
WYOMING MITIGATION CONCEPTS

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Energy has and continues to be one of Wyoming's primary economic engines; now perhaps more than ever. Currently, major development areas cover approximately 25 percent of the land area in the state. Within these areas, there are approximately 44,000 active wells, out of the 59,000 statewide. Some of these areas are currently going through the permitting process to greatly increase the amount of natural gas development. This increased development could easily be sustained over the next 30 years. Since most of this development also overlaps important wildlife habitats, it has forced the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to become proactive in dealing with these impacts and new approaches to mitigation. Some of these include 1) Working proactively with industry on individual plans to minimize and mitigate fish and wildlife impacts, 2) Working collaboratively with the BLM on the development plans, and on their Resource Management Plans to provide for greater consideration for wildlife, 3) Supporting the addition of a new office (Jonah Interagency Office) funded by industry, which will oversee and guide off-site mitigation, 4) Support for the hiring of an oil and gas coordinator in Pinedale, WY with funding provided by BLM and USFS, 5) Funding an Oil and Gas Coordinator Position in NE Wyoming, and 6) Working with our agency staff in terms of Department organization to shift personnel duties to address the issues associated with development. While all of these efforts have been somewhat effective, there is still a need for additional personnel time to address the expanding issues.