

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 7, 2017**

**WORC criticizes suspension of methane waste prevention standard**

*Billings, Mont.* – Rodger Steen, of Steamboat Springs, Colo., issued the following statement on behalf of the Western Organization of Resource Councils on the decision by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to suspend its methane waste prevention rule. Rodger is a retired air pollution consultant.

“Today the BLM, under Interior Secretary Zinke, suspended the BLM methane rule that was enacted last year. The rule required new wells extracting gas from the public domain to minimize waste and allowed BLM to charge market rates for the extracted gas. With this suspension, American citizens will lose revenue from wasted, publicly-owned gas that could be easily captured and will be exposed to greater emissions, including BTEX (benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene) carcinogens. Industry is the big financial winner.”

*Based in Billings, Mont., the Western Organization of Resource Councils is a seven-state network of grassroots community organizations working to strengthen communities and shape policies on energy and agriculture.*

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