Dakota Counsel

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Executive Director Morrison Retires Leaving DRC Primed for Success

Dakota Resource Council Welcomes Return of Scott Skokos

Dakota Resource Council has been around for nearly forty years and we have seen our share of ups and downs. In 2012, Don Morrison was hired as Executive Director following one of DRC's most challenging financial times. Since then, we have seen steady growth in membership numbers, income, staff, and power building for DRC.

Over the past 6 years, examples of furthering DRC's mission and vision include: assistance in building Fort Berthold Protectors of Water and Earth Rights (POWER), the first new affiliate in 11 years; and the revitalization of a historic affiliate,



Badlands Area Resource Council (BARC). Both affiliates have built power and membership through their work to defend the BLM and EPA Methane Rules that reduce flaring to protect air quality for oil and gas communities and to defend local people and North Dakota's only national park from a refinery proposed three miles from its border. DRC members also stopped multiple Special Waste (radioactive oilfield waste) sites from being sited in Dunn, Mountrail and McLean Counties, and on the Agriculture and Food side, DRC members and staff worked tirelessly to prevent corporate farming laws from being weakened, and to protect North Dakota family farms and communities from large Confined Animal Feeding Operations.

As DRC grew, Don assisted board and staff to clarify the roles and processes of how our board, affiliates, and task forces do their work. These processes are aimed at accommodating membership growth without losing sight of DRC's identity, make our work more effective, make engagement more transparent, and create a more supportive environment.

Don's commitment has gone beyond working long hours obtaining grants to keep the doors open and the lights on. He has led staff by example, drawing the best out of each employee, challenging and cajoling staff to stretch themselves, learn new skills, and step into new roles while remaining humble and never letting staff forget that DRC's work is all about its members. Don has carried on DRC's legacy of conservation of natural resources, protection of family farms, and building power for rural communities.

Internally, Don has fostered a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workspace and encouraged and supported staff when they brought those issues up with the entire Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) network. He promoted thoughtful discussions that nurtured a connection between he and staff. Of course, no one is perfect and problems, conflicts, differences of opinions are bound to occur but those are often springboards for new solutions and paths.

Dakota Resource Council is the Voice of the Prairie



April Fairfield, DRC Board Chair

welcome and hearkens new and wonderful things. Such is the case with DRC. We have big changes ahead and our future has never looked brighter.

Don Morrison, Executive Director "Extraordinaire", announced he will be

Transition can be scary. Especially as we

transition means change and that can be

uncomfortable. But, sometimes change is

get older and a little set in our ways,

Don Morrison, Executive Director "Extraordinaire", announced he will be retiring at the end of July after a long and successful career. Don has done an amazing job at DRC. We have grown in membership, our organizers have helped our members to go deeper and grow stronger in the in campaigns and communities, and our organizational

finances are healthier than they have ever been.

For decades, Don Morrison has been a nonprofit leader, an advocate, an organizer, a voice for the voiceless, and a champion for justice. For the last six years, he has provided tireless leadership, direction, administration, mentorship and policy development to the Dakota Resource council by working side by side with our DRC member leaders. We have been so fortunate to have his expertise and skill at DRC.

While we are sad to lose him, he has certainly earned his right to a long retirement after such a fruitful career. Knowing Don, however, he will remain engaged and passionately involved as a member of DRC, working on issues that matter to our communities, state, and nation. So, it's not like losing an Executive Director, it's like gaining an amazing and active member that can rock the issues and stir the pot!

And even though Don will be a tough act to follow, we think we have found just the guy who can do it. Scott Skokos is a pretty familiar face around DRC. He comes to us as a former DRC organizer and a current regional organizer for Western Organization of Resource Councils.

Scott holds a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University in Social Relations and policy and a master's degree in Natural Resources Law from University of Denver Sturm College of Law. He has expertise in organizing and policy work surrounding the Bakken oil boom, agriculture policy, and coal country.

