



## **Energy companies offer \$36 million for Pinedale habitat**

CHEYENNE, Wyo. Three energy producers are offering to contribute 36 (m) million dollars to improve wildlife habitat and preserve wildlife migration routes in the Pinedale Anticline in western Wyoming.

The companies offered the money as the US Bureau of Land Management crafts a plan based on their proposal to allow year-round drilling on parts of the anticline. Currently gas development is restricted by seasonal closures to protect wildlife that spend the winter in the area and sage grouse that nest in the spring.

Conservationists have voiced opposition to dropping the seasonal restrictions, saying year-round development would disturb wildlife even more than now and cause more air pollution, among other impacts.

The 36 (m) million offer from Questar, Ultra Resources, and Shell Exploration and Production comes relatively late in the lengthy bureaucratic process.

But BLM spokesman Steven Hall said the agency still has time to incorporate the companies' offer into its decision on their overall management plan.