

APPENDIX H:

**APPROACH USED FOR INTERVIEWS OF
SELECTED RESIDENTS IN THE OIL SHALE AND
TAR SANDS STUDY AREA CONSIDERED IN THE 2008 OIL SHALE AND TAR
SANDS PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

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SELECTED RESIDENTS IN THE OIL SHALE AND
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SANDS PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT****H.1 PURPOSE**

Land use plan amendments to allow for application for leasing and future development of oil shale and tar sands resources are being proposed in parts of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming, where there has been considerable experience with large-scale energy development, including oil and gas, coal mining, electric power generation, and attempts to develop oil shale resources.

Development of oil shale and tar sands resources is not only likely to produce significant impacts on the economies and communities in the regions of influence (ROIs) in each state, but would produce impacts occurring alongside rapid development of oil and gas resources. Among energy developments, oil shale and tar sands projects, in particular, are often associated with “boom-and-bust” type development, requiring local communities to make considerable adjustment to rapid economic and social change. In order for this programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) to provide a comprehensive and understandable presentation of the potential scale of the economic and social impacts of oil shale and tar sands development, a series of interviews was conducted with residents in the ROIs in each state. These interviews provided information that adds anecdotal flavor to the social and economic baseline and impact data presented in the PEIS, adding text and verbatim quotations that summarize viewpoints, perceptions, and attitudes toward large-scale energy development.

H.2 SAMPLING STRATEGIES

A number of sampling strategies were used to identify a small list of possible respondents that could adequately capture some sense of the level of variation in views of the project. Specifically, a list of potential interviewees included:

- Individuals who provided comments as part of the oil shale and tar sands project scoping process, documented in the Scoping Summary Report;
- Individuals who have witnessed various stages of development associated with energy projects, such as impacts on ranching and the associated traditional quality of life, including local and county planning officials, community leaders, community service providers, environmental groups, newspaper reporters, realtors, local citizens groups, and motivated local individuals with specific concerns; and

- Individuals located in proximity to locations at which energy project developments are likely to occur (e.g., Piceance Basin) and who are likely to be impacted by specific aspects of project development, such as water restrictions, air quality, road congestion, property values, quality of life, etc.

During the interview process, some respondents provided contact information for additional individuals that were subsequently interviewed, if it was apparent that these individuals would allow the process to provide more complete and balanced coverage of a particular topic or topics.

H.3 INTERVIEW FORMAT AND STRUCTURE

Informal interviews were conducted with individuals by telephone, without questionnaires. After a brief introduction to the project, each interview was structured around a series of preselected issues that addressed the perceived concerns and historical experience of each interviewee, in order to focus the interview and limit responses to information relevant to the presentation in the PEIS. Interviews elicited viewpoints on three general aspects of large-scale energy development:

- Past developments, particularly those that have produced “boom-and-bust” economic and social conditions deemed relevant;
- The current situation, including the ongoing impact of oil and gas development and increased recreational land use; and
- The likely impact of new developments, particularly oil shale and tar sands, alongside the projected impact of oil and gas development and recreational land use.

Each interview included open-ended questions on the progress of key variables throughout the past, present, and future experience with energy development, including housing cost and availability, congestion, community service quality and availability, employment, quality of life, environmental quality, and other variables identified by respondents, where applicable. Respondents were asked to identify and describe their perception of mitigation strategies that have been, are being, and might be used in the future.

As it was the intention of each interview to fully capture the viewpoints, perceptions, and attitudes toward large-scale energy development in a semistructured format, each interview session allowed for some improvisation toward the goal of providing useful anecdotal information, including different ways to frame questions and elicit responses, recognizing different levels of respondents’ perceived viewpoint, personal and professional participation, and residential location.