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MEMBER GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

Dakota Resource Council

- In November, Montana Dakota Utilities Resources Group announced it would not build the Big Stone II plant near Milbank, South Dakota. DRC had intervened in the North Dakota Public Service Commission's proceedings on the planned \$1.6 billion project and presented evidence that utilities underestimate the long-term cost of electricity from the plant because the agency did not consider the likelihood of federal regulations on carbon dioxide.
- In February, DRC leaders and staff met with Congressional and USDA staff to ask for reforms in USDA's program for regulating GM crops. They asked USDA to make changes to rules proposed by the Bush Administration that do away with much of the review of new GM crops proposed for release. Less than one month later, USDA announced plans to reopen the comment period on rules governing GM crops, opening the door to major changes to the way GM crops are regulated.

Dakota Rural Action

- DRA has reached out to over 200 affected landowners along the Keystone XL pipeline. As a result, 63 affected families have joined together as a legal bloc to negotiate easement terms. This legal bloc represents over one-third of the proposed pipeline distance across South Dakota. DRA has helped the landowners organize behind one lawyer to represent themselves collectively in negotiations with any Keystone XL land agents.
- DRA initiated its Farm Beginnings training program in October. Farm Beginnings is a farmer-led training and support program that provides participants with the opportunities to gain the tools to successfully launch a profitable farm enterprise.

Idaho Rural Council

- Responding to a petition from IRC, the Idaho Department of Agriculture held the first of a series of negotiated-rulemaking sessions in November to set new regulations for pathogen drift from sprinklers using dairy lagoon water.
- IRC is also organizing a campaign to promote small-scale wind energy projects by amending zoning ordinances in ten south-central Idaho counties to eliminate unnecessary barriers to small-scale wind generation.

Northern Plains Resource Council

- In a major achievement, Northern Plains won a campaign that sought \$15 million in funding for energy efficiency for Montana schools.
- A study commissioned by Northern Plains detailed the devastating effects that coalbed methane development would have on groundwater aquifers in the Powder River Basin. The model verified the existing conditions in the aquifers and predicted that aquifer drawdown could exceed 290 feet in the middle of coalbed methane fields. Recovery of the aquifers could take up to 200 years.

Oregon Rural Action

- Oregon Rural Action and its Blue Mountain Chapter are collaborating with schools and health organizations in Union County to address childhood obesity. The coalition is working to change students' eating habits by linking local farmers with school food service programs.
- Three local chapters of Oregon Rural Action are working on community gardens. The Blue Mountain Chapter serves residents, including many college students without adequate garden space. The Snake

River chapter is collaborating with the local food bank to teach people how to garden and to supply surplus produce to the food bank. The Columbia Basin Chapter is working with Future Farmers of America members to become producers for local farmers markets.

Powder River Basin Resource Council

- The BLM's Wyoming State Director canceled a coalbed methane gas project in the Fortification Creek area in Johnson County. This decision followed a lot of organizing work by PRBRC over the last few years and came one month after leaders and staff from met with the new national BLM Director in Washington, DC.
- As a result of a successful community education campaign by a local affiliate of PRBRC, the city of Sheridan followed a growing number of cities adopting light policies to promote energy efficiency and reap the benefits of starry skies by approving an outdoor lighting ordinance.

Western Colorado Congress

- The Colorado legislature approved comprehensive regulations for the oil and gas industry and they were signed into law in March. This win capped years of organizing by WCC, and is one of the top achievements in WCC's 29 years. The rules encourage responsible energy development by adding vital protections for public health and the environment.
- A decade-long campaign ended in celebration as WCC secured wilderness protection for the Dominguez Canyon when President Obama signed the Omnibus Wilderness Public Lands Act in March. The bill included 66,280 acres of the Dominguez Canyon.

WORC celebrates 30 years of building community power

On June 6, 2009, 80 of WORC's leaders, staff and friends met in Grand Junction, Colorado to celebrate WORC's 30th Anniversary. The celebration included panels featuring founding leaders and long-time friends.

