

News Release



USDA Forest Service
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GMUG APPROVES SHEEP PIPELINE

Delta, CO., (July 2, 2007) – The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest has issued the environmental assessment, Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) and decision for a special use permit to allow the construction of the Sheep Natural Gas Collection Pipeline and a water-produced pipeline. The pipeline will transport natural gas from existing private and federal leases to connect with the existing Ragged Pipeline (1983) and ultimately, distribution facilities from the Rocky Mountain Pipeline about 25 miles to the North. The pipelines will not affect any roadless areas or Wilderness.

Paonia District Ranger Levi Broyles stated, “I’m pleased with the collaboration, involvement and array of various alternatives that were considered for this project. We ended up with a good decision to locate the pipeline to create the least amount of impact, and one that minimizes the impacts to wetlands, riparian areas, live streams and potential landslide areas.”

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Broyles went on to state, “A lot of time and hard work has gone into this project and my staff and I have worked with various interests and other stakeholders to address all the questions and concerns associated with the pipeline.”

The Forest looked at ten different alternatives for the pipeline; however, most of these were eliminated from detailed consideration based on the lack of access through private lands, unstable and steep slopes, and unacceptable impacts to streams and wetlands. In total the twelve-inch natural gas pipeline and 6-inch produced water line will be located within the same trench and traverse approximately 6.6 miles across national forest system lands and 4.2 miles across private lands. Portions of the pipeline will be located adjacent to existing roads and other sections will traverse through private and national forest system lands.

Construction could begin as early as August 2007 and will likely continue into 2008.

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