

More News:

- Utah sends people, supplies to Texas
- Teen missing in Sandy
- Schools for Deaf, Blind win funding support
- Beautiful Saturday in forecast
- Hatch teams with Kennedy on service bill
- Bailout of Freddie and Fannie becomes boon for homebuyers
- 10th Circuit Court of Appeals rules against Melvin Dummar and the 'Mormon Will'
- Homeowners protest rising project dues
- State's No. 2 will not appeal disclosure law ruling
- Hatch defends Obama's pig comment
- Aggies top Utes in annual battle for the blood
- Jump to \$2 a pack would raise \$50M for health programs
- Bronze sculptures will memorialize miners
- Midvale to unveil transit oriented project
- Experienced forest manager taking over as supervisor
- Legacy Parkway: TGIF
- 4 honored for fight vs. Japanese beetles
- Fibromyalgia conference beckons today
- Developer sues over stalled Farmington project
- Your Week
- Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission seeking executive

Tribtowns.com: Enter your Zip code to find news and events in your area GO»

BOOKMARK Print Email Font Resize

Drill, drill, drill: BLM plan for Carbon, Emery counties goes for the gas

Tribune Editorial

Article Last Updated: 09/08/2008 09:00:45 AM MDT

In Price, they take to heart the Bush administration's order to drill, drill, drill. For natural gas, that is. They like to mine coal, too.

The Price Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management has just issued its preferred resource management plan for the 2.5 million acres of public lands it oversees in Carbon and Emery counties. In language only a bureaucrat could love, the plan would "maximize mineral development in areas with the greatest potential for maximum resource recovery."

Which would be fine if mineral development were always the highest and best use of these lands. But in some cases, it's not. This is, after all, the neighborhood that includes such scenic and archaeological wonders as Nine Mile and Desolation canyons. In its attempt to balance mineral development with environmental preservation, the BLM folks in Price have leaned far too heavily on the side of the scale that holds mineral extraction.

For example, they took another look at 937,440 acres of land that had been previously identified as having wilderness characteristics, but had not been formally designated as wilderness study areas. Of those, they set aside only about one-tenth, that is, 97,100 acres in five areas, as worthy to protect their wilderness characteristics. Even these will be subject to mineral leasing so long as no surface occupancy is involved. In other words, they will be available for extraction by slant drilling.

Advertisement

RELIANCE HOMES
Alegria Vista
581 E. 8680 S.
Low \$300's
www.RelianceHomes.com

Nine Mile Canyon, whose petroglyphs have been described as the longest art gallery in the world.

This plan would open more lands to similar treatment. So long as there is gas to drill, the BLM is saying, that's what matters most.

It is clear that this plan would move these lands toward exploitation rather than preservation.

The rest could become ineligible for further consideration as wilderness if development crisscrosses them with roads. Under federal law, wilderness must be roadless.

The folks in the Price office considered six alternative management plans. They chose the one that would have the second-largest overall impact in terms of environmental degradation. Even maintaining the status quo would have less. Viewed in that light, it is clear that this plan would move these lands toward exploitation rather than preservation.

This vast area already is rocking beneath a natural gas drilling boom, as Utahns know from the controversy over heavy rigs churning up dust in

FREE Online Classifieds!

The job site that'll change the world as we know it

Get out of debt
FREE CONSULTATION

Free debt analysis
The Salt Lake Tribune

[Return to Top](#)

- [Motorcycle rider from road rage incident dies](#)
- [Mom of teen who hit child charged](#)
- [Family welcomes back Bridger](#)
- [The Reader Advocate](#)
- [For the Record](#)
- [Day by day at the Utah State Fair](#)

RECENT COMMENTS:

9/11/2008 1:06:00 AM -- Use it up so the grandkids won't get it, say the greedy sociopaths. [\[MORE\]](#)

9/10/2008 11:44:00 AM -- Wilderness characteristics, half the state of Utah has wilderness characteristics. The use of this term is thrown around at every... [\[MORE\]](#)

9/10/2008 10:53:00 AM -- Podocarp; Go ahead, I won't be offended by your "elder abuse". I am quite naive (and elderly), so I wonder if you would please... [\[MORE\]](#)

[READ ALL 11 COMMENTS](#) | [POST A COMMENT](#) | [REGISTER](#) | [TRIBTALK.COM](#)

Was this article worthwhile?



+11

31 VOTES

[Buy Stocks - \\$4 Fee at ShareBuilder](#)

No account or investment minimums. No inactivity fees. Start today. www.sharebuilder.com

[Car Insurance Quotes Online](#)

Compare auto insurance quotes from top companies online. www.insurance.com

[school in ut](#)

Utah Career Training & College. Training For Today's In-Demand Jobs. www.utahcollege.edu

Ads by Yahoo!