

Categorical Exclusion Form

Project: Cimarex Energy Co. Sour Lake 3-D Seismic Survey

PIN: 16359

Date: December 21, 2006

Describe project, including location (reference the attached Environmental Screening Form, if appropriate), and list any mitigations:

Project Description: Cimarex Energy Co. (Cimarex) has submitted a Plan of Operations to the NPS to conduct a "cable-only" three-dimensional (3-D) seismic survey within the Lance Rosier and Little Pine Island-Pine Island Bayou Corridor Units (Units) of the Preserve. Cimarex's proposed operations within the Units are part of the 43-square mile Sour Lake 3-D seismic survey. Approximately 3 square miles of the survey would overlap the Preserve. The proposed data collection would be accomplished using acoustic reflection methodology, where sources of vibration would be created and the resulting energy wave recorded at various points along a grid to develop an image of the subsurface in three dimensions. The vibrations would be created by the detonation of explosive charges loaded into a single hole drilled at each source point. Cimarex proposes to use "cable-only" methodology within the Preserve. This means that no shot holes would be drilled and no explosive charges would be detonated inside the Units. Operations in the Units would begin with the surveying of locations for receiver placement. Recording operations would follow. This phase of the operation consists of the layout of cables, geophones and batteries to record vibrations produced outside the Preserve, and the removal of this equipment. Recording operations would be supported by helicopter. No off-road vehicle use would be permitted in the Unit. Vegetation would be trimmed to permit passage by foot down the receiver lines. Cimarex has requested a reduction in offset distances required by both the NPS nonfederal oil and gas regulations found at 36 CFR 9B and the Preserve's Oil and Gas Management Plan from watercourses in the project area.

Project Locations:

Location

County: Hardin

State: TX

District:

Section:

Geo. Marker:

Other:

(See the Plan of Operations for this proposal.)

Mitigation(s):

See the Plan of Operations for this proposal.

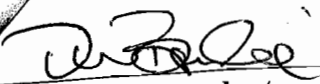
Describe the category used to exclude action from further NEPA analysis and indicate the number of the category (see Section 3-4 of DO-12):

E.6. Non-destructive data collection, inventory (including field, aerial, and satellite surveying and mapping), study, research, and monitoring activities (this is also a Departmental CE).

Describe any public or agency involvement effort conducted (reference the attached ESF):

(See Attached Environmental Screening Form)

On the basis of the environmental impact information in the statutory compliance file, with which I am familiar, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No exceptional circumstances (e.g. all boxes in the ESF are marked "no") or conditions in Section 3-6 apply, and the action is fully described in Section 3-4 of DO-12.



Park Superintendent

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12/21/06

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