measures. The relocated section of road would replace the obliterated road section.

#### Road Maintenance

Existing access roads would be maintained to a condition equal or better than the condition of the roads at the time the work commences on the proposed gas well. Routine maintenance of the existing roads would include re-grading the road, adding additional gravel as required and repairing failures that result from the drilling activities. Semi-permanent dust control would be placed and maintained on any road sections where dust would adversely affect adjacent landowners and residents.

#### Use of Herbicides to Treat Invasive Plants on the Proposed Location

Herbicides would be used to maintain the proposed location and to control invasive plants along with potential mechanical means. The following herbicides would be used: Imazapyr, Ethylene

Oxide, Sulfometuron Methyl, Isopropylamine Salt of Glyphosate, and Inert Ingredients. The herbicides would be used only as a spot application to keep the well pad clear of vegetation during use and to control invasive species. Forest Service Standards for herbicide application would be followed as well as appropriate Best Management Practices designed to limit risk to water quality.

The activity being proposed is located on an existing valid federal mineral lease which was previously issued to Seeco, Inc. This lease gives them the right to drill for, extract and sell the federally owned gas. The Forest Service is a multiple use agency and by responding to this proposal will be complying with the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, Mining & Minerals Policy Act of 1970, the Federal Onshore Oil & Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987, the Forest Service Minerals Program Policy 1995, the Energy Policy Act of 1995 as well as numerous other laws, regulations and directives.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 218.7, I am requesting your responses on this proposed action. Your responses will be used to identify issues about this proposal and to develop alternatives to the proposal for my consideration. The environmental effects will be disclosed in an environmental document.

The purpose of this project initiation letter is to provide an opportunity for the public to provide early and meaningful participation on a proposed action prior to a decision being made by the Responsible Official. This project is subject to administrative review under 36 CFR 218 Project-Level Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process, Parts A and B.

Responses should be postmarked or received within 30 days beginning the day after publication of a legal notice in the *The Courier* in Russellville, AR.

When submitting a response, please provide the following information: 1) your name and mailing address, 2) title of the proposed action: *to SEECO, Inc. Ozark Highlands Unit 9-16 2-7H6, ARES 52178 & 52179* 3) your responses on the proposed action, and 4) your signature or other means of identification verification: for organizations, a signature or other means of identification verification must be provided for the individual authorized to represent your organization.

Please send written responses to me: District Ranger Timothy E. Jones, Big Piney Ranger District, Ozark National Forest, 12,000 SR 27, Hector, AR 72845. Oral or hand-delivered responses may be made at the Ranger District office in Hector within the normal weekday business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Responses may also be mailed electronically to this office, in a common digital format (without attachments), using the following email address: [comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-bayou@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-bayou@fs.fed.us) . In accordance with regulations, all written responses received, including those submitted electronically, will be placed in the project file and will become a matter of public record. I may also be contacted at (479) 284-3150.

Questions regarding this project's effects on cultural resources and/or compliance of this project with National Historic Preservation Act Section, 106 should be directed to Dr. David Journey,

Heritage Program Manager and Tribal Liaison for the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests (479-964-7237 or [djourney@fs.fed.us](mailto:djourney@fs.fed.us)).

If you have questions on this proposal or the analysis and decision process, please contact Len Weeks at (479)964-7231 or by email at [lweeks@fs.fed.us](mailto:lweeks@fs.fed.us).

