

Dakota Counsel

March 2018

ORGANIZING * RESEARCH * ADVOCACY * EDUCATION

Vol. 41, No. 1

DRC Members Lead Refinery Air Quality Permit Hearing

Meridian Energy misleading agencies, citizens in permit application

Months of organizing and preparation led up to the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDH) Draft Air Pollution Control Permit Hearing for Meridian Energy’s Davis Refinery. Members of BARC and DRC joined together to ask the Department of Health to not grant the permit. The hearing took place at Dickinson State University campus on January 17.



"I find it laughable that Meridian thinks that a row of 6-foot trees will block the view of a refinery from the highway." Linda Weiss, Belfield

After months of research, meetings, learning about chemistry, air pollutants, and agency processes, BARC members were ready to testify against granting the permit. Leading up to the hearing members wrote, edited, and rehearsed what they wanted to say. Members spoke with conviction testifying against dangers of the proposed refinery’s location.

Members are concerned that the company requested a synthetic minor source permit rather than a major source permit. They questioned the emissions estimations that Meridian submitted for being too low because not all emissions were considered such as those from flares, start-up, malfunction, and shut down. Neither were the lifetime emissions factored in to their estimates.

BARC member Laura Grzanic asked that “the emission calculations be for the lifetime of the refinery, with accurate emission projections for the entire facility.” An independent study concluded that the refinery would be a major source of pollutants at full capacity and should be required to get a major source permit and require the best available controls.

The NDDH wrongly stated that they can’t take other permits into consideration. The State Constitution actually states that agencies must communicate with one another and take all permits into consideration when making their decisions. This is important because Meridian stated in their application to NDDH that the Davis Refinery would produce 55,000 barrels per day but gave the Public Service Commission (PSC) an estimation of 49,500 barrel per day. Two different output amounts for the same refinery!

At the hearing Linda Weiss, BARC chair, asked "what game are they playing?" It seems that the game is bait and switch. An output level of 50,000 barrels per day would trigger the oversight of another agency (PSC). It’s clear they want to avoid oversight by the PSC yet be able to produce 55,000 barrels per day with their air permit.

Ready to Organize and Act



April Fairfield,
DRC Board Chair

President Trump has been quick with the executive pen during his relatively short tenure in the Oval Office. That means we, as DRC members, need to pay close attention to the regulatory and Executive actions being taken in Washington and how they impact North Dakota.

Trade is a good example. Recently, President Trump abruptly announced tariffs on steel and aluminum. North Dakota is certainly not a “rust belt” state. Why then, should it make any difference to us, especially now that Canada has been exempted?

It may come as a surprise to some, as it did to me, that North Dakota is ninth in the

nation for relying on steel and aluminum as a percentage share of our total imports. But these tariffs raise other concerns for North Dakota. They are just the latest in a string of Trump administration trade policy changes that include the US withdrawal from the TPP and the renegotiation of NAFTA.

I have never been a fan of either of those trade agreements. DRC has taken a stance against “free-trade” agreements in the past based on such things as agricultural, labor, environmental, anti-democracy, and human rights concerns. And there is little disagreement about China’s involvement in unfair trade practices. So, it may seem that renegotiating trade deals and implementing tariffs aren’t such bad ideas. Maybe even a necessary response against countries that put American companies and farmers at a disadvantage.

The question becomes whether the President’s actions could inadvertently result in a backlash that hurts North Dakota. China has already promised to retaliate against the tariffs. North Dakota relies heavily on world markets. In 2016, North Dakota was the 36th largest US exporter of goods and the 9th largest agricultural exporting state. Trade supported an estimated 35 thousand jobs. There is no question that North Dakota farm income and jobs are inexorably linked to international trade.

More specifically, North Dakota is linked to China and Canada; two of the major targets of Trump’s aggressive trade policy changes. Canada represents North Dakota’s largest market making up an astounding 82% of the state’s total goods exports in 2016, according to the US trade office. Canada being perturbed with the Trump administration over trade does NOT bode well for North Dakota exports.

