### MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Classification of McElmo Dome Disposal Wells

Well Classification Advisory #8

PROM: Paul M. Baltay, Director

State Programs Division (WH-550)

TO: Max H. Dodson, Director

Water Management Division - Region VIII

Shell Western E & P, Incorporated (SWEPI) operates two injection wells to dispose of wastes at its McElmo Dome field in Colorado. You have classified these two wells as Class I non-hazardous disposal wells. SWEPI has protested your classification, and Mr. M.L. Blanton of SWEPI has written to the Office of Drinking Water (February 7, 1985) requesting a classification to Class II.

We have reviewed the information submitted by Mr. Blanton and additional information provided by your staff. Based on that information, we believe your classification of these wells as Class I is appropriate.

The primary purpose of the McElmo Dome operation is the production of carbon dioxide. The term "natural gas" as used in the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Underground Injection Control (UIC) regulations, and generally in the industry refers to one of the hydrocarbon series (see 40 CFR 144.1 (g)(2)(iv) and 144.6 (b)(3)). Therefore, carbon dioxide is not a "natural gas" for purposes of the UIC program. While it appears that small amounts of methane and crude oil are produced, their approduction is incidental to the primary purpose of the operation. Historically, SWEPI has not declared either the oil or methane for royalty purposes and has treated them as unwanted waste products.

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The two injection wells are used to dispose of wastes from the operation. These wastes include not only the brines produced with the carbon dioxide but also the waste water from the stripping process which contains elevated levels of sodium nitrate. Even if this were a natural gas production operation (which we believe it is not), it is questionable whether the disposal wells would qualify for the exclusion in 40 CFR 144.6 (b)(1). That exclusion was designed for non-contact "blow-down waters from cooling towers and boilers used in the initial digging process...(46 FR 48245). Finally, injection through these wells appears to be solely for the purpose of disposal and has no function in the enhanced recovery of oil or natural gas.

In summary, we agree with your classification of these two wells as Class I. I hope this memo will assist you in resolving SWEPI's questions and will clear the way to the expeditions permitting of the wells.

cc: Water Supply Branch Chiefs Regions I - X

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APR 5 1985

Mr. M.L. Blanton
Division Production Manager
Mid Continent Division
Shell Western E&P, Inc.
P.O. Box 991
Houston, Texas 77001

Dear Mr. Blanton:

This is in response to your letter of February 7, 1985. You requested the Office of Drinking Water to review the classification of the two disposal wells operated by your company at the McElmo Dome field as Class I wells.

My office has reviewed the information you provided me and the information gathered by our Regional Office in Denver. Based on that information, we believe that the Regional Office's classification of these wells as Class I is correct.

I have attached a courtesy copy of my memorandum to Mr. Dodson on this subject. As you know, our Regional Offices are responsible for the actual administration of the Underground Injection Control program in the various States. I am sure Region VIII will be in official contact with your company in the near future.

I appreciate your concern for the least complicated form of regulating these wells. I am assured that our Regional Office and the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission have developed an effective working relationship.

The dual Federal/State jurisdiction in this case should not be the cause of undue burdens on you or delays in your obtaining permits for and operating these two wells.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Baltay, Director State Programs Division

GPO: 1983 0 - 403-201

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# UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

### REGION VIII

### 1860 LINCOLN STREET DENVER, COLORADO 80295-0699

APR 0 5 1985 REF: 8WM-DW

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. M.L. Blanton
Division Production Manager
Mid-Continent Division
Shell Western E & P, Inc.
Post Office Box 991
Houston, Texas 77001

RE: Call for Permit Application McElmo Dome Field, Colorado Yellow Jacket ND-1 Hovenweep WD-1

Dear Mr. Blanton:

Based upon the information submitted to us, and information available to us through public records, EPA has determined that the subject injection wells are Class I Industrial Disposal wells for the purposes of EPA's UIC program in Colorado.

This classification requires permitting of these facilities by EPA. However, it does not preclude the State of Colorado from regulating these facilities according to State law.

In keeping with our commitment to you, as made in correspondence dated February 25, 1985, your applications are due to our office within 30 days of Shell Western's receipt of this letter.

As a courtesy, our Headquarter's office is forwarding to you, under separate cover, a copy of their determination. Should you have questions, please direct them to Angus Campbell at (303) 293-1420.

