

North Fork Mancos Master Development Plan

Fact Sheet

Gunnison Energy LLC (GELLC) proposes to drill, complete, and operate up to **35 horizontal wells** from four new well pads and one existing well pad and to construct access roads and gas gathering pipelines in Gunnison and Delta counties, Colorado. The project is 12 miles north of Paonia, located in the middle of three critical watersheds, surrounded by the Electric Mountain, Turner Creek, Clear Fork, Huntsman Ridge, Tomahawk and Pilot Knob Roadless Areas. General access to the project area would be via State Highway 133 to County Road 265, about six miles below McClure Pass. Construction and development activities are anticipated to begin in late 2018 and to extend over a period of approximately 3 years. This project is referred to as the **North Fork Mancos Master Development Plan (NFMMDP)**.

The project would occur within an area encompassing 34,906 acres of public and private lands; 25,790 acres of which is administered by the U.S. Forest Service, Grand Mesa-Uncompahgre-Gunnison National Forests, Paonia Ranger District; 468 acres administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); and 8,648 acres of private lands.

Issues:

- ❖ **The NFMMDP is adjacent to the approved 146-Well Bull Mountain Master Development Plan**
- ❖ **East Muddy Creek, West Muddy Creek, Hubbard Creek-North Fork Gunnison River Watersheds are at risk which feed some of the North Fork Valley's most important irrigation and drinking water sources.**
- ❖ **The project is proposed in one of the most geologically unstable regions in the State, which witnessed the largest mudslide in the country, and Hwy 133 has regular problems with rockfalls.**
- ❖ **There are already injection wells in the area that may be correlated with recent earthquakes near Carbondale (2.8 magnitude on January 19th, 2017 28 km S of Carbondale; 1.6 magnitude on January 19th 26 km S of Carbondale) and Paonia (3.5 magnitude on July 23, 2016 7 km NE of Paonia).**
- ❖ **Wildlife and Game Management Unit 521 is at risk. This area is part of a popular, heavily used, and highly prized hunting area, and includes critical habitat for Colorado's elk and deer herds.**
- ❖ **Rural gas gathering pipelines are exempt from federal pipeline safety regulations.**
- ❖ **This project is the first phase of a potential 13-pad development by GELLC within the NFMMDP project area, for which detailed planning and analysis are currently unavailable.**

Project Details:

- ❖ Eight Mancos shale gas wells are proposed for each new well pad, and three Mancos shale gas wells are proposed for the existing well pad, for a total of 35 new wells.
- ❖ The project proposes construction of new access roads between 2.68 and 4.85 miles.
- ❖ Construction of a single well is estimated to require 1,702 truck round-trips over approximately 88 days, and 37 average truck round-trips per day during the 3-year project duration.
- ❖ The fresh water requirement for dust mitigation on 26 miles of road is estimated at 126,880 barrels (5,328,960 gallons), which is 10x more than the fresh water required for drilling.
- ❖ Federal minerals will be accessed via horizontal drilling (fracking) due to no-surface occupancy and controlled surface use stipulations on USFS surface lands.

This is a complex proposal with significant implications, which merits careful and rigorous review of its cumulative impacts including headwaters, fish and wildlife, recreation, local economy, geological stability, road repair and safety, air quality, seismic activity, and public health.

BLM and the US Forest Service are seeking comments on the Preliminary Environmental Assessment analyzing the proposal. **The comment deadline is now June 9, 2018.**

Send comments to the BLM and USFS requesting:

- ❖ A full Environmental Impact Statement. The proposed project is complex, impacts 3 critical watersheds of the North Fork Valley, is proposed in one of the most geologically unstable areas in the State and with recent earthquake activity that may be related to existing injection wells, and is adjacent to the approved 146-Well Bull Mountain Master Development Plan, which was also subject to a full Environmental Impact Assessment. This alone merits a full Environmental Impact Assessment.
- ❖ No new development until federal resource management planning is revised to properly protect the resources of the North Fork Valley. Any new development during the resource planning revision process now underway for the Uncompahgre Field Office Planning Area and the USFS' Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests, prejudices the cumulative impacts analysis required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

You can send your comments to:

Email comments to: comments-rocky-mountain-gmug@fs.fed.us

OR

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