

**SCOPING NOTICE**  
**Quantum Geophysical Incorporated**  
**Proposal to Conduct Oil/Gas Geophysical Exploration on Federal**  
**Oil and Gas Leases Within the Adobe Town WSA**

**Bureau of Land Management**  
**Rock Springs Field Office**

December 6, 2001

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Rock Springs Field Office, has received a Notice to Conduct Geophysical Exploratory Operations on, and adjacent to, federal oil and gas leases held by AEC within the Adobe Town Wilderness Study Area (WSA). The enclosed document describes the proposal and serves as notice of the beginning of the environmental analysis process to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. If you have concerns, issues, or alternatives you would like to see addressed in the analysis, please respond in accordance with the instructions below.

***Important Notice:*** You must include your full name and address, which must be legible, to have your comments considered regardless of the method used to comment. Any letters or emails received without names and addresses, or that are illegible, or where names and/or addresses are obviously false will not be opened or considered.

Comments are due by January 7, 2002 and must be submitted to:

Address: Teri Deakins, Project Manager  
Rock Springs Field Office  
280 Highway 191 North  
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901- 3447

Email: [teri\\_deakins@blm.gov](mailto:teri_deakins@blm.gov)  
(reference **Quantum** in the subject field)

Written comments in response to this notice, including the names and addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the BLM Rock Springs office during regular business hours (7:45 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday (except federal holidays) after the comment period closes and may be published as part of the environmental process. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name and/or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses,

and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

If you have questions, please call Teri Deakins at 307-352-0211 or John MacDonald at 307-352-0238.

Sincerely,

/s/ Susan Davis

Acting Assistant Field Manager

Enclosure

## SCOPING NOTICE

### **Quantum Geophysical Incorporated Proposal to Conduct Oil/Gas Geophysical Exploration on Federal Oil and Gas Leases Within the Adobe Town WSA**

#### **Bureau of Land Management Rock Springs Field Office**

#### **Description of Project**

Quantum Geophysical Incorporated (Quantum) has submitted a 'Notice of Intent to Conduct Geophysical Exploration Operations' on and adjacent to certain valid, existing federal oil and gas leases located within the Adobe Town Wilderness Study Area (WSA, see map). Lands involved in the proposal include:

##### 6<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian

Sections 4, 8, 9, 17, 19, 20, 30, 31, T. 15 N., R. 97 W.

Section 1, T. 14 N., R. 98 W.

Section 36, T. 15 N., R. 98 W.

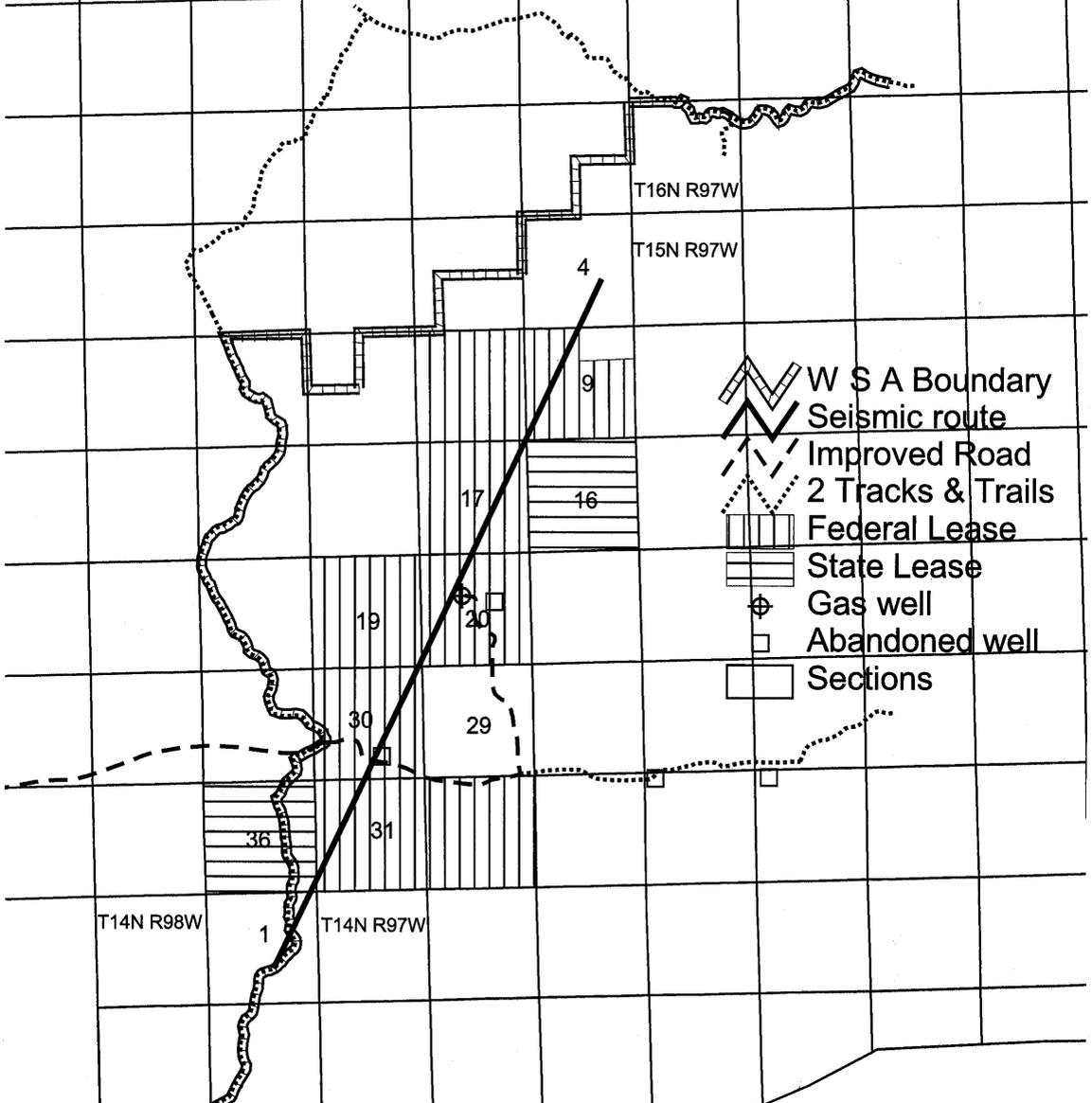
The portions of section 4, T. 15 N, R. 97 W. and section 1, T. 14 N, R. 98 W., affected by the proposal, are located outside of the leased area but within the Adobe Town WSA. Approximately 4,650 feet of 2-D line would be laid outside the lease boundary. The other public lands are contained in federal oil and gas leases issued before approval of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976 (FLPMA).

