Public lands are a valuable resource for millions of hunters and anglers. But too often these lands are not managed with sportsmen in mind, and it is time we raise our voices together.

The partners within the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership believe that there is a need for better balance of fish and wildlife management with energy development. We believe that if federal and state land managers use the FACTS, they will improve the management of public lands in the face of energy development. And they will be preserving the legacy of millions of acres of wild spaces that fish and wildlife need and sportsmen cherish.

If you support TRCP's FACTS principles, we need your help. Our grassroots campaign, Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development, will provide a voice for hunters and anglers so that our values are integrated into energy development on public lands. It is not too late to make a difference – make sure your voice is heard.

For more information about how to be a Sportsman for Responsible Energy Development, go to our Web site, *www.trcp.org*, and sign up today.

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

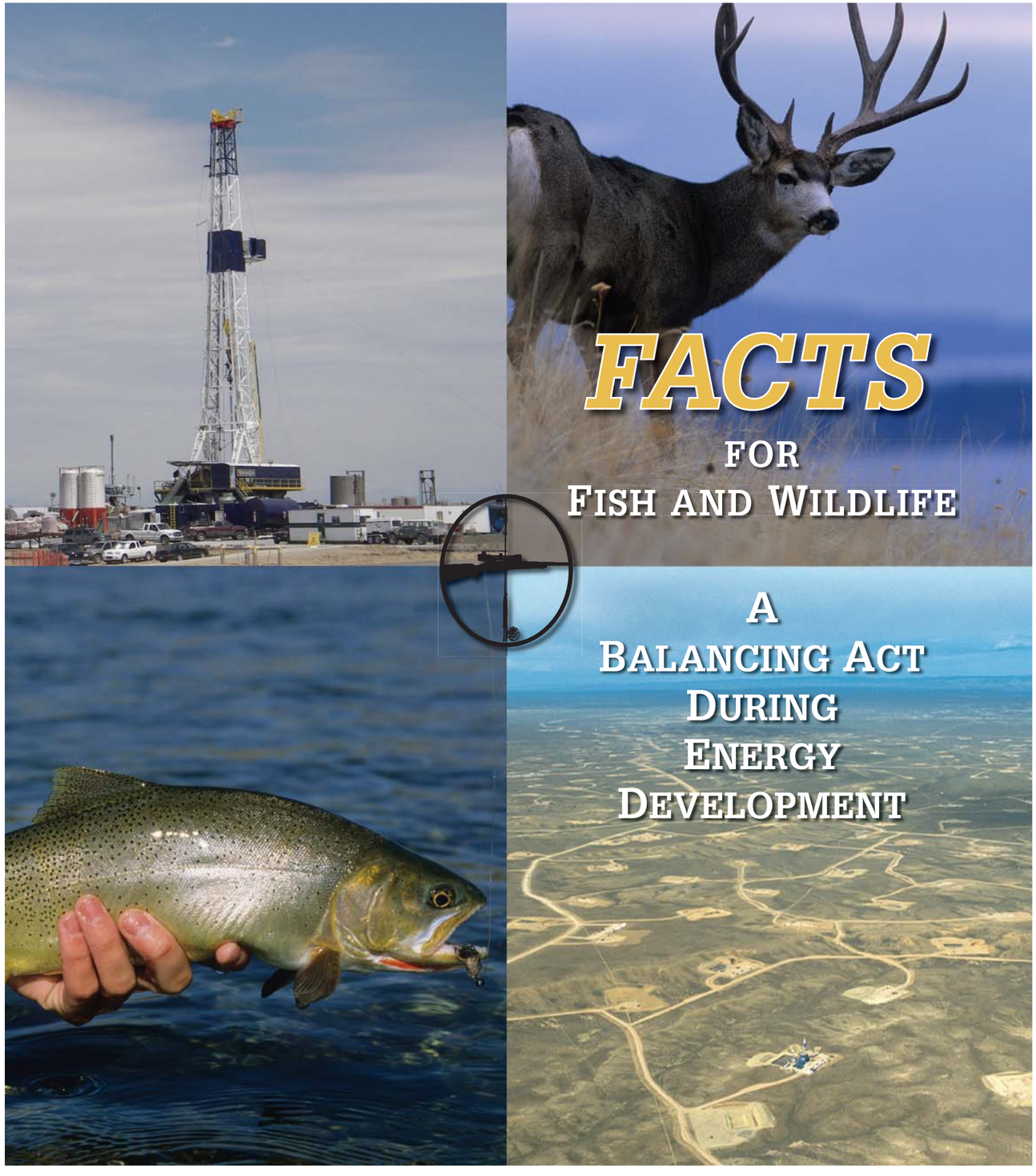
The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership is a coalition of leading hunting, fishing and conservation organizations and individual partners working together to guarantee access to places to hunt and fish, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, and increase funding for conservation. The TRCP Fish, Wildlife and Energy Working Group was formed to advocate for the proper balance of fish and wildlife needs with development of the nation's energy resources on public lands.

