

# RECORD OF DECISION

## For

### Pinedale Anticline

## Oil and Gas Exploration and Development Project

## Environmental Impact Statement

This document records the decision made by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), in consultation with the USDA-Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the State of Wyoming (cooperating agencies in the preparation of the EIS), for managing the Federal surface and mineral estate in the *Pinedale Anticline Oil and Gas Exploration and Development Project Area*<sup>1</sup> (hereafter referred to as the *PAPA or Pinedale Anticline Project Area*). The PAPA comprises approximately 197,345 acres of Federal, State, and private land. Of this total, approximately 157,719 surface acres (79.9 percent) are BLM; 9,766 surface acres (5.0 percent) are State of Wyoming; and 29,860 acres (15.1 percent) are private. See Figures 1 and 2 for location of the PAPA.

[Note: <sup>1</sup> The Pinedale Anticline Development Project is the proposal of Alpine Gas Company, BP Amoco Production Company, Anschutz Wyoming Corporation, HS Resources, Inc., McMurry Energy Company, Questar Exploration & Production, Ultra Resources, Inc., Yates Petroleum Corporation, Mountain Gas Resources, Inc., Jonah Gas Gathering Company, and other oil companies (hereafter referred to as the "Operators").]

## DECISION

### Section 1. Introduction.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approves the Pinedale Anticline Operators proposal for 700 producing well pads over the next 10 to 15 years within the PAPA. This Record of Decision (ROD) recognizes that in order to develop 700 productive well pads in the PAPA, as many as 900 well pads may need to be constructed and drilled and that as many as 200 of these well pads may be plugged, abandoned and reclaimed because the wells would be dry holes or uneconomical to produce. The ROD also recognizes that not all of the well pads will be located on Federal lands/minerals. Some will be located on state and private lands/minerals. Therefore, monitoring for project consistency with the scope of EIS analysis will be based on the total of 700 producing well pads.

The approved development will be implemented under the "*Resource Protection (RP) Alternative on Federal Lands and Minerals*", as modified. Under this alternative, implementation of the Pinedale Anticline Project, including the individual project components associated with project implementation, shall be subject to all Sections of this ROD, including: *Section 2 - Approved Project Components; Section 3 - Administrative Requirements and Conditions of Approval; Section 4 - Management Area Exploration and Development Restrictions/Limitations for Resource Protection; Appendix A, Sections A-1 through A-6; Appendix B - Transportation Plan; Appendix C - Adaptive Environmental Management Process; Appendix D - Hazardous Materials Summary; and Appendix E - Programmatic Agreement (as concurred in by the Operators).*

This ROD recognizes the PAPA as one which has been relatively undisturbed by development for natural gas and that

there are important and highly sensitive natural resources and human values within or adjacent to the area which require consideration and protection from unnecessary or undue degradation (FLPMA, Section 302).

BLM believes that implementation of the "*Resource Protection Alternative on Federal Lands and Minerals*", as modified, will provide the best balance of multiple uses within the PAPA, and will sustain the long-term yield of resources while promoting stability of local and regional economies, environmental integrity, and conservation of resources for future generations (NEPA Section 101 and FLPMA, Section 302). The RP Alternative on Federal Lands and Minerals will provide for the management of the PAPA in a manner that allows for natural gas exploration and development while continuing to provide for the existing principal and major uses recognized by the land use plan for this area (e.g., domestic livestock grazing; fish and wildlife habitat protection, utilization and development; mineral exploration and production; utility and road rights-of-way; visual resource protection; outdoor recreation).

This ROD, to the extent allowed by law, incorporates restrictions and mitigative measures in consideration of the need to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of important and sensitive resources and human values, and in consideration of Federal, State, and local agency, public, and affected Indian tribe concerns raised during scoping and in comments received on the draft and final EIS. This ROD incorporates a process recommended by the EPA, called Adaptive Environmental Management (AEM), which will provide for project implementation oversight to ensure maximum consideration for the reasonable protection of identified concerns through its development and