Then there is China, one of North Dakota and US agriculture’s biggest customers. North Dakota farmers could feel the brunt of China’s wrath regarding steel and aluminum tariffs. As news breaks this week about another \$60 billion in tariffs against China for unfair trade practices regarding intellectual property, that possibility is now even greater.
(Continued page 3)

ABOUT US

Dakota Resource Council believes that the most enduring change comes from the bottom up. DRC members organize to take actions to influence public opinion and shape public policy to advance DRC’s mission and build people power. As a non-partisan grassroots organization, DRC members organize on issues impacting our three focus areas of oil and gas, agriculture and food, and clean energy to bring long-term institutional change to communities across North Dakota.

Affiliates

Fort Berthold Protectors of Water & Earth Rights (POWER)

Lisa DeVile, Chair

Badlands Area Resource Council (BARC)

Linda Weiss, Chair

Mckenzie County Energies & Taxation Association (MCETA)

Donny Nelson, Chair

Missouri Valley Resource Council (MVRC)

Chair Vacancy



Dakota Resource Council
1200 Missouri Ave Suite
201
Bismarck, ND 58504
701-224-8587

North Dakota produces a lot of soybeans, almost 250 million bushels of soybeans. Over 90 percent of those soybeans leave the state and about 70 percent of those are destined for Asian markets. Because China is the number one buyer of American soy, it is reason for concern that soy could be one of the first targets when China retaliates against steel and aluminum tariffs. Soy is not the only major export to China that could be retaliated against. China is North Dakota's fourth largest ag export customer.

But, trade is just one example of actions that could impact North Dakota. Other examples include, but are not limited to: withdrawal from Obama-era regulations requiring higher production standards for organic livestock and poultry sold under a "certified organic" label, signing a joint resolution to block implementation of coal mining regulations that reduce acid mine runoff into rivers, withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord, and continuously trying to replace the hard fought BLM Methane Rule that DRC members worked on so tirelessly.

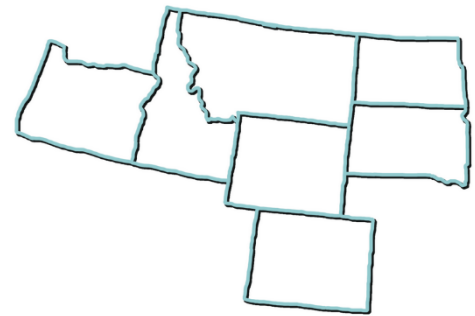
The bottom line is, DRC members must remain vigilant and be ready to organize and act. We must remain engaged and demand that our government leaders fight for the best interest of North Dakota people, our communities, our environment, and our livelihoods.

Western Organization of Resource Councils

WORC NEWS

Dakota Resource Council is one of eight member groups of the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) which stretches from North Dakota to Oregon. Each group sends two representatives to serve on the WORC Board of Directors. DRC's representatives are Lisa DeVille of Mandaree and Linda Weiss of Belfield. For more information about WORC see: <https://www.worc.org>.

Here are some highlights of recent work by DRC's sister groups in other states:



Montana: Western Native Voice New Board

Members. Denise Juneau and Pat Smith joined the Board of Western Native Voice. Denise was Montana's Superintendent of Public Instruction from 2009-2017, after becoming the first Native American woman in the country elected to a statewide executive office. Denise is an enrolled member of the Mandan-Hidatsa Tribes. Pat is an attorney specializing in Indian law and an enrolled member of the Assiniboine Tribe. Before he went to law school, he was an organizer for Northern Plains Resource Council.

Wyoming: Injection Well Permit Pulled. Powder River Basin Resource Council members got EOG Resources to pull its permit to drill an injection well near Cheyenne and an associated aquifer exemption. Powder River members spoke at public meetings and brought in experts to highlight the dangers of the proposed injection well, such as how it could damage their groundwater and drinking water.

Idaho: Increase Oil and Gas Setbacks. Idaho Organization of Resource Councils (IORC) members are speaking at hearings and submitting comments to support two local ordinance proposals for setbacks larger than required by state law. In Fruitland, the proposal is 1,200 feet from the property line of occupied structures, wells, canals, surface waters, schools, hospitals, and churches. In Eagle, the proposal is 2,640 feet.