The Board and staff are really excited to start working with Scott again and we know that we will move seamlessly from one Executive Director to another. However, what we really need, what is absolutely critical to a smooth transition, is your continued support, engagement, and activism. DRC is about the members. It is not the staff or the Executive Director that makes DRC hum; it is our members. As an organization, we need your ramped-up involvement to ensure DRC's continued success and to always be THE voice of the prairie.

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 aas, agriculture and food, and clean energy to bring long-term institutional change to communities across North Dakota.

AFFILIATE GROUPS

Fort Berthold Protectors of Water & Earth Rights (POWER)

Lisa DeVille, 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

Morrison Retires Leaving DRC Primed for Success

(Continued from front page)

If, at the end of the day, or the end of a career, it can be said that progress was made, people's lives were changed for the better and the organization was improved, one can walk away knowing that his time spent working at Dakota Resource Council has been a success. Don retires from DRC, leaving it better than he found it and positioned to take the organization to even greater heights under the new Executive Director, Scott Skokos.

Skokos Chosen Executive Director of Dakota Resource Council



DRC welcomes our new Executive Director, Scott Skokos.

Scott previously was a DRC organizer from 2010-2014 working on oil and gas, and clean energy campaigns. For the past four years Scott has worked for Western Organization of Resource Councils as a regional organizer focused on oil and gas campaigns throughout the network. Much of Scott's time at WORC was spent successfully campaigning for and

defending federal standards limiting oil and gas air pollution. He also created and managed WORC's social media storytelling project, Living with Oil and Gas. Scott earned a bachelor's degree in social relations and policy from Michigan State University and a master's degree in natural resources law from the University of Denver.

"As someone who cut his teeth organizing with Dakota Resource Council, I am super excited to be DRC's newest director. I have enjoyed working with Don Morrison over the years; from when he was my supervisor at DRC all the way until my time at Western Organization of Resource Councils. I look forward to Don downloading his knowledge and understanding of the day to day operations of DRC, as I transition in as DRC's next director" said Skokos.

"The work that DRC does is critically important to North Dakota. I look forward to working with DRC's staff, members, and board to grow DRC and run winning campaigns! I plan to meet with members across the state and I encourage folks to contact me."

In his spare time Scott trains for marathons and enjoys being outside with his wife, Liz, and his goldendoodle, Kaline. Scott is excited to come back to North Dakota and lead DRC!

AFFILIATE GROUPS

CURRENT OFFICERS

April Fairfield, Chair Curt Kralicek, Vice Chair Linda Weiss, Past Chair Theodora Bird Bear,

Secretary

Lisa DeVille, Assistant Secretary

Cheryl Kary, Treasurer
Carol Jean Larsen, Assistant
Treasurer

At-large

Angie McGinness Linda Kittilson Ben Lambrecht Donny Nelson

AFFILIATE REPS

BARC: Pat Hedstrup, Wayne Fisher

FB POWER: **Tom Abe**MCETA: Vacant
MVRC: Vacant

DRC Staff

Scott Skokos, Executive Director scott@drcinfo.com

Don Morrison, Outgoing Executive Director

don@drcinfo.com

Nicole Donaghy,
Organizer/Communications
nicole@drcinfo.com

riicole@drcii iio.com

Liz Anderson, Organizer *liz@drcinfo.com*

Jeffon Seely Bookkeeper | Accounting iseely@drcinfo.com

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. For more information about WORC see: https://www.worc.org.



Ten DRC leaders and staff attended the Western Organizations of Resource Council's (WORC) Summer Meeting in Pendleton, Oregon June 7-9. Oregon is the home to member group Oregon Rural Action (ORA) whose focus is on issues similar to DRC.

The Summer Meeting is full of capacity and skills building workshops; discussions on our ag, oil, just transition, and other issues; and opportunities to go deeper into how to make our work stronger and more successful. This year the meeting was in the land of the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla Tribes.