Fish, Wildlife and Energy Working Group Members

For more information:

Steve Belinda
Energy Policy Initiative Manager
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
307-231-3128
sbelinda@trcp.org

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
555 11th Street, NW
Sixth Floor
Washington, DC 20004
202-654-4600



FACTS
FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE
A BALANCING ACT DURING ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Balancing fish, wildlife and energy development in public lands management can be accomplished with ***FACTS.***

The vast open spaces of the West are becoming crisscrossed by a patchwork of industry. Since 1996, more than 24.4 million acres of the Rocky Mountain West - and counting - have been leased for energy development, resulting in an unprecedented loss of fish and wildlife habitat in what has traditionally been a sportsmen's paradise.

Some of the iconic western game species that are prized by sportsmen are beginning to suffer. The construction of drilling pads, roads and pipelines are invading the breeding grounds of sage grouse and the winter range of elk and mule deer. The runoff from drilling is compromising some of the West's finest blue ribbon trout streams. We all depend on energy to heat and light our homes and fuel our vehicles. But without a plan to ensure that energy development is done in a manner consistent with conservation of our western landscapes, fish and wildlife, will we be giving up too much?

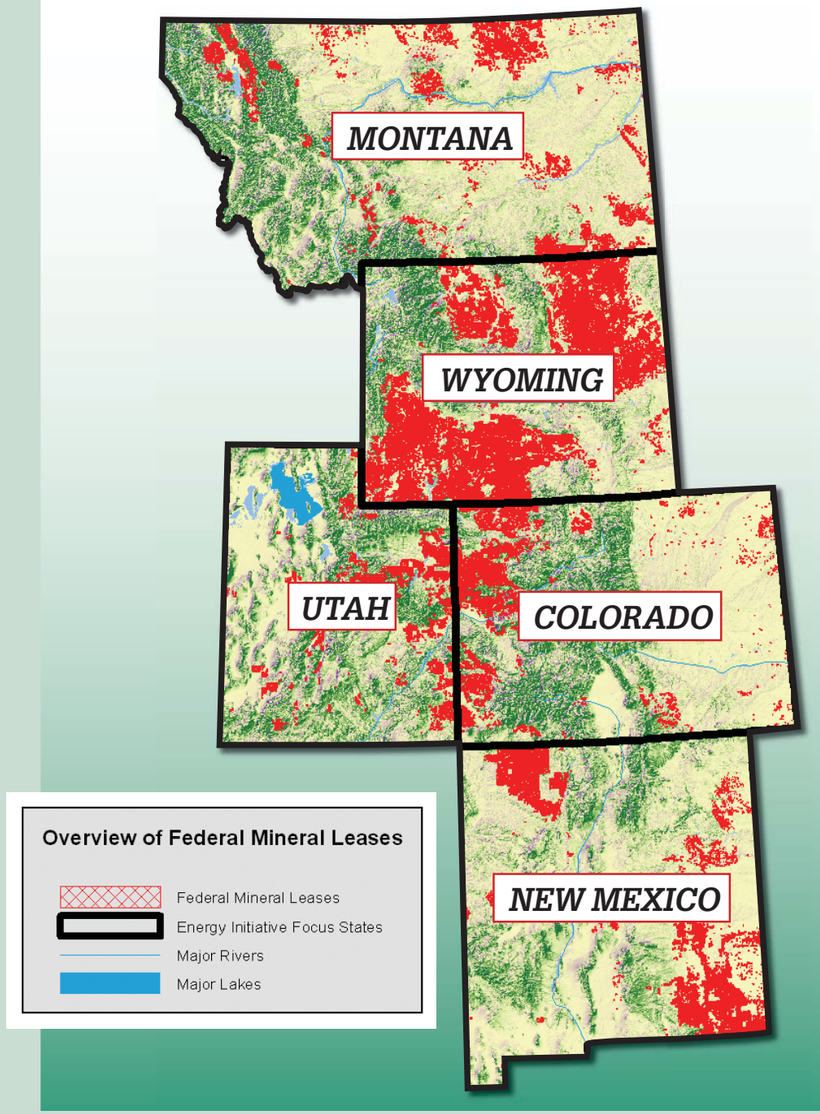
Public land managers have the opportunity to implement a sound energy development policy that will determine the future of the West's precious fish and wildlife habitats – this is the time to get it right. The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Fish, Wildlife and Energy Working Group, a collaboration of the nation's leading conservation and sportsmen's organizations, has developed a sensible plan to address the rapid growth of energy development. These organizations are asking lawmakers and agency officials to use the FACTS – Funding, Accountability, Coordination, Transparency and Science – to alleviate the impacts of energy development on fish and wildlife.