Sincerely,

Patrick A. Crotty, P.E. Chief, Ground Water Section

cc: Warren Hill, SWEPA
Paul Baltay, EPA ODW
William Smith, COGCC

## Shell Western E&P Inc.

A Subsidiary of Shell Oil Company



P.O. Box 991 Houston, TX 77001

February 7, 1985

Mr. Paul Baltay, Director State Programs Division Environmental Protection Agency 401 M St. SW Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Baltay:

SUBJECT: WELL CLASSIFICATION - MC ELMO DOME DISPOSAL WELLS

My staff informs me a difference of opinion has arisen regarding the appropriate Underground Injection Control (UIC) classification of produced water disposal wells serving the McElmo Dome field, Colorado. I understand EPA Region VIII is seeking your counsel in determining the classification of the subject wells. The purpose of this letter is to convey my strong belief the McElmo Dome produced water disposal wells adhere to the spirit, intent and letter of the UIC definition for Class II wells. Accordingly, I request careful review of these wells and your finding they are Class II wells.

Shell Western E&P Inc (SWEPI), operates the McElmo Dome field under oil and gas leases from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and numerous private land owners. The McElmo Dome field produces carbon dioxide ( $\rm CO_2$ ) methane, crude oil, and produced water by conventional oil and gas primary processes including flowing and pumping. The  $\rm CO_2$  and methane are used for enhanced recovery injection in the Wasson field of West Texas. Both the  $\rm CO_2$  and methane are sold under the terms and provisions of the oil and gas leases and royalties are paid to the owners under these same leases.

The crude oil is separated from the natural gases and wasted with the concurrence of the BLM and the state since the current crude oil production is too small to be financially viable. However, we are attempting to find a market for the oil and propose selling the oil when the market is developed. Again, royalties will be paid on the crude oil when sold under terms and provisions of the oil and gas leases.

The produced water is injected into two disposal wells located in and serving the McElmo Dome field. These wells are Yellow Jacket WD-1 and Hovenweep WD-1.

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SWEPI operates the McElmo Dome field in accordance with an oil and gas unitization order from the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission. In all respects the State of Colorado and SWEPI recognize the McElmo Dome field as an oil and gas operation. This is further demonstrated by the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission granting Class II UIC permits for Yellow Jacket WD-l and Havenweep WD-l.

A review of the UIC regulations supports the position the McElmo Dome disposal wells are correctly classified as Class II. First, EPA discusses Class II wells at 45 Fed. Reg. 42474, column 3 (June 24, 1980) and describes "Class II wells [as]... those injection wells associated with oil and gas industry... under the UIC regulations". Further, the McElmo Dome producing wells, served by the instant disposal wells, produce about 1.5 million cubic feet per day of methane and about 1 barrel per day of crude oil. Thus, the produced water injected into the subject disposal wells are "fluids... [w]hich are brought to the surface in connection with conventional oil or gas production "[45 Fed. Reg. 42502, June 24, 1980]. Therefore the instant wells comply fully with the regulatory definition.

Designating Yellow Jacket WD-1 and Hovenweep WD-1 Class II offers several practical advantages. First, these disposal wells are regulated by the same Agency overseeing the Unitization e.g., Colorado Oil and Gas Commission. Thus, all McElmo Dome operations are under one regulator. Second, the instant wells are converted producers authorized by the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission. Therefore, the drilling and completion records for these wells are held by the Commission and the Commission staff is familiar with the wells. This knowledge of the wells will help avoid delays in operation of the wells which are critical to the success of the Wasson  $\mathrm{CO}_2$  flood.

Your early consideration of our request would be appreciated. Additionally, please feel free to call Mr. Tom Karnes [713-870-3761] of my staff or Dr. G. H. Holliday [713-241-1455] of Shell OII Co.

Very truly yours,

M.L. Blenton

M. L. Blanton

Division Production Manager Mid-Continent Division

cc: EPA Region VIII
Colorado Oil & Gas
Conservation Commission

### UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

DATE: FEB 1 2 1985

McElmo Dome CO<sub>2</sub> Disposal Well Classification

FROM: Tom Belk, Chief

Ground Water Protection Program

Patrick A. Crotty, Chief Ground Water Section

As per my January 23, 1985 memo to your office, please find as Item I, Shell's response to our request for more information. Also attached, please find Item II which is the production report submitted to the Colorado Oil a d Gas Conservation Commission (OGCC) by Shell Oil. Additionally, please find Item III which is the background information consisting of correspondence between Shell Oil and our office, and our office and your office. Make note of memos dated May 31, 1984, November 3, 1984, December 6, 1984, and December 21, 1984.

On January 28, 1985 Shell Oil submitted information concerning their claim that the McElmo Dome CO<sub>2</sub> Field produces methane and oil in conjuction with the CO<sub>2</sub>, "thereby confirming that their disposal well is in the Class II catagory". On January 30 and 31st Angus Campbell, of my staff, went to the OGCC to confirm the production of methane. It was confirmed that methane is produced; however, only as a contaminant to the CO<sub>2</sub> production. The hydrocarbon gas is either vented, flared or removed at the gas processing plant in Cortez, Colorado. This data was verbally confirmed at the State Land Board of Colorado who monitors all royalities paid to the State for mineral production.

