

Draft
**Resource Management Plan Amendment
and Environmental Impact Statement**
White River Field Office Oil and Gas Development

Lead Agency: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management

Type of Action: Administrative

Jurisdiction: Portions of Rio Blanco, Garfield, and Moffat Counties, Colorado

Abstract: This Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement (RMPA/EIS) for Oil and Gas Development describes and analyzes alternatives for the planning and management of public lands and resources administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), White River Field Office (WRFO).

Four alternatives for the RMPA are considered in this Draft RMPA/EIS. Alternative A is a continuation of current management goals, objectives, and direction specified in the 1997 White River RMP; however, the analysis updates the 20-year development projection from the 1997 White River RMP to reflect the 2007 Reasonable Foreseeable Development (RFD) scenario. Resources and resource programs analyzed development projection of up to 550 multiple well pads with an associated long-term disturbance of 6,600 acres. Alternative B evaluates limiting the duration and overall extent of development activities, through a managed development approach, in order to maintain existing resource conditions throughout all phases of development. The BLM would apply additional management actions to further protect the environment for these resources. Implementation of Alternative B could result in up to 1,100 well pads. Associated surface disturbance resulting from this level of development would total 13,200 acres. Alternative C emphasizes short-term use of the environment, also with a managed development approach emphasizing the maintenance and enhancement of long-term community function and ecological integrity. This alternative projects development of up to 1,800 well pads with an associated surface disturbance totaling 21,600 acres. The management focus of Alternative D is the development of oil and gas resources, with an emphasis on the production of oil and gas resources under the environmental protection for other resources afforded by applicable laws, regulations, and BLM policy. Implementation of Alternative D is assumed to result in up to 2,556 new well pads with an associated surface disturbance of approximately 30,700 acres. The preferred alternative (Alternative C) is not a final agency decision; it is an indication of the agency's preliminary preference because it reflects the best combination of decisions to achieve BLM goals and policies, meets the purpose and need, addresses the key planning issues, and considers the recommendations of cooperating agencies and BLM specialists.

When completed, the RMPA will provide a set of comprehensive, long-range decisions for: (1) managing resources throughout the Planning Area and (2) identifying allowable uses on the public land surface and federal mineral estate administered by the BLM. Comments are accepted for 90 days following the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes the Notice of Availability for this Draft RMPA/EIS in the Federal Register. Comments should be submitted electronically to Colorado_WROGEIS@blm.gov

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