

# Greater Little Mountain Coalition

*Working to Preserve Wildlife, Fisheries & Recreation in Wyoming's unique Little Mountain Area*

*"The Little Mountain area is considered by many to be ...the crown jewel for wildlife and recreation."* Governor Freudenthal letter to BLM.

**Who We Are.** The Greater Little Mountain Coalition is a group of sportsmen's organizations and concerned citizens who want to see the Greater Little Mountain area's rugged and sensitive landscape continue to support abundant wildlife & fish populations, including Colorado River cutthroat trout and sensitive species, and provide ample recreation opportunities. Our goal is to seek stronger protection measures for specific areas, work for best management practices, and to be active participants in the BLM's upcoming resource management plan revision for this region.

**Background.** This unique high desert habitat region is considered by biologists and resource managers to be some of the most sensitive fish & wildlife habitat in Wyoming. Since 1990, the Little Mountain area has benefited from over \$2 million in habitat restoration and enhancement projects funded by various state and federal agencies, conservation

organizations, and private individuals. Our goal is to seek stronger protection measures for specific areas, to work for best management practices, and to be active participants in the BLM's upcoming resource management plan revision for this region.



Shelby Martin

**Threats.** Multiple threats are encroaching upon this prized area. We seek mitigation actions that support responsible energy development efforts while protecting some of the most sensitive of these areas from surface disturbance.

## Oil and Gas

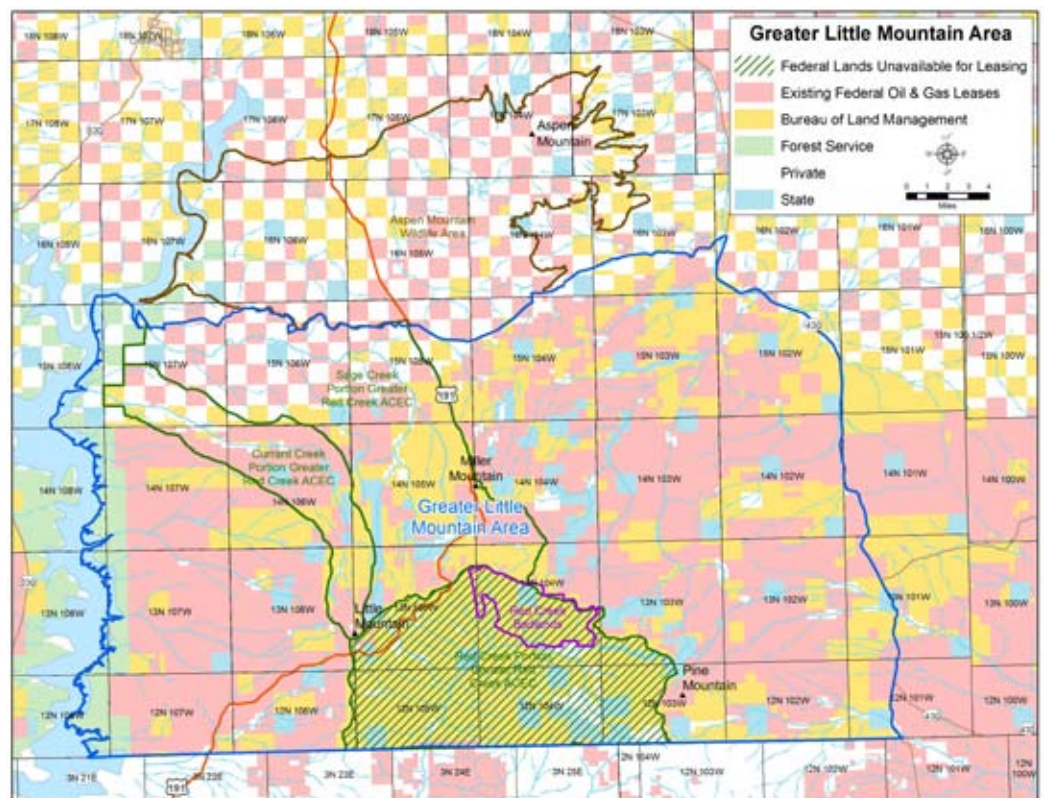
Over 169,000 acres of BLM land in the Little Mountain area have been leased for oil and gas development. The BLM continues to offer energy leases in critical habitat and sensitive watersheds with minimal stipulations. Over the past 2 years proposals for 2 seismic surveys during hunting season and 3 applications to drill have been authorized.

