



## **WILDLIFE PROTECTION & THE ROLE OF THE DIVISION OF THE WILDLIFE**

**CONSULTATION:** The Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) may make written recommendations to the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (OGCC) after consultation. Recommendations focus on steps an operator can take in order to minimize adverse impacts to wildlife resources.

- Consultation will take place between the operator, the OGCC, the DOW, and the surface owner in situations set out below.
- Consultation is limited to 40 days.
- The conditions recommended by the DOW to the operator are not binding -- the OGCC Director will decide whether attach them to permit approvals.
- The surface owner must agree to the conditions for wildlife habitat protection.

### **WHAT TRIGGERS A CONSULTATION :**

**1) Drilling In A Sensitive Wildlife Habitat:** The DOW has identified sensitive wildlife habitat areas throughout the State of Colorado. Once an operator chooses to drill in these areas, it must consult with the OGCC, the DOW, and the surface owner.

- Sensitive Wildlife Habitat Includes: critical winter range for elk, bighorn sheep and mule deer; Pronghorn winter concentration areas; Elk calving areas; Columbian sharp-tailed grouse breeding and nesting habitat; Plains sharp-tailed grouse breeding and nesting habitat; Greater sage-grouse breeding and nesting habitat; Gunnison sage grouse breeding and nesting habitat; Lesser prairie chicken breeding and nesting habitat; Black-footed ferret habitat; and Bald and Golden eagle nest sites and winter night roost sites.
- Sensitive wildlife habitat maps are listed on the OGCC and DOW Web sites so industry knows the location of these areas ahead of time and may plan accordingly.
- Habitat Maps were developed by biologists. They were subject to review and public comment throughout the rulemaking process and can be changed only through OGCC's formal rulemaking procedure.

**2) Drilling In A Restricted Surface Occupancy Area:** These are areas of habitat critical to wildlife that an operator must avoid to the extent technically and economically feasible.

- RSO areas include: Rocky mountain bighorn sheep lambing areas; Desert bighorn sheep lambing areas; within 0.6 miles of sage-grouse lek (breeding area); 0.6 miles of lesser prairie chicken lek (breeding area); within .25 miles of active bald or golden eagle nest site; within .25 miles of Osprey nest sites; within 300 feet of Cutthroat Trout stream or Gold Medal fisheries.

- Where drilling is to take place in an RSO area because avoidance is infeasible, the operator will consult with the operator, OGCC, DOW, and the surface owner as described above.

**3) Drilling An Increased Number of Wells In Limited Acreage:** In areas where operators want to drill more than one well per 40 acres, the OGCC will consult with the DOW to identify and minimize any adverse impacts to wildlife.

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