

RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS
HEARINGS DIVISION

RULE 37 CASE NO. 0299363
STATUS NO. 813063
DISTRICT 01

APPLICATION OF BENCHMARK
PETROLEUM TEXAS LLC FOR AN
EXCEPTION TO STATEWIDE RULE 37
AND SPECIAL FIELD RULES FOR
THE MERKA LEASE, WELL NO. 1A,
LARREMORE FIELD, CALDWELL
COUNTY, TEXAS

FINAL ORDER

The Commission finds that, after statutory notice in the above-numbered case, heard on April 28, 2016, the Administrative Law Judge and Technical Examiner ("Examiners") have made and filed a proposal for decision containing findings of fact and conclusions of law, which was served on all parties of record, and that this proceeding was duly submitted to the Railroad Commission of Texas at a conference held in its offices in Austin, Texas.

The Commission, after review and due consideration of the proposal for decision and the findings of fact and conclusions of law contained therein, and any exceptions and replies thereto, hereby adopts as its own the findings of fact and conclusions of law contained therein, and incorporates said findings of fact and conclusions of law as if fully set out and separately stated herein.

Therefore, it is **ORDERED** by the Railroad Commission of Texas that the application of Benchmark Petroleum Texas, LLC for an exception permit under the provisions of Statewide Rule 37 and Special Field Rules for the proposed location of the Merka Lease, Well No. 1A in the Larremore Field ("Field") be and is hereby **APPROVED**, subject to the conditions identified below, as identified in the application and as generally described as an existing vertical well in the Field located in the C. Powers Survey, Abstract No. A-68 ("Survey") in Caldwell County, approximately 3.8 miles in a northwest direction from the town of Lockhart, Texas. The surface location of the Well is 116 feet from the south line of the Lease boundary and 122 feet from the northeast line of the Lease boundary. It is 5,886 feet from the northwest line of the Survey boundary and 1,832 feet from the southwest line of the Survey boundary.

Additionally, it is **ORDERED** that the permit authorizes production of the proposed well from the Larremore Field only.

CONDITIONS

1. **Fresh Water Sand Protection.** The operator must set and cement sufficient surface casing to protect all usable-quality water as defined by the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) Groundwater Advisory Unit (GAU). Before drilling a well, the operator must obtain a letter from the Railroad Commission of Texas stating the depth to which water needs protection. Write: Railroad Commission of Texas, Groundwater Advisory Unit (GAU),

P.O. Box 12967, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. File a copy of the letter with the appropriate district office.

2. **Permit at Drilling Site.** A copy of the Form W-1 (Drilling Permit Application), the location plat, a copy of Statewide Rule 13 alternate surface casing setting depth approval from the district office, if applicable, and this drilling permit must be kept at the permitted well site throughout the drilling operations.
3. **Notification of Setting Casing.** The operator **MUST** call in notification to the appropriate district office a minimum of eight (8) hours prior to the setting of surface casing, intermediate casing, AND production casing. The individual giving notification **MUST** be able to advise the district office of the docket number.
4. **Producing Well.** Statewide Rule 16 requires that the operator submit a Form W-2 (oil well) or Form G-1 (gas well) to the appropriate Commission district office within thirty (30) days after completion of such well. Completion of the well in a field authorized by this order voids the order for all other fields included in the order unless the operator indicates on the initial completion report that the well is to be a dual or multiple completion and promptly submits an application for multiple completion. All zones are required to be completed before the expiration date of this order.
5. **Dry or Noncommercial Hole.** Statewide Rule 14(b)(2) prohibits suspension of operations on each dry or noncommercial well without plugging unless the hole is cased and the casing is cemented in compliance with Commission rules. If properly cased, Statewide Rule 14(b)(2) requires that plugging operations must begin within a period of one (1) year after drilling or operations have ceased. Plugging operations must proceed with due diligence until completed. An extension to the one year plugging requirement may be granted under the provisions stated in Statewide Rule 14(b)(2).
6. **Intention to Plug.** The operator must file a Form W-3A (Notice of Intention to Plug and Abandon) with the district office at least five (5) days prior to beginning plugging operations. If, however, a drilling rig is already at work on location and ready to begin plugging operations, the district director or the director's delegate may waive this requirement upon request, and verbally approve the proposed plugging procedures.
7. **Notification of Plugging a Dry Hole.** The operator **MUST** call to notify the appropriate district office a minimum of four (4) hours prior to beginning plugging operations. The individual giving notification **MUST** be able to advise the district office of the docket number and all water protection depths for that location as stated in the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality letter.
8. **Plugged Wells.** Should this well ever be plugged and abandoned, the Commission will consider such plugging and abandonment as prima facie evidence that production from said well is no longer necessary to prevent confiscation of applicant's property or to prevent waste; and upon such plugging and abandonment, the authority for such well as granted under this permit shall cease.

9. **Permit Expiration.** This permit expires two (2) years from the date this order becomes administratively final, unless actual drilling operations have begun. The permit period will not be extended.

Each exception to the proposal for decision not expressly granted herein is overruled. All requested findings of fact and conclusions of law which are not expressly adopted herein are denied. All pending motions and requests for relief not previously granted or granted herein are denied.

It is further **ORDERED** by the Commission that this order shall not be final and effective until 25 days after a party is notified of the Commission's order. If a timely motion for rehearing of an application is filed by any party at interest, this order shall not become final and effective until such motion is overruled, or if such motion is granted, this order shall be subject to further action by the Commission. Pursuant to TEX. GOV'T CODE § 2001.146(e) and 16 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 1.149(c), the time allotted for Commission action on a motion for rehearing in this case prior to its being overruled by operation of law is hereby extended until 90 days from the date the Commission Order is signed.

Done this 24th day of January, 2017.

RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS


CHAIRMAN CHRISTI CRADDICK


COMMISSIONER RYAN SITTON


COMMISSIONER WAYNE CHRISTIAN

ATTEST:


SECRETARY

