

Dakota Counsel

Apr/May/June 2016

ORGANIZING * RESEARCH * ADVOCACY * EDUCATION

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“NO” vote sweeps all North Dakota counties

Measure 1 to allow corporate farming defeated by wide margin

DRC members and allies celebrated a huge victory on Tuesday, June 14, when North Dakotans voted overwhelmingly to reject Measure 1 by a 3-to-1 margin (76% to 24%). Measure 1 was a referendum on the 2015 Legislature’s decision to allow corporate dairy and swine.

“It was a hard-fought campaign and we worked diligently to educate North Dakotans and turn them out to vote. We are very pleased with the result,” said DRC Chair Craig Scott, who lives in Burleigh County. “The fight is not over, and we will continue organizing and building people power to make North Dakota a great place to live.”

Since 1932, North Dakota’s anti-corporate farming law has facilitated the growth of one of the strongest agricultural economies in the world. Measure 1 was a referral of SB 2351, a law rushed through the 2015 Legislative Session by proponents of corporate farming in an attempt to increase the number of cows and pigs in North Dakota. The law would have allowed non-family corporate ownership of land for concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).

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ABOVE: A Rally for Family Farms was hosted by the North Dakota Farmers Union on Friday, June 3.



LEFT: DRC member Link Reinhiller of Beulah attends the rally with organizer Tim Glaza.

9,000-hog factory still under consideration in Buffalo

While 75.7% of North Dakotans voted to reject corporate factory farms on June 14, the so-called Rolling Green Family Farms are still planning to build a 9,000-hog factory in western Cass County near the community of Buffalo. It is now up to the Department of Health on whether or not to give Rolling Green a permit to build the facility. In 2006, Dr. Curt Stofferahn provided the state of North Dakota with a report on the well-documented negative impacts of non-family owned and operated industrialized farms.

Testimony presented at the Department of Health’s Buffalo hearing thoroughly documented the detrimental medical

consequences and concerns about air and water pollution. “The nutrient management plan submitted by Rolling Green Family Farms, which did not consider soil types or plant nutrient requirements, is not achievable, or sustainable,” said Randy Coon in his testimony, who farms near Buffalo.

DRC members and community members in Buffalo continue to monitor the progress of the proposed permit application. Although we won Measure 1, the fight is not over. One way you can help the effort is to write a letter to the editor to keep this story going in the media. Contact Tim Glaza, 701.202.6260 with questions or for help submitting a letter.

ABOUT US

The Dakota Counsel is published every quarter by Dakota Resource Council, a nonprofit, grassroots, activist organization. Dakota Resource Council's mission is to promote sustainable use of North Dakota's natural resources and family-owned and operated agriculture by building member-led local groups, empowering people to influence the decision-making processes that affect their lives and communities.

AFFILIATES

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An amazing quarter for DRC

We won the campaign to overturn the big holes the Legislature blew into North Dakota's anti-corporate farming law. Winning a statewide vote by 75.7% should make all DRC members proud. Thank you to all the members who volunteered and participated. Thank you to the leadership from DRC's Corporate Farming Referendum Committee; Jeri Lynn Bakken, who stepped up many times to be DRC's spokesperson on this campaign; Curt Stofferahn, Fr. Tom Graner and our members in Buffalo who helped make Dr. Ikerd's town hall meetings a success; and DRC organizer Tim Glaza who held our campaign together and worked closely with Measure 1's lead group – North Dakota Farmers Union.

Our members tackling oil and gas issues made several breakthroughs the past couple months. Fort Berthold POWER was instrumental in moving many more people to realize just how critical spills are. Lisa DeVille, organizer Nicole Donaghy and POWER members helped Duke researchers do sampling and hosted a town meeting with the results – a winning combination of grassroots organizing and solid research.

DRC has a long history of grassroots-led campaigns driven by people living with coal, oil and gas extraction in western North Dakota. Our current brochure says, "DRC is working with landowners, businesses, workers and others to protect our water and air,

our land and farmers who grow our food and communities where we live. We must have fair leases, safe setbacks from homes, and firm clean up and reclamation plans. We do not have to waste natural gas through flaring. We can have oil development and a good place to live and work."