In Item II please note the column labeled GS/CD, this is the type of gas the Mill Levy for the OGCC is calculated from. As you can see, the operator reports the gas as  $CO_2$ . Also take note that no gas was sold until April 1984. This is because the pipeline had to be filled (capacity of pipeline is 5.6 bcf/day).

It is the opinion of my staff that given the present data, this field is clearly a  $\rm CO_2$  producer and hydrocarbons are only waste products and therefore, should stay in the Class I classification. Tom, please make your determination and send us a written response so we can notify Shell of the final determination and contiue processing the permit application. Once we receive your final determination, we will be calling in an application from another operator of a  $\rm CO_2$  field.

Thank you for your quick response in this matter.

CC. John A+cheson - Ha

# ITEM I

Shell's Response to Region VIII's request for additional information.

13 Pages

# Shell Western E&P Inc.

A SUBSICIONY OF SHIPH CHI COMPANY



P.O. Bux 991 Houston, TX 77001

January 23, 1985

United States Environmental Protection Agency ATTN Mr. Patrick A. Crotty, Chief Ground Water Section Region VIII 1860 Lincoln Street Denver, CO 80295

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Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: WATER DISPOSAL WELLS - MCELMO DOME

This responds to your letter dated December 21, 1984, requesting additional information about Shell Western E&P Inc. (SWEP1) McElmo Dome disposal wells. We compiled the information and offer it for your consideration.

SWEPI operates producing wells in the McElmo Dome field under oil and gas leases with the Bureau of Land Management and private owners. These oil and gas leases are assigned to Shell Oil Company. SWEPI, a wholly owned subsidiary of Shell Oil Company, now operates the field. Additionally, a Unit Agreement including all of the leases, was ratified by the State of Colorado on August 24, 1982, to consolidate oil and gas operations of the McElmo Dome (Leadville) Unit. SWEPI currently produces about 1.5 million standard cubic feet per day of methane (hydrocarbon gas) from these wells within the Unit, Attachment A. This natural gas is sold and royalties paid to BLM and private owners under the above leases. Further, these wells produce a small quantity of crude oil, which is not sold since this production is not commercial, Attachment A.

Additionally, these wells produce about 245 barrels per day of formation water with the natural gas and crude oil. This water is separated from the gas and injected into two disposal wells [HWD-1 and YWD-1].

These disposal wells clearly comply with the definition of a Class II injection well [40 CFR § 146.5(b)] since the wells inject "fluids". [w]hich are brought to the surface in connection with conventional oil and gas production."

Based on the above analysis which demonstrates the two McElmo Dome disposal wells satisfy 40 CFR & 146.5(b), we request these wells be

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reclassified as Class II disposal wells. Additionally, we request a stay of the permit application deadline of February 28, 1985, until the reclassification question is resolved.

Attached, as requested, are the well completion reports for HWD-1 and YWD-1 injection wells, Attachment B, and injection well schematic drawings for HWD-1 and YWD-1, Attachment C.

We trust this information will enable you to make an early decision on reclassification of the disposal wells; however, should you have questions concerning the information submitted or require additional information, please contact Mr. W. G. Hill at (713)870-3815 or Ms. Lillian Abrego at (713)870-3987.

Very truly yours,

M. L. Blanton

Division Production Manager Mid-Continent Division

WGH: JB

Attachments

cc: William R. Smith, Director Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission 1313 Sherman Street, Room 721 Denver, CO 80203

## Attachment A

# Hydrocarbon Production

Component	Rate	Volume	Disposition
Crude Oil	Barrels/Week	5.4*(calculated)	***
Methane Gas	MMSCF/Day	1.5 (calculated)	sold

<sup>\*</sup>Approximately 2.7 barrels from each central facility

The production of crude oil from the McElmo Dome Field wells began approximately three months ago. At present, we have no means of precisely measuring the oil since it is separated from the gas along with water and glycol. This oil is presently being accumulated in a steel tank which also contains water and glycol. The oil has no commercial value as crude oil; therefore, it will either be sold to an oil reclaiming service or be disposed of in a state approved disposal facility.

