

## **Fact Sheet**

### **Iron Point 3D Seismic Mapping Proposal**

#### **The Proposal:**

Gunnison Energy is proposing to conduct a large-scale 3D seismic mapping project north of Paonia, in Delta and Gunnison Counties, to “gain a better understanding of the subsurface geology to determine if there is oil and gas potential and to also determine the best locations for exploratory drilling.” The project will last 40-60 days, and require as many as 50 workers.

#### **Location and Scale**

The project will span 28,000 acres of mostly public, and some private, lands in area around the Terror Creek Reservoir. This area includes three separate Colorado Roadless areas, known Canada Lynx and cutthroat trout habitat, and significant geologic instabilities and historic landslide areas.

#### **What is Seismic Mapping?**

- Seismic mapping is the process of using artificially generated seismic waves to image subsurface formations.
- Gunnison Energy proposes using “Vibroseis Buggies” (large trucks mounted with a powerful hydraulic shaker) and dynamite to generate the seismic waves. A series of sensors strung across the landscape at intervals will measure the seismic waves as they bounce off various subsurface layers.
- The data is then used to generate a map of the subsurface, which Gunnison Energy will use to determine the most likely locations of natural gas reserves and where to drill test wells.

#### **Gunnison Energy’s Plan**

- Using existing roads, Gunnison Energy will drive the Vibroseis buggies to generate seismic waves where possible.
- Where there are no roads, or where Roadless Areas prohibit such use, Gunnison Energy plans to use helicopters to bring in portable drill rigs to drill shallow (20-60 feet deep) shot holes, in which they will set off 2-5 pounds of dynamite to generate seismic waves. Gunnison proposes using 4,900 individual source points.
- These seismic waves will be measured by 416 miles of receiver lines, strung across the landscape at 660’ intervals.

#### **Seismic Issues**

- By its very nature, seismic mapping requires seismic waves.
- The project area is geologically unstable, with steep slope angles challenging topography. Mapping data suggests that a large portion of the project area has experienced historically large landslides.
- Landslides can occur on slopes less than 15 degrees in certain geologic areas. The project area is underlain by soft, landslide-prone rock formations.

- The Terror Ditch and Reservoir Company has grave concerns about the project. The Terror Creek Reservoir requires constant monitoring due to the steep topography surrounding the dam, and the area around the reservoir has seen historic landslides.
- Delta County's Specific Development Regulations require that oil and gas operations not interfere with irrigation of neighboring lands or alter any irrigation system.

### **Other Issues**

- The proposed project area encompasses 3 separate Colorado Roadless Areas: the Electric Mountain, Flattops/Elk Park, and Pilot Knob.
- The proposed project area encompasses mapped habitat for the Canada Lynx and the project website indicates the presence of cutthroat trout within the proposed project area as well.
- The Dominguez-Escalante expedition of 1776 passed through the middle of the project area. In fact, the expedition camped on August 31, 1776 in a meadow one mile north of the confluence of Willow Creek and Hubbard Creek, within the project area.
- The proposal suggests that while most of the receiver lines will be laid out by helicopter, some will be laid out by crews on foot or on ATVs or snowmobiles, weather depending.
- Hunters are already being disturbed by this activity. Survey crews are staking and flagging the project area, and such activity will only get more intense as the project moves forward. This proposal, in one of the most productive game units in Colorado, and is already forcing hunters out of the area.

Gunnison Energy promises that any structures damaged during this process will be immediately repaired and restored. ***The standard should be no harm will occur, not harm and repair.*** Lost irrigation water cannot be replaced in a drought. Damaged irrigation infrastructure cannot be repaired in time. Lost hunting seasons cannot be reclaimed.

**Tell the US Forest Service the scope of this project DEMANDS an EA!**

### **Comment Deadline**

The US Forest Service is accepting scoping comments until October 26<sup>th</sup>. Comments can be submitted to:

District Ranger Levi Broyles,  
PO Box 1030  
Paonia, CO 81428  
**Or online at:**

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54846>



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