

5.0 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are those effects on the environment that result from the incremental impacts of the proposed Project when added to the effects of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal, Tribal, state, or local) or private entity undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time (40 CFR 1508.7). This cumulative impact analysis has been prepared according to the requirements of NEPA and guidance from the CEQ, *Considering Cumulative Effects under the National Environmental Policy Act* (CEQ 1997). The BLM NEPA Handbook (BLM 2008) recommends that cumulative impact analysis should be focused on those issues identified during scoping that are of major importance, in this case the cumulative impacts of new pipeline construction and operation.

In a cumulative impact analysis, it is typical to restrict the discussion to impacts that have first been identified for the Proposed Action (i.e., the Project), without which cumulative impacts with other actions could not occur. That is, if no impacts would occur from the proposed Project, there would be no cumulative impacts. The overall cumulative impact study area for the majority of resources consists of the existing utility corridor that the proposed Project would traverse throughout its length in Colorado and Wyoming. The cumulative impact area for socioeconomic factors such as transportation, housing, and infrastructure is extended to include surrounding communities. **Table 5-1** summarizes the cumulative impact study areas by resource and provides rationale for the basis of each.

Table 5-1 Cumulative Impact Study Areas for the Overland Pass Pipeline Piceance Basin Lateral EA

Resource	Study Area for Cumulative Impacts Analysis	Study Area Rationale/Interrelated Projects
Soils	Immediate pipeline corridor	Impacts would be limited to direct surface disturbance. The site-specific management of vegetation and noxious weeds and invasive species affect erosion and sedimentation rates within the project area. Land uses, revegetation success, and the potential introduction and/or spread of noxious weeds and invasive species are comparable throughout this area.
Water Resources	The entirety of each hydrographic basin that intersects with the proposed route based on HUC 12 classifications.	Ongoing oil and gas activity within the immediate region may adversely impact hydrologic watersheds including water quantity and quality, wetlands, floodplains, and Waters of the U.S.
Vegetation	Immediate pipeline corridor	Impacts would be limited to direct surface disturbance. The site-specific management of vegetation, noxious weeds and invasive species affects erosion and sedimentation rates within the Project area. Land uses, revegetation success, and the potential introduction and/or spread of noxious weeds and invasive species are comparable throughout this area.

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Resource	Study Area for Cumulative Impacts Analysis	Study Area Rationale/Interrelated Projects
Wildlife and Fisheries Resources	Immediate pipeline corridor and the entire BLM White River and Little Snake Field Office Management Areas and portions of the Rawlins Field Office Resource Management Area including Sweetwater and Carbon counties in Wyoming.	Includes most of the northwest Colorado and south-central Wyoming greater sage-grouse and big game populations and parts of the Yampa and White rivers with designated critical habitat for the Colorado River endangered fish. This cumulative study area encompasses areas included within the USFWS Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program for which surface water depletions above a certain threshold are compensated for by payments to USFWS.
Range Resources	The entirety of each BLM grazing allotment crossed by the pipeline corridor.	Grazing allotments define the type and level of livestock use, and use boundaries by individual permittees.
Cultural Resources	Immediate pipeline corridor	<p>Archaeological sites are generally located in discrete areas and effects on these sites are a consequence of implementing surface disturbance activities associated with a development proposal.</p> <p>The location of cultural resources is site-specific, and effects are a consequence of implementing a development proposal. However, traditional use areas, religious sites, and certain archaeological sites have to be considered in an expanded landscape context. This RFD area encompasses major regional landscape and cultural features (Yampa and White river corridors) as well as intensive oil and gas development.</p>
Socioeconomics	Rio Blanco, Moffat, Garfield, and Routt counties in Colorado; Sweetwater and Carbon counties in Wyoming.	These counties provide goods and services as well as house a majority of the oil and gas development workers in nearby areas of Colorado and Wyoming. Additionally, fiscal benefits and costs would be felt at the county and municipal levels.

Based on the issues identified in Chapter 1.0, the primary attributes of the proposed Project that could result in cumulative impacts are summarized below.

Surface Disturbance and Operation Requirements

The proposed Project would primarily run parallel to the existing Entrega / WIC Piceance pipeline corridor. The pipeline would generally be constructed within 50 feet of the existing pipeline centerline (25-foot off-set from the edge of the existing ROW), where applicable, but may be increased or decreased depending on the

site-specific circumstances as required. Of the 1,599 acres total necessary for construction of the proposed ROW and J. L. Davis lateral (excluding the contractor/pipe yard and new or widened access roads), approximately 467 acres were previously disturbed during construction of the existing WIC Piceance and Entrega pipelines, resulting in 1,132 acres of new disturbance associated with the Proposed Action.