South Dakota: Bad Manure Pipes Bill Defeated. Nine Dakota Rural Action members traveled to Pierre to testify and help kill a House bill that would have allowed operators of Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) to run manure pipes from their waste lagoons across private land without landowner notice or permission. The bill would have ended the need to work with neighbors and infringed on private property rights.

DRC Members Lead Air Quality Permit Hearing for Proposed Davis Refinery

Continued from page 1

BARC members, including two who live within one mile of the proposed site, testified on the direct impacts the refinery would have on the health, quality of life, and wellbeing of themselves, their families, and their animals. Not only is a refinery a major polluter, secondary emissions associated with the refinery add to poor air quality. The large number of trucks that will be traveling the backroads of Billings County to transport product to the refinery will produce emissions, kick up dust, and create their own hazards as they hurry to deliver their goods.

While BARC members spoke about the effects the refinery would have on their lives, they and other DRC members spoke about protecting Theodore Roosevelt National Park (TRNP) which is designated a Class I Air Shed.

"The only piece of land in North Dakota that is owned by all Americans is Theodore Roosevelt National Park," said DRC member Marie Hoff, "the refinery will affect air quality in and around the Park."



"It is unconscionable that North Dakota will once again make headlines for siting a refinery near our park." Joletta Bird Bear, Mandaree, Fort Berthold POWER

consistent with the preservation of existing clean air resources. A PSD review applies to new, large facilities or major changes that could increase air pollution in an area; The Davis Refinery would fall under this category. Peak emission amounts from startup, shutdown, malfunctions, repairs, and upsets are unknown. Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPS) were not included in the emission testing at startup so the impact of cancer causing pollutants was not addressed."

The NDDH will decide in the next months whether or not to grant the air quality permit request. BARC and DRC are preparing next steps. If you would like to get involved, join BARC, or get more information, please contact Liz Anderson at the DRC office.

"I am concerned that there isn't a Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) program under the Clean Air Act which protects areas from an increase of emissions due to degrading industrial equipment" said Belfield resident, Laura Grzanic

A PSD review is to protect public health and welfare, preserve, protect, and enhance the air quality in national parks and other areas. It ensures economic growth will occur in a manner

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CURRENT OFFICERS

April Fairfield, Chair
Curt Kralicek, Vice Chair
Linda Weiss, Past Chair
Jamie Stewart, Secretary
Lisa DeVille, Assistant Secretary
Cheryl Kary, Treasurer
Carol Jean Larsen, Assistant Treasurer

At-large

Angie McGinnis
Linda Kittilson
Ben Lambrecht
Donny Nelson

AFFILIATE REPS

BARC: **Pat Hedstrup**, **Wayne Fisher**
FB POWER: **Theodora Bird**
Bear, **Tom Abe**
MCETA: Vacant
MVRC: Vacant

DRC Staff

Don Morrison, Executive Director
don@drcinfo.com
Nicole Donaghy, Organizer/Communications
nicole@drcinfo.com
Liz Loos, Organizer
eloos@drcinfo.com
Liz Anderson, Organizer
liz@drcinfo.com
Tanner Herbert, Organizer
tanner@drcinfo.com
Sonda Sauers, Business Manager
sonda@drcinfo.com
Jeffon Seely, Bookkeeper | Accounting
jseely@drcinfo.com

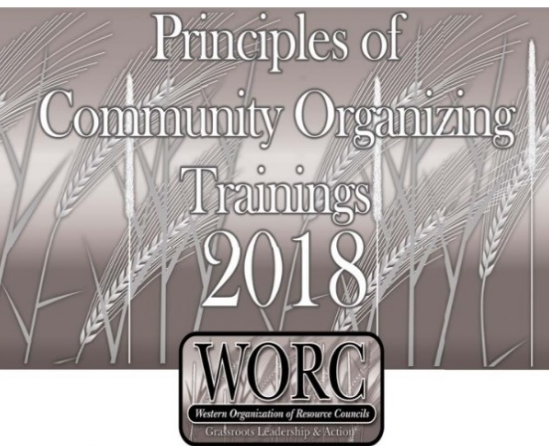
Our Fight with Big Agribusiness Continues

DRC members have continued to work hard over the last few months to stop corporate agriculture and Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's) from pushing into our state.