*Craig Scott,
DRC Chair*

For 38 years, DRC has been organizing local members to influence decision-making on issues that impact their lives. We've faced industry and state officials who dismiss our efforts to solve landowner issues as being "anti-oil." They know we cannot win when solutions are oversimplified to only "for" or "against" oil. We do much better when we focus on real problems that lots of people understand need to be addressed.

Other DRC member leaders have been meeting and working to launch renewed efforts on clean energy issues. Thanks to Jay Mosbrucker, Linda Weiss, Marie Hoff and organizer Sonda Sauer.

Our expertise comes from our members participating in task forces. A big thank you and congratulations all around for a great start to 2016! If you'd like to participate more, call the DRC office and talk with one of our organizers.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Lisa DeVille
Karen Erickstad
Todd Leake

AFFILIATE REPS
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Shelly Ventsch
Daryl Bragg/Kyle Leake
Marie Hoff/Travis Schulz
Lynn Wolff/Ed Gruchalla

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 2016

- July 8-9 DRC Board and Staff Retreat, *New Town/Mandaree*
- July 14 Oil and Gas Task Force Call
- July 16 Clean Energy Working Group In-Person Meeting, *Bismarck*
- July 20-23 Principles of Community Organizing (POCO), *Billings, MT*

AUGUST 2016

- TBA Ag and Food Task Force Call
- TBA Oil and Gas In-Person Meeting

SEPTEMBER 2016

- Sept 10 DRC Board Meeting, *Minot area*

FALL 2016

- Oct 21-22 DRC Annual Meeting, *New Town*
- Nov 12 DRC Board Meeting, *Jamestown*
- Dec 2-3 WORC Winter Board and Staff Meeting, *Billings, MT*

DRC attends WORC board and staff meeting in Red Lodge

Dakota Resource Council staff attended the Western Organization of Resource Council's Board and Staff Meeting in Red Lodge, MT, on June 13-15.

Large group sessions included an update on Native voting and candidates across the region by Mark Trahant and an explanation of the Homegrown Prosperity Initiative by Burt Lauderdale of Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, which focuses on moving from a mono-economy to a sustainable and just economy. Breakout sessions included topics on facilitation, permissible engagements for 501(c)3 organizations, divisions in tribal communities, power analysis and mapping, and a review of WORC's Communications & Media program.

The second day included a tour of Healthy Meadows Ranch, owned by Northern Plains' members Ivan and Chia Thrane, who use goats to graze noxious weeds. The tour also discussed sustainable ranching and soil health.

Help celebrate Aleta's (real) retirement in Dickinson!

She can FINALLY relax! Dakota Resource Council is saying a heartfelt "see you later" to our business manager, Aleta Hendricks, as she enjoys retirement. At least until we put her to work as an active DRC member!

All of DRC's membership is invited to celebrate Aleta on Friday, July 15 at Lions Park in Dickinson, ND. We'll be grilling brats, sharing stories of Aleta, and enjoying each other's company from 4-8 p.m. We're asking attendees to bring a side dish or dessert potluck.

Please RSVP by emailing liz@drcinfo.com or calling the office at 701.224.8587. See you soon!

Sauers moves to business and membership manager position

Clean energy organizer Sonda Sauers moved to the business and membership manager position, effective May 2016. She will be responsible for all the financials, expenses, reporting, membership renewals and recruitment, logistical meeting and event planning, and fund development, including business sponsorships. Please contact Sonda at sonda@drcinfo.com for anything business or membership-related.

DRC hiring for full-time field organizer for clean energy

We are still looking for an organizer to work on statewide clean energy issues. Clean energy work is being built on the state's tremendous renewable resources and wide open opportunities for increasing energy efficiency.

Field organizer responsibilities include working with members to address their priority issues, maximizing the power and participation of members, empowering people to speak for themselves, and fundraising. Organizers use sound and successful organizing efforts to work with DRC members on issues that impact people's lives and livelihoods. Do you know anyone who would be a great fit for DRC and the work? Please send interested candidates to www.drcinfo.org to apply.

"Farm With No Family" video series debuts

Films showcase the impact of corporate agriculture on communities in South Dakota

Working with Dakota Rural Action, DRC visited and interviewed family farmers and ranchers in South Dakota who are dealing with corporate agriculture and factory farming. DRC's referendum committee strategically developed a plan to create videos and share the true story about corporate farming in other states. Please visit <http://www.drcinfo.org/familyfarms> to see the full series including some special clips on members who are facing a proposed 9,000-hog operation in Buffalo.



