

Strategic Plan

Pinedale Anticline Project Office

Executive Summary

Recognizing the Pinedale Anticline Project Area (PAPA) contains significant energy reserves as well as important sensitive and valued natural resources, the Record of Decision (ROD) established the Pinedale Anticline Project Office (PAPO). The role of this interagency team is to oversee both on-site and off-site monitoring and mitigation projects related to activity in the PAPA and to manage monitoring information in support of adaptive management. The PAPO supports and advises the Monitoring and Mitigation Board of Directors on funding of proposed projects in the PAPA vicinity and recommendations for changes in monitoring if needed and mitigation measures based on monitoring results.

The Mission Statement of the PAPO is to:

Monitor and mitigate for impacts from the Pinedale Anticline Project Area in a collaborative effort to generate proactive and science-based adaptive decisions to conserve or restore the function of multiple resources including air, water, habitat, wildlife, cultural, and rangeland.

This Strategic Plan describes the goals and objectives of the PAPO and the strategies needed to successfully accomplish a science-based, landscape-scale initiative to effectively monitor and mitigate impacts from the PAPA.

Background

The ROD for the PAPA was signed in 2008 approving the development of 4,399 wells to be located on no more than 600 well pads within a project area of almost 200,000 acres. New surface disturbance in the form of roads, well pads, and pipelines is anticipated to continue through 2023 with drilling activity through 2025. Based upon the impacts and assumptions made in evaluating this project, the major PAPA energy companies involved with development voluntarily proposed to create a fund to mitigate potential impacts to wildlife and air quality. In addition to the mitigation, funding for monitoring of these resources is the responsibility of the PAPO. Annual deposits to the Fund are based on the number of wells spud at a rate of \$7500 per well up to a total contribution of \$36 million over the life of the project. The ROD includes a Wildlife Monitoring and Mitigation Matrix that will trigger mitigation responses based upon monitoring information gathered through the PAPO.

In order to effectively manage fund expenditures as well as support and advise the controlling Monitoring and Mitigation Board of Directors, the PAPO was established. It is anticipated that this office will be necessary for at least 25 years or until about 2033. This interagency team is composed of specialists from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Wyoming state agencies from the Departments of Environmental Quality-Air Quality Division (WDEQ-AQD), Game and Fish (WGFD), and Agriculture (WDA). The Monitoring and Mitigation Board of Directors is comprised of the BLM State Director, the State Directors for WDEQ, WGFD, and WDA, and a gubernatorial appointed Sublette County Commissioner.

PAPO Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

GOAL 1 – Wildlife

Actively pursue projects to benefit wildlife on a landscape scale within the Upper Green River Basin with a focus on those populations impacted by development on the Pinedale Anticline Project Area (PAPA).

Objective 1

Maintain, conserve, restore and/or enhance habitat and habitat function both onsite and offsite for impacted species.

Strategy 1

Identify high priority areas for mitigation.

Strategy 2

Work with partners and pursue/solicit habitat projects that will benefit impacted species.

Strategy 3

Maintain rangelands according to Standards for Healthy Rangelands & Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for the Public Lands associated with PAPA development area and mitigation sites.

GOAL 2 – Wildlife

Evaluate and respond to population trends to benefit wildlife species impacted by development on the PAPA.

Objective 1

Obtain, collect, store and distribute monitoring information to support adaptive management and analyze mitigation projects.

Strategy 1

In cooperation with Wyoming Game and Fish Department and BLM wildlife biologists, monitor wildlife trends according to the Wildlife Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (WMMP) and Avian Management Plan (AMP).

Strategy 2

Annually update the WMMP and AMP as necessary utilizing PAPO Wildlife Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives.

Objective 2

Use a proactive approach to minimize undesired trends, such as declines in wildlife populations, by implementing Best Management Practices outlined in the ROD if declines are documented, but before thresholds are reached.

Objective 3

Coordinate with other cooperators to establish a program to effectively monitor the long-term effects of funded projects.

GOAL 3 – Wildlife

Develop and utilize a measurement system for evaluating on and off-site habitat suitability/effectiveness and function for key species impacted on the PAPA with habitat suitability/effectiveness as the baseline for the effort.