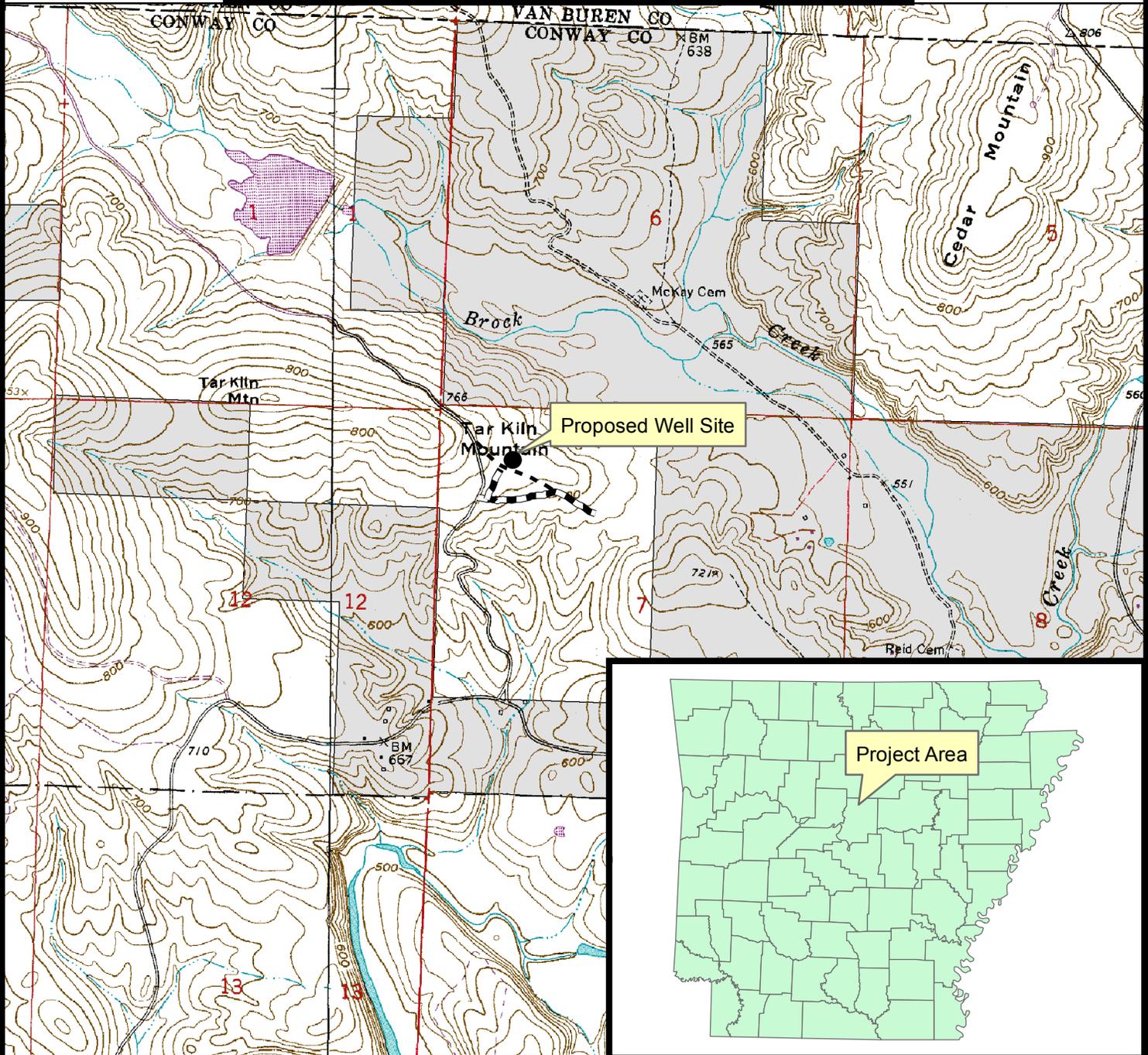
Sincerely,



TIMOTHY E. JONES  
District Ranger



**Scoping Map**  
**Proposed Natural Gas Well**  
 Township 09 North, Range 16 West, Section 07  
 Cleveland Quad., Conway County  
 Big Piney Ranger District  
 Ozark-St. Francis National Forests



