



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Los Padres  
National Forest

Supervisor's Office  
6755 Hollister Ave., Suite 150  
Goleta, CA 93117  
(805) 968-6640  
TDD: (805) 968-6790

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File Code: 2820

Date: May 2, 2014

Dear Interested Party:

The Los Padres National Forest in cooperation with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is initiating an environmental analysis to evaluate a project in the Sespe Oil Field, and is requesting comments on the proposed action. The proposal submitted by Seneca Resources Corporation is to drill eight oil and gas wells and install new facilities on National Forest System lands under existing oil and gas leases. This scoping period provides an opportunity for those interested in or affected by the proposal to make their concerns known prior to a decision being made by the responsible official.

#### BACKGROUND

The Sespe oil field is located about five miles north-north-east of the town of Fillmore in Ventura County. The oil field is comprised of land managed by the Forest Service, BLM, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and private property. Oil was first discovered in Tar Creek in 1887. Since that time, the Sespe Oil Field has been producing commercial quantities of oil and gas. Currently, there are approximately 100 active wells on National Forest System lands within the Sespe Oil Field. On adjacent lands, there are another 100 active wells.

Under the Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987, Los Padres National Forest is responsible for authorizing surface-disturbing activities on leases. On National Forest System lands, the BLM is responsible for authorizing drilling activities. Presently, Seneca Resources Corporation is the sole holder of federal oil and gas leases within the oil field on the Los Padres National Forest lands. This proposal occurs on five of their leases.

#### PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

The purpose of the Forest Service action is to respond to Seneca Resources Corporation proposed surface use plan of operations as required by 36 CFR 228.107. An environmental analysis is being completed to facilitate the Forest Service decision-making process to determine whether to approve, approve with modifications, or disapprove of Seneca's proposal.

The Forest Service needs to complete this action in order to fulfill its regulatory responsibilities for authorizing surface use associated with Federal oil and gas leases. Federal mineral leasing laws (Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 [MLA], 30 U.S.C. 188 et seq.) and their implementing regulations allow lease holders to develop Federal mineral resources according to lease terms and conditions.



In addition, Forest Goal 4.1a of the Los Padres National Forest Land Management Plan directs the Forest Service to administer mineral and energy resource development while protecting ecosystem health.

#### PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to authorize surface use and drilling of eight oil and gas wells at four separate existing well pads, construction of 7,960 feet of new pipelines, installation of a 400 barrel welded emergency tank, a transfer pump, three pressure vessels, and master headers in the Sespe Oil Field. Out of the 7,960 feet of proposed new pipelines, 7,675 feet of line would be on existing well pads and along existing roads and approximately 285 feet of line are proposed along undisturbed ground. Like most of wells completed previously in the Sespe Oil Field, the new wells would be hydraulically fractured as part of completing the wells for production. The project would be completed in two phases during two separate years, with the bulk of the project occurring within Phase 1. Maps displaying the well pads and pipeline locations can be found on our website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/lpnf/landmanagement/projects> under 'Applications for Permit to Drill (APD's) in the Sespe Oil Field'.

#### Phase 1:

Phase 1 would include drilling of four wells on two existing well pads, construction of 7,960 feet of new pipeline, installation of a 400 barrel welded emergency tank, a transfer pump, three pressure vessels, and master headers.

Drilling would occur at the Anza Mohawk and Strand 11 well pads, and would include the following wells: Anza Mohawk Wells 23-29 and 24-29, and Strand Wells 10-29 and 13-29. In addition to the new wells, two 3 inch pipelines would be installed along existing roads from the Anza Mohawk well pad to the Redrock well pad. From the Redrock well pad to the Central Facility a third 3 inch line would be installed along an existing road. This 7,960 feet of new lines would be buried within the road prism along Dough Flat Road 6N16 (open to the public), and installed on racks along those roads closed to the public. Buried lines will be externally coated steel or reinforced fiberglass with sacrificial anodes attached to prevent external corrosion. Above ground lines will be steel. The new lines will carry produced oil, produced water, produced gas, and fresh non-potable water (fire prevention). The entire length is on the National Forest Lands in Section 29, T5N, R19W, S.B.B.M. Installation of the pipelines from Anza Mohawk would eliminate the need to truck the produced crude oil and water from Anza Mohawk to swing tanks or the Hansen/Whitestar Facility, eliminating approximately 200 truck trips per month.

At the Stand 1 well pad, a 400 barrel welded emergency tank, a transfer pump, and three pressure vessels would be installed. Master headers would also be installed at both Anza Mohawk and Strand 1 well pads. Installation of this equipment would take about 45 days.

The construction crews would consist of a hydro-crane or A-Frame truck with a two person crew, up to two welding trucks with a two person crew each, and a water truck with a one man crew to help prevent any grass fires. A backhoe would be used to bury the line in roads, at road crossings and to auger holes for the pipe supports. Legs of the pipe supports would be cemented in place using a ready-mix truck to supply the concrete.

Construction would be done during daylight hours between 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday. Traffic control would be utilized on both ends of the construction zone, and if necessary the public would be escorted through the construction zone. No open trench would be left unattended or uncovered, and flashing warning signs would alert the public to any hazards. Once the construction is complete, the lines will be filled with water and hydro tested prior to being placed in service.

Phase 2:

Phase 2 of the project would occur the following year, and include drilling of four oil and gas wells at two existing well pad locations: Strand 1 well pad and the Red Rock well pad. The proposed wells include Strand wells 6-29 and 7-29, and Red Rock wells 54-29 and 64-29.

**SUBMITTING COMMENTS**

The Forest Service is requesting comments, along with supporting reasons that the responsible official should consider in reaching a decision. Please submit comments by June 4, 2014. Comments may be submitted to:

Los Padres National Forest  
Attn: Jonathan Schwartz  
1190 East Ojai Ave.  
Ojai, CA 93023

Comments may be submitted by FAX [805-646-0484] or by hand-delivery to the Ojai Ranger District office at the address shown above, during normal business hours (Monday - Friday mornings 8:00am-12:00pm and afternoons 1:00pm-4:30pm). Oral comments must be provided at the Ojai Ranger District office, in person, or via telephone at 805-646-4348, x.311 during normal business hours. Electronic comments, in acceptable [plain text (.txt), rich text (.rtf) or Word (.doc)] formats, may be submitted to: [comments-pacificsouthwest-los-padres-ojai@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-pacificsouthwest-los-padres-ojai@fs.fed.us). If submitting comments electronically, please include the words "Applications for Permit to Drill (APD's) in the Sespe Oil Field" in the e-mail subject line.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the Agency with the ability to provide the respondent with subsequent environmental documents.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the management of your national forest.

Sincerely,



KENNETH E. HEFFNER  
Forest Supervisor

