

“Good Water, Abundance of Grass,” and Natural Gas!

Lander Road Superintendent Frederick W. Lander chose this route, and emigrants followed it, because of the abundance of resources found along what became known as the Lander Road.

Little did these pioneers know that below them lay an even larger natural bounty—a natural gas field that would one day be an important source of domestic energy.

The Pinedale Anticline

The California Company drilled the first well in the Pinedale Anticline in 1939, finding natural gas but not the oil they sought. They plugged the hole and left. Development of the field began in earnest in the 1990s. Experts estimate the field can supply enough energy for 30 million homes for more than 30 years.



A generalized cross-section of the Pinedale Anticline illustrates that an anticline forms in similar ways to mountain ranges.

Preservation Through Mitigation



The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages public lands for multiple uses and must strike a balance between competing interests. The BLM, therefore, must mitigate for degradation to the Lander Road’s historic setting due to energy development—in other words, the public must be compensated for an impact to this resource.

New Fork River Crossing Historical Park



The New Fork River Crossing Historical Park was created in August 2010 as mitigation for energy development impacts to the Lander Road. Shell, Ultra Resources, and PacifiCorp made the park possible by providing funds to purchase the property. Sublette County Historical Society now manages the park.

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