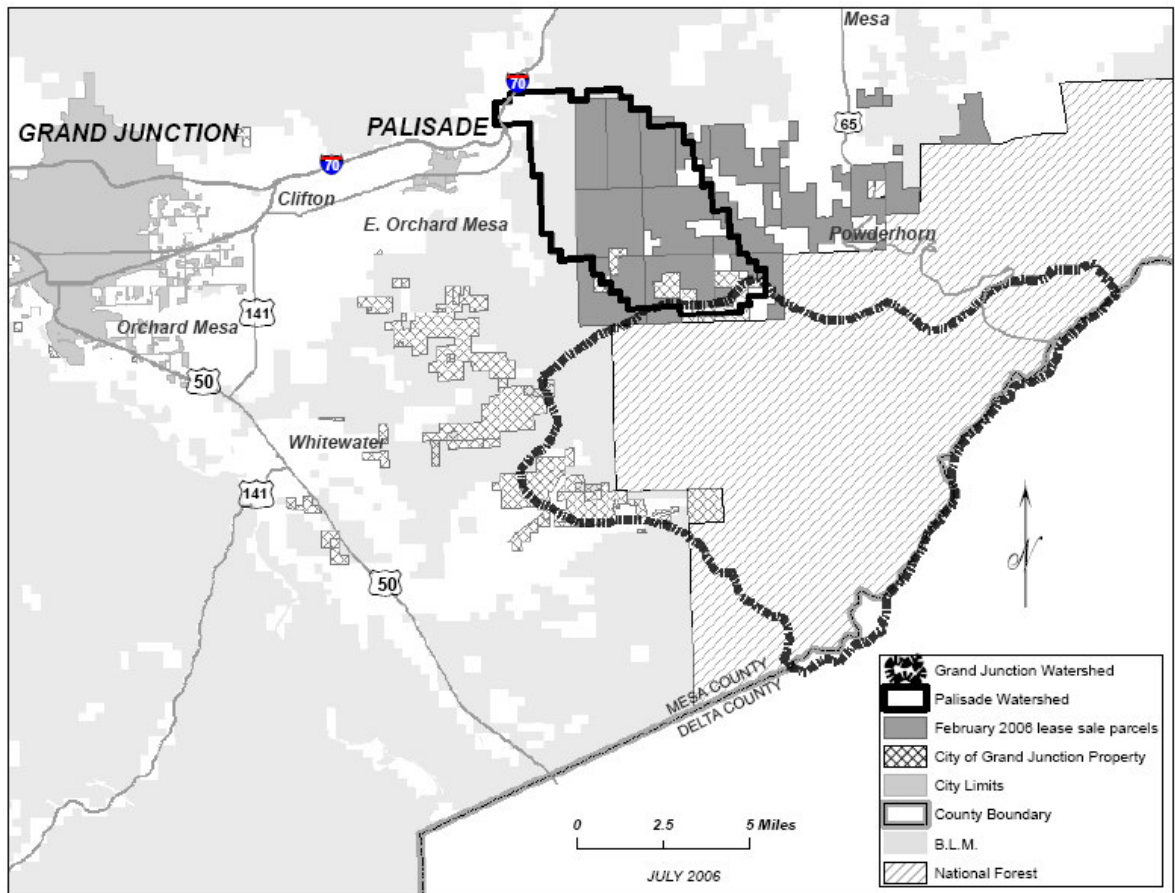


# HELP PROTECT OUR WATER!

On February 9<sup>th</sup>, the BLM leased 13,000 acres for oil and gas development within Palisade's and Grand Junction's designated watersheds. The leases are currently being protested by the City of Grand Junction, the Town of Palisade, and Western Colorado Congress.

Western Colorado Congress is not opposed to gas drilling but we recognize that it is an industrial activity and should be managed as such. Over the past two years there have been several accidents, toxic spills, instances of underground and surface water contamination, explosions and fires that have resulted from gas drilling in our region. A municipal watershed is not the place for this type of industrial activity.



Oil and gas operations require an average of seven acres of ground disturbance per gas well. This includes building a road to access the site, leveling a well pad, and connecting pipelines to the well. This ground disturbance can lead to increased sediment (mud) in a stream which – in the case of a municipal watershed – can lead to higher water treatment costs.

Oil and gas operations also use drilling fluids that can be highly toxic. For each well hydraulic fracturing treatments send 50,000 to 350,000 gallons of a pressurized chemical soup (often mixed in diesel fuel) to break up the layers of rock containing gas deposits. Only a portion of the mixture is recovered and then stored in open waste pits for reuse or until it evaporates or is hauled away. The rest remains underground. Since 2002 the industry has self-reported over 1,000 accidental spills in Colorado. Many spills go unreported. Of those, 183 spills have resulted in contamination of surface or ground water. (Source: Colorado Oil and Gas Commission - <http://oil-gas.state.co.us/>)

There is no way to guarantee accidents will not happen. There have been dozens of water wells that have been contaminated by drilling processes. In neighboring Garfield County there have been some recent examples of water contamination: the Goad's well near Rifle and the Dietrich's well near Silt, both tainted with explosive levels of gas; the Amos' well near Silt which is blamed for family illnesses; and Divide Creek near Silt which has been bubbling with methane gas for three years now.

# **SUPPORT THE GRAND JUNCTION WATERSHED INITIATIVE**

## **What is the watershed initiative?**

The watershed initiative is a ballot measure being proposed by Grand Junction residents that are concerned about the City's supply of clean drinking water.

The ordinance puts additional protection requirements on "HIGH RISK" activities that could jeopardize our water supply. These "HIGH RISK" activities within our designated watershed on the Grand Mesa Slopes include:

- Excavating a large amount of soil;
- Using or transporting large amounts of hazardous materials; and
- Timber, mining, oil and gas drilling, and feedlot operations.

Once passed, the City will have increased power to REQUIRE additional water quality protections that are not currently in city law and are not required by the state oil and gas commission or by the federal land agencies.

These ADDITIONAL WATER QUALITY PROTECTIONS may include:

- supplying water quality "baseline" data and extensive planning documents before permit is issued;
- supplying description of activity including any toxic chemicals that will be brought into the watershed;
- providing a list of best management practices that will reduce risk to water quality;
- posting a bond that would cover 100% of potential damages; and
- hiring additional third-party monitors to ensure the operations will not harm our water supply.
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## **Who is running the initiative?**

Concerned Citizens Alliance, a member group of the Western Colorado Congress, is spearheading the effort. Western Colorado Congress (WCC) is an alliance for community action empowering people to protect and enhance their quality of life in western Colorado. WCC is based in Grand Junction and has eight community groups and over 3,000 members.

## **How can I help?**

Grand Junction residents need to show they support protecting our water supply. Please sign the initiative to get protection of clean water on the ballot in November. Petitions will be available at the downtown Farmer's Market on Thursdays as well as in several downtown businesses.

There are many other groups, organizations and businesses that are supporting and joining our effort every day. To carry a petition, to get your business as a supporter of the initiative, or to schedule a group presentation about the effort, please call WCC at (970) 256-7650.

**Western  
Colorado  
Congress**

*An Alliance for Community Action*

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For more information or to get involved in protecting our supply of clean drinking water, call Matt at WESTERN COLORADO CONGRESS at 256-7650 or visit [www.wccongress.org](http://www.wccongress.org).

