

CHAPTER 4B - EFFECTS ANALYSIS

ALTERNATIVE B

To offer none of the 63 tracts (4,634 acres) of National Forest lands for oil and gas leasing.

4.1 Forest Fragmentation

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with forest fragmentation as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

Effects to the forest would continue to occur from current activities on private and public lands, but no additional effects would result from Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended

4.2 Heritage Resources

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with heritage resources as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of heritage resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended

4.3 Land Use

Direct and Indirect Effects

No leasing would lead to no development of roads, pipelines and powerlines on approximately 4,634 acres. This would result in the reduction of opportunities for land uses such as right-of-ways, easements, communication sites and other special land uses. No leasing in management areas that allow motorized recreation and timber harvesting would be inconsistent with the management goals for the area.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

No irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources would result since these 4,634 acres can be considered in future leasing packages and reviews.

Cumulative Effects

The Forest has been administering private and federal oil and gas activities on National Forest System lands in Ohio for over 50 years. At the same time the Forest has worked to restore abandoned mined lands and eroded farm land. As long as there is a market demand for oil and gas products, there will continue to be oil and gas exploration and development activities on public and private lands. Well spacing requirements and other social and environmental factors will eventually limit the number of wells per acre. Effects associated with oil and gas activities may not be in conformance with the future desired goals for some management areas that emphasize natural forest and nonmotorized recreation.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended

4.4 Mineral Resources

Direct and Indirect Effects

Implementing this alternative - by disallowing leasing on 4,634 acres of federal lands for mineral exploration and development - will directly result in reducing opportunities for understanding the geologic setting and the economic viability of future oil and gas operations. In addition, it would not allow exploration of target

areas and geologic formations previously deemed technically inaccessible or administratively unavailable.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

No irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources would result since these 4,634 acres can be considered in future leasing packages and reviews.

Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects associated with implementing this alternative are negligible since most of the oil and gas resources are privately owned. Opening more federal lands for future oil and gas leasing will improve opportunities for new exploration targets, possible new discoveries and development activities. In 1992, there were approximately 5,000 oil and gas wells, on private and public lands, within the Wayne National Forest boundary. An additional 250 wells are located, on private and public lands, in Management Area 6.2. In 1987, there were 800 oil and gas wells on National Forest System lands. In 1992, there were 1,048 wells. It was projected that by the year 2000, a total of 1,138 wells, 215 miles of road, 285 miles of pipeline and a total footprint of 1,202 acres scattered across the publicly-owned lands within the Wayne National Forest boundary. In the year 2002, there are 1205 wells and 225 miles of road, 289 miles of pipeline and a total footprint of approximately 1,349 acres.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended

4.5 Noise

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with noise generation as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended

4.6 Recreation Resources

Direct and Indirect Effects

No leasing would lead to no development of roads and trails on approximately 4,634 acres - since most motorized recreation users use other development roads in the forest. This would result in the reduction of opportunities for motorized recreation. No leasing in management areas that allow motorized recreation and timber harvesting would be inconsistent with the management goals for the area. Opportunities for primitive, non-motorized recreation are increased, if Alternative B is implemented.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

No irretrievable loss would result from this alternative.

Cumulative Effects

Opportunities for motorized recreation would decrease as a result of implementing this alternative because of the reduction of the acreage open for development. Opportunities for non-motorized recreation would increase as a result of implementing this alternative - due to restricting the opening of new acreage to road building associated with potential exploration and development projects.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.

4.7 Road Analysis & Transportation

Direct and Indirect Effects

No effects.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of roads and transportation resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No effects.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.

4.8 Socio-Economic Resources

Direct and Indirect Effects

Implementation of this alternative would create increases in economic activity (for varying periods of time) in the study area counties. The magnitudes of the exploration and development effects would vary with the intensity and duration of exploration and development activities, but upon completion of work their effects would dissipate, leaving the local economies essentially at their pre-project levels of employment, output and income. Production of hydrocarbons would continue to generate some additional local income and employment from well operation and maintenance activities and payment of royalties, but the dollar amounts would be relatively small and of little significance to local jurisdictions.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of socio-economic resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

Implementation of this alternative would result in a minor decrease increases in economic activity (for varying periods of time) in the study area counties. Effects are considered less than significant.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.

4.9 Soils

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with soil erosion as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of soil resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.

4.10 Threatened/Endangered/Sensitive (T/E/S) Animals

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with T/E/S animals as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of animal populations resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended

4.11 Threatened/Endangered/Sensitive (T/E/S) Plants

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with T/E/S plants as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of plant populations resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended

4.12 Vegetation

Direct and Indirect Effects

The only changes expected to vegetation in the three units would be from the natural succession of maturing plant communities.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of vegetation resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.

4.13 Visual Resources

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with aesthetics as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of visual resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.

4.14 Water Quality

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with water resources as described in this chapter would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of water resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.

4.15 Wetland/Riparian/Floodplains (W/R/F) Resources

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with W/R/F resources as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of W/R/F resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.

4.16 Wildlife/Fisheries

Direct and Indirect Effects

None of the effects associated with wildlife and fisheries resources as described in Chapter 4 would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources

There would be no irreversible and irretrievable commitment of wildlife & fisheries resources resulting from Alternative B.

Cumulative Effects

No new effects would occur as a result of implementing Alternative B.

Recommended Mitigation Measures

None Recommended.