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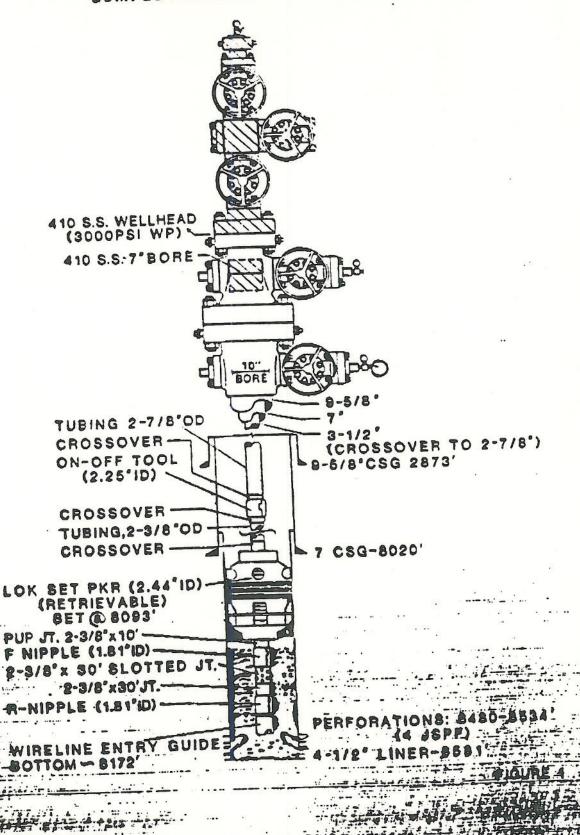
See Spaces for Additional Data on Reverse Side

# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

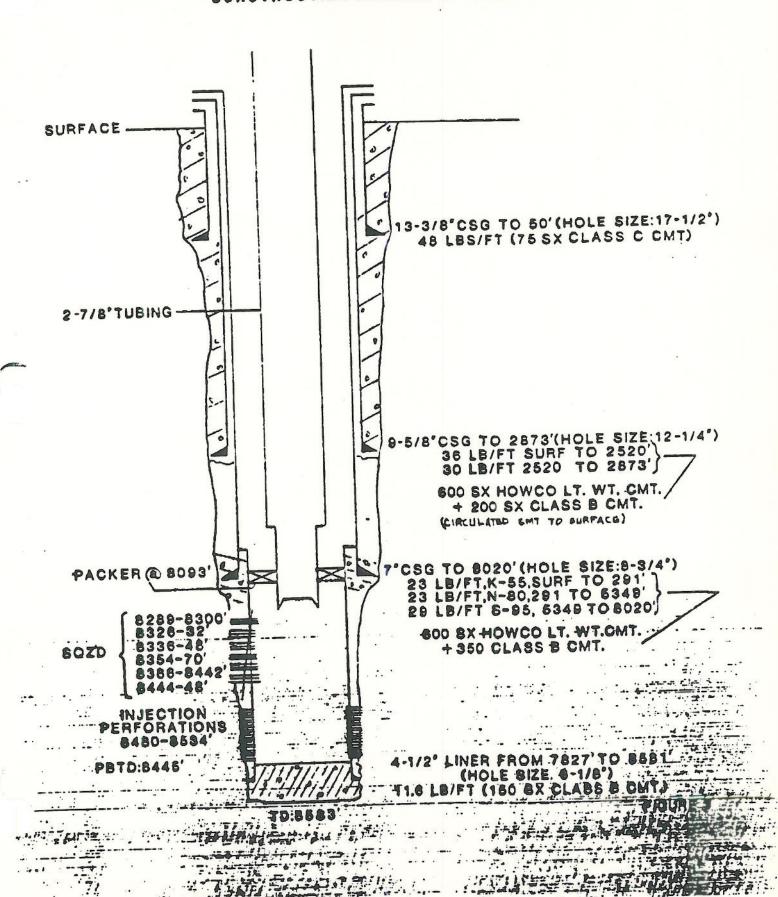
	Backs.
	8. LEASE C-2654-A
1	6. IF INDIAN, ALLOTTEE OR TRIBE NAME
	7. UNIT AGREEMENT NAME Mc Elmo Dome Unit
-	8. FARM OR LEASE NAME Yellow Jacket Unit
_	9. WELL NO.
	30. FIELD OR WILDCAT NAME
7	Mr Fimo Dome  11. SEC., T., R., M., OR BLK, AND SURVEY OR  AREA
	12. COUNTY OR PARISH 13. STATE  Momtezuma Colorado
3:	14. API NO. 05-083-6195
Chillip	THE STATE SCHOW DE KOR AND WO

