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GOVERNOR CHALLENGES BLM AND INDUSTRY TO BALANCE DEVELOPMENT AND
CONSERVATION ON THE PINEDALE ANTICLINE

CHEYENNE, Wyo. - Acknowledging the federal government's push to rapidly develop energy resources in Wyoming, today Governor Dave Freudenthal challenged the Bureau of Land Management and industry to strike a balance between development and conservation in the Pinedale area.

The Governor commented on the need to find a solution that maximizes gas recovery while providing long-term protection for the state's resources in a letter to Dennis Stenger, Pinedale field office manager for the BLM, focusing on the Draft Supplemental Pinedale Anticline Environmental Impact Statement currently being developed by the agency.

"There is likely no other place in the Rocky Mountain Region with such extensive co-existence of world class wildlife, natural gas, visual and cultural resources," Freudenthal said in his letter. "My challenge to the BLM staff and proponents is to find a solution that maximizes gas recovery while providing long-term protection for the remaining valuable social, cultural, scenic, aesthetic, agricultural and wildlife resources so as not to cause irreversible harm to any of them."

Freudenthal's administration has negotiated to reduce the impacts of additional large-scale development on the Pinedale Anticline and to ensure that unavoidable impacts are mitigated appropriately.

"While I understand the need to develop our natural resources, we must continue to do it in a way that preserves our quality of life in Wyoming," Freudenthal said.

The winter drilling supplement to the Pinedale Anticline Project Area EIS will focus development on the core area of the Anticline, and the Governor was encouraged to see the following measures initially committed to by industry:

- Directional drilling restricted to an additional 250 well pads.
- Concentrated drilling on only 1/5 of the Anticline, leaving the rest of the area open for migrating and wintering wildlife.
- Voluntary suspension of certain leases on the flank areas of the Anticline to provide wildlife habitat.
- Significant mitigation and monitoring fund created by industry to be used to offset the impacts associated with drilling.