In addition to an approximately 2,000-foot-long new access road to be built on fee land at the request of the landowner on the south side of the White River crossing, approximately 5.6 acres of additional disturbance associated with the temporary widening of existing access roads is anticipated. It is estimated that the additional disturbance associated with the construction of the new access road would result in less than 1 acre of additional disturbance.

In total, 1,138 acres of new disturbance would be associated with the construction of the proposed Project for the pipeline ROW and access roads. Should the GRP Land Re-route Alternative be constructed, this total would be 1,150 acres of new disturbance. Other pipelines (or other linear utilities) constructed in the future may have to avoid the same GRP easement and if planned along the same stretch would create additional surface disturbance. Additional linear projects would most likely have to be placed on the outside, or west of, the re-route. Presumably, each subsequent project construction right-of-way would impact a larger and larger area as the radius of the re-route corridor increased compared to the Proposed Action area.

All acreage would be reclaimed; however, 467 acres of this total new disturbance would be part of the permanent 50-foot-wide ROW that would be maintained for operations after construction. Low-growing grasses, shrubs (e.g., bitterbrush), and forbs would be allowed. Trees over the pipeline may be removed for aerial inspections.

Reclamation, Revegetation, and Spread of Invasive and Non-native Species

Construction of the proposed Project would temporarily remove cover and disturb soils in areas recently disturbed by the WIC Piceance and Entrega pipelines. Reclamation efforts from these lines have been difficult and concerns regarding successful reclamation in the area have been expressed during scoping. Issues of particular concern include control of noxious weed populations, timing and seed mixes used during reseeding/revegetation efforts, and impacts from winter construction.

Range Resources

Impacts from the construction of multiple pipelines on ranchers and BLM permittees include soil erosion; the spread of noxious and invasive weeds in disturbed areas; damage to land and property during construction (e.g., fencing, cattle guards); temporary and permanent loss of land due to construction, widening, and grading of access roads; impacts to water quality from run-off of new roads; and impacts to and loss of livestock due to interactions with construction traffic and broken fences and gates.

Major River Crossings

The Proposed Action would cross the White and Yampa rivers, Piceance Creek, and the Little Snake River. OPPC proposes an HDD construction method at the White, Yampa, and Little Snake river crossings. They propose to utilize the open cut method at the Piceance Creek crossing due to steep slopes that would preclude them from using HDD.

Socioeconomics

Increased oil and gas production in the vicinity of the proposed Project has had a significant impact on the housing supply, emergency services, infrastructure, and transportation network of the local communities. Of particular concern is the heavy equipment and increased traffic on roads not designed for such heavy use, such as County Road 5 in Rio Blanco County, Colorado, and other minor public roads.

5.1 Interrelated Projects

This analysis focuses on the cumulative impacts of the proposed Project and other actions in the vicinity of the proposed Project. Interrelated projects are defined for this EA as those activities that could interact with the proposed Project in a manner that would result in cumulative impacts. While a number of different types of activities may occur in the vicinity of the proposed Project, especially during construction, it is unlikely that many of these would interact in a cumulative manner. Projects and activities included in this analysis are generally those located within the area directly affected by construction of the proposed Project. Most effects of more distant projects are not assessed, because their impact generally would be localized and not contribute significantly to cumulative impact in the proposed Project area. For ease of presentation, interrelated projects that may interact with the proposed Project have been grouped as past and present projects or reasonably foreseeable future actions. The types of potentially interrelated projects are described below, but quantitative information relevant to the potential physical, biological, and socioeconomic impacts of each project are not available.

5.1.1 Past and Present Projects

The entire area surrounding the proposed Project has experienced a significant increase in oil and gas development activity in the past decade. For example, drilling activity in the WRFO Planning Area has tripled since 1997, and the majority of that has occurred in the past 4 years (BLM 2008b). The Resource Management Areas for the other two BLM Field Offices in the proposed Project vicinity have experienced similar increases in the level of oil and gas activity.

The two most recently constructed pipelines in the utility corridor paralleled by the proposed Project, the Entrega and WIC Piceance pipelines, have been constructed within the past 3 years. As such, there would not be sufficient time for full reclamation and revegetation to have taken place by the time OPPC proposes to construct its pipeline. Cumulative impacts would occur due to soil erosion and the spread of noxious and invasive weeds. Impacts to surface water quality also may be expected due to increased runoff from the lack of ground cover.