A behind-the-scenes photo from the video project.



Agricultural author Dr. John Ikerd speaks at a luncheon event at Dakota Farms in Rugby, ND, on May 19, 2016.

Ag author Ikerd tours four cities

Dr. John Ikerd, Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics, toured North Dakota in mid-May to speak about the failures of corporate industrial agriculture. DRC's referendum committee planned and sponsored a series of talks in Fargo, Grand Forks, Rugby, and Bismarck. Invitations were sent to every DRC member, and Dr. Ikerd was extensively interviewed by TV, radio, and print media.

While in North Dakota, Ikerd also participated in a film interview for the "A Farm With No Family" series. "I think the positive thing here is we're beginning to reinvigorate rural democracy and its coming out of people rising up in opposition and expressing their concerns about what's happening in agriculture," Dr. Ikerd said in the film.

"NO" vote sweeps

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"This may have increased the number of animals but it would have decreased the number of family farmers and squeezed the wealth out of rural communities," said DRC member Father Tom Graner of Pierce County. "People in North Dakota made it clear they understand the dangers of corporations running our farms."

THANK YOU to the North Dakota Farmers Union and other allies, as well as the hundreds of DRC members who participated in the campaign. We win on issues because people like you:

- collected signatures
- organized educational events
- made special monetary contributions to DRC
- collected pledge cards from your community
- put up yard signs
- contacted voters by calling and knocking doors
- turned out to vote!

"Throughout other parts of our country that allow corporate farming, it is very clear that large confinement dairy and hog operations do not increase rural employment or promote rural economic development," said DRC member Jeri Lynn Bakken of Adams County, responding to the impacts of corporate farming on other states. "Corporate feeding operations employ far fewer and lower-paid workers than the family farmers that they inevitably displace."

Clean energy state table meeting held in Fargo

On June 18, Wayde Schafer of the Sierra Club and DRC organizer Sonda Sauers held the initial North Dakota Clean Energy State Table meeting in Fargo. The State Table's primary goal is to reduce North Dakota's carbon footprint. During the first meeting, members of the faith, youth, health, and sustainability communities were all in attendance. Seven DRC members, also representing other organizations, attended to hear more.

The Clean Energy State Table's goal of carbon emission reductions is derived from RE-AMP, an active network of nearly 180 nonprofits and foundations across eight Midwestern states working on climate change and energy policy, with the goal of reducing global warming pollution economy-wide 80 percent by 2050. Currently, seven of the eight RE-AMP states are building state tables, a long-term vehicle to activate change. If you are a member of an organization that is interested in joining the North Dakota State Table, please contact Sonda Sauers at 605.770.3700 or sonda@drcinfo.com.



Wayde Schafer of the Sierra Club describes the formation of the North Dakota Clean Energy State Table on June 18 in Fargo.

DRC involved in Green Revolution exhibit edits

This April, news broke that the Heritage Center would be closing their new Smithsonian Exhibit called Green Revolution. An investigation by Inside Energy's Emily Guerin led to the findings that the closure came shortly after Heritage Center staff received emails from the North Dakota Petroleum Council as well as North American Coal. The timing of the closure so soon after industry complaints indicated the closure of Green Revolution resulted from political pressure and undue influence.

Staff said the exhibit was temporarily closed to add the "whole" North Dakota story, namely including oil and coal's attempts at sustainability. In response, our Clean Energy Working Group agreed to draft a letter and send it to the Heritage Center demanding that Dakota Resource Council has a spot at the table to tell the truly tell the whole North Dakota story. However, while in the process of drafting that letter, the Heritage Center reached out to DRC.

On May 9, Executive Director Don Morrison, DRC member and former Executive Director Mark Trechock, and DRC organizer Sonda Sauers met with the Heritage Center staff in charge of the Green Revolution Exhibit. DRC has been working with staff to help add the "real story of North Dakota" as was asked. We donated three copies of our video, "This is Our Country: Living with Oil and Gas." With member Daryl Peterson's help and approval, we were also able to provide an image of an aerial brine spill. Heritage Center staff hoped to reopen in early July. The Clean Energy Working Group will follow up on the exhibit.