***F**unding*
***A**ccountability*
***C**oordination*
***T**ransparency*
***S**cience*

Armed with the FACTS we can make a difference for the fish, wildlife and open spaces that define the Rocky Mountain West.

Federal Mineral Leases in the Rocky Mountain West

Fish, Wildlife and Energy Working Group Focus States



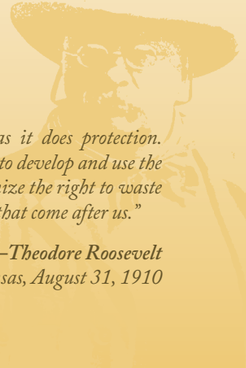
ENERGY FACTS FOR FISH & WILDLIFE

Funding

A C T S

In times of increasing pressure from energy development on our public lands, fish and wildlife management needs more funding, not less. In recent years, there have been regular increases in federal funding for expediting energy development – but no comparable increases for fish and wildlife conservation. State fish and wildlife managers do not have the funding resources necessary to manage habitats and populations where energy development is taking place. In addition, funds targeted for fish and wildlife are being redirected to the processing of permits for expanded energy development. Providing long-term funding to monitor, evaluate and protect fish and wildlife populations influenced by energy development is essential.

- *Funding appropriated for fish and wildlife management should be used to proactively manage habitats and populations – not just mitigate damage or process energy permits.*
- *Funding increases for energy development must be matched by increases for fish and wildlife management by state and federal agencies.*



"Conservation means development as much as it does protection. I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us."

—Theodore Roosevelt
Osawatomie, Kansas, August 31, 1910

Mule Deer

Mule deer, icons of western big game hunting, are declining in many parts of their range due to changes in land use, drought, predation, disease and periodic severe winters. With mule deer already in trouble, accelerated energy development that is reducing irreplaceable, critical winter range could spell disaster to existing populations. The most significant effects are not on the land at drilling sites because these can be reclaimed. It is the trucks, personnel, equipment, roads and facilities that displace wintering mule deer from favored habitats.

The threats to mule deer are widespread, ranging from heavy gas drilling and industrialization at the Pinedale Anticline of Wyoming to the more dispersed, but pervasive, coal bed methane development of the Powder River Basin of Montana and Wyoming. New development from south-central Wyoming near Rawlins to Rifle, Colorado, affects deer from the Red Desert, Sierra Madre and Roan Plateau/Piceance Basin. Book Cliffs deer herds in Colorado and Utah also are targets. These impacts are most often on public lands that are prime hunting destinations – lands where multiple-use mandates guarantee America's sportsmen that their wildlife will be sustained.

Mule deer are highly susceptible to the impacts of development in their favored habitats. With populations already on the decline, energy development could be the final blow unless federal agencies and industry make changes to current energy development processes. So far, mule deer are losing in the face of occupation of their winter ranges, and sportsmen are losing a hunting tradition.

