

Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Gasco
Uinta Basin Natural Gas Project

Lead Agency:

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ABSTRACT

Gasco Production Company proposes to develop an area in the Monument Butte–Red Wash and West Tavaputs Exploration and Development Areas, and extract and transport oil and natural gas.

The Proposed Action encompasses approximately 206,826 acres and proposes 1,491 wells. The development would involve drilling a maximum of 1,887 natural gas wells (under the full development alternative) on Federal, State, and private lands, constructing roads and gathering lines for natural gas, constructing an evaporative facility for produced water, and the expansion of existing compressor stations to move the gas to natural gas transmission lines.

Construction would begin after issuance of the Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision, and the approval of Applications for Permit to Drill and Right-of-Way grants. Construction would continue for approximately 15 years, and production is expected to last 30 years.

Five alternatives were considered in detail for this project. They were: Alternative A – The Proposed Action; Alternative B – Reduced Development, Alternative C – Full Development, Alternative D – No Action, and Alternative E – Reduced Development with Directional Drilling. Alternative A is the Proposed Action for extracting natural gas. Alternatives B, C, and E were developed in response to issues raised during the agency and public scoping process. These alternatives would incorporate the same construction, operational, decommissioning, and reclamation components as the Proposed Action, but with additional considerations applied to those actions taking place on federal lands. The No Action Alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act for comparison to the other alternatives analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement. For this project, the No Action Alternative means that natural gas exploration and development is assumed to continue on federal, state, and private lands, albeit at a much smaller scale. Activity on federal lands would come from exploratory projects

previously approved by BLM, and is assumed to also come from other subsequent authorizations by BLM, such as approval of wells to meet unit and/or lease obligations. In addition, development is assumed to continue on State of Utah and private lands, subject to the approval of UDOGM and the appropriate land owner. Reasonable access across public lands to proposed well pads and facilities on state and private lands could also occur under the No Action Alternative.

The Vernal Field Office Manager is the Bureau of Land Management's Authorized Officer, responsible for preparing this Draft Environmental Impact Statement.