



White River RMP Oil and Gas Development Amendment Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Plan Amendment?

A Resource Management Plan is the over-arching land use plan that guides specific BLM decisions on the ground. RMPs are typically in place for two decades, but they are not static documents. During their approximate 20-year span, the BLM can amend these plans as needed to address specific areas, such as oil and gas development in this case. The BLM conducts complete revisions of RMPs about every 20 years.

Why was this plan amendment undertaken?

The White River Field Office is conducting this RMP Amendment to address changes in oil and gas activity in the Piceance Basin of northwestern Colorado from what was addressed in the current RMP, completed in 1997. The Proposed RMP Amendment analyzes impacts associated with an increased level of development, a shift in the primary area of development from south of Rangely to the Piceance Basin, and a change from single well pads to multi-well pads. The Proposed RMP Amendment outlines a number of progressive mitigation measures to reduce impacts of increased oil and gas production across 1.7 million acres of leasable federal minerals in Rio Blanco County, southern Moffat County, and a small part of northern Garfield County.

How many wells are authorized under this Proposed Plan Amendment?

The Proposed RMP Amendment does not authorize any oil and gas development, including wells. Oil and gas development is authorized through separate, site-specific plans that follow the guidance found in the RMP.

The Proposed RMP Amendment analyzed the impacts associated with the potential development of 15,040 oil and gas wells drilled on 1,100 well pads over the next 20 years. To reach that level of development, an average of 750 wells would need to be drilled each year for 20 years. Currently the field office averages less than 200 wells permitted each year.

Are the decisions in this Proposed Plan Amendment final?

Proposed decisions may change based on the results of the 30-day public protest period and 60-day Governor's consistency review that follow the release of this Proposed RMP Amendment. A final Record of Decision is anticipated later this year. Information about the protest period is available at <http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/wrfo.html>.