

**FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
JONAH INFILL DRILLING PROJECT,
SUBLETTE COUNTY, WYOMING**

(Volume 1 of 2)

**Bureau of Land Management
Wyoming State Office
Cheyenne, Wyoming**

**Pinedale Field Office
Pinedale, Wyoming**

and

**Rock Springs Field Office
Rock Springs, Wyoming**

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ABSTRACT

Environmental Impact Statement Jonah Infill Drilling Project Sublette County, Wyoming

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Lead Agency: Bureau of Land Management
Pinedale Field Office
Pinedale, Wyoming

Cooperating Agency: State of Wyoming

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The Bureau of Land Management has received a proposal from oil and gas developers to more intensively develop natural gas resources in an approximately 30,500-acre portion of the Jonah Field through infill drilling among existing wells. The project area is located approximately 32 miles southeast of Pinedale and 28 miles northwest of Farson in south-central Sublette County, Wyoming. Within the project area boundary there are currently more than 500 wells permitted and operating or committed to on 497 well pads. The wells are expected to produce for approximately 40 years, and the life of the project (i.e., the time from first well is drilled to the last well is plugged and abandoned, and habitat function restored) is estimated at up to 105 years.

Five alternatives were considered in detail. The No Action alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as a baseline against which other action alternatives can be analyzed. For this project, the No Action alternative would not authorize field-level development, though drilling could continue on state and private leases and would occur on federal leases as authorized by prior NEPA decisions.

The Proposed Action includes drilling, completing, and operating up to 3,100 additional wells on up to 16,200 acres of new disturbance, including the roads, pipelines, and other ancillary facilities needed to support the new wells; minimum well pad (surface disturbance) density of 64 well pads per 640-acre section; bottomhole well density ranging from 1 bottomhole every 5 acres to 1 bottomhole every 40 acres; and 250 wells drilled per year. Standard field development and production procedures would be followed. Above a certain level of authorized surface disturbance, the Operators have committed to establishing a fund to finance compensatory (off-site) mitigation for impacts that cannot be fully mitigated within the project area.

One action alternative would remove certain standard restrictions, mitigations, and wildlife and surface protections to minimize the amount of directional drilling and facilitate additional gas recovery; another alternative would limit all drilling to the currently authorized 497 well pads.

The BLM Preferred Alternative combines aspects of these alternatives and applies additional mitigation and outcome- or performance-based field management objectives to ensure ongoing habitat restoration throughout the life of the project.