

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PITKIN
COUNTY, COLORADO
IN SUPPORT OF THE THOMPSON DIVIDE COALITION**

RESOLUTION NO. 030-2009

RECITALS

A. WHEREAS, the Thompson Divide Coalition is a broad-based coalition of local landowners, ranchers, farmers, hunters, anglers, recreationalists, water users, conservationists and local governments, formed to address mutual concerns regarding the existing oil and gas leases on federal lands in the Thompson, Fourmile, Muddy and Clear Fork Creek watersheds, and the headwaters of East Divide Creek, and the potential negative impacts on this rural area associated with their development.

B. WHEREAS, ranching and farming in the Roaring Fork Valley not only make important contributions to the economy of the area, but define the rural character of the valley. These watersheds provide clean water to farms and ranches, as well as water for domestic use. In addition, these federal lands host grazing allotments for summer range for the majority of the area's ranchers.

C. WHEREAS, the area of concern is part of a 122,000 acre roadless landscape, which is the largest contiguous roadless area in the state. These federal lands provide important habitat for wildlife, and excellent hunting and angling opportunities. The area has been recognized by the Colorado Division of Wildlife as high priority habitat for a variety of species. It is part of a critical big game migration corridor and provides key wildlife security for species such as deer, elk, bear, and lynx. The entire area is important elk calving habitat and summer range for big game. In addition, the Colorado River cutthroat trout (recognized as a Species of Special Concern) is found in at least one fork of Thompson Creek.

D. WHEREAS, the area offers exceptional recreational opportunities and is regularly used by local bikers, climbers, hikers, snowmobilers and cross country and back country skiers. The recreational opportunities this special area provides local residents are an essential part of the high quality of life offered by the valley.

E. WHEREAS, energy development in this area would have a deleterious impact on the rural character, ranching heritage and agricultural heritage of the valley and would forever ruin the wild character and exceptional habitat of this area. Furthermore, energy development in this rural and largely roadless area would create serious public environmental health and emergency management concerns, and potentially cause a marked increase in the need for social services that Pitkin County and other local jurisdictions are already struggling to provide.

F. WHEREAS, the Thompson Divide Coalition recognizes the need for energy development; however it believes it is imperative that energy development occur only in appropriate places and

that it proceed in a responsible manner. The Bureau of Land Management has approved 80 leases on this special landscape, half of which were let in roadless areas without surface stipulations after the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule was in effect.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Pitkin County that:

1. The Thompson, Fourmile, Muddy and Clear Fork Creek watersheds, and the headwaters of East Divide Creek, as well as the local community, environmental and economic values these areas support deserve preservation and protection; and
2. Energy development on federal lands in these areas is inconsistent with such preservation and protection, and is indicative of a flawed and irresponsible approach to energy development; and
3. Pitkin County supports the efforts of the Thompson Divide Coalition to explore legislative initiatives and other opportunities to protect these special areas from energy development.

INTRODUCED, READ AND ADOPTED ON May 13, 2009.

ATTEST:

By: Jeanette Jones
Jeanette Jones
Deputy County Clerk

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF PITKIN COUNTY

By: Patti Kay-Clapper
Patti Kay-Clapper
Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By: John Ely
John Ely
County Attorney

MANAGER APPROVAL:

By: Hilary Fletcher
Hilary Fletcher
County Manager