The Entrega and WIC Piceance pipelines each maintain a 50-foot-wide permanent ROW for operations along the length of their respective routes. The portion of the Entrega pipeline generally collocated with the proposed Project is approximately 142 miles from the Greasewood Hub in Colorado to Wamsutter, Wyoming, for a permanent ROW of approximately 860 acres. The WIC Piceance pipeline from southwest of Meeker, Colorado, to Wamsutter, Wyoming, is approximately 136 miles for a permanent ROW of approximately 825 acres. The proposed Project parallels an existing pipeline corridor containing anywhere from one to six other pipelines within the corridor. Assuming each of these pipelines maintains a 50-foot-wide permanent ROW similar to Entrega and WIC Piceance, it is estimated that the existing permanent disturbance from previous pipeline projects is at least 2,750 acres. The proposed Project would add an incremental 467 acres of new disturbance to this permanently maintained corridor for a total of approximately 3,217 acres of maintained pipeline ROW along this approximately 150 miles of corridor. This represents an estimate of the total surface disturbance along the pipeline corridor only. Since detailed resource-specific data is not available for most of these projects within the corridor, any analysis to that level of detail would not be reliable.

All disturbances associated with these previous projects have been or are being reclaimed and the 50-foot-wide permanent ROWs for each are maintained for pipeline inspection and maintenance with low-growing grasses, shrubs, and forbs. It is anticipated that the proposed Project disturbance also would be reclaimed and maintained in a similar manner.

5.1.2 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

5.1.2.1 Oil and Gas Development

Oil and gas exploration and development began in the early 1900s in the areas surrounding the proposed Project. It is projected that a combined total of approximately 26,815 new wells would be drilled over the next 20 years in the areas encompassing the three BLM Field Offices: 17,168 in the WRFO Planning Area; 3,031 in the LSFO Planning Area; and approximately 6,616 in the RFO Planning Area in the vicinity of the proposed Project. Approximately 60 percent of these wells (all in the WRFO Planning Area) would be constructed on multiple well pads with an assumed average of 8 wells per pad. The combined total temporary surface disturbance for future well development (including construction of well pads, roads, gas plants, pipelines, and other necessary infrastructure) has been estimated at 119,045 acres for the three Field Office Planning Areas combined (26,465 acres in the WRFO Planning Area; 49,216 acres in the LSFO Planning Area; and 43,364 acres in the portion of the RFO Planning Area near the proposed Project). Details regarding estimated oil and gas development for each Field Office in the project area are provided in the following section.

White River Field Office

Although development of oil and CBM is expected to continue in the WRFO Planning Area, these wells are only expected to account for 5 percent of all future drilling activity. The more intense exploration and development of natural gas is expected to account for 95 percent of all future drilling activity in the WRFO Planning Area through multiple development projects, many of which are currently proposed. The Geologic and Engineering Team in the BLM White River Field Office projects a potential need for up to 2,146 multiple well pads (averaging 8 wells per pad) within the next 20 years to fully develop the natural gas resource while minimizing impacts to other resources. Approximately 80 percent of these multiple well pads would be on federal lands. This would require an estimated cumulative total of 26,465 acres of associated surface disturbance including construction of well pads, roads, gas plants, pipelines, and other infrastructure (BLM 2008b).

Little Snake Field Office

It is anticipated that approximately 3,031 new wells would be drilled in the LSFO Planning Area over the next 20 years. This development would require a total temporary disturbance of 49,216 acres, including 36,372 acres of disturbance for new oil and gas roads. Total long-term surface disturbance for future well developments has been estimated at 23,030 acres (BLM 2007b).

The most significant currently proposed development project in the LSFO Planning Area is the Hiawatha Regional Energy Development Project. Questar Exploration and Production Company and Wexpro Company propose to drill exploratory and development wells on their leases within existing natural gas fields in southern Sweetwater County, Wyoming, and northern Moffat County, Colorado. The project area of approximately 157,335 acres is generally located about 55 miles south of Rock Springs and about 35 miles west of the proposed Project. The proponents propose to drill up to 4,207 new wells, mainly within the boundaries of the existing Hiawatha, Canyon Creek, and Trail units of southwest Wyoming and northwest Colorado. It is estimated that about 66 percent of the proposed wells would be in Wyoming with the remainder in Colorado. The total number of wells ultimately drilled would depend on production success, drainage area, technology, economics, commodity prices, and environmental restrictions. Up to 14,000 acres could be affected. All proposed wells are anticipated to be drilled during an approximately 20- to 30-year period after project approval (BLM 2006).