Each member group has two representatives on the WORC Board. Each June the WORC Board and staff from WORC and member groups meet in one of the seven states in the WORC network. Participating this year from DRC were WORC Board Members Linda Weiss and Lisa DeVille, WORCEP Board member Joletta Bird Bear, DRC leaders Theodora Bird Bear and Walter DeVille, and staff Don Morrison, Nicole Donaghy, Liz Anderson, Liz Loos, and Tanner Herbert. This year the focus is to build equity in organizing and understanding what that means. WORC's goal is to bring all the folks to the table who need to be at the table in community organizing.



The meeting started with a daylong training in diversity and equity. Organizing is about adaptability and building power in communities that are facing issues that affect their lives. Effective organizing includes folks that come from all walks of life, beliefs, and places.



The group of about 100 board members, directors, staff, and members attended a tour of the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, led by Director, Bobbi Conner. Conner shared a history of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla-Walla tribes who lived, worked and traded on the lands near the Columbia River.



Following the tour, members of Oregon Rural Action, Western Colorado Alliance (formerly Western Colorado Congress), Fort Berthold POWER, and director of Dakota Rural Action (South Dakota) led a panel discussion on what it's like organizing in ethnic communities across the region.

The meeting ended with the business meeting of the WORC Board of Directors.

Highlights of DRC Board of Directors at Work

DRC Board Providing Vision and Direction

In its role of providing vision and direction to the organization, the DRC Board of Directors has been tackling many issues. A Strategic Planning Committee was established and appointed with the goal of finishing the work in time for an Operating Plan to be developed for 2019. This year, the Board has taken additional time to discuss the potential of enhancing and deepening DRC's work through building resilient local economies and strengthening our grassroots organizing. In January the Board adopted the local affiliate agreement and issue task force framework that had been developed over the past year to clarify and strengthen members' engagement in these two critical parts of our organization.

Financial oversight of the Board has included approving the 2018 Budget following its preparation by the Finance Committee and reviewing monthly financial statements and cash flow estimates.

A major role of the board is to hold each other accountable to work together constructively. When SARC and GFC3 rejected offers of assistance from the Board and staff, the Board addressed the issues straight forwardly to move the organization forward in a positive direction. While both local groups are disaffiliated, DRC remains committed to our Eastern North Dakota members. DRC staff travel to the Eastern side of the state and are available to meet and help members engage in DRC.

Other recent decisions by the Board include approving several legal actions regarding the Davis Refinery in Billings County and endorsing the Anti-Corruption Initiated Measure.

Regular meetings of the DRC Board of Directors are held every other month. Eleven Board members are elected at the Annual Meeting in October and each local affiliate can elected two representatives. In addition to the above work, Board members review information bimonthly on the work of local affiliates, issue task forces, communications and other matters.

Board Committee Looking at Structure and Member Engagement

Local organizing and campaigns provide the foundation of DRC's work. During the past year, DRC has made a concerted effort to clarify the work and strengthen the health of local affiliates, especially the accountability of affiliates to their membership.

Some local affiliate leaders have expressed concern that the current DRC Board structure leads to too much brain and energy drain away from local affiliates. With so many people needed to fill positions on the DRC Board, which meets six times a year, local leadership can get stretched beyond capacity to do what they need to do to lead successful local efforts.

The DRC Board has established an ad hoc Structure and Member Engagement Committee to study Board structure and recommend changes to deepen participation and leadership at the local affiliate level.

The committee is assessing the issue and preparing a report to the Board in September 2018. Member input would be greatly appreciated. If you have ideas, suggestions, or questions, please contact the DRC office at 701-224-8587.

Dakota Resource Council Host's RE-AMP Annual Meeting in Bismarck



June 19-21 the RE-AMP Network held its annual meeting in Bismarck, hosted by Dakota Resource Council.