DRC attends RE-AMP meeting in Chicago

To further build both the Clean Energy State Table as well as DRC capacity, on June 27, organizer Sonda Sauers and Executive Director Don Morrison flew to Chicago to attend the RE-AMP annual meeting. There, they were able to make some great connections with other members from across the region. They were also able to participate in workshops on labor relations, negotiations, power analysis, youth integration, and environmental and generational justice, all of which are highly applicable and incredibly useful to the work being done at Dakota Resource Council.

DRC's Annual Meeting to be held October 21-22 in New Town, ND

Dakota Resource Council's Annual Meeting is a time where we gather and look back on the last year as well as look forward to the year ahead. It's a space where we inform members on what we've accomplished together, and it's where we confirm our shared vision for the future. It's not just a business meeting – it's a space where we revitalize our commitment to active membership and compel new leaders to serve. We will be in New Town, a place very significant to our state's cultural identity, but also heavily impacted by oil and gas development.

This year, our goal is to have more non-DRC members in attendance than ever so we can reach more people who care about the same issues you do. Please consider inviting and/or bringing a friend to the annual meeting. There is no cost to attend, but we're asking members to RSVP. Look for a mailer with more information soon, or register online now at www.drcinfo.org/annualmeeting.

Check out the rest of this section to see what we have planned for the annual meeting. See you in October!

TENTATIVE MEETING AGENDA

Friday, October 21, 2016

- 7 p.m. District 4 Candidate State Legislative Forum
- 10 p.m. Post-Forum Mixer at Teddy's

Saturday, October 22, 2016

- 8:30 a.m. Registration/Silent Auction and Art Show
- 10 a.m. Welcome/Introduction
- 10:30 a.m. How We Got Here: Presentations From the Field
- 11:30 a.m. How We Move Forward: Group Conversations
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch with entertainment
- 2 p.m. Business Meeting
- 4 p.m. DRC Awards Ceremony with social to follow

Silent auction is back!

Silent auction baskets will be back this fall, but with a streamlined approach. We're curating multiple baskets under the themes of spring, summer, fall, and winter. Would you like to donate or help us source items from DRC members to complete these baskets? The themes are very flexible and allow inclusion of items for the whole family. It could be knitted gloves or a scarf for the winter basket, or grilling supplies for a summer basket. We will gladly accept purchased or like-new items for the baskets, but would really like to highlight our members' talents and businesses.

Donations can be dropped off at the DRC office in Bismarck, or give us a call and we can arrange pickup or transfer with the help of other members. We would like to have all donations secured by September 30 so we can prepare the baskets and thank all of our donors.



In search of carpoolers for annual meeting

The annual meeting committee is looking for numerous DRC members to serve as carpool captains for the annual meeting in New Town, which will be held at the New Town Civic Center.

Carpool captains, in addition to driving members to the meeting, will help us contact members in their area to let them know about the upcoming annual meeting and to offer a ride. Our goal is to have more attendance at the annual meeting than ever. Your willingness to help others get there will be much appreciated, and carpooling is a great opportunity to socialize with friends old and new!

For more information or to volunteer to be a carpool captain, please contact Liz or Sonda in Bismarck. We can help prepare contact lists from a radius around the carpool captain's location.

New art show auction invites commentary

Call for entries on agriculture and food, oil and gas, and clean energy and coal issues

It's no secret that many members of the DRC community are talented artists. Whether it's mainstream mediums like photography or painting, or more traditional methods like sewing, beading, or textiles, creatives have a different lens through which to process issues that impact North Dakota. This lens could be: What are we fighting to protect in North Dakota? What is happening, both good and bad, in different parts of our state?

We're inviting artists from within the DRC member community and beyond to submit works of art for the DRC Art Show & Auction, debuting at the DRC Annual Meeting. Categories include fine art (painting, drawing, sculpture, illustration, digital art), photography, music, and writing. Visual art pieces will be part of a silent auction, and writing and music entries will be incorporated into the lunchtime entertainment during the annual meeting.

A formal call for entries will be sent to all DRC members and extended to various art communities around the state. What we're asking for as the contribution is a finished work that serves as commentary on the issues of agriculture and food, oil and gas, and clean energy and coal. Artists will be encouraged to suggest a minimum donation for the piece and record a video talking about their work, which will be posted on our website along with the artist's contact information.

