



Wildcat!



Rules

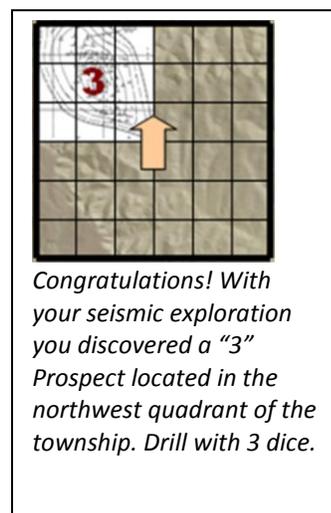
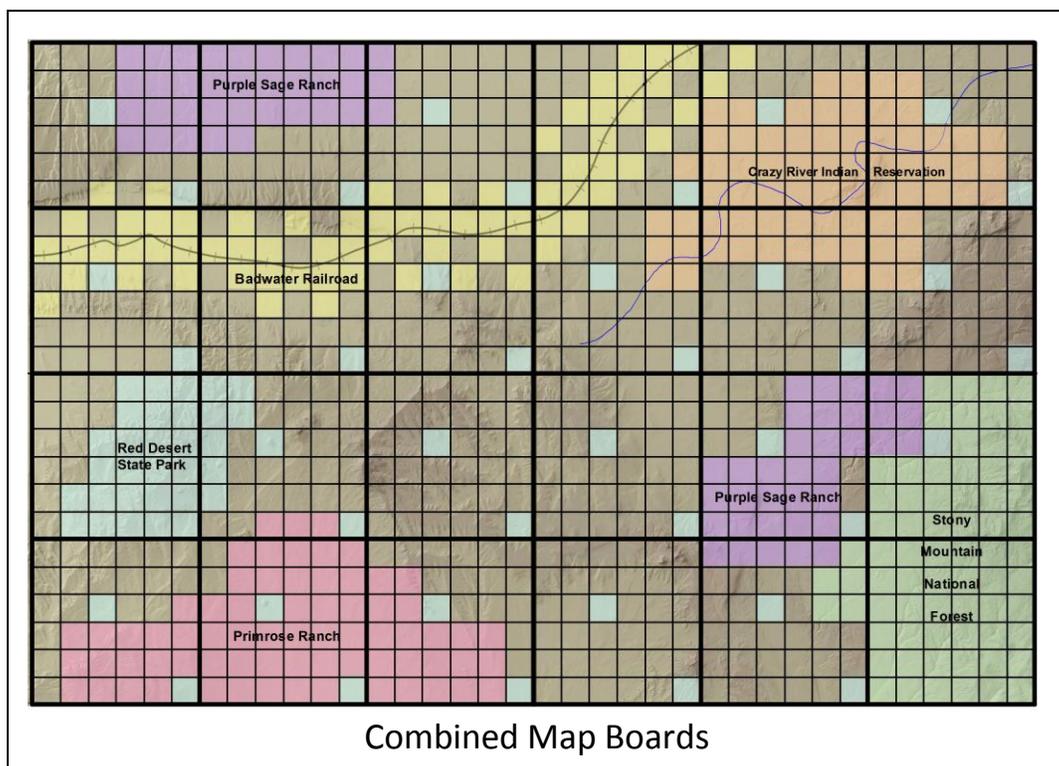
Introduction. Wildcat! Is a strategy game for 3-6 players about exploring for oil in the western United States. Played out on a map consisting of 24 townships¹, it provides for seismic exploration for prospects, obtaining leasing rights, drilling for oil, producing any oil discoveries, and selling it for income. Each Player represents an independent oil company competing for the “black gold” to be found underground in the map area.

Of the 24 townships, 14 of them will have hidden prospects of varying sizes, distributed randomly so that each time the game is played, the oilfield discoveries will be found in different locations. But that leaves 10 townships with nothing there, so it is your job to explore until you find something, and you may encounter several “dry holes” along the way!

Players must manage their cash carefully, as oil exploration, leasing, and drilling are all expensive operations, and you face an uncertain market in which to sell your produced oil. Leases are taken by open auction, so bid carefully in order to leave funds for drilling. Even a dry hole costs money and your seismic “shoots” may find nothing at first.

