



## Project Scoping

October 21, 2004

Proposal by Sanchez Oil and Gas Corporation to Drill and Produce the WM Rice #1 Well inside the Turkey Creek Unit of Big Thicket National Preserve  
Tyler County, Texas

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. subsection 9.52(a), the Superintendent of Big Thicket National Preserve gives notice that Sanchez Oil and Gas Corporation, (Sanchez) proposes to drill and produce the WM Rice #1 Well inside the Turkey Creek Unit. The proposed operations area is shown in the inset to the right. When a substantially complete Plan of Operations is received by the Preserve, the Superintendent will publish a notice of availability of the Plan of Operations and associated environmental assessment in the *Federal Register* for a 30-day public review period.

Sanchez proposes to drill and produce the WM Rice #1 Well from a surface location inside the Turkey Creek Unit of Big Thicket National Preserve. The proposed surface location is north of CR 4825, southeast of the community of Hicksbaugh. This location is within the 100-year floodplain of Turkey Creek. If the well is placed in production, the gas produced would be transported along this corridor, under CR 4825, to an existing gas pipeline. The oil and brine produced would be trucked from the site.

At this time, the Superintendent is announcing a 30-day public scoping period to solicit public comments on this proposal prior to the Preserve completing an environmental analysis of the proposal.

As the superintendent of Big Thicket National Preserve, I invite you to participate in this scoping process.

Sincerely,  
Art Hutchinson, Superintendent

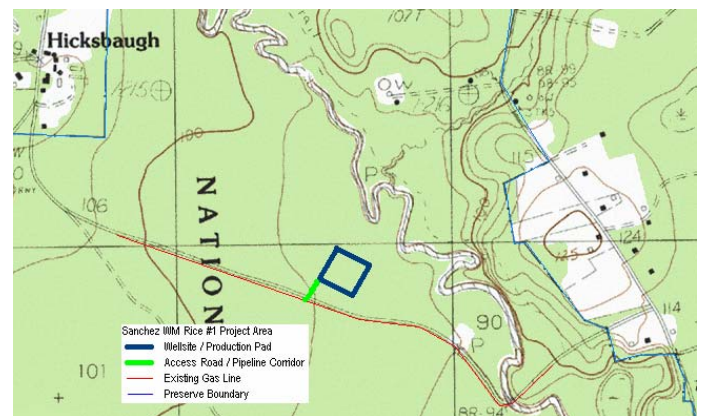
### Overview of the Process

Project milestones include:

- Public scoping period (closes November 19, 2004)
- Preparation of environmental assessment
- Public review of environmental assessment
- Analysis of public comment
- Preparation of decision document
- Announcement of decision on Sanchez's proposal

**What does the scoping period mean?** Scoping is done in the initial phase of a project to seek input from a variety of sources. The input is used to identify issues, areas requiring additional study, and topics that will be analyzed in the EA process. This is an opportunity for you to provide us with your suggestions, comments, and concerns regarding this oil and gas project at Big Thicket.

**Is scoping my only opportunity to comment on the project?** No, once the EA is developed, the document will be made available for public review for a 30-day period.



Proposed WM Rice #1 Project Location (not to scale)

### Resources and Concerns

Initial internal project scoping identified the following resources and other concerns for consideration in the environmental assessment (EA).

Air quality	Cultural resources
Geology and soils	Lightscares
Water resources	Visitor use
Floodplains/wetlands	Natural soundscapes
Vegetation	Adjacent landowners
Fish and wildlife	Socioeconomics
Species of special concern	

### Alternatives

Initial internal project scoping identified the following alternatives for consideration in the EA:

- 1) No-Action (well would not be drilled)
- 2) Sanchez's proposal
- 3) Directionally drill and produce the well from a surface location outside the boundaries of the Preserve
- 4) Alternate surface locations inside the Preserve for the drilling and/or production operations, including locating the production facilities outside the 100-year Floodplain
- 5) Acquire the minerals interests which are part of the proposal

**Please let us know by November 19, 2004:**

1. Do you have ideas to share about the resources and concerns, or are there additional resources and concerns that you think we should consider?
2. Are there any other alternatives that you think should be considered?
3. Do you have other comments and suggestions for us to consider in the environmental assessment?

**If you wish to comment on the scoping brochure or on any other issues associated with the project, you may submit your comments in the following ways:**

- You may submit written comments to:  
Superintendent, Big Thicket National Preserve  
3785 Milam Street  
Beaumont, Texas 77701
- You may also comment via electronic mail (e-mail) to [BITH\\_Superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:BITH_Superintendent@nps.gov). *Please submit e-mail comments as a text file, avoiding the use of special characters and any form of encryption. Please also include your name, e-mail address and return mailing address in your e-mail message. If you do not receive confirmation that we have received your e-mail message, please contact Dusty Pate at 409/839-2689, extension 232.*
- Finally, you may hand deliver comments to Big Thicket National Preserve.

**If you wish to be added to the park's mailing address for this and other announcements, please be sure to indicate that in your response, and we'll add you to the park's mailing list.**

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