Image by DusanSmetana.com

A New Strategy for Managing Energy and Wildlife

Managing for impacts to fish and wildlife before they occur could go a long way toward conserving some of the species at risk from the current energy boom. The TRCP Fish, Wildlife and Energy Working Group recommends that a "***conservation strategy***" for fish and wildlife resources should be required before energy development begins. Going beyond current National Environmental Policy Act documentation, this conservation strategy would identify and direct management of important fish and wildlife habitats and populations in addition to providing mitigation for impacts from energy development.

Energy Facts for Fish & Wildlife

Accountability

Substantial new accountability measures should be established to ensure that the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service manage our public lands equally for multiple uses and resources, maintaining a balance of energy development and fish and wildlife habitat. To hold the agencies accountable, the public should be able to track their compliance with law, policy, plans and, most importantly, commitments in decision documents.

- *A specific "Conservation Strategy" should be completed for each energy field or project before development starts. It must provide specific recommendations for actions to minimize impacts on fish and wildlife, while establishing plans for mitigation, detailed monitoring and the use of adaptive management.*
- *Managers, industry and other decision-makers must be held accountable and responsible for following laws, regulations, and policy, including commitments made in Records of Decision and other contracts with the American people.*
- *Evaluation of impacts from energy development should occur before leasing and include plans that balance development with the needs of fish and wildlife.*

Pronghorn

Pronghorn herds used to rival and even surpass the storied bison herds in the West, before populations declined precipitously at the beginning of the 20th century. Though nowhere near as high, populations are once again stable and pronghorn are a favored game species in most Western states, particularly Wyoming, where much of the pronghorn hunting in North America occurs.

Many herds are migratory, shifting their location to meet the demands of winter. The longest migration of any North American big-game animal occurs as pronghorn move from the summer grounds of Grand Teton National Park to their wintering grounds in the Upper Green River Basin – a corridor that is in the heart of the current energy boom. Gas drilling and rapid expansion of roads and other infrastructure are severing movement corridors, displacing pronghorn from important habitats and reducing their options to cope with winter weather.

Pronghorn and hunters need the wide open spaces of pronghorn country. But the habitat fragmentation and blocking of movement corridors caused by energy development could threaten the herds – and the hunting opportunity – in the Rocky Mountain West.

Image by DusanSmetana.com

ENERGY FACTS FOR FISH & WILDLIFE

FACTS Coordination

Public involvement and coordination between the federal government and all stakeholders – including local and state governments, non-governmental organizations, industry, sportsmen and others – should be assured throughout the energy development process. Better coordination will ensure that habitat management meets the goals and objectives of fish and wildlife populations and deals with the impacts from energy development.

- *State wildlife agencies that have the authority to manage wildlife and fish populations affected by energy development should be given stronger legal standing in the decision-making process.*
- *Federal officials must employ an adaptive management process that requires regular reviews of both state and federal research and monitoring findings. The process must include active consideration of alternative energy field management techniques – and the means for implementing these changes for future development.*

"We do not intend that our natural resources shall be exploited by the few against the interest of the many. . . Our aim is to preserve our natural resources for the public as a whole, for the average man and the average woman who make up the body of the American people."

—Theodore Roosevelt
Convention of the National Progressive Party
Chicago, August, 1912

Cutthroat Trout

Native cutthroat trout are a prized catch for anglers in the streams and rivers of the Rocky Mountain West. But habitat degradation and the introduction of non-natives have caused populations to decline significantly, and at least three subspecies have been considered for Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing. Already at risk from land use changes, the rapid development of energy resources creates a new concern for these trout.

Cutthroat are especially susceptible to siltation and do not survive well with heavy disturbance to the surrounding landscape. The Green River drainage in Wyoming and Colorado is native cutthroat habitat, and new leasing and development threaten some of the best remaining habitat for this species. Intensive energy development on one field in the Upper Green River Basin proposes to remove more than half of the surface vegetation. Coal-bed methane development in Wyoming and Montana pumps "produced" water with concentrated salts into streams and rivers, threatening the fish and many of the bugs on which they depend. And in a region where water quantity is always of concern, more than 15,000 gallons of water a day is pulled from coal seams.

Image by Denver Bryan

ENERGY FACTS FOR FISH & WILDLIFE

FACTS

Transparency

Federal and state resource management agencies are managing a public trust, and their decisions on energy development must follow an established, transparent planning process that allows for public review. A consistent planning and decision-making process that follows administrative law and policy will make sure that the public is supportive of land management decisions.