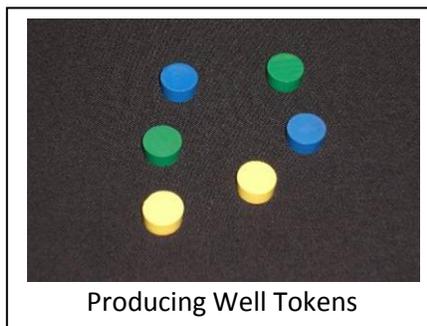
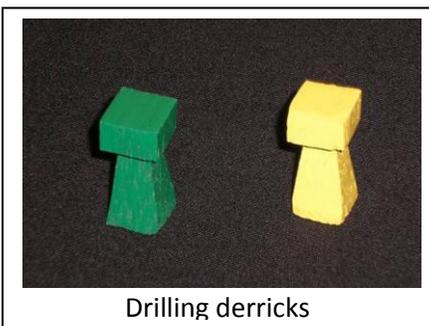
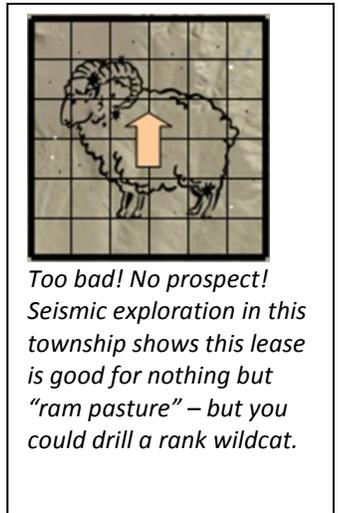
Components:

- Map boards, 2, 11 in. X 17 in., each folds in half to fit in box
- Prospect Map with reduced-scale map board image, 8-1/2 in. X 11 in., in color, for placement of prospect tiles
- Player/Company cards (6): Fossil Fuel Co., Pyramid Petroleum, Ty-Rex Energy, Lighthouse Petroleum, Pacific Oil Co., and Gemstone Oil Co.
- Turn Action cards (24), 4 for each player: 1. Seismic Exploration, 2. Lease, 3. Drill, and 4. Sell Oil



¹ A township is a surveyed area 6 miles square, 36 square miles total, derived from the “Jeffersonian” public land survey system adopted in the 19th century and applied throughout most of the western U.S.

- Major Lease tiles (6): Purple Sage Ranch, Primrose Ranch, Crazy River Indian Reservation, State Parks and School Lands, Stony Mountain National Forest, and Badwater Railroad
- Event cards (30)
- Player pieces, in player's choice of color (yellow, red, blue, green, brown, or white), per player: Drilling derricks (4), Leasing markers (4), and Producing well tokens (20, also used to indicate seismic action)
- Player mats (6) with Crude Oil Production Track (Turn Track), Township Reference, and storage areas for Player/Company card, Major Lease Tile, Drilling Derrick, and Leasing Markers
- Dry-Hole tokens (44) (Dry-Hole-With-Show symbol on reverse side), uncolored
- Township Tiles (24), 1½ in. square, 14 with various prospects², 10 with none (with a "ram pasture" symbol instead); to fit on Prospect Map (small images of these are also shown on bottom of the main Map Boards)
- Custom dice, ¾ in. square:
 - 7 for drilling discovery rolls
 - 1 to determine the production level for any discoveries made, and the same die is used to determine the current turn oil price
- Oil price marker (on right-side main Map Board)
- Starting Player / Active Player token (1 - gray)
- Barrels of oil in 3 sizes: 1 barrel (144), 5 barrels (60), and 25 barrels (18)
- Paper Money (it is recommended that you use denominated "poker" chips, not included in the game materials)



Setup (refer to the illustrated Setup card):

- The Starting Player is the person who lives in or nearest to Wyoming. He or she takes the gray token.
- Each player takes a reference mat entitled "Crude Oil Production Track"
- Each player starts with \$50 million in paper money (recommended in chips if available) from the bank. *Note: hereafter "million" is abbreviated as "MM". Suggested: (10) 1's, (4) 5's, and (2) 10's*
- Each player chooses a Player/ Company card and places it in the labeled space on their mat.

