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ITEM 22

Toiyabe National Forest
Tonopah Ranger District
Box 3940 Tonopah, NV 89049

File Code: 2810

Date: February 22, 1996

Attn: Clearinghouse
State of Nevada
Dept. of Administration
Capitol Complex
Carson City, NV 89710

Dear Sir:

The Tonopah Ranger District is currently assessing Apex Energy (U.S.), Inc.'s Plan of Operation (P.O.O.) #04-96-002 to insure that it complies with the standards and guidelines in the Toiyabe National Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The Hann Claims Drilling Project is located in the Monitor Mountain Range, approximately 17 miles east of Tonopah, NV within Sections 14 and 15, T. 3 N., R. 45 E, Nye County, Nevada. Total area of potential disturbance is 1.3 acres.

The Forest Service encourages you to assist in the environmental analysis process by providing written comments on your concerns that pertain to the resource management on these claims. Comments should be received by the Tonopah District Ranger by March 16, 1996, at the following address: Michael A. Valdes, Tonopah Ranger District, Toiyabe National Forest, P.O. Box 3940, Tonopah, NV 89049.

Proposed Action

Apex Energy (U.S.), Inc. proposes to conduct exploration drilling of 16 exploratory drill holes 1 mile south of the area called Hannapah of the Monitor Mountain Range. Existing roads and drill tracks would be used to access the claim blocks with 4,600 feet of cross-country access. Drilling would be conducted by an air track wagon rig.

Mitigation measures outlined in the proposal consist of using existing roads and cross-country travel where possible to minimize surface disturbance. Mud-pits would be used to contain drill fluids. Tree cutting would be kept to a minimum. Removed trees would be cut to ground level, bucked and scattered. Waterbars and rolling dips would be constructed on roads to prevent channeling of water runoff.

Reclamation measures outlined in the proposal are as follows: Drill holes would be plugged in compliance with State Regulations. Seasonal Reclamation includes seeding disturbed areas as an interim measure. As final reclamation, disturbed pad and road areas would be reshaped to natural contour and reseeded where necessary.

Preliminary Issues and Concerns

No issues or concerns have been identified during the preliminary review of this project:

Forest Plan Compliance

Forest Management Direction includes the following standards and guidelines:

1) **Minerals Goals:**

Mineral exploration and development will be encouraged while establishing reclamation policies that minimize or shorten the duration of impacts on renewable and non-renewable surface resources.

2) **Minerals Desired Future Condition:**

Any operation with potential to cause significant surface disturbance will be covered by an operation plan with provisions to minimize or mitigate effects on natural and cultural resource values. Reclamation plans will address surface disturbance and will contain provisions to return disturbed areas to as near the pre-existing condition as possible. Reclamation bonds will be calculated in accordance with the reclamation plan.

3) **Minerals Standards and Guidelines:**

The standards and guidelines set forth in paragraphs 1 thru 24 on pages IV-57thru IV-59 of the Forest Plan. The Monitor Mountain Range falls within Management Area #10. Total management area direction and proposed management practices are found on pages IV-134 thru IV-141 of the Forest Plan. The Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is semi-primitive motorized and a Visual Quality Objective (VQO) of partial retention.

Preliminary Alternatives

1) **No Action.** No exploration would be conducted, no holes would be drilled, no drill pads and no new roads would be constructed.

2) **Proposed Action.** Approval of Plan of Operations #04-96-002, as submitted, would be granted.

3) **Proposed Action With Modifications.** Approval of Plan of Operations #04-96-002, as submitted with modifications that address the issues and concerns that are identified.

For your convenience, I have enclosed a location map of the project area. All site specific maps are considered confidential, as outlined in 36 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 228.6.