Early last December, the township council of Howes township held a meeting in Embden to change their setbacks to the maximum allowed by the state. This was done in hopes to prevent a massive 9,000 hog CAFO from being sited in an area that would not only devalue the land and poison the air for dozens of nearby farmers, but also certainly contaminate ground and surface water. Several DRC members attended the meeting, including sympathetic members from the Devils Lake region who are fighting the siting of a CAFO themselves. When a representative from Pipestone Systems, the corporate managing company behind both CAFOs, asked what Pipestone could do to change the resident's minds on this decision, DRC member Jeff Kenner informed him that there is nothing that Pipestone can offer the people of Howes township and Buffalo that would be worth allowing their land, air, and water to be poisoned.

Department of Health Issues Notice of New CAFO Water Quality Standards

At the end of January, the North Dakota Department of Health issued several public notices of intent to change North Dakota administrative code. The proposed changes include water quality standards, regulating pollution from CAFOs, the storing of livestock effluent, and updating the North Dakota Livestock Program Design Manual (NDLPDM) to make siting and permitting CAFO's easier, as well as removing the North Dakota Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and updating to a weaker federal standard. February 20, the NDDH took public comment, seven DRC members attended the hearing and three provided testimony CAFO siting and pollution regulation as well as the changes to the NDLPDM. If you would like more information on the proposed changes you can contact ag and food organizer, Tanner Herbert at 701-391-3271, or go to <https://deq.nd.gov/PublicNotice.aspx>.



Training Opportunities

Want to learn the basics of Community Organizing? Call the DRC office today to reserve your spot in WORC's nationally recognized Principles of Community Organizing training. Each participant receives a copy of *Applying the Principles of Community Organizing*, a practical notebook of support materials.

WORC's training develops skills of leaders and staff to **build powerful organizations** and **launch winning issue campaigns**. The hands-on workshop covers a range of skills and topics for community organizers and leaders of grassroots community organizations.

July 18-21
Sioux Falls, SD
Location TBD
Apply at the DRC office by July 6, 2018
Space is limited tuition fee is \$100 for DRC members.
Scholarships are available.
Call the DRC office today
701-224-8587

- Why we organize
- Roles of leaders and staff
- Membership recruitment
- Developing an issue campaign
- Planning and taking actions
- Healthy organizations`
- Leadership development
- Building strong relationships
- Running good meetings

Homegrown Stories

FARM AND RANCH FAMILIES CULTIVATING GOOD
FOOD, HEALTHY LAND AND RURAL VITALITY

Corporate control of our agricultural system is taking a devastating toll on our communities.

Homegrown Stories is a project of the Western Organization of Resource Councils. We're fighting for a food and farm system based on democratic values that honors the health of families, the land and our communities.

In January, food and ag organizer, Tanner Herbert, travelled around the Devils Lake Region with WORC's creative content coordinator, Natalie Hardwick, to interview members for WORC's homegrown stories project.

Over four days Natalie spoke with DRC members Diane and Jim Yri, Rick Schwab, Jeff Kenner and Vice Chairman of Spirit Lake Nation Doug Yankton, a DRC ally. These interviews allowed them to put the possible impacts of the proposed CAFO into their own words and share them with the world. You can see their and other stories at www.homegrownstories.org. Currently, the Devils Lake stories are the most watched stories on the website. Share these stories with your world.

When a CAFO Comes to Town

Photos taken near the proposed Confined Animal Feeding Operation in Pelican Lake Township and in downtown Devils Lake, North Dakota.



Rick Schwab is a campground owner on Six Mile Bay on Devils Lake. He rents out his 168 campsites every year from the first of May until the first of November. "It's pretty much a fishing community. Most people come here to fish, and we're a good location on the lake for that," said Rick.

