



File Code: 1950; 2820
Date: September 4, 2015

Dear Interested Party:

I plan to approve the Surface Use Plans of Operations (SUPOs) analyzed in Dual Operator Proposal: Development of 25 Federal Natural Gas Wells and Associated Infrastructure on 5 Multi-well Pads Environmental Assessment (EA) on National Forest System (NFS) lands for existing federal oil and gas leases on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG). SUPOs are a portion of the Applications for Permit to Drill (APDs) submitted to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the GMUG related specifically to surface operations, which in this case occur to some extent on NFS lands, for the development of leases. Specifically, I have decided to approve SUPOs for up to 16 wells on NFS lands on existing leases in the following locations: Aspen Leaf, 11-90-9, and Henderson and further to approve infrastructure and access needs for to Allen (T12S, R90W, NENE Section 7, 6th PM) and Spadafora (T11S, R90W, NENW Section 20, 6th PM) private locations on NFS lands as described in the EA. My draft decision, in accord with the EA analysis, is summarized as follows:

- Approve the SUPOs for APDS identified as Federal 11-90-9-3 (“11-90-9” location), and Federal 11-90-8-H3 (Henderson location) located in T11S, R90W, SWSW Section 8 and SWNW Section 9, 6th PM already submitted and deemed complete and associated gas gathering lines, subsurface water lines, temporary surface poly pipelines and access.
- Approve an additional SUPO (identified as Federal 11-90-15-2) on existing Aspen Leaf location in T11S, R90W, Section 15, SESW, 6th PM and possible changes to existing pad as considered in the EA. As the Aspen Leaf location already exists, my decision does not authorize this location; however any anticipated adjustments to this location that have been considered in the EA would be approved.
- Approve an additional four SUPOs for APDs (submitted April, 2015) which BLM has deemed complete (August 27, 2015) identified as 11-90-15-3 and 11-90-15-4 on the Aspen Leaf location and identified as 11-90-9-4 and 11-90-9-5 on the 11-90-9 location. The same Forest Service Conditions of Approval will be applied as described in the EA for the specific locations.
- Require the inclusion of all design features in SUPOs by operator and found in Appendix B of the EA and require adherence with Conditions of Approval as defined in Appendix C of the EA as specific to each APD.
- Approve, after submittal of APDs for review, up to an additional four SUPOs for wells on Aspen Leaf location, up to two additional SUPOs for wells on 11-90-9 location, and up to three additional SUPOs for wells on Henderson, as long as consistent with the EA. Conditions of Approval will match EA without additional NEPA analysis.



- Approve issuance of Special Use Authorizations (SUAs) for infrastructure and access for APD elements on NFS lands for any of the locations identified in the EA that are not authorized under the Mineral Leasing Act such as produced waterlines.
- Require operators to obtain Road Use Permits (RUPs) for use of National Forest System Roads (NFSRs) from the Paonia District Ranger used in conjunction with the pads described in the EA.

My decision will allow the BLM Field Office Manager, who is the responsible official for the BLM, to approve or deny APDs on NFS lands associated with the above referenced locations.

The EA and the full text of my decision are available on the GMUG's website listed below. If you require these documents in another format, please contact us.

OBJECTION OPPORTUNITIES

My proposed decision is subject to a predecisional objection in accordance with the provisions of 36 CFR §218 subparts A and B. Objections must be filed with the reviewing officer in writing. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted and timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities for comment (i.e., after August 4, 2015).

At a minimum, an objection must include the following: (1) Objector's name and address as defined in 36 CFR § 218.2, with a telephone number, if available; (2) Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection); (3) When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector as defined in 36 CFR § 218.2. Verification of the identity of the lead objector must be provided upon request or the reviewing officer will designate a lead objector as provided in 36 CFR § 218.5(d); (4) The name of the proposed project, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name(s) of the national forest(s) and/or ranger district(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented; (5) A description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and (6) A statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunities for comment. Incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided for at 36 CFR § 218.8(b).

Objections, including attachments, must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service) with the reviewing officer (see 36 CFR § 218.3 and §218.8) within 45 days of the publication of the legal notice in the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel*. The publication date of the legal notice in the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel* is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. Evidence of timely filing is described in 36 CFR § 218.9. Please submit objections to the Reviewing Officer at:

Mail or hand delivery:

Maribeth Gustafson, Reviewing Officer
U.S.D.A. Forest Service
Rocky Mountain Region
740 Simms Street
Golden, CO 80401

Fax: **303-275-5134** to the attention of Objections

The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objections are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or MSWord (.doc). In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

Email: **r02admin-review@fs.fed.us**

CONTACT

EA and Draft Decision may be downloaded from the internet at the following location:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=46535>

For additional information concerning this proposed decision contact: Levi Broyles, District Ranger, Paonia Ranger District, PO Box 1030, 403 N. Rio Grande Ave, Paonia, CO 81428, or lbroyles@fs.fed.us.

Thank you for your continued interest in management of the GMUG.

Sincerely,



SCOTT G. ARMENTROUT
Forest Supervisor

cc: Niccole Mortenson, Levi Broyles