

# WESTERN ORGANIZING REVIEW

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## Coal Bankruptcies: How WORC Took Advantage of an Opportunity and Won

The coal industry has been battered by market forces for years. When the country's three largest coal mining companies entered bankruptcy over the past 18 months, no one was sure they would emerge. WORC leaders and staff engaged in all three bankruptcy cases to ensure that clean-up of massive western strip mines wouldn't be paid for out of the public purse with taxpayer money. With the emergence of Peabody Energy from bankruptcy in early April, we're celebrating a major victory! Here's how it happened.

The gusher of coal bankruptcies began around 2012, with the bankruptcy filings of 50 smaller companies mostly based in Appalachia. During the eight months between August 2015 and April 2016, Alpha Natural Resources, Arch Coal, and Peabody filed for bankruptcy. In 2015, those three companies produced about 40% of the coal mined across the country.

Coal-fired electricity has become more expensive than power produced from natural gas and renewable sources. With competition eroding coal's market, the coal companies sought to "reorganize" their businesses by slashing debts and restructuring contracts under



the sweeping protection of bankruptcy law. The risk in the bankruptcy process was that if a company's assets were found to be insufficiently valuable due to long-term adverse market conditions, the company would be unable to reorganize and would be forced liquidate their business to pay their debts.

This posed a big threat to the clean-up, or "reclamation," of many mining operations, because the three companies had not put up any guarantee for the reclamation. Instead, Alpha, Arch, and Peabody were allowed to "self-bond" for the majority of their reclamation obligations. A self-bond is an unenforceable "IOU" for companies that are considered "too big to fail." If a coal company meets certain financial tests, the company can promise to complete reclamation without turning over any funds to regulators.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

The View from WORC .....	2
Around the Region .....	4
Farmer Fair Practice Rules Under Review .....	6
What Trump's Energy Executive Order Means for Our Work .....	7
WORC Project Maps Oil and Gas Waste Stream .....	10
Living with Oil and Gas .....	11

*continued on page 3*

# The View from WORC

By Monica Wiitanen, WORC Chair

I used to have a membership renewal problem. A notice would arrive a couple of months before payment was due and the letter would get buried in a stack of papers that didn't need immediate attention. A second notice would arrive, again before the renewal date. When money is tight, sending dues early isn't a priority. Eventually, though sometimes during the grace period, my dues would get paid.



Then with the help of Western Colorado Congress and WORC, the Colorado Cottage Foods Act was passed and my life changed. Doing what I love, baking in my wood fired oven, brought dedicated customers and regular income. My small business grew. When I could give back to WCC in appreciation for its legislative support I realized that instead of a single donation, monthly giving would be better for the organization's budget and for mine.

It's easy! Monthly donations can be made by credit card or, with some organizations, by direct withdrawal from a bank account. You'll never get renewal notices again, and you can change the amount when and if you wish. And, like me, you'll feel good each month when you see your credit card or bank statement, knowing you are providing steady support for organizations that are central to your life.

When I first served on a board, I read that board members are expected to give from their assets. At first, my assets were garlic and potatoes. A beautiful garlic braid and a medley of fingerling potatoes were donated to WCC's silent auction each year. Others do the farming now, and my assets are sourdoughs: wheat, rye, and einkorn. By feeding them and building the active cultures into doughs for a wide assortment of breads, English muffins, salted pretzels, and more, customers return each week and bring their friends.

One result? I signed up to give monthly to WORC to support the important issue work done on our behalf as well as leadership development within our state and local groups.

Please join me in this effort at whatever level of giving is comfortable for you. Consider monthly giving to your member group and WORC. Small monthly donations go a long way! Call the office at 406-252-9672 or email us at [billings@worc.org](mailto:billings@worc.org) and we'll get you set up.

## WESTERN ORGANIZING REVIEW

The *Western Organizing Review* is published quarterly by the Western Organization of Resource Councils.