## Wind

Currently, the BLM has authorized 31,959 acres as Right of Way for wind development in the Greater Little Mountain Area. The majority of these acres are also leased for oil and gas development causing conflicting & overlapping land use while doubling the effects of industrialization on the landscape.

## Oil Shale

The 2008 Oil Shale and Tar Sands Final PEIS includes 95,367 acres available for development in the Greater Red Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern within the Greater Little Mountain Area.



**“Any energy development, whether limited or broad, in the Little Mountain area is going to stir up a perfect storm of wildlife, environmental, recreational and social issues,”** Wyoming Governor Dave Freudenthal 2009

## Habitat Improvement Summary

- More than \$2 million spent on habitat improvement projects for Colorado River cutthroat trout, elk, mule deer, and sensitive watersheds.
- Local citizens, organizations, the BLM and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department have actively worked on these projects.
- BLM has spent more than \$1.6 million toward wildlife habitat recovery; WGFD has spent more than \$340,000.
- More than 20 years of land and watershed enhancement projects have significantly improved big game hunting opportunities and cutthroat trout fishing opportunities in the Greater Little Mountain area.

## Wildlife and Fish Facts

- World class trophy elk and mule deer hunting.
- Area 31 considered most desirable quality elk hunt & one of the hardest drawing odds area in Wyoming.
- Deer Area 102 is recognized nationally as a top mule deer hunting spot in the West.
- Pronghorn antelope hunting remains popular among local residents.
- Aspen Mountain area provides superb elk, mule deer, and antelope hunting with a collective average hunter success rate of more than 90%



WGFD/BLM

- Colorado River cutthroat trout inhabit more than 130 stream miles of highly sensitive watersheds.
- More than \$10 million annually is spent on recreational sport fishing in Flaming Gorge Reservoir
- Efforts to protect and preserve watershed degradation and big game habitat enhancements have helped increase big game and Colorado River cutthroat trout populations in the Greater Little Mountain Area.

## Sensitive Species

Wyoming's Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) represent terrestrial & aquatic wildlife and their habitats which are



C. Purves

threatened by various actions and require special conservation management status. Within the Greater Little Mountain area, the following species are high value priorities by both BLM and Wyoming Game & Fish.

- Colorado River cutthroat trout
- Greater Sage-Grouse
- Midget faded rattlesnake
- Pygmy Rabbit
- Wyoming Pocket Gopher
- Ferruginous Hawk



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## BLM Energy Leasing Summary

The following lease sales contained acreage within the Greater Little Mountain area:

- **Dec. 2007:** BLM offered 11 oil & gas parcels south of Rock Springs.
- **April 2008:** BLM offered 2 parcels (2900 acres).
- **August. 2008:** BLM offered 6 parcels (6,700 acres).
- **Dec. 2008:** BLM offered 14 parcels (16,000 acres).
- **Feb. 2009:** BLM offered 1 parcel (1785 acres).
- **June 2009:** BLM offered 1 parcel (1753 acres).
- **August 2009:** BLM offered 2 parcels (2239 acres).

Due to our coalition's efforts a little less than half of these offered leases were temporarily deferred and not sold on the auction block.

## Action Updates

- Greater Little Mountain Area ranked in the top 10 most important fish and wildlife habitats on America's public lands by Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development (SFRED). Read the report at [www.Sportsmen4ResponsibleEnergy.org](http://www.Sportsmen4ResponsibleEnergy.org)
- The Rock Springs BLM office proposes to update the Green River Resource Management Plan beginning in 2010.
- Two new federal projects being proposed in the Greater Little Mountain Area include the North Dutch John Well and the Azealia Seismic Project. For more information on these projects go to [www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/field\\_offices/Rock\\_Springs.html](http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/field_offices/Rock_Springs.html)
- BLM has authorized Right of Way permits for 2 wind projects located on Aspen and Miller Mountain.
- For further information, contact Joy Bannon (Wyoming Wildlife Federation) at [joybannon@wyomingwildlife.org](mailto:joybannon@wyomingwildlife.org) or 307-335-8633; Cathy Purves (Trout Unlimited) at [cpurves@tu.org](mailto:cpurves@tu.org) or 307-332-6700 ext. 10.
- You can also visit the Wyoming Wildlife Federation website for all updates at [www.wyomingwildlife.org](http://www.wyomingwildlife.org).



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