



## Dual-formation dual-laterals



MAXINE HERR

Six Hess Corp. dual-lateral wells in the Ross field approximately six miles east of Stanley in central Mountrail County, N.D. One lateral of each well targets the middle Bakken and the other the Three Forks.

## Canada's Transport Minister pondering unilateral rail action

Canada is better placed to move separately from the United States to eliminate the use of older crude tanker cars that carry much of the blame for the deadly rail crash in Quebec last summer, Transport Minister Lisa Raitt said.



LISA RAITT

She told reporters that although the rail industry is widely integrated across Canada and the United States, Canada is prepared to take unilateral measures in response to pressures on her government to act after the loss of 47 lives in the Lac-Mégantic

see RAIL ACTION page 17

## Oil production in ND held firm with Mother Nature in February

For the second straight month, North Dakota oil production gained back some of the nearly 50,000 barrels per day loss that occurred in December. Preliminary data released by the Department of Mineral Resources, DMR, Oil and Gas Division put February production at 951,340 bpd. While an increase of approximately 16,000 bpd over January, an increase of just under 2 percent, the February output still lags some 25,000 bpd behind the current record high production of 976,453 bpd that occurred in November (see chart). That November record output was followed by a month of severe winter weather which drove production down by the nearly

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## ND Petroleum Council task force takes on right-of-way challenges

Obtaining easements is cited as the biggest challenge in the oil industry's effort to move product while reducing truck traffic and flaring in North Dakota.

It's why a right-of-way, ROW, task force has been formed to address the issue and find some solutions. As a spin-off of the North Dakota Petroleum Council's, NDPC, flaring task force, the ROW task force includes landowners, industry leaders, county commissioners, and state officials from the Department of Transportation, Pipeline Authority and the attorney general's office.

The group has met twice since February and plans to continue to meet monthly in hopes of presenting some recommenda-

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## NATURAL GAS

# Snuffing flares

North Dakota willing to let oil production take a hit to curb flaring

By MAXINE HERR

For Petroleum News Bakken

Regulators are hopeful that excessive natural gas flaring will soon be a thing of the past in North Dakota. At a public hearing scheduled for April 22, the Mineral Resources director will listen to comments regarding production curtailment to reduce flaring in order to then draft an order to be voted on at the May Industrial Commission meeting. The order will have the force of law, according to Director Lynn Helms, and he hopes to have it take effect June 1 to coincide with the gas capture



LYNN HELMS

plans order.

In March, the commission voted to require a gas capture plan when an operator applies for a spacing unit. Upon application, the operator must show that it shared the gas capture plan with all available gas gathering companies for better construction coordination.

## Outdated order doesn't take massive Bakken into consideration

As the production curtailment order reads

see SNUFFING FLARES page 19

## DRILLING & COMPLETION

# Slawson infills Big Bend

ND operators ramp up higher density Bakken petroleum system drilling

By MIKE ELLERD

Petroleum News Bakken

Slawson Exploration filed applications requesting authorization to drill multiple horizontal Bakken pool wells on 81 spacing units in the Big Bend field which the North Dakota Industrial Commission will consider during monthly hearings scheduled for April 23 and 24. While other operators submitted ambitious Bakken pool infill applications, some seeking densities as high as one horizontal well per 64 acres, Slawson led in the number of individual spacing units targeted for infill drilling.

The spacing units, which range in size from 320 to 3,200 acres, include all but five sections in

Right behind Slawson is Hunt Oil Co. which filed applications seeking authorization to drill up to seven Bakken pool wells on a total of 57 separate 1,280-acre spacing units in eight fields in Divide and Williams counties.

the Big Bend field which consists of 91 full sections and five half-sections.

The Big Bend field spans across the northern portion of the peninsula in Lake Sakakawea in southwest Mountrail County and extends around the Van Hook Arm of the lake on the east side of

see BIG BEND INFILL page 20

## MOVING HYDROCARBONS

# Harper under fire on XL

Canadian PM faces heat from allies as pipeline's future remains uncertain

By GARY PARK

For Petroleum News Bakken

Any thoughts Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper held that he could sit back while President Barack Obama fielded the slings and arrows of anger over Keystone XL are being dashed.

Suddenly, Harper finds himself under siege from a former prime minister, a former federal cabinet minister and a current Alberta cabinet minister — all of them members of governing federal or provincial Conservative party governments.

Feeling the heat from his own party faithful must come as jolt to a man who, during his eight



STEPHEN HARPER

years in office, has been rated as the petroleum industry's best friend in recent memory.

Not only that, but the newly installed U.S. ambassador to Canada, while eager to play a role as deal broker to facilitate cross-border trade, suggested Canadians should avoid making too much of a fuss over the fate of XL.

Ambassador Bruce Heyman, a Chicago investment banker, was unable to give any updated forecasts on when Obama will cast the final vote on the pipeline, noting only that the review process is continuing.

But he did argue that XL should not dominate

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