



# Energy Fact Sheet

## Roan Plateau: Managing the Naval Oil Shale Reserves

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### Key Messages

The Roan Plateau planning area consists of 127,000 acres of which 73,602 are BLM lands. There are 34,758 acres on top of the Plateau and 38,844 are below the rim. The natural gas potential is tremendous in the area with 8.9 TCF (trillion cubic feet) of recoverable federal gas and 4.2 TCF under the top of the Plateau.

### History of Naval Oil Shale Reserves

- Reserves one and three were designated as Naval Oil Shale Reserves (NOSR) in 1916.
- They were managed by the Navy until 1977, after which the Department of Energy managed the lands until 1997.
- Public access remained in place, but the area is remote.
- Congress transferred the reserves to the Department of Interior in 1997.
- At that time the lands were leased as public domain lands for oil and gas development “as soon as practicable”.
- Lands are managed under BLM multiple use lands.

### Roan Plateau: Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

- A Draft Resource Management Plan was released in November 2004.
- A Preferred Alternative that was developed deferred leasing on top until the area below was 80 percent developed.
- There were ~75,000 comment letters and emails that specified little support for the Preferred Alternative approach.
- The cooperating Agencies involved include:
  - Colorado Department of Natural Resources
  - Garfield County
  - Rio Blanco County
  - City of Rifle, CO
  - Town of Parachute, CO
  - City of Glenwood Springs, CO

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## The Proposed Final Plan

- There must be an innovative approach to oil and gas development.
- There must be more protection for wildlife and other values than what is included in the Alternative plan
- There must be more gas accessibilities than what is included in the Preferred Alternative plan.
- Stipulations include:
  - NSO – No Surface Occupancy, no ground disturbance.
    - More than 50 percent No Surface Occupancy on top and below rim.
    - Surface Disturbance on top tightly controlled – no more than one percent (350 acres) at any one time.
    - Surface Disturbance minimized – Well pads no closer than ½ mile apart.
    - Staged development on top – ridge-by-ridge development (no development in canyons).
  - CSU – Controlled Surface Use, BLM can require relocation.
    - More than 40 percent Controlled Surface Use.
    - One lessee conducts operations on behalf of all lessees.
    - This creates greater control of how, when and where development occurs.
    - This eliminates the need for duplicative infrastructure.
    - This allows for the entire top to be leased at once.
    - Pipelines and other infrastructure will be located along existing roads as much as possible.
  - Timing limitations – prohibits certain activities at certain times.
    - Big game security areas
      - 23,000 acres above and below are designated big game security areas (31 percent of planning area).
      - NSO or CSU stipulations apply, exceptions require consultation with the CDOW.
    - Cutthroat trout/Water resources
      - NSO stipulations apply for high value habitat.
      - Development will be on ridges.
      - CSU stipulations apply throughout Parachute Creek Watershed.
    - Travel management
      - This limits motorized travel to designated routes
        - 259 miles of existing motorized routes
        - 157 miles existing on the top
        - The plan closes and reclaims 28 miles
        - The plan designates 68 miles for admin use only
        - 163 miles open to motorized travel

- Miles capped on top
  - The top is limited to 138 miles of roads/routes
- Below the rim
  - 58 percent NSO
  - 31 percent CSU
  - 11,500 acres of big game security areas (NSO)
  - Winter timing limitations
  - Average of 160-acre well-pad spacing

### **Current Status**

- Decision issued in June on all but ACECs
- Comment period on ACEC closed in November 2007.
- Salazar/Udall amendment in House Energy Bill makes top all NSO
- In early August 2007, the Governor granted 120 days to become familiar with the plan.

### **Upon the Record of Decision**

- Nominate parcels for development
- Hold a lease sale
- Issue leases
- Coordinate Federal Unit operators
- Submit/analyze site specific plans
- Issue APDs