



Price Field Office  
125 S. 600 W.  
Price, Utah 84501  
(435) 636.3600

February 1, 2008  
Contact: Brad Higdon, 435-636-3613

## **BLM Announces the Availability of the Draft EIS for the West Tavaputs Plateau Natural Gas Full Field Development Plan**

The Bureau of Land Management's Price Field Office announces the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the West Tavaputs Plateau Natural Gas Full Field Development proposal is available for public review and comment. The draft document evaluates a plan by Bill Barrett Corporation and other operators to conduct full field development of natural gas resources on the West Tavaputs Plateau in the northeast portion of Carbon County.

This long-term development proposal includes drilling up to 807 new natural gas wells on 538 locations over a period of approximately eight years. As each well has the potential to produce gas for up to 20 years, therefore the total life of the project could be approximately 28 years. Most surface locations would be designed to accommodate more than one well using directional drilling techniques to minimize overall surface impacts. Project infrastructure would include roads and pipelines, gas compression stations and other facilities to accommodate delivery of natural gas to markets.

The BLM is evaluating five alternatives in detail in an effort to address the full range of environmental issues and uses in the area. The range of alternatives include applying best management practices for oil and gas development, optimizing opportunities for directional drilling and other mitigation measures developed to address issues specific to this project. A decision on full field development could require BLM to amend its current land use plan.

Issues considered in this analysis include impacts associated with transportation and the effects on cultural and historic resources; visual resources; habitat for mule deer, elk and sage grouse; threatened and endangered species; vegetation; and recreational opportunities. In addition, the project proposes some development within the Desolation Canyon and Jack Canyon Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). Oil and gas leases within these areas predate their establishment as WSAs, and are recognized by Congress as valid existing rights.

Benefits from the natural gas development include increased royalty and tax revenue to local, state and federal governments, employment opportunities at the local and regional level, and helping to meet the demand for domestic energy while reducing dependence on foreign sources.

The West Tavaputs Plateau is an area that has seen oil and gas development since the 1950's. To date, over 100 gas wells have been drilled within the project area, most of

which are currently in production. A substantial network of roads, pipelines and compressor stations currently exist on federal, state, and private lands within the project area to support past and present natural gas production.

Comments on the Draft EIS for the West Tavaputs Natural Gas Full Field Development Plan will be accepted through May 1, 2008. Written comments should be sent to BLM Price Field Office, Attention: West Tavaputs Plateau Natural Gas Full Field Development Plan DEIS, 125 South 600 West, Price, Utah, 84501.

Comments may also be submitted online by accessing BLM's website for this project at: [www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/price/energy/oil\\_gas/](http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/price/energy/oil_gas/). Members of the public should be aware that their entire comment, including personal identifying information such as name, address and phone number, may be made publicly available at any time.

Public information open houses will be held by BLM during the comment period. Notice of these meetings will be provided in advance.

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