

PREFACE

The purpose of this Final environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Desolation Flats Natural Gas Field Development Project is to supplement the Draft EIS which was published in April 2003. Reviewed together, the Draft and Final EIS documents incorporate the description of the proposed project, other alternatives including the "No Action" alternative, the affected environment, as well as the analyses of potential environmental consequences resulting from construction, operation, and abandonment of the proposed project. This Final EIS should not be considered as a complete EIS, nor as a decision document. This FEIS is organized into five sections:

- Section 1, *Executive Summary* - Information presented in this section describes the NEPA process utilized in the analysis, briefly describes the Proposed Action and alternatives, provides a summary of the resource elements analyzed and a summary of their cumulative effects, and describes the agency-preferred alternative.
- Section 2, *Addendum and Errata* - Provides an addendum of additional discussion and studies which have been completed to address comments received during the comment period on the draft EIS. It also includes an errata section showing changes in the text of the Draft EIS which resulted from public comment or internal BLM review.
- Section 3, *Consultation and Coordination* - Summarizes the consultation and coordination that occurred during the preparation of the Desolation Flats Project Area EIS and background information regarding the consultation and coordination process.
- Section 4, *Comment Letters Received on the Draft EIS* - Provides a copy of the comment letters received during the public comment period on the draft EIS.
- Section 5, *Response to Comments* - Provides BLM's responses to those comments shown in Section 4.
- Two appendices not included with the draft EIS are provided in this final EIS. Appendix A contains the Formal and Informal Consultation for the Desolation Flats Natural Gas Project; Appendix B provides direction for cultural resources management within the DFPA.

In response to comments received concerning air quality impacts with implementation of the Desolation Flats Natural Gas Field Development Project and other projects, *Buys and Associates* prepared a Revised Air Quality Impact Assessment Technical Support Document (USDI-BLM 2004b), and the BLM revised the air quality sections of the draft EIS. Changes to the air quality sections are provided in Section 2, Addendum and Errata of this FEIS.

The draft and final EIS documents have been prepared according to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA, effective July 30, 1979.

The analyses were based on a proposed schedule and maximum assumed level of development contained in the draft EIS. As the project is implemented, the impacts will be evaluated to determine if they fall within the parameters discussed in the draft and final EIS documents. Any major change in project design would require additional environmental analysis.