The meeting started with a welcome by Waylon Hedegaard, President of the North Dakota AFL-CIO and Cheryl Kary director of Sacred Pipe Resource Center and DRC board member, created a sense of place and connection to the land on which we met.

Afternoon sessions focused on ways to transform a system: through the pathways of reforming, resisting, re-creating and re-imagining. Attendees participated in open space sessions ranging from equity and electric vehicles to the connection between climate change and environmental toxins.



DRC members led a bus tour with the first stop at Assumption Abby in Richardton. Long-time DRC member Terrance Kardong welcomed the group and gave a brief history of the Abby, followed by Sister Renee from the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Monastery who talked about the wind energy farm that the Monastery created.

Later, POWER members led a tour through the Bakken

oilfields in western North Dakota, guided by Lisa and Walter DeVille of Fort Berthold. The tour visited super pad fracturing sites, past sites of toxic brine spills, ground flares and oil wells. The day wrapped up with a group dinner on Beulah Bay overlooking Lake Sakakawea and a moving and inspiring keynote speech by organizer Nicole Donaghy.



RE-AMP brings together over 175 non-profits and foundations across eight Midwestern states to collaborate from a diversity of perspectives and build power to achieve results on climate change and energy policy.



Bolder Advocacy Leads Training for Groups

On May 31, several DRC members and staff gathered with members and leaders of other North Dakota non-profit organizations, unions, and one tribal leader for a workshop conducted by Bolder Advocacy is an initiative of the Alliance for Justice that promotes active civic engagement in democratic process through their work with non-profit organizations and their support in navigating complex advocacy rules and regulations. Participants at this workshop spent several hours learning about how non-profit organizations like DRC can work in collaboration with tribal entities and unions on issues that are important to all of us.

Blurbs...

"We want them to follow the law. Meridian's conditional use permit has lapsed so they're not able to start construction. They have changed the plan that they first submitted..."

April Fairfield, DRC board chair interview on Davis Refinery on News and Views with Joel Heitkamp Radio Show June 15, 2018

40th ANNUAL MEETING



The Annual Meeting Committee is in the process of preparing for the 2018 annual membership meeting.

DRC's annual membership meeting is held every year in October at locations throughout the state.

Save the date: October 26-27

Location to be determined

Fort Berthold Protectors of Water & Earth Rights to host National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Workshop in August

Taught by practitioners with decades of experience with NEPA, the workshop will review current trends in NEPA, mitigation and monitoring, and more. The workshop will also include practical tips on how to best engage with government agencies and their decision-makers. Watch your email for more info.

Space is limited, call Nicole at the DRC office at 701-224-8587 for more information

Oil and Gas

Department of Interior Secretary Visits Millionaire Friends Dismisses Local Residents

May 2018—DRC affiliates Fort Berthold Protectors of Water & Earth Rights (POWER) and Badlands Area Resource Council (BARC) sent formal requests to Secretary Zinke inviting him to come to Ft. Berthold and the Belfield area to discuss issues that affect them. See story in the <u>Bismarck Tribune</u>.

POWER expressed that Zinke should witness the amount of flaring occurring within Fort Berthold before rescinding the BLM Methane Rule. BARC requested Zinke to see how close the industrialization is near the area of Theodore Roosevelt National Park and near their homes.

In a <u>letter to the editor</u> published around the state, POWER President Lisa DeVille said "Right now, Zinke is in the process of rescinding the BLM methane waste prevention rule, a rule that is needed on Fort Berthold to regulate out of control emissions that damage the health of the people and land of Fort Berthold." She reminded Secretary Zinke that he should visit with the people before making harmful decisions.

While in North Dakota, Zinke attended the Williston Basin Petroleum Conference in Bismarck, visited a well pad near Killdeer, and spent the day at Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The park named after his personal hero.

