

**Summary:**

Impacts to hydrological resources would be greater under the Proposed Alternative than under the No Action Alternative.

Impacts to surface water would be of the same magnitude under both alternatives, however the duration over which these impacts would occur would be 14 months longer under the Proposed Alternative. The discharge of CBNG water into the Tongue River would increase the SAR and EC of the river, however as this discharge does not cause established standard to be exceeded. Therefore, it is not anticipated that any beneficial uses of the Tongue River will be adversely affected by either alternative.

Groundwater may be drawn down up to 3.1 miles under the No Action Alternative, and up to 3.6 miles under the Proposed Action. This creates the potential to affect wells and springs. Water mitigation agreements, as required by the Powder River Basin Controlled Groundwater Area designation, will mitigate these effects. Under the No Action alternative the area within the potential drawdown area is 18 square miles less than under the Proposed Action Alternative. Implementation of the Proposed Action would cause 1 more domestic/stock well to be included in the potential drawdown area. After production is completed, 70% groundwater recovery would be expected after 5-12 years. Complete recover may require hundreds of years (BLM, 2003).