Please see the registration form on this page for more information. A registration form will also be online at www.drcinfo.org/annualmeeting. We encourage all DRC members to help us spread the word about this creative outlet for commentary on significant issues that affect North Dakota.

DRC Art Show Entry Form

Thank you for your participation! Your contribution will make a valuable addition to the DRC Art Show & Auction.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete the information below, especially the Artist Statement -- prospective buyers will be very interested in the artists' perspectives. We also welcome artists to contribute a frame if desired. It's definitely optional, but can increase the bidding price.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

SELECT ARTWORK CATEGORY (Choose one)

___ Fine art (painting, drawing, sculpture, digital art)

___ Photography

___ Writing

___ Music

Title of artwork: _____

Artwork dimensions: _____ Weight: _____

Will your work be framed? ___ YES ___ NO

Suggested starting bid: _____

ARTIST STATEMENT (How did this piece come to be? What is your point of view with this piece? What are you hoping to accomplish or communicate with this work?)

Please return this registration form, along with your creative work, to the DRC office in Bismarck. If you have a submission idea that will take more time, please call Jennifer to reserve your space or make arrangements.

ALL ENTRIES REQUESTED IN HAND BY SEPTEMBER 30.

Rad waste forum held in Dunn County

Forum also held in McKenzie County to address IHD permit app

On April 5, 2016, a crowd of about 75 residents organized by Dunn County Concerned Citizens met in Killdeer to discuss the possibility of storing radioactive waste. Presentations led by DRC members Darrell Dorgan, David Schwalbe, and Larry Heilmann gave listeners a graphic idea of how special waste landfills operate and how radiation affects human health and the environment. DRC live-tweeted the event on Twitter, and multiple news media attended.

The group finished the presentation with questions and answers. The biggest concern was how to keep the rampant industry at bay from the continuous threat of transfer stations and special waste landfills that accept radioactive oil field waste. Dorgan encouraged listeners to organize their communities to change policies that affect their lives.

Members from the County Commission were present and the discussion veered toward their responsibility in approving these facilities. Members of the Commission stated that they could incorporate citizen concerns into any hypothetical agreement to build a waste-holding facility.

Larry Novak from McKenzie County was in attendance at the Killdeer Rad-waste Forum and wanted the same presentation in Alexander. So on May 12, more than



More than 60 community members in Killdeer present for public info about #radioactivewaste in landfills. #DRC



50 people gathered in Alexander City Hall to discuss risks of accepting radioactive waste at the Indian Hills Disposal facility in Alexander, the first to apply for a radioactive waste permit.

Dorgan gave a brief history of the legacy of former Governor Art Link, who made a home in McKenzie County. Schwalbe and Heilmann showed a slideshow of photos from the Oaks Facility in Glendive, MT, and how radiation could

be very dangerous if not handled and stored correctly. After the presentation, there was discussion between landowners and commissioners with numerous concerns for air quality, radioactive exposure, and dust control.

Under the new TENORM (Technologically Enhanced Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material) rules, these facilities are required to cover each layer of waste with at least 1 foot of soil at the end of the day; the most common practice is to use drill cuttings which has potential levels of radiation. Both Dunn and McKenzie County folks continue their fight.

NDIC drops 'interested party' rule change

On June 29, the North Dakota Industrial Commission met with Department of Mineral Resources Director Lynn Helms to discuss the 89 oil and gas rules that were proposed earlier this year. DRC members participated in hearings in Bismarck on April 11, Dickinson on April 12, and in Williston on April 13.

Among the 89 rules, an attempt to define the term 'interested party' was proposed. Under the proposed rule, anyone who does not have financial interest or does not own property adjacent to any proposed oil and gas facility

would not qualify to testify at an oil and gas hearing. The rule was cut after 86 organization and individual comments came in opposing, with two comments supporting the rule -- a big win for local control!

NDIC approved the remaining rules. The DMR is looking at an effective date of October 1, 2016. Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem stated that if anyone has issue with any of the rules passed, there is still opportunity to remand the rules at the Legislature's Administrative Rules Committee hearing in September.

Duke University study reveals wide contamination of fracking spill sites

Report shows state's method of flushing creates radioactive buildup downstream of spill sites

BISMARCK, N.D. – Accidental wastewater spills from fracking-related oil production in North Dakota have caused widespread water and soil contamination, a new Duke University study finds.