Badlands Area Resource Council Continues Refinery Fight

BARC members have been busy as multiple actions have taken place surrounding the Davis Refinery. In mid-June the North Dakota Department of Health granted Meridian an Air Permit with few changes. That same week DRC, along with ally, Environmental Law and Policy Center, filed a Complaint alleging that the Billings County Conditional Use Permit was both lapsed, as there had been no action taken on it within a year of its issuance, and that the plans for the construction have changed so significantly that the original permit application should be altered to match the changes.

The water appropriations hearing has been postponed until October. There are more plans in the works to get the location of the refinery changed. Be on the lookout for more Action Alerts, letters to the editor, and news items (some of which are in the communications section.)

On June 27, Dakota Resource Council and Environmental Law & Policy Center filed a complaint with North Dakota utility regulators that seeks to stop construction of the oil refinery until the project receives a more thorough review. The complaint argues that Meridian is attempting to build the Davis Refinery in stages to avoid the scrutiny of the Public Service Commission, which requires siting permits for refineries that process 50,000 barrels per day.

Meridian has, at times, described the project as expanding to process 55,000 barrels per day in statements to investors, in news releases and on state and local permit applications. Later, the company website was amended to 49,500 barrels, just under the threshold.

The North Dakota Department of Health recently issued an air quality permit for the Davis Refinery that stated a capacity of 55,000 barrels per day. The complaint seeks a cease-and-desist order from the Public Service Commission to prevent Meridian from constructing the refinery until it obtains a certificate of site compatibility. Meridian Energy has said construction at the site near Belfield is expected to begin soon now that the project has approval from health regulators.

Linda Weiss said the group filed the complaint because "Meridian is manipulating North Dakotans."

"The company shouldn't be allowed to pick and choose what laws suit their purposes," Weiss said. "We want the PSC to compel Meridian to follow the law."

Read more in the Bismarck Tribune article by Amy Dalrymple HERE.

Dakota Resource Council Takes Meridian to Court Over Planned Construction Without Valid Conditional Use Permit

Dakota Resource Council filed a complaint filed 11, 2018 with District Court in Bismarck alleging that Meridian Energy Group, Inc. plans to illegally construct its Davis Refinery. DRC alleges the Billings County permit that was issued has expired over a year ago. The permit was approved July 26, 2016 and expired on July 26, 2017. DRC's complaint also alleges that the plans for the refinery have significantly changed and the company failed to apply for a new permit under the new, revised plans.

DRC members are concerned that the Commissioners have not followed up with Meridian on their permit and that Meridian is evading County review that is intended to protect the public's health and safety.

Emanuel Culman from Beach wondered if it's hard to tell your friends no: "Perhaps the bells, whistles, and dollar signs make up for the fact that the refinery plans, size, projected emissions, and production levels have changed significantly?"

Meridian's plans are all the more concerning given that it just received an Air Permit to Construct from the Department of Health and has said that it plans to begin construction soon, without acknowledging that further review by Billings County is required.

Meridian has repeatedly changed its story about the Davis Refinery presenting different sets of facts to different permitting agencies. For example, Meridian stated an output of 49,500bpd to the Public Service Commission, evading a siting permit by 500bpd, while asking the Health Department for permission to construct a 55,000bpd facility. It is no surprise that the company is again trying to skirt the law.

Agriculture and Food

DRC Focuses on CAFO's

In early April, DRC leaders and staff braved a blizzard and black ice to make it to a meeting on the North Dakota - South Dakota border for a meeting on our similar work concerning Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). The meeting was organized by DRC and Dakota Rural Action (DRA), our sister organization in South Dakota. The meeting included leaders and staff from both member groups, leaders from Spirit Lake Nation, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, and WORC. Participants shared perspectives, information, and discussed effective strategies and ways we can work together.

DRC's Agriculture and Food Task Force has met several times this year to address CAFOs, the status of the Farm Bill, and potential local issues. Task Force members have been invited to participate in the Board and Staff Retreat in July.

