



## Cimarex Energy Co.'s Delilah 3D Seismic Survey in the Lance Rosier and Little Pine Island – Pine Island Bayou Corridor Units

Project Scoping

October 11, 2008

*Dear Friend of Big Thicket National Preserve:*

*Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. subsection 9.52(a), the Superintendent of Big Thicket National Preserve (Preserve) gives notice that Cimarex Energy Co. (Cimarex) has submitted a draft Plan of Operations to conduct a “cable-only” three-dimensional (3D) seismic survey within the Lance Rosier and Little Pine Island-Pine Island Bayou Corridor Units (Units) of the Preserve. The proposed operations area is shown on the attached figure. Upon determining the Plan of Operations substantially complete, the Superintendent will publish a notice of availability of the Plan of Operations in the Federal Register for a 30-day public review period.*

*Cimarex’s proposed operations within the Units are part of the 76-square mile Delilah 3-D seismic survey. Approximately 5.4 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 Units. A minimal amount of vegetation would be trimmed to permit passage by foot down the receiver lines.*

*At this time, the Preserve is announcing a 30-day public scoping period to solicit public comments on this proposal prior to completing environmental impact analysis. As the Superintendent of Big Thicket National Preserve, I invite you to participate in this scoping process.*

*Sincerely,*

*Todd Brindle  
Superintendent*

### Alternatives

Following is the preliminary range of alternatives to be evaluated during environmental analysis:

**Alternative 1 – No Action** The proposed 3D seismic survey would not be conducted within the Preserve

**Alternative 2 – Cimarex’s Proposed Action** Cimarex would conduct cable-only operations within the Preserve.

**Alternative 3 – Conduct the Survey Using Seismic Sources within the Preserve** In addition to the activities proposed under Alternative 2, off-road vehicles (drills/ATVs) would access the Preserve to drill source holes, the holes would be loaded with explosive charges, and the charges would be detonated within the Preserve during recording operations.

**Alternative 4 – Acquire the Mineral Rights that are Part of the Proposal** The National Park Service would purchase 100% of the mineral rights underlying the proposed project area, eliminating the rights of the current mineral owners to operate in the area.

### Overview of the Process

Project milestones include:

- **Public scoping (closes November 10, 2008)\***
- Environmental impact analysis
- Public review of Plan of Operations\*
- Analysis of public comment
- Completion of environmental impact analysis and preparation of decision document (if applicable)
- Announcement of decision on Cimarex’s proposal

Bold indicates where we are now; \* indicates opportunities for public comment

### Resources and Concerns

The National Park Service will analyze potential impacts to:

Water Resources ● Floodplains and Wetlands ● Fish, Wildlife, and Species of Special Concern ● Geology and Soils ● Vegetation ● Cultural Resources ● Air Quality ● Soundscapes ● Socioeconomics ● Visitor Use and Experience ● Public Health and Safety

## Ideas to Consider

Following are a few ideas to keep in mind as you develop your comments on this proposal:

1. Do you have any ideas to share about the alternatives or resources and concerns, or are there any other issues/concerns about the project 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?

## How Do I Comment on This Project?

Please submit your comments online at the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/bith>

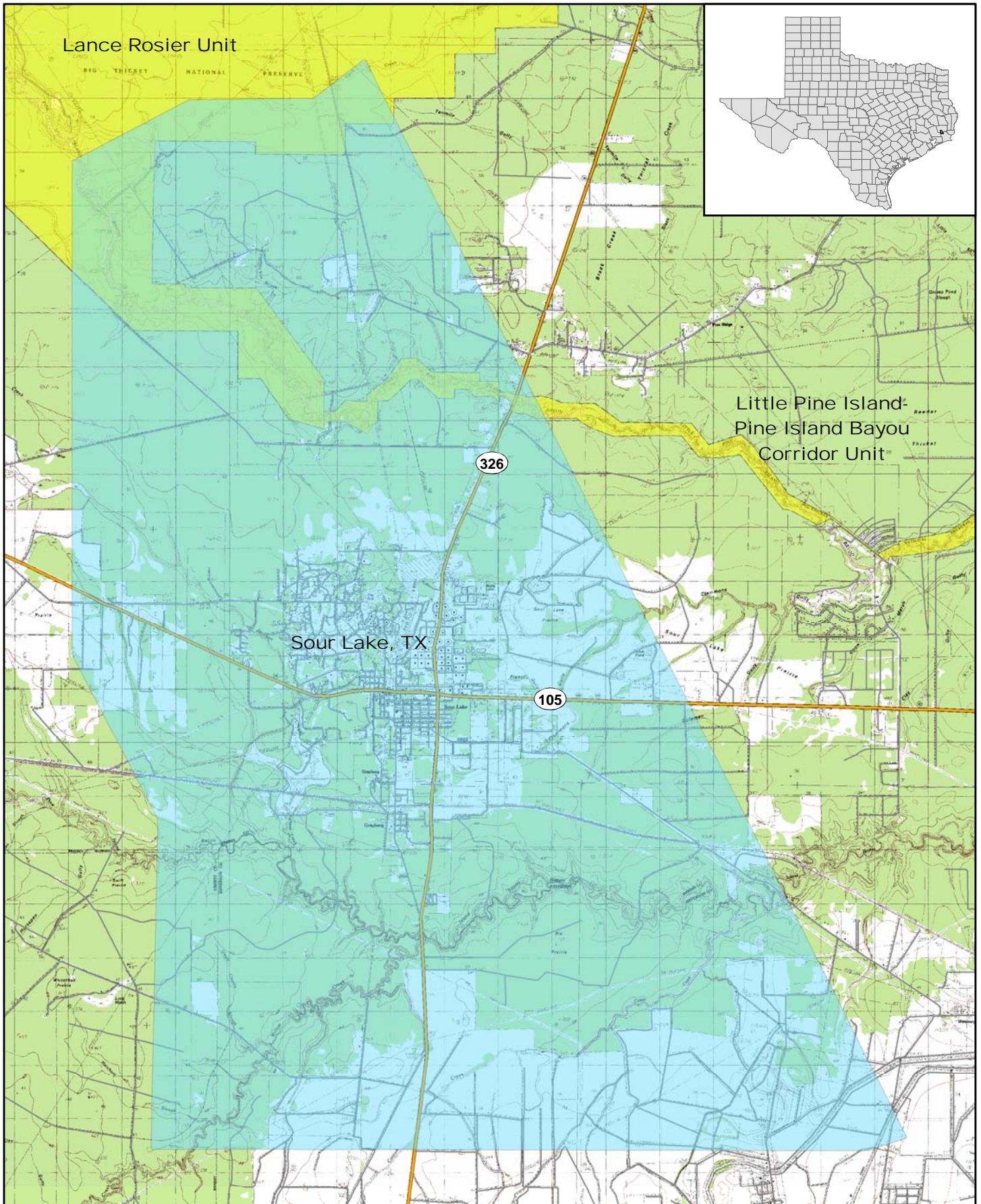
**Please provide all comments by November 10, 2008.** If you wish to be added to or removed from the Preserve's mailing list for future correspondence, please indicate that in your response.

If you are unable to submit comments electronically through this website, then you may also submit written comments to the address below, Attention: Dusty Pate. You may also hand-deliver written comments to the Visitor Center at Big Thicket National Preserve.

**Big Thicket National Preserve**  
6044 FM 420  
Kountze, Texas 77625

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior





Legend

- Cimarex Delilah 3-D Project Area
- Big Thicket National Preserve Boundaries