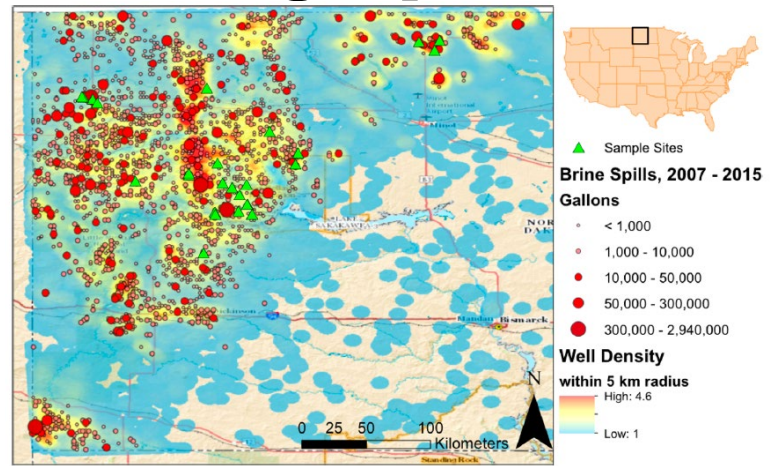
Researchers found high levels of ammonium, selenium, lead and other toxic contaminants as well as high salts in the brine-laden wastewater, which primarily comes from hydraulically fractured oil wells in the Bakken region of western North Dakota.

In 2015, DRC members accompanied Dr. Avner Vengosh and others from Duke University to spill sites to collect samples, also taking them on a tour of the Mandaree area. At one site, the researchers were still able to detect high levels of contaminants in spill water four years after the spill occurred.

Streams polluted by the wastewater contained levels of contaminants that often exceeded federal guidelines for safe drinking water or aquatic health. Soil at the spill sites was contaminated with radium, a naturally occurring radioactive element found in brines, which chemically attached to the soil after the spill.

“Until now, research in many regions of the nation has shown that contamination from fracking has been fairly inconsistent,” said Dr. Avner Vengosh, professor of geochemistry and water quality at Duke’s Nicholas School of the Environment. “In North Dakota, however, we find it is widespread and persistent, with clear evidence of direct water contamination from fracking.”

“The magnitude of oil drilling in North Dakota is overwhelming,” Vengosh said. “More than 9,700 wells have been drilled there in the past decade. This massive development has led to more than 3,900 brine spills, mostly coming from faulty pipes built to transport fracked wells’ flowback water from on-site



holding containers to nearby injection wells to be disposed underground.” As part of the study, the team mapped the distribution of the 3,900 spill sites to show how they were associated with the intensity of the oil drilling (above).

North Dakota’s unconventional oil production grew from about 100,000 barrels a day in 2007 to more than 1 million barrels a day in 2014. Much of the increased production has been made possible by advances in hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. The industry’s expansion in North Dakota has fueled economic growth, especially on tribal lands and in rural areas, but also has sparked concern about drinking water contamination.

“Unlike spilled oil, which starts to break down in soil, these spilled brines consist of inorganic chemicals, metals and salts that are resistant to biodegradation,” said Nancy Lauer, a Ph.D. student of Vengosh’s who was lead author of the study. “They don’t go away; they stay. This has created a legacy of radioactivity at spill sites.”

Soil samples collected downstream from spill sites contained higher levels of radioactivity than soil at the spill sites themselves, Lauer noted. This suggests that radium builds up in the soil as the spilled brine flows through the environment.

Lisa DeVille, DRC board member from Mandaree, said that having accurate information is vital and continues to call for ongoing monitoring, research, testing, and studies

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Oil and Gas Task Force welcomes interim chair

On June 23, members of the Oil and Gas Task Force met via conference call. The first item on the agenda was to find a replacement for Theodora Bird Bear as Task Force Chair.

Linda Weiss has been voted in and has agreed to serve as Interim Chair until the next Oil and Gas Task Force In-Person Meeting in August.

The Task Force will have another call on July 14 to finalize preparations for the in-person meeting. A meeting notice and information will be sent out prior to that call. If you want to join the Oil and Gas Task Force and get involved, or for more information, contact Nicole at 701.202.0927 or nicole@drcinfo.com.

Federal court stalls BLM fracking rule, appeal expected

In mid-June, a federal court judge ruled that the BLM does not have the authority handed down from Congress to regulate fracking on federal lands.