² All prospects depicted on the tiles are real oilfields in the state of Wyoming

- Each player takes all pieces for their color:
 - Drilling derricks (four)
 - Leasing markers (four)
 - Producing well tokens (20)
- 
- and places them on their mat
- Each player in turn order chooses one Major Lease Tile and places it in the labeled space on their mat, with “3 Turns Remaining” at the top (see illustration under the Lease Action). At this point, if the whole map is used (5 or 6 players), all Major Leases are equal in value, each covering 70 sections (square miles). For fewer players, some of the Major Leases are smaller than others.
 - Place the main map/boards on the table as shown on page 1. If there are less than 6 players, block off portions of the map (using unused player mats placed face down):
 - 3 players – only the western half of the map is used. Thus the Crazy River Indian Reservation, the Stony Mountain National Forest, and portions of three other Major Leases are out of play
 - 4 players – the northeast quadrant is out of play (including the Crazy River Indian Reservation)
 - 5 players – all four quadrants are used, except for the Stony Mountain National Forest and its Major Lease tile (which is out of play)
 - Take the 24 township tiles, mix them face down, and place them randomly down on the Prospect Map.
 - Each player in turn takes one exclusive peek at one township tile for a starting prospect inventory. (The viewed tile may have no prospect shown – that’s tough!). Mark the tile viewed with a colored disc (producing well token); players may always at any time look again at a township tile already viewed.
 - Each player/company starts out with some remaining production from existing oil fields, so each player loads their Crude Oil Production Track with 5 barrels (one 5-barrel token) in Turn 1, 2 barrels (two 1-barrel tokens) in Turn 2, and 1 barrel in Turn 3 (*illustrates the Production Depletion Rule*).
 - Take an oil barrel from the supply and place it as a Turn Marker on the Turn Track on the map/board. The number of turns to be played in a Standard Game is 11 minus the number of players (for example, for 3 players it is 8 turns, for 6 players it is 5 turns).
 - Each player in turn order draws one card from the Event Card deck and acts on it immediately or holds it for future use as indicated on the card.



Order of Play.

- Set oil price: the Active Player rolls the single numbered die to set the current oil price for this turn. Place an oil barrel on the board.
- All Players in turn order Draw an Event Card; as required or desired either play it immediately, or hold it in your hand for future use.
- Action Cards: Each Player secretly chooses an Action Card from their hand and all Players reveal their card simultaneously. The actions are then taken in numeric order. **General Rule:** all Players get to take each action played as long as at least one Action Card of that type is played, even if they personally didn’t choose it. But only the Players choosing a given Action Card are allowed to use the listed Bonus action. Players choosing a given Action card will always go before the other Players for that action.
- After all actions have been taken (described below), then each Player reduces lease terms by one.
- Finally, the Active Player advances the Turn Marker and passes the gray token to the Player on the left.

Quick Reference: Order of Play

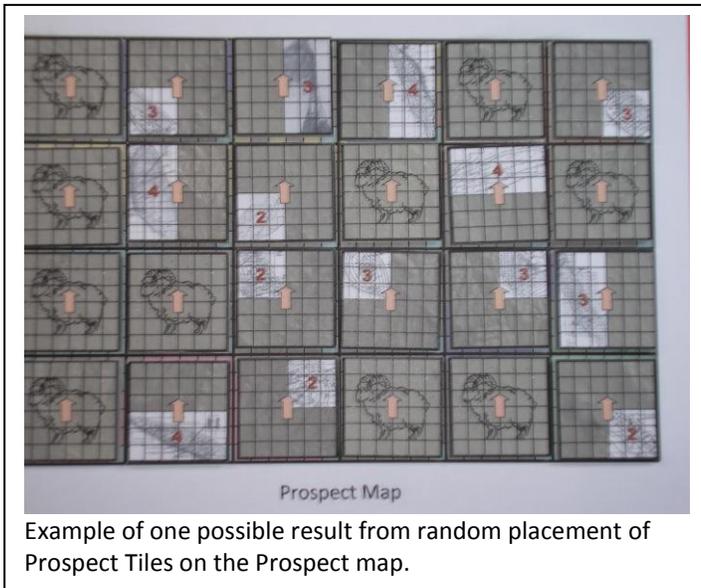
- Roll die to set oil price
- Draw an Event Card
- Choose and reveal Action Cards
- Take actions in numeric order
- Reduce remaining lease terms by one
- Advance turn marker
- Pass Active Player token to the left

Actions.

- **1. Seismic Exploration:** Those Players who selected “1. Seismic Exploration” (if any) will go first, starting with the Active Player, then the player to his left, and so on. (See **General Rule** above).



- Place one colored disc (producing well token) on an unrevealed Township Tile. Seismic “shoots” cost \$5MM, paid to the Bank.
- Players choosing this action are entitled to the bonus, which is placing a second colored disc (producing well token) on an additional unrevealed Township Tile (at no extra cost).
- Only one disc can be placed per township tile; once a disc has been placed on a township tile, no other Player can choose that same tile this turn.