"What disappoints me about the people in the community is their lack of concern for this. They don't realize when this lake is contaminated from hog waste, and it will be, they're going to lose a natural resource that they can't ever replace. Now is the time to put an end to this." — Rick Schwab



Jim and Diane Yri farmed the Devils Lake area for 28 years before the lake rose and destroyed their cropland. They lost over 2,000 acres to the lake. For the last 16 years, the Yris have owned Westbay Resort located right on Devils Lake.

“This will wreck Devils Lake,” said Diane. She says the high North Dakota winds will bring the odor straight to their campground, making it impossible for people to enjoy the lake. “What we provide here in North Dakota is clean air, flat and open spaces. We have the best fishery here, why would we even consider putting something here that could possibly ruin that,” said Diane.

Jeff Kenner grew up on Six Mile Bay on Devils Lake. He has lived there all his life. Today, Jeff owns a campground called Kenner’s Campground. Jeff used to run his family’s farm but after losing over 500 acres to the lake in 2011, he focused on turning his land into a campground. “We’ve embraced the lake. There’s nothing you can do about the growth or the land loss, it’s just nature.”

“I think it’s appalling that the leadership in this community is virtually silent.” — Jeff Kenner



Spirit Lake Reservation is south of Devils Lake, North Dakota and is located 7 miles from the proposed CAFO. The reservation is 245,240 square acres and borders Devils Lake along the northern part of the reservation. Spirit Lake Nation was established in 1867 by a treaty between the Sisseton-Wahpeton Bands and the United States government.

Doug recounts a story his grandmother told him growing up. “She said every year we would have a celebration or a wacipi we called it. The visitors that used to come to Spirit Lake Nation would come with cans or jars and they would come and scoop up some water and take it home with them. When they would have their ceremonies and prayers they would use that water because they understood its sacredness that it provided, the lake is a valuable resource.”

“...If we have to hold the United States government accountable to keep our waterways and our drinking water safe, and use that next step, that’s the route we’ll have to go.” — Doug Yankton

DRC Chair Appoints Task Force Members

The Oil and Gas Task Force unanimously adopted the Task Force Framework as approved by the DRC Board of Directors. In January, Board Chair April Fairfield appointed the 2018 Task Force members: Linda Weiss (Chair), Carol Ventsch, Carol Moldenhauer, Linda Kittilson, Lisa DeVille, Laura Grzanic, Curt Kralicek, and Larry Novak. The Task Force looks forward to building regional and statewide power and offering many opportunities for members to get involved in Oil and Gas issues in the coming year.

Badlands Area Resource Council Updates

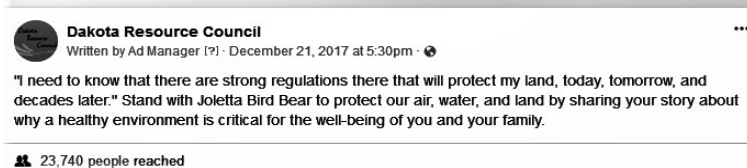
BARC members want to thank the other DRC members who came and testified at the January Davis Refinery hearing. The insight that Fort Berthold POWER members shared at the pre-hearing meeting was especially appreciated. BARC is committed to following POWER's lead on affiliate support and recognizes the value and necessity of supporting one another as we organize for healthy communities.

Since the Air Quality Permit hearing, members have written letters to the editor across the state and have attended public meetings regarding the refinery. New members have joined the affiliate and are taking an active role in the work of BARC. The commitment of the BARC members creates a welcoming and active group. Looking forward, the group will decide what needs to be done next.



POWER national ad campaign continues

In late December, Fort Berthold POWER members worked with Indigenous film maker, Justin Deegan to create a video for a national video campaign on the proposed budget cuts to environmental protections. Lisa DeVille and Joletta Bird Bear were featured in the 30 second video. The videos were featured in advertisements on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The ads will be recirculated for another 3 weeks. Watch for them on social media.



BLM Releases New Draft Rule, Judge Rules in Favor of Citizen Groups

The Trump administration has ceaselessly expended efforts and resources into rescinding the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Methane Waste Prevention Rule. February 8, the BLM released a new rule to address methane emissions and gas capture. The new proposed rule, is very similar to the previous rule that is nearly 4 decades old.

