



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
White River Resource Area
220 East Market
Meeker, Colorado 81641



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GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE
DIVISION OF
RECLAMATION MINING & SAFETY

Natural Soda LLC.
Attention: Kirk Daehling
3200 County Rd. 31
Rifle, Colorado 81650

Dear Mr. Daehling:

My staff has reviewed Natural Soda's (NS) December 1, 2015 request for the BLM to except the winter timing limitation (December 1 through April 30) for big game severe winter range allowing for the drilling operations of NS's well pairs 15H, 16H, and 17H which are scheduled to commence in February 2016.

An exception to the timing limitation was granted for the 12H production well pair in January of 2012. The 12H production wells are located in a year round drilling study area where Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), in coordination with WPX, evaluated the effects of year round drilling on mule deer within the big game severe winter range. The 15H through 17H well pad is located approximately 600 feet outside of the study area and within the big game severe winter range.

CPW's year round drilling study will be concluding following the 2015-2016 winter period. Once the study is concluded the big game severe winter timing limitations will be in effect throughout NS's well field.

Because the location of 15H through 17H well pad compliments the design of the ongoing CPW mule deer study, an exception to the big game severe winter timing limitation is granted for the drilling of 15H, 16H, and 17H well pairs scheduled to commence in February 2016. This exception does not set precedence for any future exception requests. Future exceptions will likely not be granted and it is strongly recommended scheduling all future well field drilling and associated activities outside of the big game severe winter timing limitation (December 1 through April 30).

If there any questions, please contact Paul Daggett Mining Engineer at (970) 878-3819.

Sincerely,

Kent Walter
Field Manager

cc:

Travis Marshall
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Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
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