Rawlins Field Office

Intense oil and natural gas exploration and development are expected on BLM-administered lands within the Washakie Basin and Great Divide Basin in southern Wyoming with multiple development projects currently proposed. The Proposed Plan for the BLM Rawlins Field Office RMP and Final EIS (BLM 2008a) estimates

that approximately 8,822 new wells (3,711 federal) would be drilled over the next 20 years, requiring 3,158 miles of new oil and gas roads. Temporary surface disturbance from development would total 57,505 acres, and total long-term surface disturbance for future well developments has been estimated at 15,472 acres. While this projected activity would take place in a number of locations across the planning area, 75 percent is anticipated to occur in the vicinity of the northern end of the proposed pipeline within the eastern portion of the Washakie Basin and western portion of the Great Divide Basin in Wyoming (BLM 2008a).

5.1.2.2 Pipeline Development

While many pipeline projects have been built and/or are being considered for the west to east pipeline corridor along the I-80 corridor at the northern end of the project, the proposed Project would not interact directly with the surface disturbance of the majority of these projects. The primary exception would be at the very north end where the proposed Project ties into the existing Overland Pass Pipeline at the Echo Springs Meter Station. However, potential competition for limited housing could occur among the workforces associated with these other pipeline projects.

Although there are many oil and gas development projects on the southern end of the proposed Project area, there are two currently proposed pipeline projects that potentially could contribute to the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed Project:

- The Questar White River Hub Project would run from the Greasewood Hub (in T2S, R96W, S8) west to the Rockies Express Hub (in T1S, R97W, S33). This project would consist of 6.5 miles of 30-inch pipeline, two 24-inch laterals associated with interconnects, a 2.3-acre meter station, and a new 2.3-acre compressor station near the Greasewood Hub. Construction is anticipated to begin in late summer or early autumn 2008.
- The Enterprise Multiple Pipeline project would consist of three buried pipelines in the Meeker/Greasewood vicinity for a total of approximately 17 miles. These lines would consist of a 24-inch pipeline, a 36-inch pipeline, and a 12-inch water line. The project would impact a total of approximately 216 acres. The anticipated construction start date is unknown at this time.
- The Pathfinder Pipeline - Meeker Segment project would be a 126-mile, 36-inch diameter natural gas pipeline from Meeker, Colorado to Wamsutter and Echo Springs, Wyoming. This portion of the project is expected to be completed in late 2010. The Meeker Segment of the Pathfinder Project as currently planned would share the same construction corridor as a portion of the Proposed Action between approximate MP 40 and MP 80. Discussions are on-going with the Applicant for the Pathfinder Project regarding the possibility of co-locating more of the Pathfinder route with the Proposed Action (i.e., between approximate MP 40 and MP 140). Potential impacts are unknown at this time given the uncertainty regarding the alignment. Two other segments of this pipeline would continue further north and east out of the proposed Project area.

Only the Pathfinder pipeline would potentially interact directly with the ROW surface disturbance area of the proposed Project. The other two pipelines would not interact directly with the proposed Project except where they may intersect in the vicinity of the Greasewood Hub.

5.1.2.3 Gas Processing Facilities

Williams Midstream/Williams Field Services Company, LLC (Williams) has filed an application to construct the proposed Willow Creek Cryogenic Treatment Facility. The proposed facility would involve construction and operation of natural gas, NGL, and water supply facilities; a natural gas processing plant; and related facilities in Rio Blanco County, Colorado. The plant is located at the southern terminus of the proposed Project approximately 22 miles southwest of Meeker, Colorado, on a 77.5 acre parcel of land owned by Williams. The design of the facility would facilitate the processing and transport of up to 450 million standard cubic feet per day (mmscfd) of natural gas from production areas in northwestern and western Colorado to interstate and

intrastate pipeline facilities. It is anticipated to be the primary source of NGL for the proposed Project. Construction of this facility would result in approximately 45 acres of surface disturbance and an average construction workforce of 190 employees from May 2008 through June 2009. The peak maximum workforce would be 250 to 280 people from October 2008 through March 2009. The permanent workforce once in operation is anticipated to be approximately 21 people. Although work at a number of gas processing facilities is proposed along the proposed Project route, construction of the Williams facility would have the greatest impact on the resources associated with the proposed Project (Rio Blanco County Commissioners 2008).