Figure 1

General Location  
of the  
Pinedale Anticline Project Area

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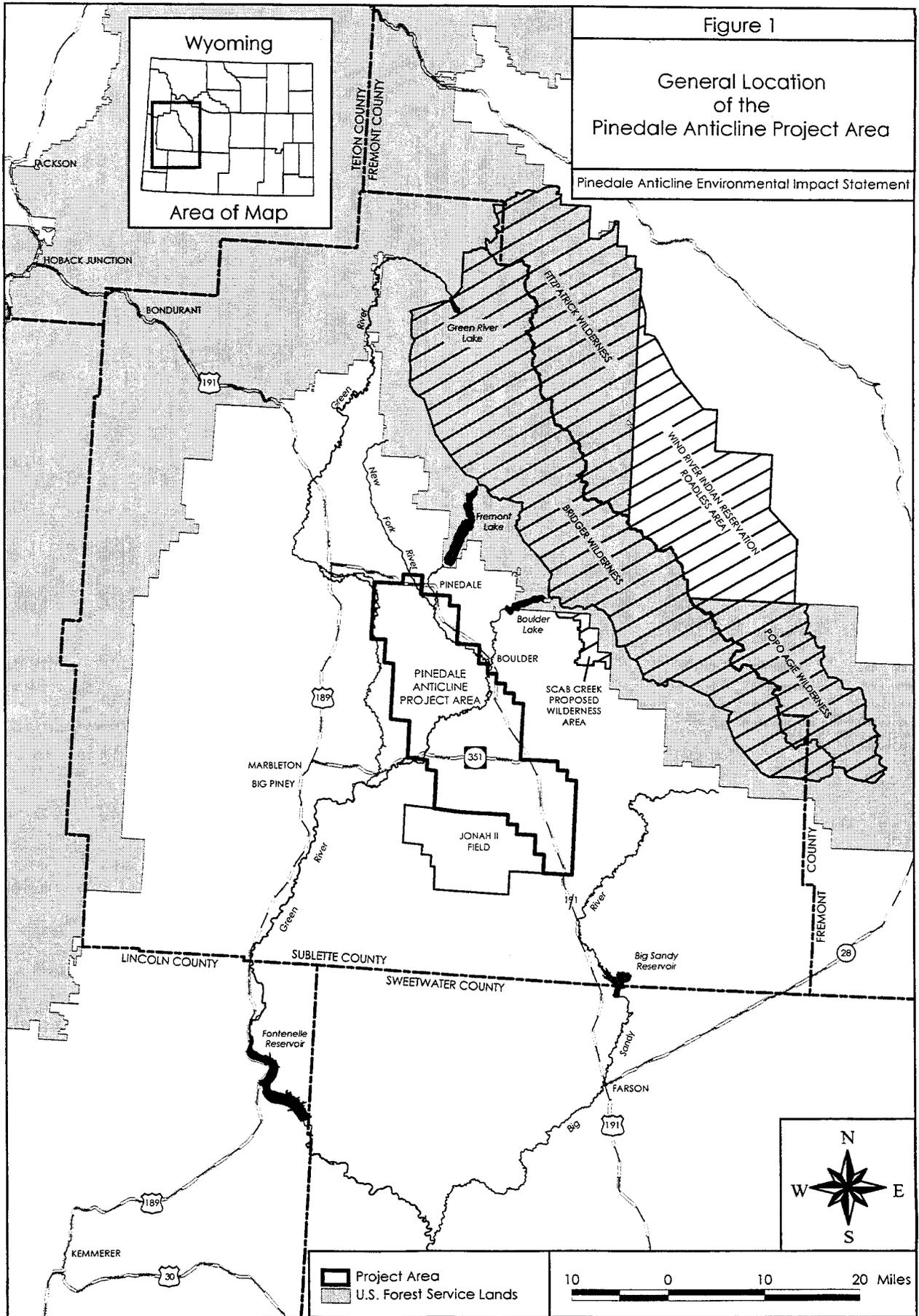
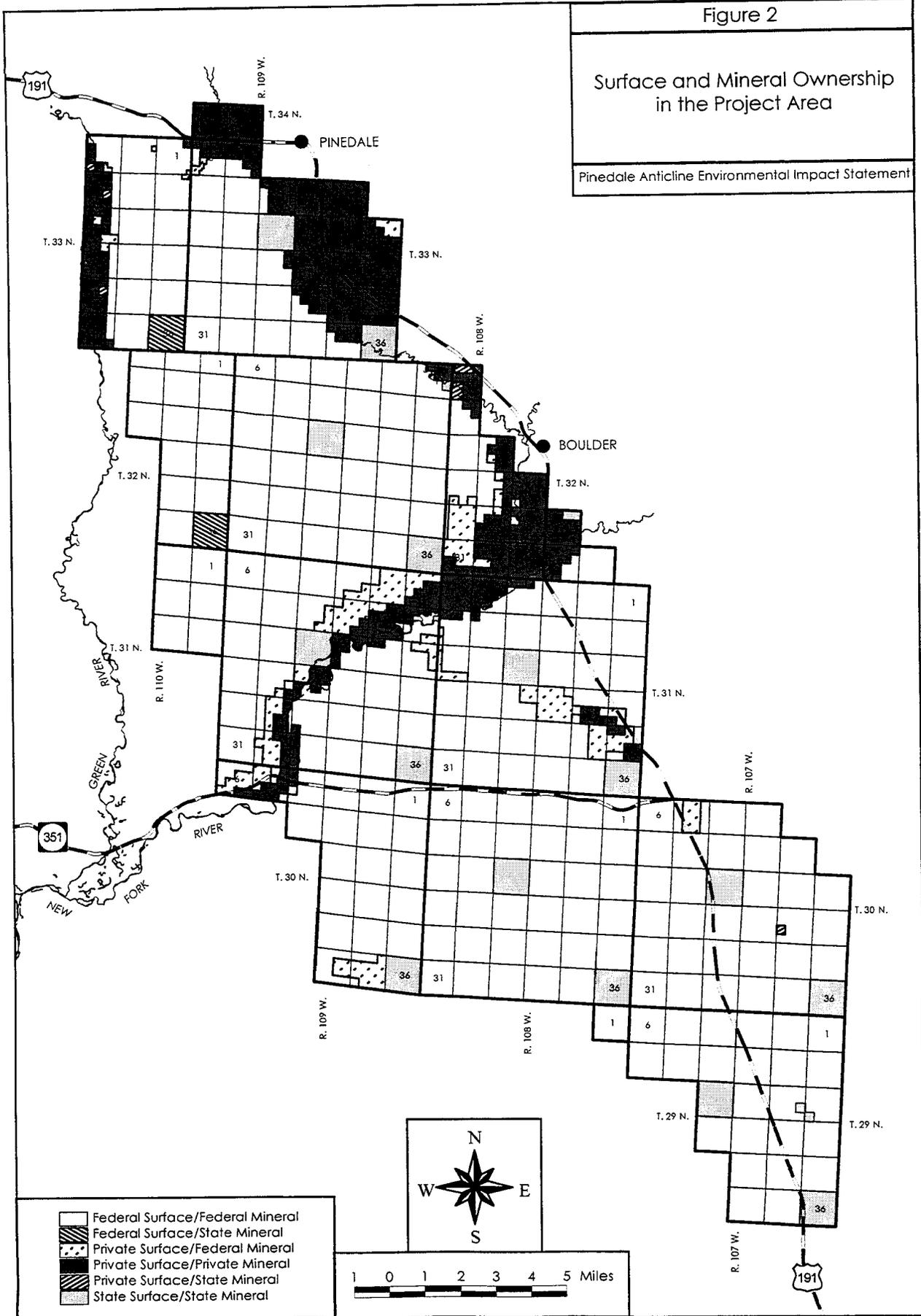


Figure 2

Surface and Mineral Ownership  
in the Project Area

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- Federal Surface/Federal Mineral
- Federal Surface/State Mineral
- Private Surface/Federal Mineral
- Private Surface/Private Mineral
- Private Surface/State Mineral
- State Surface/State Mineral

1 0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

implementation (Appendix C). The AEM Process will be designed to ensure that the implementation of the Pinedale Anticline Project is managed and monitored in a manner that will guide mid-course corrections in adapting to inevitable problems or changes associated with and inherent in each authorization for the implementation, operation, and abandonment of activities to develop the mineral resource.

This ROD authorizes the BLM Pinedale Field Manager (Authorized Officer or AO) to process Applications for

Permit to Drill (APDs), Sundry Notices (SNs), Rights-of-Way (ROWs), and Temporary Use Permits (TUPs) on public lands administered by the BLM for the Pinedale Anticline Project Operators and for companies contracted by the Operators. Approval of individual applications will authorize the implementation of the various components of the Pinedale Anticline Project (e.g., access road and well pad construction, gas gathering pipeline and production facilities installation, etc.).