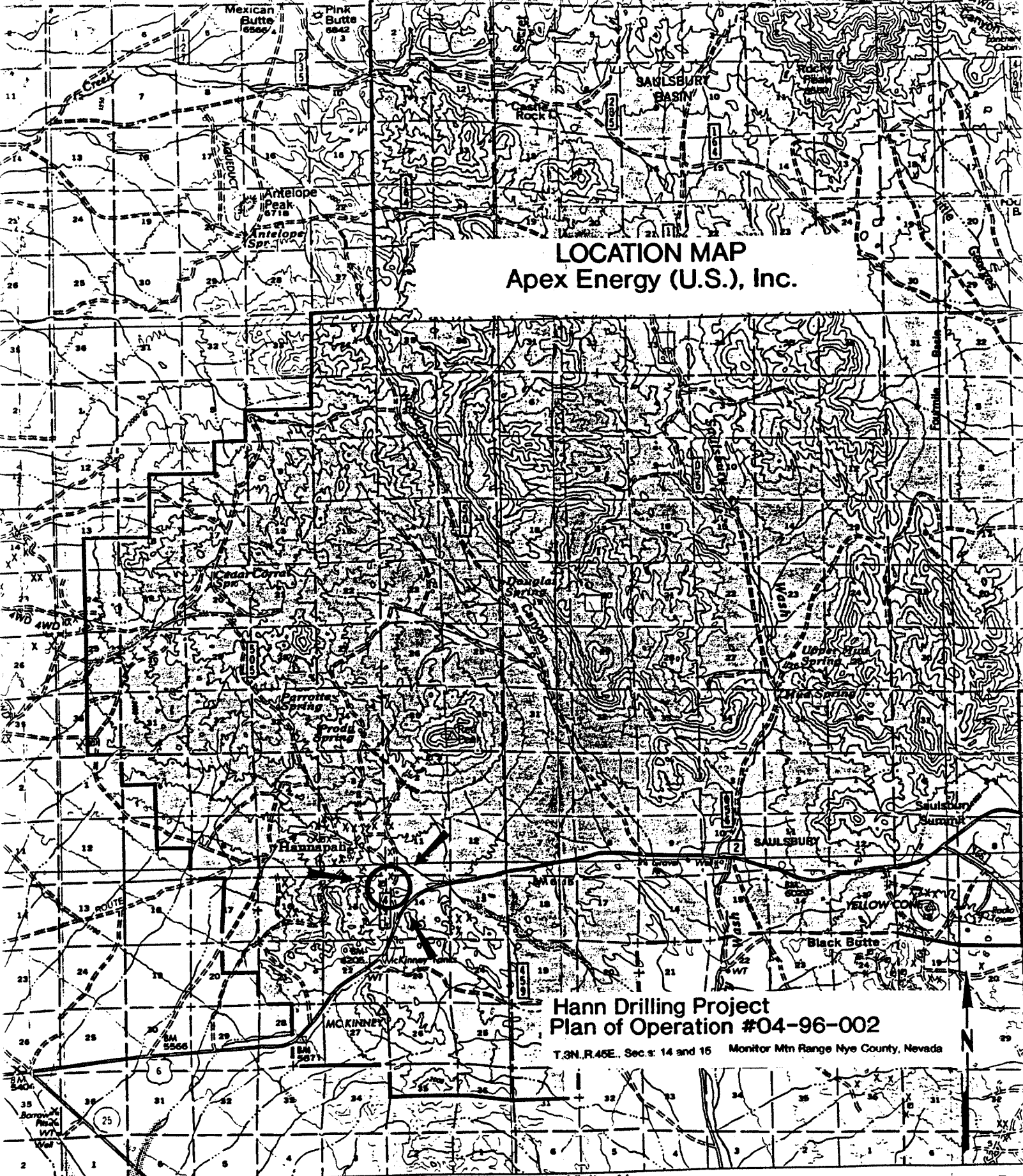
Again, I welcome your comments on the Hann Claims Drilling Project. Please call Will Wilson or Wayne Frye at (702) 964-2671 or at (702) 482-6286 for any additional information or questions you might have.

Sincerely,

Wayne H. Frye

for Michael A. Valdes
District Ranger

enclosure



LOCATION MAP
Apex Energy (U.S.), Inc.

Hann Drilling Project
Plan of Operation #04-96-002

T.3N., R.45E., Sec.s 14 and 15 Monitor Mtn Range Nye County, Nevada

R. 45 E. Tonopah Ranger District Visitor Map Toiyabe National Forest R. 46 E.

117°00' Scale 1/2 inch = 1 mile 52°30' 116°45'

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