WORC is a regional network of grassroots community organizations, which includes 15,190 members and 39 local chapters. WORC helps its member groups succeed by providing trainings and coordinating regional issue campaigns.

## WORC's NETWORK

*Dakota Resource Council  
Dakota Rural Action  
Idaho Organization of Resource Councils  
Northern Plains Resource Council  
Oregon Rural Action  
Powder River Basin Resource Council  
Western Colorado Congress  
Western Native Voice*

## WORC's BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*continued from page 1*

To protect the public interest in clean air, water, and reclaimed land, WORC and its member groups recognized the need to force the replacement of self-bonds through the bankruptcy process. That meant engaging in bankruptcy court.

Bob LeResche, Chair of Powder River Basin Resource Council, crystallized the urgency of the task: “Bankruptcy should never be used as a haven for a huge corporation to escape its reclamation bonding obligations. Better financial assurance will protect taxpayers and neighboring landowners and will ensure that the mining company remains responsible for any clean-up costs.”

With bankruptcy counsel Jim Burghardt at Moye White LLP, WORC leaders and staff began figuring out how our community organizations could navigate bankruptcy court to protect the public’s interest in successful coal mine reclamation. Unlike most courts, your heft and leverage in bankruptcy court is determined by the amount of money you’re owed. It was not clear that a bankruptcy judge would weigh our organizations’ interests at all.

If the companies were unable to emerge from bankruptcy, or if they dodged their bonding and reclamation obligations with the blessing of a bankruptcy judge, the mine neighbors would be left with giant pits and the federal and state governments would be saddled with the cleanup bill. If the companies emerged from bankruptcy with self-bonds intact, they would face the same market conditions that undercut their business in the first place. Some coal companies have already filed for bankruptcy twice, and liquidated in round two. In that situation, self-bonds would be worthless and mines could go unreclaimed.

That didn’t happen here. Alpha, Arch, and Peabody are now bound by orders from a bankruptcy judge to replace the self-bonds at their mines after emerging from bankruptcy. The total amount of self-bonds replaced across the country by Alpha, Arch, and Peabody is approximately \$2.4 billion.

## Lessons

This is great news for neighboring landowners and the public purse. Like any campaign, WORC network staff and leaders recalled old lessons and learned new ones along the way. Here are a few:

- Success in bankruptcy court, like organizing, is all about relationships. The bankruptcy process is built on negotiation between parties: the debtors, banks, hedge funds, business counter-parties, representatives of various levels of government, and others. Many outcomes are possible in bankruptcy, and crucial details are worked out in side conversations, including in the hallway before the

monthly court hearing. You need legal representation to get to the table and a plan about who can give you what you need.

- The participation of WORC and its partners created uncertainty for the bankrupt companies. We put strong arguments before the bankruptcy judge that would not be made by any other party in the case, and they may have strengthened the hand of the federal government’s own arguments. Our aggressive posture towards continued self-bonding was not lost on the companies’ management. For example, a recent investor slide-deck from Peabody touts its replacement of self-bonds for reducing uncertainty for the company and protecting its social license to operate. We agree that any company whose business model contemplates dodging the costs of its own clean-up should not be operating. Instead of trying to squeak through with continued self-bonding, the companies replaced their self-bonds outright with real guarantees of mine clean-up.

- The surety bond industry ended up bailing us out. In Peabody’s case, surety companies lodged lower-than-expected bids to replace self-bonds. It’s possible that Peabody’s management intentionally inflated estimated costs to achieve self-bond replacement. It could be that the surety industry saw an opportunity for new business, or put misplaced confidence in the coal market. We aren’t likely to know, but our pressure on self-bonding helped create an opportunity for the companies to replace their self-bonds.

- When confronting a big problem, look for unusual opportunities. Bankruptcy is a period of remarkable transformation for a company. This makes it a major opportunity for community organizations looking to affect company policy and compliance with the law. We need to be aggressive about looking for new opportunities and venues to achieve our policy goals. That means remaining open to unconventional ideas like pursuing strategic objectives in unfamiliar venues such as bankruptcy court.