The ruling came down from Judge Scott Skavdahl as the rule is seen as a regulation overstep of agency authority. “Congress has not delegated to the Department of Interior the authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing,” he wrote. “The BLM’s effort to do so through the Fracking Rule is in excess of its statutory authority and contrary to law.”

The rules have been in the making for years and were crafted as an effort to crack down on the environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing. The ruling will be appealed, as supporters strongly believe BLM has broad legal authority to regulate oil and gas development.



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Lisa DeVille, DRC board member from Mandaree, said that having accurate information is vital and continues to call for ongoing monitoring, research, testing, and studies to show the environmental and human health impacts of exposure. “We knew there was contamination happening from seeing the effect of oil and gas on our daily lives,” she said. “We need neutral, third-party data like this study because our attempts as citizens to find out what exactly is getting into our water seem to meet wall after wall.”

The Duke team published its peer-reviewed study on April 27 in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*. As part of their study, the researchers collected samples of brine-laden spill waters from four sites – two large spills and two smaller ones. They measured and analyzed the samples for inorganic contaminants and to identify the unique isotopic signature, or fingerprint, of Bakken region brines. By comparing this fingerprint to the geochemical and isotopic profiles of 29 background surface water samples collected across the region, the team was able to determine where and to what extent contamination associated with brine spills had occurred, and rule out the possibility that it had been caused by other sources.

“These isotopic tracers give scientists powerful forensic tools for tracking the presence of spill waters in the environment,” Vengosh said. “Given that spills can occur upstream from drinking water sources, long-term monitoring of downstream waters is necessary to assess impacts on water quality.”

One of the state’s largest spills to date occurred in 2014, when an underground pipeline leak caused approximately 1 million gallons of brine to flow down a ravine and into Bear Den Bay, about a quarter mile upstream from a drinking water intake on Lake Sakakawea.

“No matter what jurisdiction these spills are happening in, we must figure out both how to handle them and how to prevent them,” DeVille said. “This kind of contamination is an immeasurable cost to tribal members across ND who face virtually unregulated oil and gas development that has clear and lasting impact downstream.”

Ph.D. student Jennifer Harkness co-authored the study with Vengosh and Lauer. Funding came from the National Science Foundation and the Natural Resources Defense Council. Copies are available at the DRC office or via email. Contact nicole@drcinfo.com for information.

WANTED: Cartoonists with a sense of humor

One thing that has been missing from the Dakota Counsel is a regular editorial cartoon. Do you have a passion for drawing and an opinion to match? DRC is looking to feature editorial cartoons that address issues relevant to membership in agriculture and food, oil and gas, and clean energy and coal.

Humor is an effective and time-tested way to highlight the most critical issues facing North Dakota today, as well as to hold our leadership accountable.

We welcome member submissions, and also have some ideas on tap -- contact Jennifer at the DRC office if you're interested or know someone who might be.

Looking for leads on new business sponsorships

Let the DRC office know any leads for new business sponsors. We're currently revamping the benefit package we offer to include more value for our business sponsors, like ads in the DRC newsletter and on our website, in addition to being featured in the annual meeting program.

We are building contact lists that specifically target central and eastern North Dakota, but welcome member-driven relationships from businesses around the state. Please call or email Sonda with any leads.

Future FD campaign will secure reliable staff cars

One staple of the Dakota Counsel newsletter may be a thing of the past -- requests for donated staff vehicles.

Look for more information soon about a targeted capital campaign with a clear and needed focus: long-term, reliable staff cars plus the creation of a maintenance and repair fund. We will be searching for 100 donors to pledge \$100 over a 100-day period. The most exciting part is that all \$100 pledges will be matched by some amazing DRC members. More info soon!

100 DONORS, \$100, 100 DAYS

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Will you be one of our 100?

JULY 15-OCT 22

TO RAISE MONEY FOR
RELIABLE, SAFE STAFF CARS
& TO ESTABLISH A MAINTENANCE FUND

Direct mail coming soon!

FRIDAY, JULY 15

4-8 pm

Lions Park, Dickinson

RETIREMENT PARTY!

FOR ALETA HENDRICKS

RSVP with Liz via email or phone

BEER & BRATS
SALAD & DESSERT POTLUCK
SENTIMENTS OF GRATITUDE

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