



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

High Desert District

Pinedale Field Office

1625 West Pine, PO Box 768

Pinedale, WY 82941



In Reply Refer To:
1610 (WYD01)
Adaptive Management Proposal #2 2012

APR 10 2012

Re: Public Comment Period and Background Information for the Pinedale Anticline Project Office's Adaptive Management Proposal

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Pinedale Field Office (PFO) is accepting public comments on a Pinedale Anticline Project Office (PAPO) adaptive management change to the Pinedale Anticline Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) Record of Decision (ROD), and the Pinedale Anticline Project Area Monitoring for Reclamation Success plan (Monitoring Plan). If approved, the changes to reclamation monitoring methodologies, and monitoring schedule would be implemented during the 2012 monitoring season.

ROD Appendix C, Page C-1, states in part:

"Final reclamation will be considered successful when:

*A self-sustaining, vigorous, diverse, native (or otherwise approved) plant community is established on the site **with a density or frequency** sufficient to control erosion and non-native invasion and reestablish wildlife habitat and forage production.*

The PAPO proposes minor language changes, including to the aforementioned paragraph, to the ROD. The proposed changes are in the attached December 29, 2011 PAPO letter to the PFO Field Manager.

The PAPO also proposed the revision of the Monitoring Plan to provide clarification and further guidance about the implementation of the plan, as well as to ensure the methodologies in the plan are monitoring for all of the reclamation objectives and vegetative criteria outlined in the ROD. For example, the Monitoring Plan was reformatted by the area to be monitored (e.g., reference area or well-pad), referenced why specific data have to be collected, and clarified the data gathering process for each method. The PAPO also incorporated some information about data submittal protocols into the Pinedale Anticline Data Management System.

The Pinedale Field Office Manager formalized the creation of a review team to conduct an initial analysis of the PAPO's December 2011, proposed adaptive management action.

The review team's analysis concluded the proposed changes of wording in Appendix C of the 2008 ROD, as well as the revision of the 2009 Monitoring Plan had merit. These proposed

adaptive management actions are time sensitive due to when the natural gas operators secure their reclamation monitoring contracts, and when the monitoring season begins. The proposed changes do meet the intent of the ROD, and will in part help to ensure reclamation data are collected and reported more consistently.

In addition to the public comment period (per the PFO's adaptive management process), the PAPO's adaptive management proposal will be reviewed by the Pinedale Anticline Working Group (PAWG).

Written comments on the adaptive management proposal will be accepted until close of business April 25, 2012, and must be mailed or delivered to: Eric G. Decker, Pinedale Field Office, 1625 West Pine Street, P.O. Box 768, Pinedale, WY 82941 or emailed to egdecker@blm.gov.

You should be aware your entire comment, including address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee we will be able to do this.

The BLM Adaptive Management team will consider all public comments after the comment period closes, and make a final recommendation to the Pinedale Field Manager by May 11, 2012 with an effective date of May 15, 2012 for PAPO operators. The PFO Field Manager will then provide the PAWG an opportunity to form a team to review and comment on the proposed adaptive management actions.

While the revised Monitoring Plan has an effective date of May 15, 2012, the PFO recognizes there will be unresolved issues relating primarily to seed mixes and rights of way monitoring that will take the 2012 field season to resolve. Because of the unresolved issues and the fact the PAWG may form a team over the summer to review the plan, it is the intent of the PFO to have a final Reclamation Plan by April 1, 2013. Thus the plan that has an effective date of May 15, 2012 will be referred to as the "Final Draft Reclamation Plan" that will be used by Pinedale Anticline operators for the 2012 field season and by the PAWG for review purposes.

If you would like additional information on the PAPO's adaptive management proposal or have any questions, please contact Eric Decker at 307-367-5386 or egdecker@blm.gov.

Sincerely,



Shane DeForest
Field Manager

3 Attachments:

- 1 – December 29, 2011 PAPO's Adaptive Management Proposal
- 2 – 2009 Pinedale Anticline Project Area Monitoring for Reclamation Success plan
- 3 – Proposed revised Pinedale Anticline Project Area Monitoring for Reclamation Success plan

cc: Pinedale Anticline Working Group
Pinedale Anticline Project Office
John F. Ruhs, High Desert District Manager, BLM