Market pressure may send coal companies back to bankruptcy court sooner than they would like. Coal is subject to persistent pressures that bankruptcy can’t change: coal production has declined significantly since 2008, coal-fired electricity is among the most expensive across many parts of the country, and capital markets are rushing headlong toward renewable energy. In light of these headwinds, each of the coal companies promised post-bankruptcy success based on overly rosy projections that overstated the future prospects for the coal market. Despite the risk of a second bankruptcy, executives at Peabody have repeatedly asserted their right to return to self-bonding after emerging from bankruptcy. - Dan Cohn



# Around the Region

## A look around WORC's network

### Dakota Resource Council

Dakota Resource Council affiliate, Fort Berthold POWER, is keeping up the pressure on Senator Heidi Heitkamp to vote against efforts in the Senate to repeal the Bureau of Land



Management's Methane Waste Rule. Since the beginning of 2017, Fort Berthold POWER members have had four letters-to-the-editor and one op-ed published in papers throughout North Dakota urging Sen. Heitkamp to support the methane rule. Members also met with Sen. Heitkamp in North Dakota and in Washington, D.C.



### Dakota Rural Action

On March 8, 70 people participated in a No KXL Rally in Pierre, South Dakota, organized by Dakota Rural Action (DRA). Speakers addressed water protections, tribal and treaty rights, and use of eminent domain by foreign companies. State senators spoke of efforts to stop the Keystone XL tar sands oil pipeline in the legislature.

The rally preceded an afternoon hearing where DRA appealed the decision by the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission to recertify the state permit for the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. The Yankton and Cheyenne River Sioux and several individual intervenors had joined DRA in the appeal.

"IORC is disappointed in Governor Otter's veto of this very popular bill," said Eileen Stachowski, Co-chair of IORC's Ag and Food Task Force. "His decision will hurt working families and border communities in Idaho. But the fight isn't over, and we will continue our work to exempt food from the state's sales tax."

Thirty legislators are also continuing the fight. They filed a lawsuit contending that the governor did not veto the bill within the time limit specified in the state constitution. Idaho's constitution allows the governor to veto legislation within 10 days after *adjournment* of the legislature, but a 1978 Idaho Supreme Court decision says the governor has 10 days from the time the bill is *delivered* to the governor.



### Northern Plains Resource Council

The Northern Plains Resource Council filed a lawsuit on March 30 challenging President Trump's approval of the Keystone XL tar sands oil pipeline. Northern Plains contends the permit is based on outdated and incomplete information used to determine the project's threat to the health of water, land, and communities the pipeline crosses.

The Administration justified its approval of Keystone XL based on a January 2014 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Since then, pipeline spills, including two in the Yellowstone River, have shown the danger tar sands oil spills pose to water are far greater than the EIS assumes.

## The Idaho Organization of Resource Councils

### Idaho Organization of Resource Councils

The Idaho Organization of Resource Councils (IORC) and a coalition of organizations and businesses pressed the state legislature to repeal a grocery tax, which disproportionately affects low income Idahoans and hurts border communities. Although passed through the state House and Senate with broad support, Governor Butch Otter vetoed the bill after the legislative session adjourned.

"As Montanans, we understand the importance of water," said Kate French, Chair of Northern Plains. "We depend on our rivers and our groundwater for drinking, for irrigation, and for our biggest economies – agriculture, recreation, and tourism. A threat to our water is a threat to our most basic needs." The escalating threat of climate change to public safety is also significantly underestimated.

### Oregon Rural Action

Oregon Rural Action members from the Blue Mountain Chapter in La Grande and the Snake River Chapter in Ontario reached across the 120 miles that

separate them to meet via a live computer link during the annual winter celebration that took place in both communities on Feb. 13.