The proposed 2-D seismic operation would entail drilling 2.25-inch diameter shotholes to a depth of 80 feet along the 2-D line (see map). Each shothole would be packed with low-level explosive charges and re-packed with the drill cuttings. Any remaining cuttings would be spread out or removed from the area. Shotholes would be drilled every 440 feet. Once all the shotholes are drilled, geophones would be hand-laid along the same 2-D line to record seismic waves produced by the low-level charges upon denotation. Drilling shotholes in certain areas (i.e., active prairie dog towns or vegetated sand dunes if occurring along the 2-D line) would be avoided although off-set shotholes (holes moved a minimum of 50 meters) would be used where possible. All shotholes would be drilled using a portable drill that would be transported by helicopter. No roads would be constructed or improved for this proposal although two existing, improved roads within the WSA could be used for moving equipment and personnel into the WSA. Existing improved roads that could be used include BLM Road #4412 which provides access into the WSA and the access road leading to the Adobe Town #1 well (Section 20, T. 15 N., R. 97 W.) owned by AEC. A helicopter would be used to move equipment and personnel outside of the road rights-of-way.

#### **Relationship to Existing Plans and Documents**

**Green River Resource Management Plan** (approved August 8, 1997) - The Green River Resource Management Plan (GRRMP) provides management direction for resources contained within the Rock Springs Field Office area. The management objective for geophysical operations is to provide opportunity for exploration of mineral resources and collection of geophysical data, while protecting other resource values.

# Quantum Adobe Town Geophysical Project



The environmental analysis done for this project will incorporate appropriate decisions, terms, and conditions of use described in the GRRMP.

**Wilderness Resource Management** - The proposed action affects pre-FLPMA leases within the Adobe Town WSA. Management under the GRRMP for areas under wilderness review is to manage the WSA to retain wilderness quality and manage in accordance with *Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review* (Interim Management Guidelines, Guidelines) until Congress acts on designation.

Interim Management Guidelines recognize valid existing rights and state such valid existing rights “. . . must satisfy the non-impairment standard if possible, unless this would unreasonably interfere with the enjoyment of the benefit of rights.” If non-impairment criteria can not be met, then managed “to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands.”

The Guidelines further state that “[v]alid existing rights for mineral leases issued on or before October 21, 1976 are dependent on the specific terms and conditions of each lease, including any stipulations attached to the lease. Activities for the use and development of the leases must satisfy the non-impairment criteria, unless this would reasonably interfere with the rights of the lease as set forth in the mineral lease. When it is determined that the rights conveyed can be exercised only through activities that will permanently impair wilderness suitability, the activities will be regulated to prevent unnecessary and undue degradation . . . even if such activities impair the area’s wilderness suitability, they will be allowed to proceed . . . ”

**Lease Terms** - The following federal oil and gas leases are affected by this action:

WYW-017284	Issued January 17, 1969	1,840.00 acres
WYW-017282A	Issued March 1, 1969	640.00 acres
WYW-017296	Issued January 17, 1969	2,547.72 acres

None of the leases specify any conditions or special stipulations.