SUNDRY NOTICES AND REPORTS ON WELLS	Mc Elmo Dome Unit
SUNDRY NOTICES AND REPORT or plug back to a different (Do not use this form for proposals to drill or to deepen or plug back to a different reservoir. Use Form 9-331-C for such proposals.)	O SARM OR LEASE NAME
reservoir. Use Form 9-331-C for such proposals.)	Yellow Jacket Unit
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Mell C Mell C Other	9
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3. ADDRESS OF OPERATOR	Mr Fimo Dome 11. SEC., T., R., M., OR BLK. AND SURVEY OR
- a cos llaurton Toyas //IIII	11. SEC., T., R., M., OR BEN. 2010
P. O. Box 991, Houston, Texas 77001  4. LOCATION OF WELL (REPORT LOCATION CLEARLY, See space 17	AREA
helow)	12. COUNTY OR PARISH 13. STATE
AT SURFACE: 2095 'NL & 1995' FIL, Sec 26	Momtezuma Colorado
AT TOP PROD. INTERVAL: Same	34. API NO.
AT TOTAL DEPTH: Same	1 05-083-6195
16. CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX TO INDICATE NATURE OF NOTICE. REPORT, OR OTHER DATA	15. ELEVATIONS (SHOW DF, KDB. AND WD)
SUBSEQUENT REPORT OF:	
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO: SUBSEQUENT REPORT OF.	
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ABANDON' Recomplete in Lower Leadville and Run	Injectivity Test
	and the second s
17. DESCRIBE PROPOSED OR COMPLETED OPERATIONS (Clearly sincluding estimated date of starting any proposed work. If well it including estimated date of starting any proposed work. If well it including estimated date of starting any proposed work. If well it including estimated date of starting any proposed work.	UAUT TO THIS MALLEY
measured and true vertical depths for all markers and 2010 827 82783 Squeeze cement perforations from 8182' to 827	4' w/ 100 sx. class H cement. Max
9/23/83 Squeeze cement perforations from olde	
pressure 300 psi.  3/24 to 10/25/83 Fished packer and drilled retainer a	ind cement to 8450'
10/27/83 Perforated Lower Leadvelle from 8360 to 8380	and 8386' to 8406'. Ran injectivity
10/27/83 Perforated Lower Leadverte 170m 8300 to 3000 test. Formation would only take 2 bpm @ 100	Opsi.
10/29/83 Perforated Lower Leadville from 8292' to 835	52'.
10/29/83 Perforates Lower Estates 8292' to 8406' (200	holes) w/ 5000 gal 15% HCL w/294 ball
10/31/83 Acid treated perfs from 8292 to 8406 (200	HOIES W GAAA 3
seaters.	
11/1/83 On injectivity test ppd 7 bpm @ 1000 psi an	d ppd 4 bpm w no pressure.
11/1/83 On injectivity test ppd / ppm 4 1000 ps and	ad as 1000 and held OK Well TA'ed unt
1/2/83 Set Baker Model G lok-set RBP @ 8019'. Test	ed to 1000 by ! He will be to
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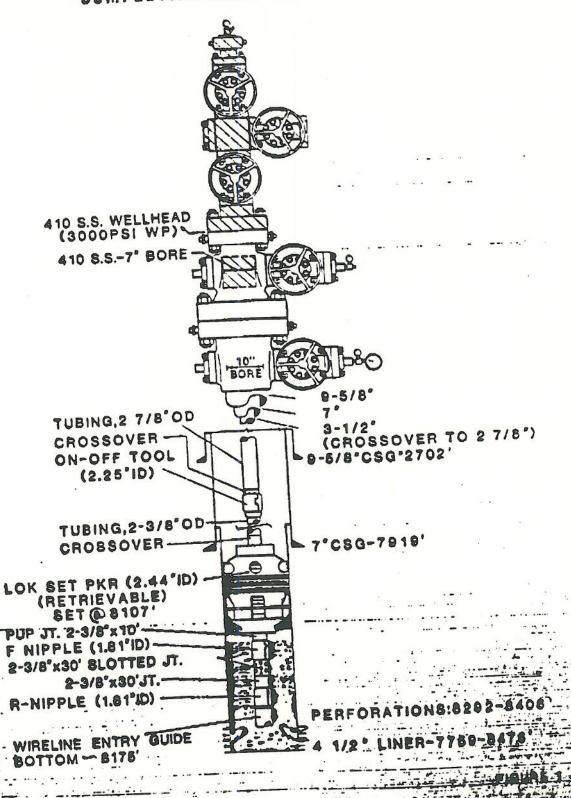
# COMPLETION DETAILS OF HWD-1



