

# Final Supplement to the Montana Statewide Oil and Gas Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Amendment of the Powder River and Billings Resource Management Plans

**Lead Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

**Type of Action:** Administrative

**Jurisdiction (Planning Area):** the planning area is BLM-administered lands and minerals in the Powder River Resource Management Plan (RMP) (Powder River, Carter, and Treasure counties and portions of Big Horn, Custer and Rosebud counties) and the Billings RMP (Carbon, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Wheatland, and Yellowstone counties and the remaining portion of Big Horn County). The planning area contains about 1,506,011 acres of federally managed surface, and 5,009,784 acres of federal mineral estate.

**Abstract:** As a result of lawsuits filed against the BLM's Record of Decision (ROD), the U.S. District Court issued orders, dated February 25, 2005, and April 5, 2005, that required the BLM to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to evaluate a phased development alternative for coal bed natural gas (CBNG) production. The U.S. District Court also issued an order, dated February 25, 2005, advising the BLM to include the proposed Tongue River Railroad in the cumulative impact analysis and analyze the effectiveness of water well mitigation agreements.

The Final SEIS (FSEIS) is a reissue of the original EIS/Amendment: *Montana Statewide Oil and Gas Environmental Impact Statement and Amendment of the Powder River and Billings Resource Management Plans* (Statewide Document). This SEIS provides additional information and analyses regarding the topics identified by the U.S. District Court. It is intended to expand on the information presented in the Statewide Document.

The FSEIS analyzes three phased development alternatives (F, G, and H) for managing oil and gas resources in the planning area. As a result, the BLM selected a new preferred alternative (H). This alternative would amend the Resource Management Plans and allow coal bed natural gas (CBNG) exploration and development while minimizing impacts on environmental resources.