

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 12, 2018

Secretary Zinke wastes sensible methane standard

Billings, Mont. — In response to Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke’s scrapping of major portions of the Bureau of Land Management’s Methane and Waste Prevention Rule today, the following organizations issued statements:

“Secretary Zinke and the Trump Administration have missed the point that this is a good, common-sense rule that will stop the waste of taxpayer-owned natural gas and make real improvements in air quality for people who live near oil and gas drilling. There’s a reason it has the support of so many people. It’s good for taxpayers. It’s good for neighbors, and it’s good for the oil and gas industry.

“As one of the hundreds of people who took the time to go to a public hearing in 2015 to speak in support of limiting venting and flaring, I’m insulted that Secretary Zinke plans to weaken the limits that were put in place and allow the oil and gas industry to increase waste and air pollution. This is another example of oil and gas industry profits being prioritized over us taxpayers and the good of the nation.” — ***Rodger Steen, spokesperson for the Western Organization of Resource Councils from Steamboat Springs, Colo.***

“Over 900 oil wells dot the landscape of the Fort Berthold Reservation, some of them flaring very close to people's homes, harming our health and wasting our tribe’s valuable natural resources. Today’s announcement will definitely harm my community. I, along with members of my group, Fort Berthold Protectors of Water and Earth Rights, will continue to fight back against Zinke's attempts to rescind the original BLM methane rule.” — ***Theodora Bird Bear, member of Fort Berthold Protectors of Water and Earth Rights from Mandaree, N.D.***

“Secretary Zinke’s move to eviscerate the Bureau of Land Management’s Methane Waste Prevention rule is unconscionable. We in the west, where the majority of BLM land lays, have already given testimony at hearings and submitted a multitude of written comments in support of this rule. The loss of this valuable resource is costing the citizens of this country millions of dollars in unrealized revenue as well as increased healthcare costs for those living close to gas and oil developments.” — ***Susann Beug, a Red Lodge, Mont., resident and member of Northern Plains Resource Council.***

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