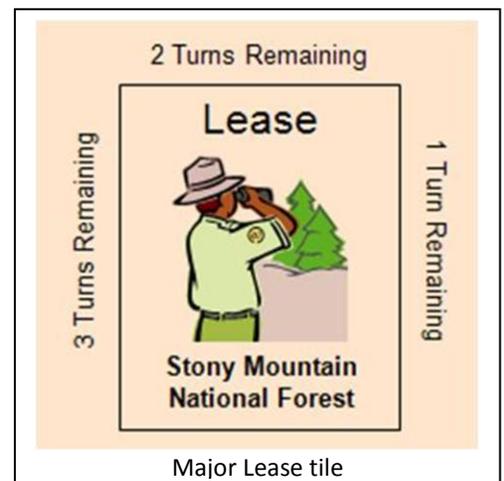


- After all discs have been placed, then in turn order each Player secretly views the underside of the tile to see if any prospects are present. Players need to remember their observations. However, players may always at any time look again at a township tile already viewed.
- Prospects (if any) are located as though the tile is flipped right-side-up with the arrow pointing north (in other words, they are not “mirror images”).
- After all selected tiles have been viewed, Players leave their colored “producing well tokens” on each of the viewed tiles.
- Viewed tiles will stay hidden until someone drills a well on the tile and states how many dice are being rolled.

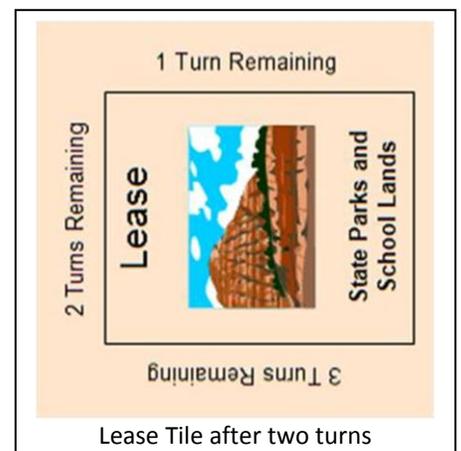
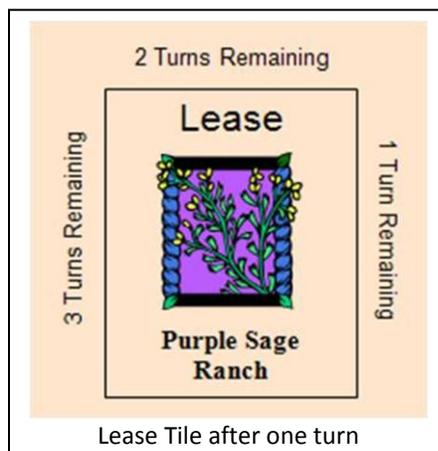
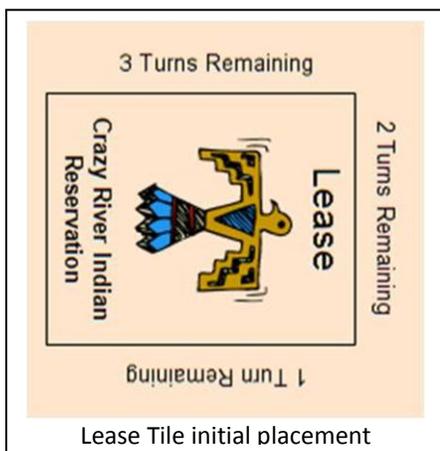
- **2. Lease:** Those Players who selected “2. Lease” (if any) will go next, starting with the Active Player, then the player to his left, and so on. (See **General Rule** above).



- Place one Lease Marker on either an available Major Lease tile, or on an unleased Township on the Map Board. Leases represent the right to drill on that property. Leases consist of all sections on the map of a color representing a Major Lease (each one has 70 sections), or all uncolored (gray) sections within a single township.
- Players choosing this action are entitled to the bonus, which is placing a second Lease Marker on an unleased Township Tile (they may not choose a second Major Lease for this bonus).
- Each Lease action is resolved by auction, starting with the Active Player or the first Player to his left who chose this action. The minimum bid is \$5MM. Bidding continues around with each player either raising the current bid by at least \$1MM, or passing. Once a Player passes, they are out for that round and lease. After all Players but one have passed, the lease is awarded to the last remaining Player and they must pay the final bid amount to the Bank. If no one else bids at all (everyone else passes), the Player putting that property up for auction must pay the minimum bid of \$5MM.