For areas outside of pre-FLPMA leases, the Guidelines also state that “seismic and inventory information gathering by helicopter or other means not requiring road blading or improvement may be allowed if it satisfies the non-impairment criteria.”

Use of existing roads and ways may be allowed as long as no blading or improvement is done.

**Monument Valley Management Area** - The project area also lies within the Monument Valley Management Area (MVMA) although Interim Management Guidelines override management prescriptions for the MVMA within the WSA. Management objective for the MVMA, outside the WSA, is to provide protection of wildlife, geologic, cultural, watershed, scenic, and scientific values (paleontological and cultural). However, the MVMA is open to consideration for mineral leasing, exploration, and development provided mitigation can be applied to retain the resource values.

### **National Environmental Policy Act Compliance (NEPA)**

The proposed geophysical operation is subject to the appropriate level of environmental analysis. To comply with NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations which implement NEPA, BLM is required to conduct an environmental analysis.

This scoping statement has been prepared to enable government agencies, the general public, and other interested parties to contribute to the analysis process. Public input is important in establishing the scope of analysis for the NEPA document.

### **Identified Resource Management Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities**

The following issues have been tentatively identified as potentially affected by the proposed pipeline:

Adobe Town WSA, including valid existing rights on pre-FLPMA leases within the WSA  
Threatened, endangered, proposed for listing, and candidate plant and animal species  
Raptor nesting  
BLM identified sensitive species  
Monument Valley Management Area (overlaps the Adobe Town WSA)  
Cultural  
Paleontology  
Class I/II Visual Resource Management  
Wild horse herd management area

### **Timing Needs or Requirements**

Public input is important in establishing the scope of the analysis. The public is encouraged to participate during the scoping process to help identify the scope of the analysis needed, alternatives to the proposed action, other issues or concerns that should be analyzed, mitigative opportunities, and any other comments or ideas to help ensure the completeness of the analysis process.

### **Public Participation**

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Comments are due by January 7, 2002. Please submit your comments to:

Address: Teri Deakins, Project Manager  
BLM - Rock Springs Field Office  
280 Highway 191 North  
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901-3447

Email: [teri\\_deakins@blm.gov](mailto:teri_deakins@blm.gov)  
(Please refer to **Quantum** in the subject line)

The following individuals and organizations received a copy of this scoping statement:

**FEDERAL OFFICES**

USDI Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Office, Rawlins Field Office  
U.S. Representative Barbara Cubin  
U.S. Senators Mike Enzi and Craig Thomas  
U.S. Department of Energy  
U.S. Army of Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**STATE AGENCIES**

Governor Jim Geringer  
Affected State Senators and Representatives:  
State Senators Rae Lynn Job, Tex Boggs, Bill Vasey  
State Representatives Stephen Watt, John Eyre, Fred Parady, Bud Nelson, Loren Willford  
State of Wyoming Clearing House for the following agencies:  
Wyoming Federal Land Office  
State Engineers Office  
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality  
Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office  
Wyoming Business Council  
Wyoming State Grazing Board  
Wyoming Game and Fish Department  
Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

Sweetwater and Carbon County Commissioners  
Sweetwater and Carbon County School Districts  
Sweetwater and Carbon County Planning Commissions  
Public Libraries in Green River, Rock Springs, Rawlins

**MUNICIPALITIES**

Mayors of Green River, Rock Springs, Wamsutter, and Rawlins

**NATIVE AMERICAN GROUPS**

Native American Tribes including:  
Eastern Shosone  
Shoshone-Bannock  
Northern Aparpaho  
Northern Ute

**GRAZING PERMITTEES**

Grazing permittees in the Rock Springs Grazing Allotment

**LEASE, ROW, AND LAND OWNERS**

AEC

**MEDIA**

Casper Star-Tribune  
Rock Springs Rocket Miner  
Green River Star KGWC TV - Casper  
KQSW/KRKK - Rock Springs  
KSIT - Rock Springs

KTWO - Casper  
KUWR - University of Wyoming  
KTWO TV - Casper  
KMKX - Rock Springs  
KUGR - Green River  
KYCS - Rock Springs  
Wyoming, NPR - Laramie

**OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

Audubon Society  
Wilderness Society  
The Nature Conservancy  
Independent Petroleum Association  
Petroleum Association of Wyoming  
Public Lands Advocacy  
Sierra Club  
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Southwest Wyoming Mule Deer Foundation  
Fund for Animals  
Wyoming Stockgrowers Association  
Wyoming Wildlife Federation  
Wyoming Woolgrowers Association  
Wyoming State Grazing Board  
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation  
National Wildlife Federation  
Wyoming Association of Professional Archeologists  
Wyoming Advocates for Animals  
Humane Society of United States  
Biodiversity Associates-Friends of the Bow  
Predator Project  
Wyoming Outdoor Council  
Wyoming Public Lands Council