1:24,000      0    0.2    0.4    0.6    0.8  
 Miles

**Legend**

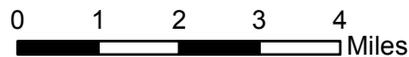
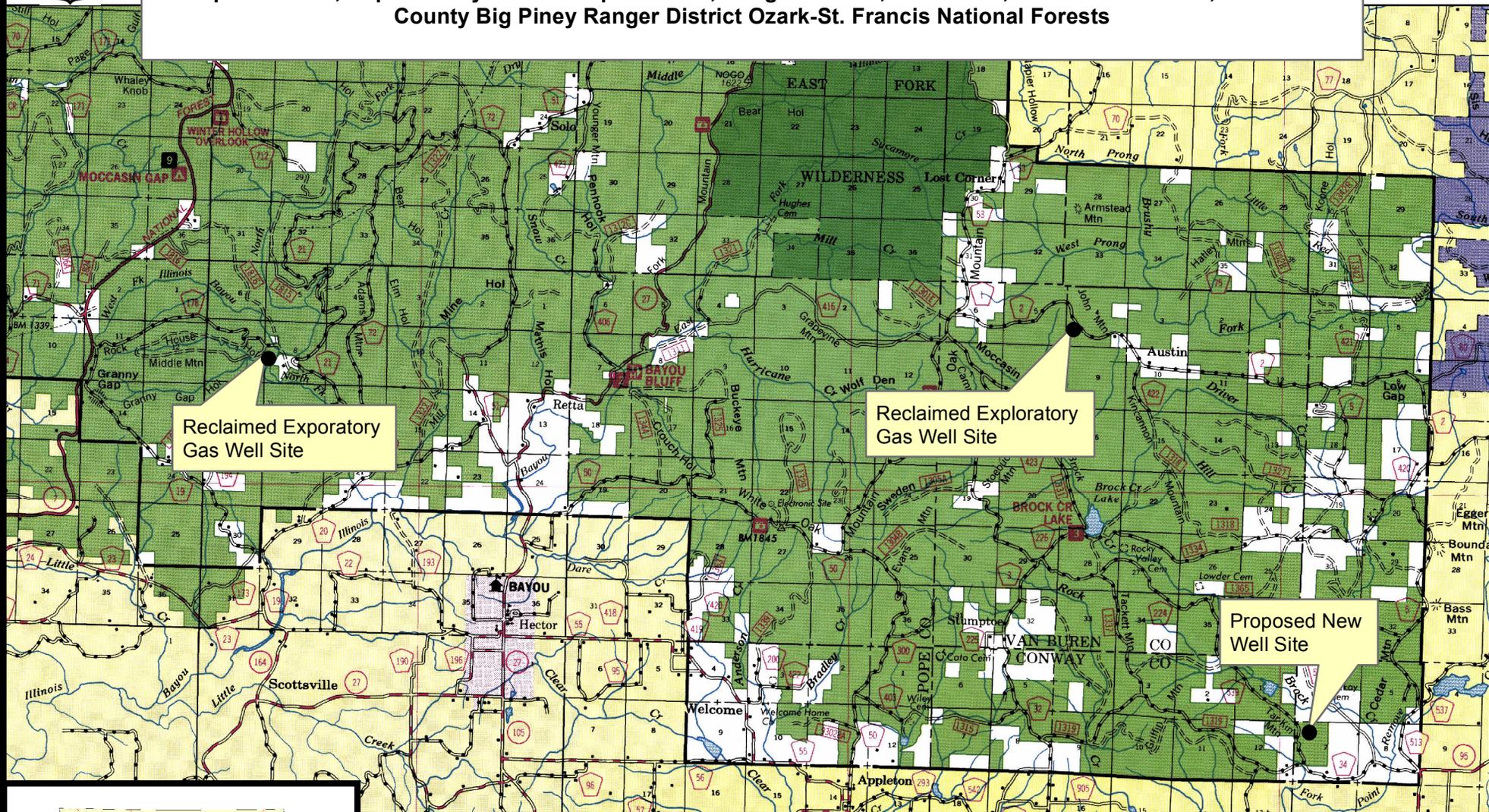
- 93021B To Be Obliterated
- Reconstruct Road 93021B
- Private

The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. The y may be: developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created, may yield inaccurate or misleading results.

The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace GIS products without notification. For more information, contact:  
 Ozark-St. Francis National Forest, 605 West Main, Russellville, AR 72801 -3614, (479) 964-7211



**Project Location Map for Reclaimed Natural Gas Well Sites: Township 10 North, Range 19 West, Section 08 Simpson Quad., Pope County & Township 10 North, Range 17 West, Section 04, Lost Corner Quad., Van Buren County Big Piney Ranger District Ozark-St. Francis National Forests**



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