The Food and Agriculture team has been working with the Social Justice team on hosting events that focus on nutrition, food scarcity and local food procurement. The Food and Ag team also brought ORA members' attention to the environmental impacts that a proposed confined animal feeding operation (CAFO) with over 30,000 head of dairy cows would potentially have on the air and water quality of surrounding rural communities. As a result, ORA joined a coalition of concerned citizens to urge Oregon's governor to stop the CAFO until safeguards against environmental degradation could be put into place.

Other issues, such as the availability of affordable quality health care, remain the focus for members involved in the Health Care Reform Action team. While universal health coverage, also known as single-payer or Medicare for All, remains their goal, the Health Care Reform Action Team joined forces with allies in organizing rallies and letter writing campaigns in opposition to the administration's attempts to cut funding for programs that have helped millions of Americans acquire medical coverage through states' expansion of Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act.

### Powder River Basin Resource Council

The Powder River Basin Resource Council and over a dozen Sheridan County landowners and concerned citizens filed objections to Ramaco's proposed Brook Coal Mine on January 27. The proposed mine is approximately six miles north of Sheridan, Wyoming, in the scenic Tongue River Valley, an area with important agricultural and recreational attributes. Landowners are concerned about impacts to their property, health and safety, water resources and quality of life.

"Our families have lived in Monarch and Kooi for over 100 years and we have concerns about detrimental impacts to our property and operations that could result from mining," said John Buyok, a Powder River member and local landowner. "For example, our house well is

listed in the permit document as being one of those impacted by mining. In



another part of the permit document, the Brook Mine says that they will not be responsible for any damages to our well caused by mining because it is not adjudicated under state law. We believe issue like this should be addressed before a permit to mine is issued." – Shannon Anderson and Jill Morrison, Powder River staff.

### Western Colorado Congress

More than 400 people packed the Montrose High School gym April 7 for U.S. Rep. Scott Tipton's first of three town halls during the Congressional recess. Great organizing by Western Colorado Congress and several Indivisible groups swelled a crowd that spoke powerfully and pretty much unanimously on key issues. Participants sent a strong message to the Congressman with a barrage of smart questions on energy policy, environmental protections, public lands, health care, budget priorities, the Trump administration and more.

WCC said the action was an excellent demonstration of grassroots democracy, and



an empowering experience for those in attendance to realize that they had the numbers and they were powerful when they came together. Although Rep. Tipton didn't always give the answers WCC members preferred, WCC gave him props and said was a trooper to stick it out, even extending the Question & Answer period.

### Western Native Voice

A bill requiring schools to allow students to wear bead work, eagle feathers and other cultural items during graduation ceremonies passed the Montana legislature. The bill emerged from community meetings held by Western Native Voice, where individuals from Billings, Wolf Point, and Polson told stories about incidents where graduates were denied the right to display cultural items during commencement ceremonies.



On WNV's Native Day of Action at the legislature, Native youth from the Rocky Boy Reservation and Billings, as well as leaders across the state, testified in a packed hearing room on the importance of cultural acknowledgement during graduation ceremonies. Others testified on the shame and pain of learning they could not honor their culture and families during a monumental life event.

# Farmer Fair Practices Rules Under Review

The Trump Administration's U.S. Department of Agriculture is reviewing new rules proposed by the Obama Administration to help ensure independent farmers and ranchers are treated fairly by corporate meatpackers.

On December 14 the Grains Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration announced the Farmer Fair Practices Rules. The rules contain an interim final rule on competitive injury, a proposed rule on unfair practices and unreasonable preference, and a proposed rule on the tournament system and poultry.

"WORC is especially glad to see that the final rules make it clear that a producer harmed by unfair practices does not have to demonstrate harm to the entire industry to win in court," said Mabel Dobbs, a rancher from Weiser, Idaho, and member of WORC when the rules were released in December. "This standard is nearly impossible for an individual rancher to meet and was not what Congress intended when it passed the Packers and Stockyards Act."

