

**From:** [Austin Hopkins](#)  
**To:** [Comments](#)  
**Subject:** ICL comments re CPC Federal 20-3 Directional Drilling  
**Date:** Friday, November 04, 2016 04:53:17 PM  
**Attachments:** [ICL cmnts on Directional Deviation permit for Federal 20-3.pdf](#)

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Greetings,

Attached please find the Idaho Conservation League's comments pertaining to CPC Mineral's application to perform directional deviation drilling on the Federal 20-3 oil and gas well. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input and thank you for consideration of our comments.

Regards,

**Austin Hopkins**

Conservation Assistant

Idaho Conservation League

PO Box 844, Boise, ID 83701

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11/4/2016

Oil and Gas Program  
Boise Staff Office  
300 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 103  
Boise, ID 83702

Submitted via email: [comments@idl.idaho.gov](mailto:comments@idl.idaho.gov)

**RE: Idaho Conservation League comments on CPC Mineral LLC's application for directional deviation drilling of the Federal 20-3 oil and gas well**

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on CPC Mineral LLC's (CPC) application for directional drilling of the Federal 20-3 oil and gas well in Bonneville County, ID.

Since 1973, the Idaho Conservation League has been Idaho's leading voice for clean water, clean air and wilderness—values that are the foundation for Idaho's extraordinary quality of life. The Idaho Conservation League works to protect these values through public education, outreach, advocacy and policy development. As Idaho's largest state-based conservation organization, we represent over 25,000 supporters, many of whom have a deep personal interest in protecting and restoring Idaho's rivers, public lands and scenic views. Additionally, we have several members who live in the project area.

Our comments are described in detail following this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 208-345-6933 ext. 23 or [ahopkins@idahoconservation.org](mailto:ahopkins@idahoconservation.org) if you have any questions regarding our comments or if we can provide you with any additional information on this matter.

Sincerely,

Austin Hopkins  
Conservation Assistant

*RE: Idaho Conservation League comments on CPC Mineral's application to directionally drill the Federal 20-3 oil and gas well*

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## NEPA Process for Oil and Gas Extraction

The proposed location for this well appears to be on a split estate, with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) owning the mineral rights. CPC has leased the mineral rights from the BLM under Federal Lease No. IDI-35687. In accordance with NEPA protocol, the BLM prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project that concluded with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Record of Decision (ROD) issued on October 24, 2016.

As outlined in the ROD, concerned parties have twenty (20) days after the issuance of the ROD to appeal the decision to the State Direction of Land Board Association. This 20-day appeal period will commence on Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. Although these comments are due to IDL no later than November 6<sup>th</sup>, a permit should not be issued until the 20-day NEPA appeal period has expired in the event somebody appeals the EA.

## Location within Flood Zone

The proposed surface location for this well pad construction is within the 100-year flood zone for Grays Lake. The BLM's Approval to Drill Permit (APD) for this well was contingent upon CPC receiving approval from Bonneville County's Planning and Zoning. It is unclear based on the documents provided if this well has received such approval. If approval has been granted, IDL should include that for public review along with the permit application. If approval has been denied, IDL is compelled to deny a permit to drill.

In addition, we feel the proposed stormwater management plan (SMP) is insufficient given the location of the site within the flood zone for Grays Lake. The current SMP is primarily reactionary, requiring the operator to check on the site within 24 hours after a storm event with greater than 0.5 inches of rain. The permit should require more proactive SMP measures, such as monitoring weather reports and installing temporary BMPs prior to storm events to prevent runoff from the site entering into Grays Lake.

## Wildcat Wells and Closure Requirements

The location of this proposed well is in an area previously explored by CPC with unsuccessful results. In case the drilling of this well results in a similar outcome, we remind CPC that a well incapable of production shall be classified as an inactive well after 24 continuous months of inactivity.<sup>1</sup> If it is determined that a well will not serve a production purpose we sincerely hope it is plugged and abandoned immediately. However if this does not occur, CPC is obligated to plug and abandon an inactive well

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<sup>1</sup> IDAPA 20.07.02.501.01

<sup>2</sup> IDAPA 20.07.02.502.01

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Grays\\_Lake/seasons\\_of\\_wildlife/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Grays_Lake/seasons_of_wildlife/)  
*Rutland Conservation League Comments on CPC Mineral's application to directionally drill the Federal 20-3 oil and gas well*

within 6 months of being notified as well as post an Inactive Well Bond, calculated at \$10,000 plus \$8.00 per foot for the length of the well.

Additionally, section 4 of the PTD application summarizes the drilling hazards, including sloughing shale and unstable formations causing drill pipe to become stuck and unfit for use. Should drill pipe become stuck, rendering the well incapable of being used for the purpose for which it was originally drilled (i.e. if the well is dry and will not be able to produce oil or gas), the well must be immediately plugged and abandoned.<sup>2</sup>

In light of these potential risks, we are concerned that the required bonding amount may be insufficient to cover the mobilization of equipment to the site and closure and abandonment of the well. As CPC has already plugged and abandoned one well in this area (17-1), we request that IDL review the costs necessary to perform all closure activities for this well. If these costs exceed the current bond amount IDL should require a larger bond capable of covering all costs associated with plugging and abandonment procedures.

#### Proximity to Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge

The proposed well location is roughly 2 miles north of the Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge. This refuge primarily serves as resting and feeding habitat for migrating waterfowl. Given the close proximity of the proposed well location, as well as the use of Grays Lake Road as the primary access road to the site, we encourage CPC to implement operational practices that limit the impact to the nearby animal refuge. These could include, but are not limited to: minimizing the amount of traffic to and from the site, monitoring waterfowl movement and activity, and reducing loud or disruptive work during periods throughout the day when waterfowl are most active. Additionally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicates that Grays Lake serves as an important staging area for migrating birds in the fall.<sup>3</sup> In light of this, IDL should consider restricting operations until after this seasonal period has passed and Grays Lake is no longer serving an important seasonal migration role.

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<sup>2</sup> IDAPA 20.07.02.502.01

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Grays\\_Lake/seasons\\_of\\_wildlife/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Grays_Lake/seasons_of_wildlife/)