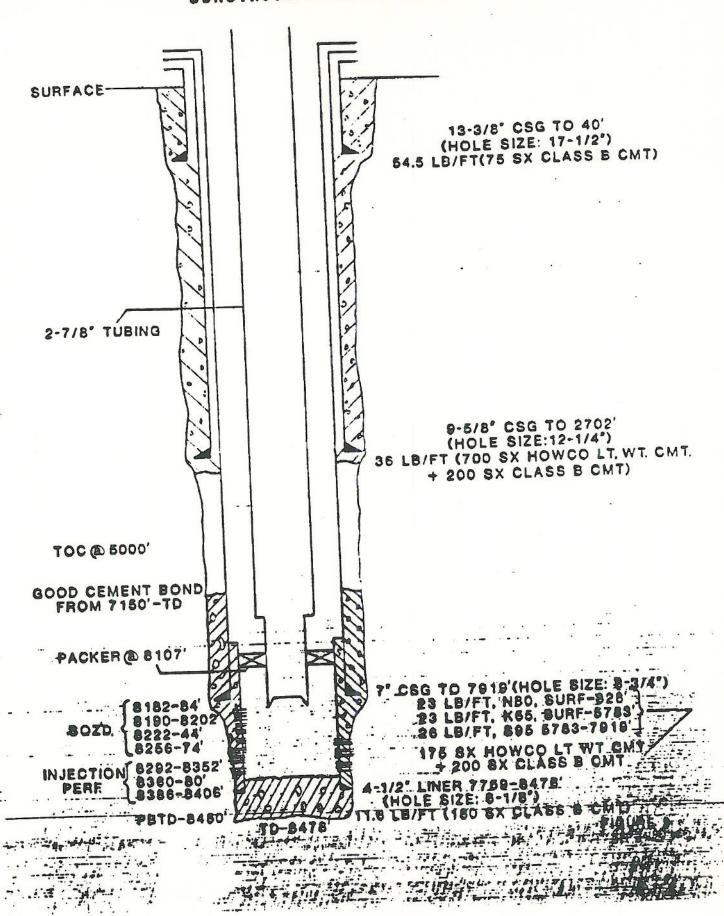
# CONSTRUCTION DETAILS OF HWD-1



# COMPLETION DETAILS OF YWD-1



# CONSTRUCTION DETAILS OF YWD-1



# OGJ REPORT





Development driffing in the Greater Prudhoe Bay area probably will stay at current record levels through the rest of the century as North Slope producers begin exploiting third-generation oil reserves in North America's richest hydrocarbon province.

# Alaskan North Slope operators push projects to recover third-generation oil

## About this issue . . .

OGJ team headed by Bob Williams, West Coast Editor, covers exploration/development activity throughout the U.S. and Canadian for northern frontiers in this report. Despite disappointments at Mukluk off Alaska and in the Canadian Beaufort and Arctic Islands, the Far North still is regarded as probably the brightest hope for giant new oil and gas fields in this hemisphere.

Alaskan North Slope operators, led by ARCO Alaska Inc., have embarked on an ambitious effort to exploit a third generation of reserves underlying North America's richest hydrocarbon province.

That assumes that primary development of megagiant Prudhoe Bay oil field represents the North Slope's first generation of oil exploitation, and that Kuparuk development programs and Prudhoe secondary recovery and reservoir maintenance programs represent the second generation.

ARCO and partners now are poised to begin exploitation of thin-return, even marginally economic, reserves through tertiary recovery and

than 60 million bhl of original oil in

How carefully the economics of those development programs must be fine-tuned is typified by the selective modular program planned for the next North Slope field due on stream, Milne Point (see story, p. 63).

The success of these programs would offset the expected sharp decline of oil production from Prudhoe and Kuparuk fields during the late 1980s. But beyond that, recent statements by Atlantic Richfield's Chairman Robert O. Anderson and Pres. William F. Kieschnick suggest that the programs planned might enable the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) to keep humming at capacity to the end of the century. It certainly could keep ARCO domestically self-sufficient in crude supplies through 2000, they contend.

Some of the reserves exploitation efforts might call for routine scaling up or down of modular increments in line with crude price trends or require development of new technology. But it seems apparent that as each new program advances, it furthers the economic infrastructure of oil development on the North Slope and thus aids the economics of other, future projects in the petroleum industry's most

costly environment.

All of which, incidentally, calls for facilities modules amounting to a record North Slope sealift in 1986. And look for more records set thereafter as the current record pace of development drilling continues almost unabated on the slope for the rest of the century.

West Sak elephant. Leading the list of these ambitious programs is the proposed development of the megagiant West Sak reservoir, a thin Cretaceous sand overlying Kuparuk River pay and encompassing a 200-250 sq

mile area.

ARCO pegs West Sak original oil in place at 15-25 billion bbl. A \$75 million pilot program employing hot water injection in the heavy oil zone will get under way by midsummer. It will be the world's first thermal EOR project in an Arctic region. If pilot results are encouraging, it could lead to a commercial program with an ultimate recovery target of 20% beginning during the late 1980s.

In the interim, a demonstration project is likely, with a modular scale-up later on a scale smaller than the modular development increments at Kuparuk. The scale of a commercial West Sak program and its projected peak production rate haven't been

Prudhoo Bay 20 billion "Original off in place. Approximate ranges for nonproducing zon Source: Atlantic Richfield Co.

determined yet, but the rate likely would peak perhaps at 100,000-

200,000 b/d of oil. The pilot calls for a hot waterflood on 5 acre spacing with 13 wells, a bounded inverted nine spot with eight producers, an injector in the middle and four injectors on the outside, to provide a closed pilot system for better evaluation. A later demonstration scale-up would involve 20 acre spacing. Injection of 200-300° F. water will begin at the rate of about 1,000 b/d, doubling later to yield pilot oil output of perhaps 2,500 b/d. ARCO expects to see some kind of reservoir response the first year and is already conducting detailed engineering on an expanded pilot or demonstration scale program to begin possibly during 1985.