Unfortunately, an early Trump Administration action delayed the implementation of the rules, and extended the 60-day comment period. Now, the rules will not go into effect until October 19, and USDA has made an unusual request for another round of comments specifically on whether USDA should:

- Let the rule become effective
- Suspend the rule indefinitely
- Delay the effective date of the rule further
- Withdraw the rule.

Comments are due June 12, 2017.

The rules are important to independent ranchers because four meatpackers control over 85 percent of the beef market and dictate the terms of production, marketing and pricing for cattle producers.

"The rancher needs access to the courts when meatpackers step over the line," Dobbs said. "This rule will help restore that." At least, it will if it is allowed to go into effect.

- Sara Kendall



*In 2009, WORC members joined with other ranchers to protest the National Animal Identification System at a news conference during an USDA listening session on the controversial proposal.*

## Career Opportunities in the WORC Network

### Dakota Resource Council

- Clean Energy Field Organizer, Bismarck, N.D.
- Agriculture Field Organizer, Bismarck, N.D.
- Communications Coordinator, Bismarck, N.D.

### WORC

- Communications Director, Billings, MT
- Summer Intern(s), Billings, MT

For more information visit  
[www.worc.org/who-we-are/career-opportunities](http://www.worc.org/who-we-are/career-opportunities)



# What Trump's Energy Executive Order Means for Our Work

**O**n March 28, the President Donald Trump signed a sweeping executive order in an attempt to roll back protections for clean air, clean water, American taxpayers, and the global climate that were put in place under the Obama administration.

There's no sugar-coating it: this is not good. The order begins to undo policies that WORC members worked hard to put in place. Revoking the various safeguards and policies targeted in the executive order is sure to prevent the United States from meeting its obligations under the Paris Climate Accord.

But the order does not accomplish the goals that the White House claims.

In fact, the executive order threatens America's energy independence by empowering oil and gas drillers to continue to waste valuable, nonrenewable domestic energy sources with unlimited venting and flaring of natural gas.

Rescinding a pause on federal coal leases does nothing to change market dynamics, spur coal development, or help coal communities succeed economically. Regarding the Clean Power Plan and coal jobs, University of Wyoming energy economist Rob Godby told the New York Times, "The problem with coal jobs has not been CO<sup>2</sup> regulation, so this will probably not bring back coal jobs."

The contents of the order make it clear that the president's power to undo environmental safeguards and climate protections is more limited than he suggests. While the order mentions over a dozen Obama-era environmental and climate protections, it mostly directs agencies to "review" the various orders and regulations, not repeal them, leaving plenty of loose ends for WORC and allies to organize to stop the Trump administration from carrying out their anti-environment agenda.

The following tables sum up what the executive order does and a few challenges the administration will face in its attempts to carry out the order and dismantle the common-sense protections put in place under President Obama:

## **I. Clean Power Plan**

What is it?	The Clean Power Plan (CPP) is Obama's cornerstone climate policy. It regulates carbon dioxide as an air pollutant under the Clean Air Act, limiting the amount of carbon pollution emitted from power plants. The plan was written in a process that included public input from all over the country, including every single state.
What does the EO do?	The order directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to rewrite the CPP, a years-long public process.



How is Trump limited?	Trump would like to get rid of the CPP with the stroke of a pen, but he can't. To withdraw the plan, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt has to go through the same process that Obama's EPA went through to write it. That will take years. In the process, Pruitt will face public outcry from Americans and states as well as the cold, hard facts of climate science: the EPA has to demonstrate a rationale for why the change is justified. Because Pruitt denies human-caused climate change and the rest of the world does not, this won't be easy for him. Whatever rationale Pruitt invents for refusing to address climate change has to be solid enough for a federal judge, since it's sure to end up in court.
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## ***II. Pause on Federal Coal Leasing***