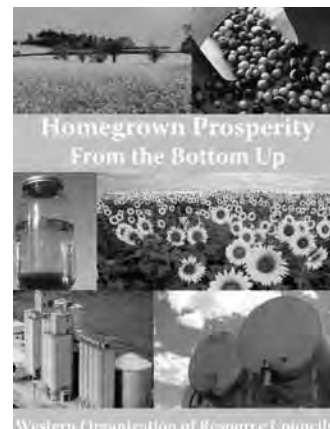
During one panel, Mabel Dobbs from Idaho Rural Council, Richard Parks from Northern Plains, Ed Swartz from Powder River Basin Resource Council and Randolph Nodland from Dakota Resource Council shared stories from WORC's early years. Randolph Nodland was a founding Board member of WORC and attended WORC's convening Board meeting in November 1979 in Billings.



Long time WORC friends (from left) Herb White and Jessica Fernandez-White, retired community organizers, Maureen O'Connell from Save Our Cumberland Mountains, Judy Hatcher from the Environmental Support Center, and Jeff Blodgett from Wellstone Action, on a panel (moderated by Pat Sweeney, WORC's Director on the far right) discussing the past and future of community organizing.

WORC court ruling stops further sales and planting of GM alfalfa.

In June, WORC won a significant victory when the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals declined Monsanto's request to rehear its appeal on the banned sales and planting of Roundup Ready alfalfa. This decision affirmed the Court's September 2008 ruling, which found that planting of GM alfalfa could result in potentially irreversible harm to other varieties of crops, the environment, and farmers, and upheld a nationwide ban on the planting of Roundup Ready alfalfa, pending a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).



WORC's new report examines small-scale biodiesel industry

In spring 2009, WORC released *Homegrown Prosperity from the Bottom Up*, which examines the experiences of farmers, local entrepreneurs and governmental bodies starting biodiesel production facilities. The report presents six case studies covering biodiesel's economic potential, legal and systemic issues, sustainability, available technical assistance and financial resources. The report can be downloaded at www.worc.org.

WORC wins new surface owner notification requirements

On July 30, 2009, the Bureau of Land Management issued new guidance (Instruction Memorandum 2009-184) requiring notification of split-estate surface owners when their subsurface is going to be included in a lease sale. In addition, when companies nominate parcels that are on split-estate lands, they must provide the name and address of the surface owners or the BLM will not process the nomination. The requirement to include the information is effective immediately, but the Instruction Memo states that the requirement to notify landowners is not effective until October 2010 lease sales. This requirement is one that WORC and its groups have been pushing for a long time, and although the October 2010 date is far off, this is a significant win in our work to protect surface owners.

WORC is a regional network of seven grassroots community organizations that include 10,000 members and 45 local chapters. WORC helps its member groups succeed by providing training and coordinating regional issue campaigns.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Dakota Resource Council

North Dakota

Dakota Rural Action

South Dakota

Idaho Rural Council

Idaho

Northern Plains Resource Council

Montana

Oregon Rural Action

Oregon

Powder River Basin Resource Council

Wyoming

Western Colorado Congress

Colorado

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WORC hosts Tri-National Trade Conference

Thirty participants representing 14 organizations from the U.S., Mexico and Canada met at Home on the Range in February for a Tri-National Trade Meeting. The meeting resulted in three main avenues for approaching the problems NAFTA has created for livestock producers in all three countries: addressing corporate concentration in the livestock industry and antitrust enforcement; food safety; and dumping of commodities.



WORC's delegation at the conference, from left to right, John Munsell, Roger Brenna, John Hagen, Jeri Lynn Bakken, Gilles Stockton, Cindy Klein, Karen Englehart, Pat Sweeney, and Dena Hoff.

WORC poll finds strong public support for property owner protections, FRAC Act

With its member groups in Colorado and Montana, WORC conducted in-depth polling this summer to gauge the public sentiment on the Clean Water Restoration Act, Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals (FRAC) Act, and protecting surface owner property rights around oil and gas activities. More than 8 out of 10 voters favor strengthening protections for private property owners from the effects of oil and gas drilling.

Even when asked if protecting private property owners would lead to higher gas prices and increase our dependence on foreign oil, in Montana 62% and in Western Colorado 61% still favored still favored property rights protections,

Pollsters explained hydraulic fracturing and the FRAC Act which would regulate fracturing under the Safe Drinking Water Act and require companies to disclose the chemicals they are using in the fracturing process. The survey found that an overwhelming two-thirds of the voters in Montana and western Colorado favor the FRAC Act.