- The winning Player places (or leaves) their Lease Marker on the Map Board to show lease ownership, or in the case of a Major Lease, places the Major Lease Tile on their mat.
- Leases expire after three turns for Major Leases, and after two turns for township leases.
- Lease Markers are placed with the side showing the “2” upwards, meaning two turns remain for drilling operations, including the current turn (since the Lease Action will numerically always be taken before any Drill Actions in each turn). Per the Order of Play, these Lease Markers are to be flipped over at the end of the current turn to show the “1” side up.
- Major Lease Tiles are placed in the labeled space on the players mat, with “3 Turns Remaining” at the top (see illustration below left). Per the Order of Play, these tiles are to be rotated counter-clockwise 90° to the left at the end of the current turn to show the remaining turns.
- Players are limited to 4 Lease Markers and the one space on their mat reserved for Major Leases; once they have acquired 5 leases they may not put up or bid on any more.
- Leases can be relinquished at any time to reclaim Lease Markers. Markers will return when leases expire.



3. Drill: Those Players who selected “3. Drill” (if any) will go next, starting with the Active Player, then the player to his left, and so on. (See **General Rule** above).

- Place drilling Derricks on proposed locations on the main Map Board, which must be on leases held by the Player, one per lease held.
- Players choosing this action are entitled to the bonus, which is optionally placing a Derrick on one additional drilling location, after resolving the results from the first wells.
- After all Derricks have been placed, then in turn order each Player rolls up to 7 custom dice to determine the results. If the location is on a seismic prospect, then the Player announces how many dice they are using, turns over the Township Tile to reveal the prospect, leaving the revealed tile on the smaller Prospect Map, and transfers their colored “producing well token” to the small image of this same prospect shown on the bottom of one of the main Map Boards.
- Wells may be drilled where there is no prospect, using only one die, in which case the tile is revealed showing the ram symbol. This is known as a “rank wildcat”, and it is unlikely that oil will be found. This can only be done after the tile has already been explored with seismic.
- The cost to drill each well is dependent on the *size of the prospect*. The cost is \$2MM, \$3MM, or \$4MM, corresponding to the prospect number being drilled. Rank wildcats cost \$1MM. Event Cards may modify this cost. These costs are paid to the Bank when the well is drilled.
- The number of dice rolled is the number on the prospect (2, 3, or 4), possibly modified by:



- Offsetting wells in the 8 sections surrounding the location; producing wells adding one more die for each producing well, dry-holes subtracting one die for each dry-hole present. Dry-holes-with-oil-shows are treated the same as producing wells (they indicate oil was found in the area, but not in commercial quantities for that well), so offsetting one of these increases the odds of a commercial discovery.
 - Event Cards – certain Event Cards can modify the drilling die rolls by adding an extra die, or causing that a “dry-hole-with-show” well becomes a producing oil well instead. These cards may be held in the Player’s hand until played. Only one Event Card can be played per turn in this manner.
 - Even with these modifiers, the maximum number of dice rolled is 7.
- Die roll results are the single best result from all the dice rolled, so as long as at least one producing oil well symbol is shown, the well is a discovery. If at least one of the dice has the “dry-hole-with-show” symbol, the well was a “geologic success but an economic failure (non-commercial oil quantities). The “Serendipity” Event Card can modify this result to make the well a commercial producing oil well.
- If at least 3 dice are rolled, and the best result is still just a dry-hole (not a dry-hole-with-show), draw an Event Card. This is a “consolation prize” to reward risk-takers.
- Discovery wells are marked by placing a Producing Well Token of the Player’s color on the map at that location. Dry-holes are marked with uncolored well tokens, either the plain dry-hole side, or the “dry-hole-with-oil-show” side face up at the location.
- **Production:** For discovery wells, the Player then rolls the single numbered die to determine the production level (the same die used to set the oil price). The resulting number on the die roll is the number of 5-quantity barrels of oil produced in the first turn of discovery, either 1 (5 barrels), 2 (10 barrels), or 3 (15 barrels). This many barrel pieces are placed in the current turn on the Crude Oil Production Track, and using the **Production Depletion Rule**: each subsequent turn receives one-half of the previous turn barrels, rounded down. For example, if the production level die roll is 2, then two 5-barrel pieces (equal to 10 barrels) are placed in the current turn box, followed by one 5-barrel piece in the next box, then two single barrels ($\frac{1}{2}$ of 5 rounded down), and finally, one barrel in the third box after the current turn. No barrels are placed after that (since $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1, rounded down is zero).

4. Sell Oil. Those Players who selected “4. Sell Oil” (if any) will trigger this action. (See **General Rule** above). The Player order doesn’t really matter for this step.