What is it?	In early 2016, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell initiated a review of the broken federal coal leasing program to ensure that it meets the nation's energy needs. Along with this review, the Secretary paused federal coal leasing.
What does the EO do?	Rescinds the pause and directs Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to "amend or withdraw" the order that initiated the comprehensive review of the federal coal program. The next day, Secretary Zinke formally rescinded the pause on leasing and ended review of the program.
How is Trump limited?	Removing the pause will have little or no effect on coal production or leasing. Coal is rapidly losing market share to cheaper energy sources like natural gas and renewables, leading to a historic downturn in mining. No coal company has bought a single ton of federal coal in the Powder River Basin since 2012, a trend that shows no sign of letting up for years.

## ***III. Methane Waste Prevention***

What is it?	Under the Obama administration, both the EPA and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) required that oil and gas drillers stop wasting methane by venting and flaring it instead of capturing and selling valuable natural gas to consumers.
What does the EO do?	Directs EPA and BLM to review and rewrite rules so that drillers can continue to waste valuable resources and pollute the air. Somehow, the White House believes it is in the interest of "energy independence" to empower oil drillers to continue to waste nonrenewable domestic energy supplies.
How is Trump limited?	Just like with the CPP, the White House doesn't have the authority to simply strike down these methane waste prevention standards. Trump has to direct his agencies to write a new rule to replace the old one, take public input on that replacement, demonstrate a fact-based rationale for doing so, and survive the inevitable legal challenges.

- Colin Lauderdale



# WORC Project Maps Oil and Gas Waste Stream

A web-based mapping project released in February by WORC plots the oil and gas waste stream in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming.

Created by the FracTracker Alliance, the WORC Oil and Gas Waste Mapping Project uses state agency data to chart wastewater spills, wastewater injection wells, radioactive solid waste facilities, and commercial oilfield waste disposal facilities.

The mapping project supplements *No Time to Waste*, WORC's 2015 report comparing federal and state standards on oil and gas waste. The report found that the federal government and five Western states lacked sufficient protections for the storage, transport, and disposal of radioactive oil and gas field waste. The report covers Colorado, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

Due to inadequate state and federal standards, the project builds off of the report's effort to educate the public and regulators about the size and dangers of this waste stream.

"The visual nature of these maps makes it easier for people directly impacted by oil and gas development to know the location of oil and gas waste facilities and spills," said WORC's Oil and Gas Campaign Team Chair Linda Weiss of Belfield, N.D.

Because standards are left up to the states, oversight of oil and gas waste is at-best piecemeal. According to WORC's report, regulators are ill-prepared to handle land and water contamination from wastewater spills and solid and liquid waste facilities. For example, since 2010, North Dakota has experienced thousands of wastewater spills and many cases of illegal dumping of radioactive solid waste.

The oil and gas waste stream contains hazardous contaminants, including radioactive liquids and solids, extremely salty wastewater that, if spilled, irreparably harms soil and water, and cancer-causing chemicals that come up from the drilling process.

Maps are available at <http://www.worc.org/worc-oil-gas-waste-mapping-project/>.

-Scott Skokos



*WORC's Oil and Gas Waste Mapping Project plots the oil and gas waste streams in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming. Access the maps at [www.worc.org](http://www.worc.org).*

## PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING WORKSHOP

July 19-22, 2017 - Billings, Montana

Sign up at [www.worc.org](http://www.worc.org)

Travel and lodging scholarships are available to qualified members

# Living with Oil and Gas



Katie Mogen, Kristi Mogen's daughter, after surgery to remove an unexplained tumor at age 14.

"We came home after a trip and found Katie's tumor, a benign soft-tissue tumor the size of an egg. We had it removed because it was obstructing her breathing and swallowing. We've had tumors in the cows, but none of those have been cancerous, either. We didn't know what it was right away, but we knew we couldn't be there another day. The next day, we found a place online and moved [away from Douglas, WY] as soon as we could. And when we moved, we specifically chose an area where there was no oil and gas."