5.2 Impacts by Resource

Cumulative impacts are analyzed only for those resources that would have potential effects. No cumulative impacts are expected for the other resources addressed in this EA. The total area of cumulative surface disturbance maintained as permanent ROWs would be 3,217 acres. This number is comprised of 467 acres of new disturbance from the proposed Project and 2,750 acres of disturbance from the interrelated projects (past, present, and future). The GRP Land Re-route Alternative would add 7.6 acres of permanent ROW to this, making the cumulative surface disturbance maintained as permanent ROW 3,225 acres; 475 acres of which would be from the proposed Project. In August 2008 the Mayberry fire northwest of Craig, Colorado disturbed the surface of 25,385 acres in the vicinity of the project. This disturbance is nearly 800 percent more than the cumulative surface disturbance of the proposed Project and interrelated projects.

5.2.1 Soils

Cumulative soil disturbance would occur along the existing utility corridor from the construction of past pipelines and the proposed Project. Restoration efforts from the two most recent pipeline projects are still ongoing. As a consequence, the potential for cumulative soil erosion where pipeline construction disturbance areas from one or more of these projects overlap (approximately 1,599 acres) is a concern. BMPs for soil management and protection would be applied across all ownerships for the proposed Project construction ROW. Revegetation mixtures would be applied that are appropriate to soil conditions and expected future uses (grazing, wildlife habitat). In addition, OPPC would coordinate with the adjacent pipeline companies to ensure adequate reclamation, stabilization, and weed control occurs along the pipeline corridor.

5.2.2 Water Resources and Fisheries

OPPC proposes to directionally drill the White River, Yampa River, and Little Snake River. Consequently, there would be no cumulative channel disturbance and sediment increases and resulting impacts to water quality and fisheries at these crossings. The proposed Project would follow the OPPC procedures and/or BLM stipulations for open cut crossings of Piceance Creek and smaller perennial streams and intermittently flowing waterbodies. In most cases, the site-specific channel restoration, bank stabilization, and erosion control measures would prevent cumulative habitat loss and sedimentation increases where the existing utility corridor crosses the same stream channel at the same location.

Water depletions for hydrostatic testing and construction procedures such as dust control, equipment washing, and HDD drilling would be short-term. All water used for hydrostatic testing (approximately 11 acre-feet total from multiple locations) would be temporary as it would be discharged back to the original withdrawal location. The 35 acre-feet removed for other construction procedures would be considered consumptive use; however, since this withdrawal would be temporary during construction only and no other significant withdrawals are currently proposed for these locations, no cumulative impacts would be anticipated.

Oil and gas development on tracts of land administered by the BLM WRFO, LSFO, and RFO could affect both surface waters and groundwater. Specific cumulative impacts on water resources, including water quality and quantity, due to future development in the vicinity of the proposed Project would depend on the characteristics of common surface water bodies and aquifers to which future projects might be linked. However, the proposed

Project would have minimal impacts on either the quality or quantity of local water resources (and thus fisheries also), so it is anticipated that cumulative impacts would be minimal.

5.2.3 Vegetation

Surface disturbing activities such as those associated with oil and gas development fragment vegetation communities and wildlife habitats. Of the total of 3,217 acres of cumulative impacts, the proposed Project would contribute approximately 15 percent. All of the projects included in the cumulative impact area include mitigation measures designed to increase the stabilization of disturbed sites following construction, minimize the potential for long-term erosion, and encourage the spread of native vegetation into disturbed areas, thereby minimizing the degree and duration of cumulative impacts on vegetation.

Invasive and noxious weed populations exist in many locations in western Colorado and southern Wyoming, and weeds could spread into areas disturbed by the proposed Project and interrelated projects. Applying invasive and noxious weed controls on federal lands during construction and operation, including such measures as pre-construction equipment cleaning, weed control on restored areas, and monitoring for and controlling weed invasions during later phases would help control the spread of these invasive and noxious weeds. Comparable programs also may occur on private lands, subject to landowner agreements. Such weed control measures would limit cumulative weed infestations. In order to evaluate the level of success of reclamation, post-construction monitoring reports would be conducted for the life of the Project. Additionally, OPPC would coordinate with the adjacent pipeline companies to ensure adequate reclamation, stabilization, and weed control occurs along the pipeline corridor.

