

**TOWN OF NEW CASTLE
RESOLUTION NO. TC-2005-2**

A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of New Castle in Support of Protecting the Top and Cliffs of the Roan Plateau and for Adopting the "Community Alternative" into the Bureau of Land Management's Final Management Plan for the Roan Plateau Planning Area.

WHEREAS, the Roan Plateau Planning Area of Garfield County provides outstanding opportunities for backcountry recreation, such as backpacking, hunting, mountain biking, camping, fishing, wildlife viewing, scenic drives and encounters with solitude, and these historic uses contribute significantly to the local and national economy; and

WHEREAS, the top and cliffs of the Roan Plateau includes important mid-elevation wildlife habitat, an extremely high level of biological diversity, including several species of endemic plants, and is considered by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program to be one of the four most biologically diverse places in western Colorado and the only one without any protections; and

WHEREAS, the top and cliffs of the Roan Plateau provide an undeveloped island of important public land resources in the rapidly growing upper Grand Valley, and among the rapidly expanding Piceance Basin gas fields, and is the scenic backdrop for Rifle, New Castle, Parachute and Battlement Mesa, Colorado; and

WHEREAS, during an earlier public comment period the Town of New Castle and every municipality in Garfield County have already passed a resolution in support of this middle ground approach; and

WHEREAS, public lands at the base of the Roan Plateau along the I-70 corridor are currently being developed for oil and gas, and it is reasonable to require industry to use the best available technology to protect the sensitive and unique resources of the Roan Plateau Planning Area, and it is reasonable to focus energy development in these areas using these technologies in order to maximize resource extraction, utilize existing infrastructure, and minimize scenic and environmental impacts; and

WHEREAS, Garfield County is already helping to provide for America's energy needs, and sufficient access to abundant energy supplies already exists throughout the County and region, and large portions of public lands inside and near the planning area are already leased or in energy production; and

WHEREAS, the "community alternative" is a common sense approach which honors the community's desire to protect the top and cliffs, and allows responsible development of over two thirds of the planning area, and provides for retrieval of over 85% of the Planning Area's federal natural gas likely to be produced during the next twenty years without leasing any of the public lands on top of the Plateau; and

WHEREAS, advancing technologies hold promise of extracting additional natural gas from underneath the Plateau and along its base over the twenty year life of this plan allowing even more of the Planning Area's reserves to be developed, and that

requiring high standards to protect the sensitive and popular lands atop the Plateau and along its cliffs also stimulates innovation and the development of new production technologies; and

WHEREAS, the "community alternative" keeps the top and cliffs of the Roan Plateau mostly "as it is" while still managing the area for responsible energy development and other public uses such as grazing, hunting, hiking, fishing and other recreation, which are all important public uses and contribute greatly to our residents' quality of life and to our visitors' enjoyment of the area.

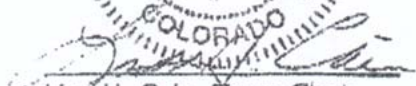
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of New Castle, Colorado:

1. The Town Council adopts the foregoing recitals as findings of fact and determinations of the Council.
2. The Town Council of the Town of New Castle, Colorado, supports protection of the undeveloped top and cliffs of the Roan Plateau, and opposes both gas leasing and gas development on the cliff faces and top of the Plateau during the life of the proposed management plan for the Planning Area.
3. The Town of New Castle supports the "Community Alternative" as the best alternative for management of the public resources in the planning area. Specifically, the Town of New Castle supports the attached provisions of this community alternative, and urges that the BLM incorporate these changes into the final management plan for the Roan Plateau.
4. In addition to being included as official comment for the record in the BLM's planning process, a copy of this resolution shall be immediately submitted to the Garfield County Board of Commissioners, State Senator Jack Taylor, and State Representatives Al White and Kathleen Curry and to the members of Colorado's Congressional delegation.

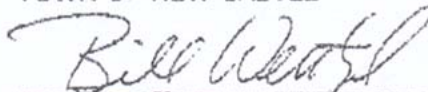
Introduced, Read and Adopted at a Regular Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of New Castle, Colorado, on January 18, 2005.



ATTEST:


Lisa H. Cain, Town Clerk

TOWN OF NEW CASTLE


Bill Wentzel, Mayor