

News Release

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BULL MOUNTAIN PIPELINE FINAL EIS RELEASED

Glenwood Springs, CO., (November 14, 2007) –The Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service have issued the final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the 25.5-mile Bull Mountain Pipeline in western Colorado. The FEIS details a proposed action alternative and the resulting impacts. A final, full-force-in-effect decision will follow no sooner than 30-days after the availability of this FEIS is announced in the Federal Register.

“When proposed rights-of-way cross lands administered by more than one federal agency, BLM is by regulation the lead agency that issues the decision,” said Jamie Connell, Glenwood Springs Field Office Manager. “However, because the majority of the pipeline crosses Forest Service lands, we all agreed that the Forest Service would take the lead in preparing the environmental impact statement.”

The proposed action alternative includes the installation of a 20-inch diameter natural gas pipeline and an 8-inch produced-water pipeline within the same trench, the use of a construction corridor to install the pipeline, and the reconstruction/upgrade of some access roads. The pipeline will cross lands under the jurisdictions of the Forest Service, White River and Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) and Bureau of Land Management, Glenwood Springs Field Office.

“S.G. Interests proposed the pipeline to facilitate the transport of natural gas produced from federal and privately-held mineral interests to national energy markets. They are installing a pipeline with enough capacity to handle potential development, which should avoid the need for future disturbance and expense,” explained Charlie Richmond, GMUG Forest Supervisor. “It is my understanding that there are existing leases in the area that have not been developed.” The final

EIS addresses reasonably foreseeable past, present and future actions to the extent possible, given the speculative nature of oil and gas well development.

BLM and the Forest Service agree that the proposed action alternative is the most appropriate course of action because it results in fewer environmental impacts and long term effects to the land than the other action alternatives detailed in the Draft EIS. It disturbs the fewest acres, installs the fewest miles of pipeline, and involves the fewest miles of road construction. It minimizes the negative effects to soils, wetlands, road corridors, and it meets the visual quality and air quality objectives for the area. Additionally, the restoration requirements specify re-vegetation of the post construction pipeline corridor to similar conditions for the existing Ragged Mountain pipeline corridor.

The pipeline will parallel a segment of the existing Ragged Mountain Pipeline corridor which crosses through 5.75 miles of the Clear Creek Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA), 1.72 miles of the East Willow IRA, and 0.86 miles of the Baldy Mountain IRA.

Prior to releasing this FEIS, the Forest Service consulted with the State of Colorado specifically about the IRAs.

The proposed action alternative is consistent with the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule. No new road construction (permanent or temporary) will occur within IRAs and equipment use and vegetative clearing will only be allowed within the construction corridor. When construction is complete, the corridor will be graded, re-contoured and re-vegetated. Motorized use will not be allowed, including for inspection or general maintenance. This construction corridor is not a road or travelway and it is not designed to any standard. It is a construction zone which allows necessary equipment to complete approved work during a specific construction timeframe.

In September 2006, the Draft EIS for the project was published for a 60-day public comment period. Fifty-five comments were received and the responses to these comments can be found in Appendix Q of the final EIS. “Based on some comments we received on the Draft EIS, there is some confusion about how this project relates to the 1993 Leasing Decision and/or the Reasonably Foreseeable Development report (RFD) for the Forest,” stated Maribeth Gustafson, White River National Forest Supervisor. “They are unrelated. The proposed action alternative is to issue a right-of-way for two pipelines (natural gas and produced water) and temporary use permits.”

The Bull Mountain Final Environmental Impact Statement is available on the following websites:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver/projects/>,

<http://www.co.blm.gov/gsra/gshome.htm>, or <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/>. CD copies are

also available upon request by contacting the BLM-Glenwood Field Office or the Forest Service-

White River or GMUG Forest Supervisor's Offices.

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