If you are interested in getting involved with DRC's agriculture and food work or would like to participate in training sessions on organizing, issue development or being a local spokesperson, please contact the DRC office at 701-224-8587.

Do you ever wonder what it's like living with oil and gas development?

Western Organization of Resource Councils has put together a visual storytelling project that shows the impact of oil and gas on communities like ours. The project has run over 3 years and features members from oil and gas communities across the WORC network. Visit www.livingwithoilandgas.com to see the full project.

25-acre Saltwater spill on the Peterson's farm. Saltwater is a waste byproduct of oil and gas production that is more than 100 times saltier than sea water. When saltwater spills onto farmland it sterilizes the land taking valuable farmland out of production.





"Before all of this new development started this area felt peaceful. But ever since industry came to town, our decision-makers seem to think it is more important to support industry. It feels like myself and all of the people who have lived here for years are being squeezed out. The area feels less rural from all of the development. And if they build the proposed refinery, it's going to be even worse. That's why I'm fighting it."

-Laura Grzanic, Belfield, ND

"Beyond the impacts to human health, the carbon and methane emissions from flaring or leaking oil and gas wells significantly impact the climate. Raw methane gas is considered 75 times worse for the climate than carbon, so methane venting and leaks are a real problem. Flaring is also a problem for climate, but not as much as raw methane gas. We are currently experiencing 1 degree in warming right now, and we are approaching to 2 degrees of warming. It is past time to act to stop things like flaring and the release of raw methane gas"

-Tom Abe, New Town, ND





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Farewell and Thank You By By

Don Morrison

The past six and a half years with DRC have been good in so many ways. The best part has been working together with members on the right side of critical issues in North Dakota.

I am inspired by DRC members who dedicate time, energy and skills at the local, affiliate, task force, Board, and WORC levels. The current DRC Board of Directors is a skillful, engaged group with the leadership and courage to make difficult decisions as a group. The current Board has what it takes to move DRC to the next levels of success. Working with our members are skilled, passionate staff who are committed to members' success.

DRC's community organizing makes a difference. People join DRC because they see what is happening in our state and know that there are better ways to do things. Our air, water, land and livelihoods do not have to be destroyed in the process. So, somebody must make the strong case for those better ways. A lot of effort goes into making DRC's issue campaigns focused, factual, responsible and targeted on specific decision-makers. We know doors can open through organizing and the hard work DRC members do. We can win when we build on our local, real life experiences and bedrock prairie values. That's how we get to a better future that includes everyone.

I am really stoked that Scott Skokos is coming in as DRC's Executive Director. I have enjoyed and appreciated working with Scott over the years. He brings the necessary energy, focus, a lot of knowledge of and commitment to DRC's issues and how we operate. I'm really excited. I think DRC is at a point that it is ready to catapult forward.

Together we can have a better North Dakota. In fact, working together is the only way positive, equitable change has happened. Thank you, DRC members, for what you do, your hard work, support, and dedication to making where we live better.

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 scott@drcinfo.com

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



Know someone who wants to make a difference? Encourage them to join DRC!

I want to join Dakota Resource Council and affect positive change in North Dakota!			
Please make your tax- deductible check payable to DRC and mail to: 1200 Missouri Ave, Suite 201 Bismarck, ND 58504 Or join online at www.drcinfo.org/join	1. I want to be a DRC: (Please choose one) \$1000 Lifetime Member\$500 Watchdog of the Prairie Member\$250 Sustaining Member\$100 Century Club Member\$55 Household Member\$35 Individual Member _\$15 Student/Senior Member	to join my local	Badlands Area Resource Council\$5 Household\$5 Individual McKenzie County Energy & Taxation Association\$10 Household\$10 Individual
3. Fill out your information below: Name:			Missouri Valley Resource Council \$5 Household\$5 Individual
Address:			Fort Berthold Protectors of Water
City, State, Zip:			& Earth Rights\$10 Household\$10
Phone:			Individual
Email:			

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

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