-Kristi Mogen, Twin Brooks, S.D.



"Western Colorado Congress was providing support through community organization and working with the organizer at that time is how I got involved. So I started attending some of their board meetings and I ultimately became a director at large with WCC. I could bring a little engineering to the table and business experience.

I think there's many, many jobs that really need to be done. People in this oil and gas situation, people out in the gas patches have been disenfranchised completely. So much development has taken place on private land because basically a big oil company cannot bully the federal government that well. But they can bully the individual people. And pit them against one another and it's a real operation. Unless the people know how to organize they're just helpless to fight back."

-Bob Arrington, Battlement Mesa, Colo.

# Living with Oil and Gas



“Dealing with the company was... well, in my opinion, Keystone didn’t come into this country to negotiate with landowners. They came here to take that right away. They offered a minimal amount of money, and gave us a contract that was wrote for them, and they expected us to take that and be fine with it. Well, most of us along the route were not gonna sign that contract, because of what was in it.”

“The whole process was just long and drug out, and I don’t think it had to be that way. If Keystone would’ve come in willing to negotiate with landowners, I think they probably would’ve saved themselves a lot of headache. And it would’ve saved us a lot, because we spent a lot of time going to meetings, and the expense of all the meetings, and attorneys, and everything else...it became quite expensive before it was over with. And that was just one fight. I feel for the folks who are fighting things on multiple fronts. The people with 20 oil wells on their place, or the folks who had to fight the Tongue River Railroad for 30 years. It’s just exhausting.”

-Chuck Nerud, Circle, Mont.



“Each farm has a really important story. People lived on the land for generations, and built up farms. I guess that’s one of the things that really hurts, that this was not valued by the industry. People’s lives and what they had done. All of a sudden farms were just in the way of the oil and I just, I can never accept that.”

-Norma Stensile, New Town, N.D.



# WORC

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## PUBLICATIONS

**GROWING THE 16%** Addresses the problem of beef market concentration and its impact on independent livestock producers, local meatpacking infrastructure and rural communities.

**NO TIME TO WASTE** Examines standards and disposal practices around radioactive oil and gas waste in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming

**UNDERMINED PROMISE II** Examines coal production in the West and find that mining companies and regulatory agencies are falling short on keeping promises made in the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act

**FLARING BOOM** Explains the underlying causes and the problems caused by flaring and venting methane from oil and gas fields in six western states

**HEAVY TRAFFIC STILL AHEAD: RAIL IMPACTS OF POWDER RIVER BASIN COAL TO ASIA BY WAY OF PACIFIC NORTHWEST TERMINALS** Identifies costs for infrastructure due to increased rail traffic, many of which will fall on taxpayers

**WATERED DOWN: OIL AND GAS WASTE PRODUCTION AND OVERSIGHT IN THE WEST** Examines dangers to water quality from oil and gas production in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming

**GONE FOR GOOD: FRACKING AND WATER LOSS IN THE WEST** Finds that oil and gas extraction is removing at least 7 billion tons of water from the hydrologic cycle each year in four Western states

Download these publications at [www.worc.org](http://www.worc.org)

## 2017 EVENTS

WORC BOARD AND STAFF SUMMER MEETING  
*Sioux Falls, South Dakota* ..... June 13-14

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING  
*Billings, Montana* ..... July 19-22

DAKOTA RESOURCE COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING  
TO BE ANNOUNCED.....OCTOBER 27-28

POWDER RIVER BASIN RES. COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING  
*Sheridan, Wyoming*..... November 4

NORTHERN PLAINS RESOURCE COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING  
*Billings, Montana* ..... November 10-11

IDAHO ORG. OF RESOURCE COUNCILS ANNUAL MEETING  
*Boise, Idaho* ..... November 11

WORC BOARD AND STAFF WINTER MEETING  
*Billings, Montana* ..... December 1-2