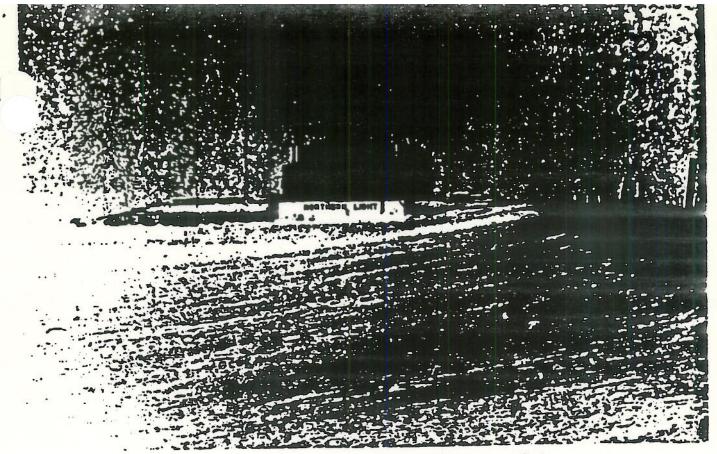
But a larger commitment, to even a fifth of the West Sak pay area, would require a significant reduction in expected well costs to even lower than Kuparuk because of low productivity expected in the West Sak wells. That's so even with planned consolidation of facilities with concurrent Kuparuk development.

Lisburne. Closer in timing-but no less difficult to economically extract will be oil from the Lisburne, a fractured carbonate limestone reservoir which underlies the Sadlerochit and which has confounded Prudhoe oper-

ators for many years.

Later this year ARCO and partners plan to launch a 180 well Lisburne development program that will add about 140 million bbl of reserves, with more on tap from a later waterflood. Production could begin in 1987 and build quickly to 100,000 b/d, with primary recovery in the Prudhoe field area estimated at about 15% of

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Seawater treatment plant to handle about 2.2 million b/d of Beaufort Sea water for giant Prudhoe Bay waterflood is scheduled to start up this summer. It's part of massive \$10.4 billion Prudhoe pressure maintenance program.

3 billion bbl of in place oil.

Initial development would cover about 60 sq miles with the wells initially on 160 acre spacing and the structural high at the Prudhoe gas cap. ARCO needs more data before deciding whether to go to 80 or 320 acre spacing later.

Many of the Lisburne wells thus could be produced to commingle with Sadlerochit oil and be recompleted later as gas wells. But the Lisburne has its own gas cap, and there remain some questions about how Lisburne gas will interact with the reservoir's natural fracture system.

Lisburne development will call for its own gas compression and standalone crude gathering facilities.

Miscible gas. Meanwhile ARCO and partners have obtained approval for a \$750 million, fivefold expansion of the world's first tertiary EOR project, an enriched-gas miscible flood of Prudhoe Bay field. Start-up is slated for early to mid-1987.

ARCO has been operating the 650 acre, \$111 million Prudhoe w Station Three Injection Project in e eastern portion of Prudhoe field ace December 1982, except for owntime following a fire. Plans call for the miscible gas flood to boost recovery another 5-5.5% beyond wa-

terflood. The project would be expanded to about 12,900 acres, or about 10% of Prudhoe field area.

As with this pilot, the expanded Prudhoe Bay Miscible Gas (PBMG) project entails alternate injection of water and enriched (with NGL) gas to boost recovery by an additional 115 million bbl of oil. Currently injection volumes at the pilot run about 35-40 MMcfd of miscible enriched gas and about 90,000 b/d of water via 11 enriched gas injectors and seven upstructure water injectors.

That would increase to injection of about 180 MMcfd of gas at first, peaking at about 266 MMcfd in 1996, and averaging about 200 MMcfd during the 10 year program life. It will use inverted nine spots on 80 acre spacing for at least 10 years from 1987, or until the miscible gas slug pore volume reaches 10%.

About 1,000 b/d of liquids injectant is produced by the field fuel gas unit comprising flash drum and scrubber liquids and other offgas and residue gases from Flow Station Three. A bigger, 2.7 billion cfd capacity NGL plant for the expanded operation is expected on the 1986 sealift to yield ethane, propane, and CO<sub>2</sub> to enrich the gas, about 40,000 b/d of NGL to be blended into the TAPS crude

stream, and residue gas for reinjection.

A similar miscible program may be technically feasible at Kuparuk as well, says ARCO, but the economics are questionable there because it would have to buy the liquids from the Prudhoe unit.

