



For Immediate Release:

Citadel Announces Commencement of Drilling at Rancho Grande and New Acreage Acquisition.

Company commences operations on its first prospect while expanding portfolio.

Newport Beach, CA (May 3, 2013): Citadel Exploration, Inc. (OTCBB: COIL) ("Citadel") is pleased to announce drilling has commenced at Rancho Grande. This milestone marks the first drilling since the company's founding in 2011.

Citadel has executed an agreement with Sojitz Energy Ventures (Rancho Grande operator) for participation on two exploratory wells at Rancho Grande. Under terms of the agreement, Citadel will pay 22.22% cost share for a 20% working interest. Each well will test a separate prospect with multiple objectives. Citadel has also obtained a separate letter of intent that will allow for continued operations at Rancho Grande with Sojitz Energy Ventures.

"Drilling at Rancho Grande gives us a high probability of early success," said Armen Nahabedian, CEO of Citadel Exploration, Inc. "The first wells we will drill have significant potential and can be brought onto production quickly. I could not be happier with the Sojitz team's performance to date. They are great partners and I look forward to a long and prosperous future with them," Mr. Nahabedian added.

In addition to the progress on its existing projects, the company is also pleased to announce expansion of its portfolio with acquisition of approximately 3,000 acres from AERA Energy, LLC, a California joint venture of Exxon Mobil Corp (NYSE: XOM) and Royal Dutch Shell (NYSE: RDS). This acreage has been mapped using a combination of both 2D and 3D seismic with extensive well control data, and is in close proximity to the Yowlumne oil field which has produced more than 100 million barrels of oil.

About Citadel:

Citadel Exploration (OTCBB: COIL) is a pure-play California oil company with operations in the Salinas and San Joaquin Basins of California. Citadel has a broad portfolio of capital investment opportunities arising from management's extensive knowledge of the geology and the history of oil and gas exploration and development in California.

For more information on the company, visit www.citadelexploration.com.

This press release may contain "forward-looking statements" (within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Act of 1995) that inherently involve risk and uncertainties. Citadel Exploration generally uses words such as "believe," "may," "could," "will," "intend," "expect," "anticipate," "plan," and similar expressions to identify forward-looking statements. One should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements. The Company's actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in the forward-looking statements for many unforeseen factors. See Citadel Exploration's Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012 for a discussion of such risks, uncertainties and other factors.

Statements such as any perceived benefit from the raising of capital and the beginning of drilling and any other perceived benefits, involve risks and uncertainties, including, but not limited to our ability to successfully drill wells and extract resources, operate without adversely impacting the environment, our ability to adhere to safety measures, or other general economic conditions which would hinder our ability to operate effectively.

Should one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or should underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual outcomes may vary materially from those indicated. Important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from the forward-looking statements we make in this news release include market conditions, our ability to raise sufficient funding to finance our operations, the actual drilling results, adherence to regulations, and those set forth in reports or documents we file from time to time with the SEC. We undertake no obligation to revise or update such statements to reflect current events or circumstances after the date hereof or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events.

Contact:

Investor Relations:
Phil McPherson, CFO
Citadel Exploration
417 31st Street Unit A
Newport Beach, CA 92663
949-612-8040

Media Relations:
Robert Parry
Compass Check Consulting
rparry@compasscheckconsulting.com
626-698-0878