- All Players sell all oil from this turn’s Production Track, and any leftover from previous turns (this occurs when the Sell Oil Action card was not selected by any of the Players in the previous turn or turns). The sale price is the number rolled at the beginning of the current turn, and equals how much each barrel sells for, from \$1MM to \$3MM each. Payments are paid from the Bank into the Player’s Treasury.
- Players choosing this action are entitled to the bonus, which is a 10% extra premium payment added to the base payment. The other Players only receive the base payment.
- The final turn of the game will include a last Sell Oil action, even if no one selects this card that turn, but only at a fixed price of \$1MM per barrel. However, if this Action is chosen in the final turn, then the price will be as rolled at the start of the turn.



End of Game and Scoring.

- The number of turns to be played in a Standard Game is 11 minus the number of players (for example, for 3 players it is 8 turns, for 6 players it is 5 turns – these are shown on the turn track on the board). If no other game end conditions have been met, then the game ends when this number of turns has been completed. Players may mutually agree to play a shorter game with fewer turns as they wish.
- The game will end earlier if and when one Player places their last (20th) discovery well token. The current turn is completed (other Players may still have wells to drill this turn), but it is the last turn.
- The final turn of the game includes a last Sell Oil action, even if no one selects this card that turn. All remaining oil, even that which has been already placed per the Production Depletion Rule representing future production, is sold in this step. This represents total liquidation of the Player’s Oil Company and sale including valuation of future developed reserves. Undrilled prospects and leases have no residual value, and the oilfield infrastructure is not sold – only barrels of oil.
- The final score is the \$ value of each Player’s Treasury, and the Player with the most money wins!

Other rules:

- There are no loans allowed, either from the Bank or from other Players. All Seismic Exploration, Lease bidding, and well Drilling must be paid for at the time the action is taken.
- Players may not sell their leases to other Players. They may, however, relinquish them, and another Player may attempt to acquire them in a new Lease action auction.
- The total number of Producing Well Tokens is limited to 20 for each Player. As soon as one Player places their last (20th) discovery well token, *including those placed on Prospect Tiles or images of discovered prospects*, it triggers the game end and the current turn is the last.
- Dry-Hole tokens are not intended to be limited to the quantity supplied in the game; if the supply runs out during game play, improvise with some other bits.

Special rules for 2 Players:

- Use an imaginary 3rd Player – each turn the current Active Player draws a random Action Card from an unused player’s deck and places it on the table face-up, prior to Action Card selection by the other Players. This Action will be in play this turn, even if not chosen by any of the other Players. Other Players won’t have to choose this Action, unless they want the Bonus benefit that accompanies selection of that Action.
- As in the 3-player game, only the western half of the map is used. Thus the Crazy River Indian Reservation, the Stony Mountain National Forest, and portions of three other Major Leases are out of play.

For those interested in how this game relates to the real world, I offer these two tables:

Oil Price and Production Volumes Equivalencies

Production die roll	1 st year production in “Game barrels”	Real world BOPD*	1 st year total production	Oil price roll=1 \$34.25 per barrel	Oil price roll=2 \$68.50 per barrel	Oil price roll=3 \$102.75 per barrel
1	5	400	146000	\$5MM	\$10MM	\$15MM
2	10	800	292000	\$10MM	\$20MM	\$30MM
3	15	1200	438000	\$15MM	\$30MM	\$45MM

*Barrels of Oil Per Day Note: each “game barrel” equals 80 BOPD or 29,200 barrels in a year; each “game well”, which is one well per 640 acre section, actually represents about 4 wells on 160 acre spacing, 8 wells on 80 acre spacing, or 16 wells on 40 acre spacing.

Well depletion and cumulative production

Production die roll	1 st year production in “Game barrels”	Game barrels and BOPD in year 1	Game barrels and BOPD in year 2	Game barrels and BOPD in year 3	Game barrels and BOPD in year 4	Cumulative total production	Total \$ value at price 2 = \$68.50/barrel
1	5	5; 400	2; 160	1; 80	0	8; 233,600	\$16MM
2	10	10; 800	5; 400	2; 160	1; 80	18; 525,600	\$36MM
3	15	15; 1200	7; 560	3; 240	1; 80	26; 759,200	\$52MM

The real world price range for “sweet” crude oil over a one-year period from June, 2008 to June, 2009 ranged from a high of \$140 per barrel down to \$35 per barrel, with the current price in late 2011 about \$100 per barrel.

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