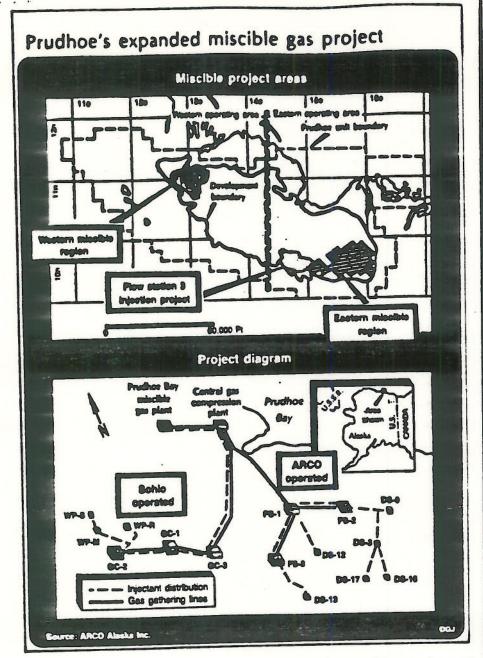
Other development prospects. Farther down the line is another huge heavy oil resource on the North Slope that's currently beyond industry's technical capability, the Ugnu reservoir.

Ugnu's in-place load of 6-11 billion bbl of shallow, 10-11° gravity oil won't yield readily to anything but a technological leap.

Another prospect for future development might be the Prudhoe West End reservoir, although no plans are on tap yet. And Gwydyr Bay Sadlerochit reserves north of Prudhoe probably will need another concurrent development nearby to reach commerciality.

A decision is likely to come this autumn by Sohio and partners whether to launch a project to begin the first production of oil from the Beaufort Sea with development of the 300 million bbl Endicott reservoir.

The lack of gas market not only stymies a solution for disposal of the



giant Prudhoe gas reserves, it also inhibits production of 350 million bbl of condensate in the giant Point Thomson gas/condensate reservoir. Recent interest by Japanese financial institutions in feasibility of an all-Alaska gas pipeline and LNG export project strengthened that \$25 billion project's hand against the long-delayed \$40 billion Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, although current prospects aren't promising for either.

Current work. Meanwhile, first and second generation work continues apace at Prudhoe and Kuparuk. Plans call for 70-80 development wells at Kuparuk and 50-60 at Prudhoe this year. The giant Beaufort seawater treating plant is due to start up shortly, launching Prudhoe's 2.2 million b/d fieldwide waterflood. Kuparuk's full field waterflood is expected to start up in 1986.

Start-up of Kuparuk's second central producing facility is due later this year, with a design capacity of 120,000 b/d of oil. The third phase

will be installed in 1987.

Prudhoe is progressing on its \$2 billion gas lift program, undergoing initial installation, with tripling of capacity planned by next year. Second phase equipment for Prudhoe's lowpressure separation program came up on last year's sealift and should go on stream before next year. And the last two phases of Prudhoe's well pad manifolding effort will start up this year and next.

It all adds up to a massive effort by North Slope producers, especially ARCO, to move beyond the "Prudhoemania" quest for the next elephant and apply an activist engineering approach to wring new giants out of the resource base at hand.

# Alaska wildcat

The remote waters of the Bering Sez will dominate Arctic Alaska wildcatting during 1984-85 as the oil and gas industry gets its first opportunity to test leases on Alaska's tantalizing western

Outer Continental Shelf.

Look for drilling to begin on at least 10 exploratory wells and perhaps as many as 15 or more costing \$20-30 million each in the St. George and Norton Sound basins during the first season beginning in second half 1984. Depending upon results from the first season, follow-up tests in these two areas in tandem with launching of the first campaign in the forbidding Navarin basin next year could mean sufficient work for a fleet of 6-7 rigs off Alaska's western coast through 1986.

Even if all three western OCS basins should eventually prove nonproductive, the broad spectrum of geological plays evinced in bidding in the first areawide sales there means a 3 year drilling campaign at least to furnish that proof, say industry executives. Operators will encounter geology unrelated to that with which they're familiar, for example, on the North

Slope.

Although the Bering basins command the spotlight at the moment, industry isn't about to walk away from the Beaufort Sea, despite the bad news at Mukluk. Plans call for a significant test in the western Beaufort involving the first use of a mobile gravity structure in U.S. waters and the delineation of a significant oil strike in the eastern Beaufort.

That gravity structure could see action in the Beaufort during 1985-86 as industry gears up to drill acreage acguired in Diapir Sale 87, scheduled next month. This sale will feature the most remote tracts yet offered in U.S.

Heading the list of onshore Arctic Alaska wildcat programs are the longawaited first tests by industry next winter in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) and the Arctic National Wildlife Range (ANWR).

Meanwhile, Alaskan operators must continue to deal with a tough political