WORC trains leaders, strengthens member groups

In 2009, WORC held 13 trainings for 262 members, leaders and staff including:

- Two Principles of Community Organizing trainings for 57 participants.
- Six Leadership and Action WORCshops for 63 participants.
- One Advanced Principles of Community Organizing training for 15 participants.
- One June Leadership Training and Board Meeting for 70 participants.
- One December Board Planning Session and Staff and Leader Training for 36 participants.
- Two Staff Director Meetings for WORC's seven staff directors.

In addition, WORC staff spent 2,496 hours (62 weeks) on member group consulting in 2009. This does not reflect all the time spent with the member groups as time spent on campaigns are coded under specific issue campaigns. Some of this support and consulting includes: technology and data management, leadership development, strategic planning, campaign strategy on local and multi-state campaigns, lobby training, fundraising and building funder relationships and media coordination and strategy.

WORC's radio special addresses coal production in the west

WORC produced a 30 minute radio special that addressed lesser known issues about coal, such as coal ash and carbon capture and sequestration. *We shall remain – life with and after coal* visits three communities – a Montana town where coal has been both a blessing and a curse, an Indian reservation looking to coal for salvation, and a town on the plains of North Dakota that's still hesitant to open its doors to coal and coal power development after years of the industry's knocking. The program also looks into carbon sequestration, and WCC President Gretchen Nicholoff adds a commentary on the need for energy efficiency and a strong federal renewable fuels standard. It is also available for download at www.highplainsnews.org. More than 30 public and community radio stations across the country have broadcast the special.

WORC builds opposition to National Animal Identification System

WORC's Animal ID Campaign is building strong public opposition to the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) and preventing implementation of the system. In June, over 400 livestock producers attended a USDA listening session in Rapid City, South Dakota, to voice their concerns on NAIS. This listening session had the largest attendance of all 14 sessions the USDA held around the country. WORC is opposed to NAIS because the system will do nothing to address food safety or food security.

Because of our leadership on this issue, the 2010 Ag budget significantly cut funds to the program. As a result, members and allies have asked USDA to formally withdraw all pending rule makings initiated by the agency to advance NAIS. WORC is still awaiting an answer to this request.



Donley Darnell, member of the Powder River Basin Resource Council, was a spokesman for WORC at the USDA Listening Session in June.

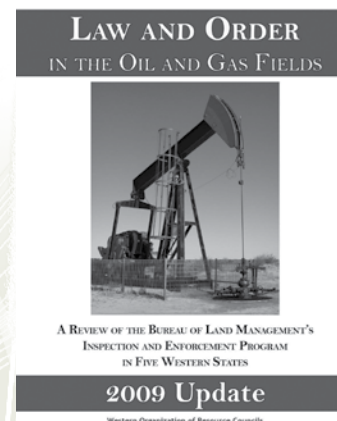
WORC stops federal funding for coal-to-liquid plants

As direct result of our work, the U.S. Department of Defense has stated it is no longer interested in contracting for the production of liquid fuel from coal, and the Air Force officially abandoned its effort to solicit interest in a liquid coal plant at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana. WORC also opposed several policies that would incentivize coal-to-liquids including:

- Extending the coal-to-liquids tax credit, which expired on December 31, 2009.
- Efforts to weaken Section 526 from the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, which prohibits federal government purchase of fuels with higher greenhouse gas emissions than conventional gasoline.

WORC works to define Undue Preferences

In the 2008 Farm Bill Congress directed USDA to define the terms "Undue and Unreasonable Preferences" in the Packers and Stockyards Act. The rules defining these terms became a top priority for WORC's Open Competitive Livestock Markets Campaign. WORC has contracted with Farmers Legal Action Group to help ensure that we take full advantage of this process. The rules are expected to be published in February 2010 and we worked throughout the second half of 2009 to develop an extensive plan to gather comments, influence USDA and activate new and existing members on this campaign.



WORC's updated report finds federal oil and gas inspections still lag behind drilling

In May, WORC released a 2009 update to *Law and Order in the Oil and Gas Fields: A Review of Inspection and Enforcement Programs in Five Western States*. The report found some improvement in the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) oil and gas inspection and enforcement programs, but the number of inspections and the time and money invested were too low in 1999 and have barely kept up with oil and gas permitting and drilling. According to the report, the agency conducted just 825 of 5,325, or 15 percent, of the required high priority environmental inspections in 2007 in the six field offices. The report can be downloaded at www.worc.org.