Attorneys from EarthJustice, representing POWER and a handful of conservation groups, requested a preliminary injunction to keep the rule in effect until the new rule is finalized. Judge Orrick from the North District Court of California ruled in favor of the preliminary injunction, finding that the decision to delay the rule is untethered to evidence to suspend it. The judge also has shown concern for the unrepairable harm that is being done to citizens and communities living with oil and gas development.

The BLM has been forced to use the correct process of changing or repealing a rule by opening a public comment period to disclose proposed changes and for public input.

Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke's proposed rule would gut the BLM's Methane and Waste Prevention rule. The new Rule severely weakens efforts to curb waste on public lands, leading to the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer-owned energy every year.

The comment period for the proposed replacement rule closes on **April 23. Take action today and tell the BLM to protect clean air!** Check your email for an action alert to sign on to public comments or visit the DRC website: <http://drcinfo.org/2018/03/21/take-action-today/> For more information or questions, call Nicole at the DRC office.

Staffing

DRC Welcomes Jeffon Seely to Staff

Jeffon Seely joined DRC as an accountant/bookkeeper in February 2018. Jeffon received his Bachelors in Accounting from Central Washington University. After college, he used his degree to help small businesses, non-profits, and community organizations improve their productivity, profit, and impact. In addition to his accounting work, Jeffon leads workshops and seminars across the country focused on generations, diversity and inclusion, mindfulness and 21st-century leadership.



ARE YOU
AWESOME?

WE'RE HIRING!

Dakota Resource Council, North Dakota's only home-grown, statewide, multi-issue grassroots organization, is looking for a **full-time field organizer** and **communications coordinator** for our team. DRC formed in 1978 and is a founding member of the Western Organization of Resource Council.

If you or anyone you know is looking to work with a great team send a **copy of your resume, cover letter, a writing sample, and three references** to Don@drcinfo.com

To see the full job listings, visit the DRC website:
<http://drcinfo.org/dakota-resource-council-jobs/>



Like us on Facebook
Follow us on Twitter



Dakota Res Council
@DakResCouncil



Flint, Michigan in Bowman County?

Mark Nygard

Bowman County Pioneer

March 18, 2018—I must say, I was dubious the first time I heard that Meridian Energy Group was proposing to build a major oil refinery west of Belfield, three miles from Theodore Roosevelt National Park. I said to myself, can that really be good for a national park, to have the light, noise, and smoke of a major refinery that close?

Then I learned that the air quality permit that Meridian was requesting from the state health department would allow them to emit 100 tons of lead per year into the atmosphere. To do the math, that is over 500 pounds of lead compounds per day. When the wind is out of the north, that is up to 500 pounds of lead per day over the city of Bowman. My concern for the park morphed to concern for the people I care about in Bowman. Folks, is that what we want our children breathing on their way to school, out hunting, during track practice?

I am not an expert on lead, but the World Health Organization says that lead exposure can occur by contaminated air and dust, as well as water, food, or consumer products, and that children are at a greater risk for lead because they absorb a greater proportion of the lead they take in (“Lead Poisoning and Health,” Fact Sheet, <http://www.who.int/> accessed 3/19/18). I have lived in Bowman just long enough (Continued page 10) to grow attached to your young people. I’ve had some of the older ones in my confirmation classes, and I’ve sat on the floor with some of the younger ones during children’s sermons and first communion preparations. I don’t relish the thought of a lead source putting 500 pounds of it a day into the air that a north wind will bring them.

I haven’t discussed the other compounds that the plant will be permitted to vent in quantity: the nitrous and sulfur oxides, the formaldehyde, the dioxin equivalents, the heavy metals, the arsenic. But perhaps enough has been said to help you understand my opposition to this plant as a danger to our area, and to invite you to wonder if you shouldn’t join me. Now is the time.