- *Leasing and development should be guided by complete and up-to-date land use plans developed with public input and based on current information on how development is likely to proceed.*
- *Sufficient information about proposed energy leases and development must be provided to the public, and sufficient time for public comment should be allowed based on the complexity of the proposals.*
- *Meetings related to energy development on public lands should be part of the public record.*
- *Federal and state agencies should use all means available to inform the public about the management of public lands and fish and wildlife resources, including energy development activities.*

Sage-Grouse

Sage-grouse are synonymous with the expanses of sagebrush prairies in the West and have been a favored game bird for western hunters for generations. Human alteration of sage habitats for more than 100 years has reduced grouse populations, and there are now less than half the number encountered by early western settlers. Similar to mule deer, sage-grouse behavior is negatively affected by the increased level of development from drilling and energy production. Breeding activity is reduced because sage-grouse males abandon key display grounds within one and one-half miles of active drilling. Young birds do not return to sites with heavy development activity, suggesting that populations will not sustain themselves near active well fields. Also, like mule deer, sage-grouse populations decline during drought. This makes development pressure more important because it can be managed, but drought cannot.

In 2005, a move to list sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act was found not to be necessary because of strong populations in Wyoming and a few nearby states. But at least half of the remaining good habitat is on public lands and several of the key grouse areas are being rapidly developed for gas extraction. Effects are widespread from the Upper Green River of Wyoming to the Powder River Basin in Montana and Wyoming. Now Wyoming's Red Desert, which maintains some of the strongest remaining grouse numbers, is targeted for widespread development.

Research in the Powder River Basin and the Upper Green River Basin has shown that large blocks of undisturbed sage habitat are necessary to sustain sage-grouse populations. Scientists predict that sage-grouse will disappear from developed areas unless some key habitats are protected.

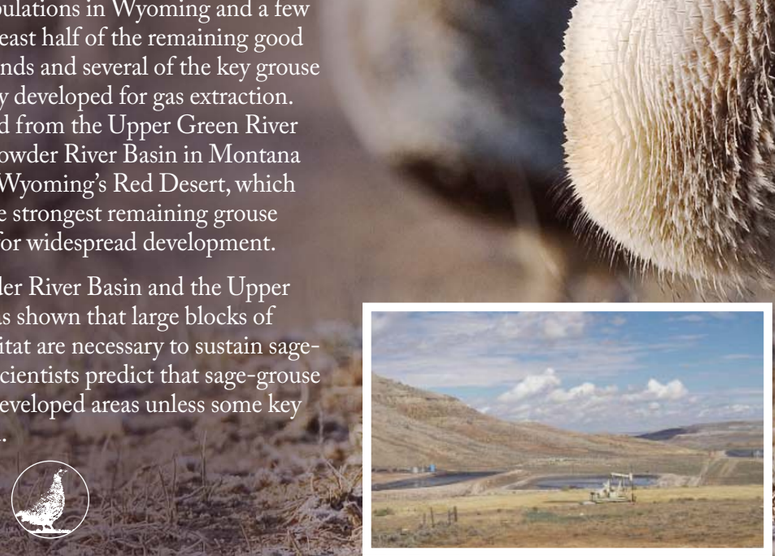


Image by Denver Bryan

FACT

Science

Effective fish and wildlife management based on science must be used when assessing and mitigating the impacts on fish and wildlife from energy development. Adaptive management processes that allow for a systemic approach to adjusting development must be implemented to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife.

- *Science must be used to inform all fish and wildlife management decisions, particularly when specific research has been conducted on the impacts of energy development.*
- *Science-based mitigation, using rigorous methods and an adaptive management process, must be incorporated into energy development planning.*
- *Places that have irreplaceable or extremely important fish and wildlife resources should be identified by the use of science and available data. Efforts should be undertaken to permanently restrict these areas from energy development.*

"It is time for us now as a nation to exercise the same reasonable foresight in dealing with our great national resources that would be shown by any prudent man in conserving and wisely using the property which contains the assurance of well-being for himself and his children."

—Theodore Roosevelt
Conference on the Conservation of Natural Resources
the White House, May 13, 1908