

First Rockies natural gas report issued

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The U.S. Wildlife Conservation Society has released the first-year results of a study on how natural gas development in the Rockies might affect wildlife.

The report represents initial data from a five-year WCS study funded by the Shell Exploration & Production Co., Ultra Resources Inc. and other natural gas developers. The study focuses on how such development influences wildlife in the Rocky Mountains -- a region that serves as a critical wintering ground for pronghorn antelope, the focus species of the study.

"The Upper Green River Valley Basin contains some of the nation's most spectacular wildlife, including pronghorn, one of the most prominent and wide-ranging species of the western United States," said WCS researcher Joel Berger, co-author of the study with WCS scientists Jon Beckmann and Kim Murray Berger.

Joel Berger says the study is designed to provide empirical data concerning management of the valley's resources and serve as a model to balance wildlife needs with energy development across the Rocky Mountain region.

The Wildlife Conservation Society is based at the Bronx Zoo in New York City.

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