Methane waste may be invisible, but it’s widespread impacts are not

Lisa DeVille

Op-ed published in The Hill

January 18, 2018 – This week should have brought long-overdue updates to rules preventing methane waste and limiting wasteful flaring of natural gas on public and tribal lands should have gone into effect. Despite the real need, a methane waste prevention rule did not go into effect.

Instead of providing vital protections for families in communities like mine, the administration suspended these regulations despite finding strong support for the rule in Congress and among the American people.



Unfortunately, the rule’s suspension comes at the expense of taxpayers, public health, and the environment — including all who live on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in Mandaree, North Dakota.

The Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) Waste Prevention Rule would have required companies drilling on public and tribal lands to reduce the leaking, venting or flaring of natural gas through maintenance of

equipment and use of proven technologies. This is a rule that my community fought for because we experience the impacts of methane pollution daily.

The Fort Berthold Indian Reservation is surrounded by nearly 1,000 oil and gas wells that make the unceasing extraction of the resources beneath our land hard to escape. The air smells like rotten eggs, the noise disrupts our lives and the gas flares make our night skies look like bright summer days.

But even with all the evidence of pollution, I did not fully understand the severity of the problem until I stood next to a gas well with an infrared camera in 2016.

Giant plumes of methane leak into the atmosphere like an invisible oil spill, unseen by the naked eye. As an environmental student, climate activist and a Mandaree resident, witnessing the extent of the methane leakage across my community left me speechless.

This is why I joined a [lawsuit](#) to stop the Trump administration from willfully polluting our community and wasting our resources. The lawsuit challenged the authority of the administration to suspend the rule without adequate public process and in defiance of its legal obligation to take all reasonable precautions to prevent waste of publicly owned oil and gas.

Studies have shown that flaring, venting and leaking of methane and natural gas causes increased risks of asthma, respiratory infections, cancer and neurological damage.

We have experienced [several of these impacts](#) firsthand as oil and gas activity has increased exponentially over the last decade on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation. Though we are told that we live a safe distance from the drilling, our family's medical tests mirror those of the drillers themselves.

They get paid to take that health risk. We don't.

I also worry about the impact of methane pollution on the planet. Methane, a greenhouse gas that is [86 times more potent than carbon dioxide](#), is the second-largest contributor to human-caused climate change.

The suspension of the rule hurts our pocketbooks, too. Between 2009 and 2014, oil and gas companies on public and tribal lands vented, flared and leaked about 375 billion feet of natural gas — enough to supply over 5 million homes for a year. According to BLM's own calculations, suspending the Waste Prevention Rule will increase methane emissions by 175,000 tons over the next year and result in the waste of 9 billion cubic feet of natural gas.

The Government Accountability Office found in 2010 that 40 percent of the natural gas vented and flared on federal lands could be captured cheaply with technology that was cost-effective and readily available. Without the Waste Prevention Rule, companies pay fewer royalties on the gas they waste which means taxpayers lose [out on millions](#) of dollars in revenue every year — including funding for schools and infrastructure projects.

We need common sense controls on methane pollution. We need monitoring, testing and studies that explain the environmental and human health impacts of exposure to methane and other pollutants released alongside methane during development. The 2016 Waste Prevention Rule promised all that — but today our communities are being denied those vital protections.

The Waste Prevention rule did not go into effect this week as it should have. While we might not be able to see the methane pouring out of wells without an infrared camera, as long as the rule remains suspended, oil and gas companies will continue wasting millions of dollars worth of our shared natural gas resources at the expense of taxpayers, public health, and the environment.

Lisa DeVille is the president of the Fort Berthold Protectors of Water and Earth Rights (POWER).

Make a Difference GET INVOLVED



Dakota Resource Council
1200 Missouri Ave, Ste. 201
Bismarck, ND 58504-5264
www.drcinfo.org

Want to make a difference in your community? Looking to meet folks who want to make change?

Host a 'house party' or attend a DRC event near you!

Call the DRC office if you'd like to host a community meet up in your area.

DRC believes that power comes from the bottom up and that our voices are stronger when we stand together. Our members are the experts of their lives and experiences, and their concerns guide how we take action.

PRSRT. STD.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #20
DICKINSON, ND
58601