



## Bureau of Land Management

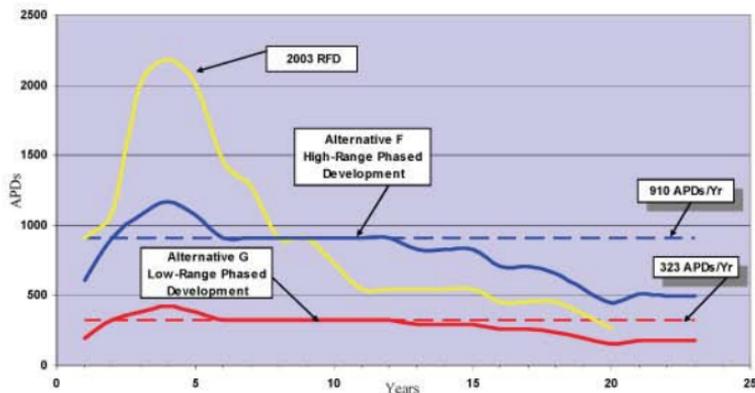
## SEIS Project Newsletter

## BLM Analyzes Phased Development Alternatives

## Special points of interest:

- Reasonably foreseeable development scenario predicted a range of CBNG wells from 6,470 to 18,225.
- Low-range RFD prediction identifies 3,000 CBNG wells drilled on BLM administered minerals.
- Rate of development under the low-range phased development alternative would be 325 APDs per year.

The Miles City Field Office received several comments regarding the Phased Development Alternative prepared in October 2005. Based upon these comments and discussions with the participating cooperating agencies a decision was made to analyze a second phased development alternative. The second phased development alternative (G) is based on the lower range of potential CBNG wells as presented in the 2003 reasonably foreseeable development (RFD) scenario. BLM estimates 6,470 wells may be drilled. Of these approximately 3,000 would be on BLM administered minerals while the remaining 3,470 would be on state and private minerals. The low-range phased development alternative incorporates the same environmental resource screens as was applied to the high-range phased development alternative. Applying these screens to the low-range scenario in alternative G would result in a cumulative threshold of 325 Applications for Permit to Drill (APD) annually. Once this limit was reached BLM would not approve any more APDs.



Phased Development Alternatives APDs/Year

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Typical air quality monitoring station

## New Regional Air Model Being Prepared

During the scoping period a number of comments regarding air quality impacts from CBNG activities were received. Based upon these comments and other concerns the BLM decided to conduct a supplemental dispersion modeling study.

In January, 2006 the BLM initiated the process by issuing a decision for the development of the air modeling procedures and protocol. The draft modeling protocol was completed in February and issued to agency stakeholders for review and comments. Agency stakeholders include the Montana DEQ, EPA Region VIII, USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, and the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. Comments were received from each of the stakeholders. A full version of the modeling protocol can be found on the project website: [www.blm.gov/eis/mt/milescity\\_seis](http://www.blm.gov/eis/mt/milescity_seis).

Currently, emissions data, meteorological data, and other model input data collection efforts are being conducted. Emission data is being collected from North and South Dakota, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. Additional source data is also being collected from the Western Region Air Partnership (WRAP).

The EPA's CALPUFF model will be used for this new air quality assessment and include the same modeling domain as used in the original 2003 oil and gas EIS. For this study the receptor grid, emission inventory data, and meteorological data were all updated and expanded from the earlier modeling study. The analysis will rely on a modeled base year of 2004 and determine air impacts for alternatives E, F, and H with regards to their predictive scenarios. Additionally, the study will discuss air impacts from the proposed Tongue River Railroad and the Roundup Power Plant.

The Montana DEQ, EPA, and the Northern Cheyenne Tribe are conducting a cumulative analysis of the Northern Cheyenne's Class I airshed increment. This study is intended to determine the definitive increment for the reservation for  $\text{NO}_x$ ,  $\text{SO}_2$ , and  $\text{PM}_{10}$ . The DEQ anticipates this study to be completed by the end of summer 2006.

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*New regional air model study will address human health effects and include an expanded mitigation measures evaluation*

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Billings, Montana  
Coburn Road air quality monitoring station

## Supplemental EIS Schedule Revised

The schedule to complete the SEIS has been revised to accommodate the preparation of a new regional air model. The schedule to complete the new air quality model is six months. This means the Draft SEIS will now be issued to the public in August 2006. The schedule includes a milestone for the selection of an official preferred alternative which will not be done until all the analyses including the regional air model has been completed. The 90-day public comment period will occur August through October 2006. During the 90-day public comment period there will be four public meetings held at Billings, Broadus, Lame Deer, and Miles City. The public meetings are intended to collect public comments regarding the analyses and preferred alternative. The public is also encouraged to submit written comments via the project web site or by mail.

### WebSite

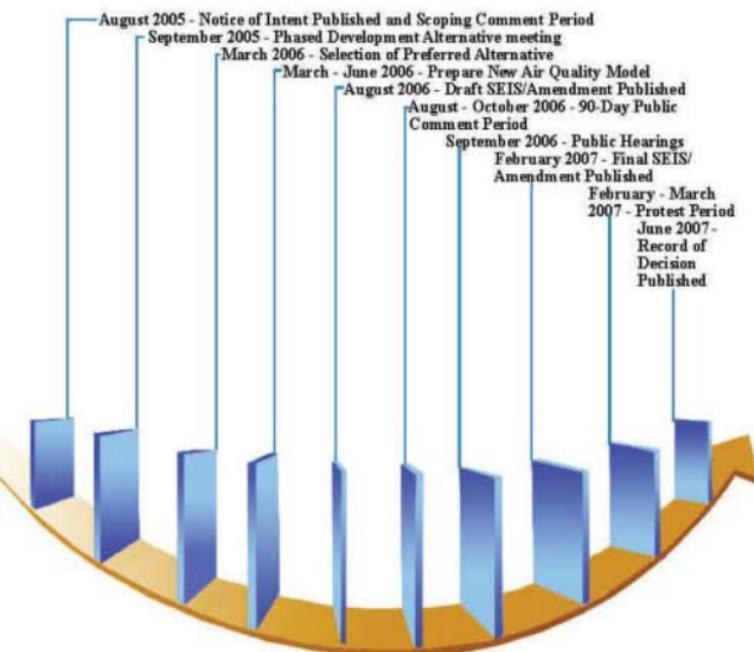
[www.blm.gov/eis/mt/milescity\\_seis](http://www.blm.gov/eis/mt/milescity_seis)

A link has been established on the Miles City Field Office Home Page

### Mailing Address

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## SEIS Project Milestone Schedule



*August 2006  
Draft SEIS/  
Amendment  
published*

*90-day public  
comment period  
August-October 2006*

*Four Public  
Meetings  
September 2006*

- Billings
- Broadus
- Lame Deer
- Miles City