5.2.4 Wildlife

The removal of woodland and shrubland habitats along the proposed pipeline construction ROW would result in a long-term habitat reduction, because the regeneration of woody species is slow in the proposed Project region. Operation of the proposed Project would incrementally add 50 feet to the width of habitat discontinuities within the existing utility corridor, which is at its widest of 300 feet where 6 pipelines currently exist. This may affect the movement of species dependent on these habitats and would cumulatively reduce carrying capacity for woodland- and shrubland-dependent species. However, location of the proposed Project within the existing utility corridor would reduce habitat fragmentation, and thus cumulative effects, when compared to construction along a greenfield route.

If the GRP Land Re-route Alternative is selected, there would be some additional habitat fragmentation and reduction in previously undisturbed areas (i.e. greenfields). It is likely that additional pipelines would be proposed in the future. Should the GRP Land Re-route Alternative be implemented, future pipelines would most likely follow this new route. If this occurs, it is expected that the disturbance associated with these pipelines would push closer towards the nearby greater sage-grouse lek site and potentially could reach the lek site. The lek accounts for approximately one tenth of the birds managed in population zone 3b of the Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan (CDOW 2008c). Additional disturbance to the lek site would have an adverse impact on male attendance at the lek and overall breeding success.

5.2.5 Range Resources

Potential impacts on ranchers and BLM permittees from the construction of multiple pipelines include soil erosion; the spread of noxious and invasive weeds in disturbed areas; damage to land and property during construction (fencing, cattle guards); temporary and permanent loss of land due to construction; impacts to water quality of run-off from new roads; and impacts to and loss of livestock due interactions with construction traffic and broken fences and gates. However, restoration and compensation for impacts in accordance with the terms of each lease agreement between the landowners and the leasees for each project in the cumulative impact area would prevent cumulative impacts to range resources from becoming significant.

5.2.6 Cultural Resources

Disturbance that has occurred or would occur on federal lands is subject to laws and regulations that protect cultural resources, especially those eligible for the NRHP. As directed by law, Class III inventories would be completed for any future proposed development on federal lands (including the entire proposed pipeline route and any of the interrelated projects), thereby decreasing potential impacts to historic properties. By avoiding or mitigating impacts to known historic properties prior to ground-disturbing activities associated with any future proposed development, the potential for incremental increases in cumulative impacts would be reduced. However, disturbance of unknown cultural resources during development activities by project proponents and some additional vandalism by outside parties as a result of increased access could result in cumulative impacts to cultural resources.

5.2.7 Socioeconomics

The proposed Project and other oil and gas development projects in western Colorado and southern Wyoming may be constructed in a similar timeframe. While detailed construction schedules are not available for all interrelated projects, it is likely that the workforces of several projects could overlap in a given area for a period of time. Such overlap would place demands on local infrastructure such as temporary housing and other services. The potential for the maximum cumulative workforce would likely occur in the vicinity of Meeker and Craig, Colorado, and in Rawlins, Wyoming. Based on current high levels of oil and gas activity in this region, it is expected that there may be a shortage of temporary housing for non-local workers, resulting in longer employee commutes, or the requirement for contractors to obtain more temporary housing in the vicinity of the pipeline spreads. There also may be increased demands on local emergency services, based on the large number of projects underway at the same time, and the long distances to be traveled for emergency response. The construction workforces for projects occurring during the same timeframe would contribute to short-term increases in local sales tax revenues, and the constructed facilities would contribute to long-term increases in the property tax base.

Cumulative traffic impacts are expected where multiple projects are being constructed simultaneously, such as along U.S. 13 through Colorado and into Wyoming as well as on County Road 5 in Rio Blanco County, Colorado. The Williams Willow Creek Plant is located on County Road 5 in Rio Blanco County, Colorado, and construction would occur during the same timeframe as construction of the proposed OPPC pipeline. Cumulative impacts to these roads would be short-term as pipeline spreads move away from congested areas. OPPC would follow transportation plans to manage construction vehicles on secondary and improved access roads. Equipment turning onto and off state highways and access roads may require flagmen and other controls to limit the risk of accidents on public roads. OPPC and interrelated projects would be required to obtain permits for use of county roads, which would define weight limits and maintenance standards. The BLM would require minimum standards be met for maintenance of existing BLM roads.

While overlaps in the construction schedules of the OPPC and Williams projects could occur, total construction activity in Rio Blanco County would be similar to what has occurred over the past 3 to 5 years. Thus, short-term increases in cumulative impacts are not anticipated. Few long-term employees would be needed to operate the new oil and gas wells, pipelines, or gas plants; and therefore, no long-term cumulative impacts to employment, demands on local services, and transportation are expected.