

Effort will reduce truck traffic amid air pollution concerns

Company proposes condensate pipeline

By JEFF GEARINO - Southwest Wyoming bureau | Posted: Saturday, October 24, 2009 12:00 am

GREEN RIVER -- A Houston-based energy company is proposing to construct a 42-mile pipeline to move condensate out of the Pinedale Anticline natural gas field to a terminal located south of LaBarge, according to Bureau of Land Management officials.

The move is expected to reduce truck traffic in the lucrative Sublette County gas field, which should help reduce potentially dangerous ozone-causing air pollutants and reduce impacts to wildlife.

BLM spokeswoman Lorraine Keith said Ultra Resources, Inc. proposed building the 6-inch pipeline to fulfill a requirement in the agency's supplemental environmental impact statement record of decision.

The document mandated that field operators install a liquids gathering system to reduce truck traffic associated with production in the Anticline within two years.

State and federal officials have been working with oil and gas operators in recent years to take steps to reduce pollution from field equipment, condensers and other facilities in an effort to reduce ground-level ozone concentrations in the region.

Sublette County has been plagued by rare, winter-time ozone pollution the past few years, which has drawn the ire and concern of area residents. In 2007, the state issued its first ozone alert for southwest Wyoming.

The proposed Ultra Condensate Pipeline Project would add infrastructure to carry condensate from the Pinedale Anticline to the Rocky Mountain Pipeline Systems, LCC terminal just south of LaBarge in Lincoln county.

Natural gas condensate is a low-density mixture of hydrocarbon liquids that are present in the raw natural gas that is produced in the lucrative natural gas fields in southwest Wyoming.

It condenses out of the raw gas if the temperature is reduced to below the hydrocarbon dewpoint temperature of the raw gas.

The natural gas condensate is simply known as condensate, or sometimes natural gasoline, because it contains hydrocarbons within the gasoline boiling range.

BLM officials said in a scoping notice about 22 miles of the pipeline would run in existing corridors from the Gobbler's Knob area of the Anticline field to southwest of the neighboring Jonah Field.

The remaining approximately 20 miles of pipeline would parallel the existing Rocky Mountain Power Bridger 230kV power line and other existing infrastructure, according to plans.

Keith said construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2010 and completed by the fall of 2010.

She said the BLM is accepting public comments on the proposal through Nov. 23. The scoping notice can be viewed on the agency's Web site at www.blm.gov/wy.

Contact southwest Wyoming bureau reporter Jeff Gearino at 307-875-5359 or gearino@tribcsp.com