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BLM White River Plan Amendment scoping meetings scheduled

Meeker, Colo. – The Bureau of Land Management's White River Field Office will be hosting three public open house meetings in September on its proposed plan amendment covering potential impacts of anticipated increases in oil and gas development.

The open houses will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. at the following locations:

- Sept. 12 in Meeker at the Fairfield Center, 200 Main St.
- Sept. 13 in Rangely at Rangely High School, 234 South Jones Ave.
- Sept. 14 in Rifle at the Garfield County Fairgrounds Event Hall, 1001 Railroad

BLM will give brief presentations at 4:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. at each meeting. The open house format offers the opportunity to stop by anytime to provide comments and discuss issues and concerns one-on-one with project specialists.

"Public involvement from the beginning of this process is critical," said Kent Walter, Field Manager for the White River Field Office in Meeker. "We encourage anyone interested to stop by the open house meetings to learn more."

The 1.5 million-acre Field Office in northwestern Colorado is amending its 1997 Resource Management Plan to address an anticipated increase in oil and gas development that will likely result from improved technology, increased demand and added capacity to move natural gas from the area.

In this first opportunity for public comment, called "scoping," BLM asks the public to help identify issues or concerns and to provide general input on the proposed amendment. The information will be used to prepare the draft amendment and associated environmental impact statement. A 90-day public comment period will follow the release of the draft, which is currently anticipated for late fall 2007.

BLM will accept public scoping comments through Sept. 30, 2006. For more information, to submit comments or to have your name added to a mailing list, log on to the White River Field Office website at <http://www.co.blm.gov/wrra/>. Additional information is available through Jane Peterson, WRFO Oil and Gas EIS Project Manager, at (970) 244-3027.

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