

Dear Sir/Madam,

In accordance with a memorandum dated October 20, 2010, I am requesting public comments on a proposal to apply adaptive management on the Pinedale Anticline.

#### Background

On February 16, 2010 (sage-grouse) and April 16, 2010 (mule deer, antelope), the BLM requested review of the wildlife monitoring and mitigation matrix contained in Appendix b of the final Record Of Decision for the Pinedale Anticline Oil and Gas Exploration and Development Project (Sept 12, 2008). The University of Wyoming conducted the review and submitted their recommendations from April through June 2010 (sage grouse 4/2/210, mule deer 5/20/2010, antelope 6/11/2010). These reports are commonly referred to as "UW COOP Review". Following these reviews, representatives of the Bureau of Land Management and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department met and reviewed these comments. From this meeting, comments were developed to management regarding these recommendations. These comments were submitted in July, 2010 and are commonly referred to as "Agency Response to the UW COOP Review". On November 15, 2010, I convened a Review Team consisting of wildlife biologists from the BLM, and Wyoming Game and Fish Department. The purpose of the Review Team was to review the elements of the three agency responses to the UW COOP Review which required application of adaptive management on the Pinedale Anticline. The proposed changes involved deletion of certain mitigation triggers for mule deer, antelope, and sage grouse.

The Review Team consisted of representatives from wildlife and planning disciplines. Specifically, the wildlife portion of the Review Team was comprised of a wildlife biologist from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and two representatives from the BLM. The planning representative was from the BLM.

The Review Team met on Monday November 15, 2010. The discussion was focused on evaluating the proposals against three key requirements; are the changes needed?, if so, do the changes require immediate implementation?, and finally, will the proposed changes require additional public planning? The Review Team concluded for each of the three changes, that the changes were needed, that they required immediate implementation, and that additional planning was not required.

Prior to implement these proposed adaptive management changes, I would like to hear from you. Please consider the attached materials and provide comments to me by December 20, 2010. Following this comment period, I will reconvene the Review Team, we will discuss the comments. I will use your comments and the recommendation of the Review Team to determine how to proceed.

This letter and the attached materials are posted on the internet at <http://www.wy.blm.gov/jio-papo/papo/wildlife.htm>. If you would like to review the full text of the Coop reviews, they may be also be found at this site.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact myself or Mark Thonhoff, the review team lead at (307) 367-5300

Sincerely,

Shane DeForest,  
Field Manager, Pinedale Field Office

Enclosures: 4

1. November 4, 2010 Memorandum (3pp.)
2. Review Team recommendations for Antelope (1pp.)
3. Review Team recommendations for Mule Deer (1pp.)
4. Review Team recommendations for Sage Grouse (1pp)