What we are doing

• EIS analyzing 65 existing leases issued since 1993 on the White River National Forest.

• Final result will be a Record of Decision
  – Keep leases as they currently are
  – Modify existing leases
  – Cancel existing leases
What this EIS does not address

- **Future leasing.**
  - White River National Forest is currently revising their Oil and Gas EIS. Final expected later in 2014.

- **Drilling/development proposals.**
  - Forest Service would take lead on drilling proposals, including specific routes, locations
  - Forest Service waiting for results of BLM EIS
What EIS does not address

• Policy decisions outside scope of this EIS

• Lease suspensions

• Leases issued before 1993
Why is BLM conducting the EIS?

• Forest Service determines which of its lands are available for oil and gas leasing (BLM manages the leases)

• Forest Service 1993 EIS made lands available
  – Decisions carried forward in 2002 Forest Plan
  – Most leased ‘95-2004

• 2007 IBLA decision
  – BLM did not formally adopt Forest Service analysis or do our own
Issues already identified

• Changes in oil and gas since 1993
  – More development
  – Different technologies
• New air quality analyses available
• Endangered species updates since 1993
• Roadless Rule new since 1993
Common questions

• How important are public comments?

• How important are local comments?

• Do you have the authority to cancel leases?

• Why not just cancel the leases?
Why were lease suspensions approved?

• Ursa Resources 7 leases
  – Development proposal in 2009
  – Unitization request in 2012

• SG Interests 18 leases
  – Unitization request in 2011
  – Development proposals in 2012
Why was the area leased (particularly Thompson Divide)?

- Forest Service decision made the lands available
- Industry nomination
- Forest Service concurred with offering the lands for lease
- Interest in the area for many decades
Gas Occurrence Potential in the Colorado River Valley Field Office

- **High**
- **Medium**
- **Low**
- **No known**

Map showing the distribution of gas occurrence potential in the Colorado River Valley Field Office.
• First well in Thompson Divide 1947
• 34 wells have been drilled since 1947
• 31 found gas, 16 produced gas
• Only 1 currently producing
How will BLM incorporate the new Forest Service EIS decisions?

- BLM EIS will use as much of the Forest Service analysis as possible

- BLM could include an alternative for the 65 current leases that mirrors the Forest Service decision for future leases
Are any of the 65 leases producing?
Scoping period

- Ran from April 2 publication of NOI to May 16
- Public meetings:
  - Glenwood Springs
    - 4/15/2014
    - 151
  - Carbondale
    - 4/16/2014
    - 282
  - Aspen
    - 4/17/2014
    - 95
  - Debeque
    - 5/1/2014
    - 240
    - Total: 768
- Comments:
  - Approximately 200+ hand-written comment forms or letters
  - Approximately 45+ typed hard copy letters or forms
  - Approximately 32,700+ form emails
  - Approximately 170+ unique emails
  - Approximately 550 minutes of transcribed (to MS Word and .txt files) verbal comments and questions/answers from scoping meetings
Cooperating Agencies

• Building a preliminary list of invitees based on known issues and those heard in scoping

• Preliminarily to include:
  – County governments: e.g. Garfield, Mesa, Rio Blanco, Pitkin
  – Municipalities: e.g. DeBeque, Glenwood Springs, Meeker, New Castle, Parachute, Rangely, Silt, Carbondale, Collbran, Grand Junction
  – State agencies: e.g. DNR, CPW
  – Federal agencies: e.g. EPA, FWS, USFS (WRNF)
  – Tribes: e.g. Ute Indian Tribe, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Northern Ute Indian Tribe

• Intend to invite agencies in the next few weeks, will sing MOUs with all. Intend to specify specific expertise sought or area of jurisdiction.
## Draft Schedule and Next Steps

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<th>Milestone Tasks for EIS</th>
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<td>- Scoping Report</td>
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Requested RAC Involvement

- Priority issues RAC advises BLM to address in this EIS
- Key information RAC advises BLM to consider
- RAC-suggested alternative(s)
- Advice on any fatal flaws to BLM approach