Objective 1

Utilize the measurement system for evaluating habitat function on-site and for monitoring mitigation success both on and off site.

Objective 2

Utilize the measurement system for identifying habitat enhancement projects on and off site.

GOAL 4 – Air Quality

Participate in activities and public outreach helping safeguard a healthy environment as energy production in the PAPA continues.

Objective 1

Ensure compliance with State of Wyoming Air Quality Permits.

Strategy 1

Employ a WDEQ-AQD inspector/engineer to ensure compliance with air quality permits.

Objective 2

Establish and/or operate monitors recommended by the “Network Assessment-2008” for pollutants of interest from the PAPA.

Strategy 1

Determine efficient and effective placement of air quality and meteorological monitoring stations.

Strategy 2

Future air quality modeling in the PAPA will utilize monitoring data collected by new and existing local monitors.

Objective 3

Collect, analyze and dispense information in an effort to encourage responsible development and healthy ambient air.

Strategy 1

Employ a WDEQ-AQD Data Analyst for 2 years to assist with the analysis and reporting of ambient monitoring data in the PAPA.

Strategy 2

Disseminate data by upgrading the WDEQ-AQD ambient air quality data management system.

Strategy 3

WDEQ-AQD will utilize best available scientific techniques and participate in information sharing endeavors.

GOAL 5 – Cultural

Protect and preserve significant cultural resources and reduce or eliminate threats to eligible and unevaluated sites from natural or human-caused impacts.

Objective 1

Promote stewardship, conservation and appreciation of cultural resources.

Strategy 1

The Lander Cut-Off of the Oregon-California National Historic Trail will be managed to protect the trail and increase public awareness through cooperative efforts with other stakeholders.

GOAL 6 – Paleontology

Protect significant fossils and known paleontological resources particularly in the Blue Rim area which has a high potential for producing vertebrate fossils such as turtle, crocodilians and small mammals.

Objective 1

The Blue Rim area will be managed to maintain site conditions and/or for research.

Strategy 1

Construction monitoring, project relocation, data recovery, or other mitigation will be required to ensure that significant paleontological resources are avoided or recovered during construction.

Strategy 2

Block inventories will be encouraged in the Blue Rim area.

GOAL 7 – Reclamation Monitoring

All surface disturbances will be reclaimed to meet BLM standards as described in Surface Operating Standards and Guidelines for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development – The Gold Book and specific criteria identified in the PAPA ROD Appendix C (Reclamation Plan).

Objective 1

Interim reclamation will maintain biologically active topsoil, control erosion, and restore habitat, visual, and forage function on those portions of disturbed areas not needed for production operations or until final reclamation is initiated. Reclamation will be initiated to meet ROD required criteria standards on well pads and access roads not needed for production operations when the last well on the pad is drilled and completed or when no forecasted drilling or completion activity is expected within two years, but additional well development activity is planned on the pad.

Strategy 1

Disturbed areas not needed for long-term production operations or vehicle travel will be recontoured, protected from erosion, and revegetated with a self-sustaining, diverse, native (or otherwise approved) plant community sufficient to minimize visual impacts, provide habitat and forage, stabilize soils, and impede the invasion of noxious weeds.

Strategy 2

Annually monitor a minimum of 5% of the well pad locations and Rights-of-Way (ROW).

Strategy 3

Measure revegetation using both Qualitative and Quantitative techniques found in “*PAPA Monitoring for Reclamation Success.*”

Strategy 4

Site stabilization and seeding will occur during the first appropriate growing season as determined by the authorized officer.

Strategy 5

Use Adaptive Management when monitoring indicates a change in protocol is necessary.

Objective 2

Final reclamation will achieve habitat, forage, and hydrologic functions comparable to predisturbance functions.

Strategy 1

Restoration of the original landform or creating a landform that approximates and blends in with the surrounding landform.

Strategy 2

Restoration of the natural vegetative community, hydrologic systems, visual resources, agricultural values and wildlife habitats.

Objective 3

Maintain open communications with cooperators and industry.

Strategy1

PAPO will make available information that can aid in revegetation success of disturbed areas to restore sustainable habitat and multiple use.