

The Cost of BLM's Methane Waste Rule Rollback

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's proposal to gut the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) methane waste rule will **cost Americans over \$1 billion in wasted natural gas and pollution**. Schools and communities will lose funding, public energy resources will be wasted, and communities will experience more smog. Despite bipartisan opposition in Congress and overwhelming opposition nationwide, the BLM is gutting reforms and relying on a 40-year-old regulatory framework that is disconnected from our 21st century energy landscape.

Lost production, less revenue

- By BLM's own [count](#)¹, repealing the methane waste rule would **cut natural gas production by 299 billion cubic feet over a decade**, enough to heat almost 500,000 homes for a decade.
- And BLM's rollback plan would **cost Americans over \$1 billion in wasted natural gas and pollution**. Its own analysis shows this is a net-negative for the American public.
- States, tribes, and the federal government would also [lose](#)¹ **out on upwards of \$37.2 million in royalty revenue**. That's money that largely goes to funding things like schools and roads.

Fewer jobs, stagnant investment

- In exchange for more wasted energy and less taxpayer revenue BLM's own analysis shows its **rollback will result in no additional job growth**, [stating](#)¹ *"We do not believe that the proposed rule would substantially alter the investment or employment decisions of firms."*
- However, the rollback will **create uncertainty and threaten the burgeoning methane mitigation industry**. The industry [supports](#)² over 130 companies including 590 manufacturing, sales and support facilities, with company headquarters across 46 states.
- **This decision is out-of-step with where the oil and gas industry is headed**, including major producers like XTO, which [supports](#)³ methane regulation and is [committed](#)⁴ to complying with federal methane rules.

More pollution and climate emissions

- Secretary Zinke's revisions are a huge step backward, and would result in the **same amount of short-term climate damage as 8.3 million cars** over ten years.
- Oil and gas operations also release **dangerous toxics such as benzene and other ozone-forming pollutants** that can trigger asthma attacks and worsen respiratory disease.

The public wants strong methane rules

- A January 2018 [Colorado College poll](#)⁵ found that **7-in-10 western voters support methane waste requirements on public lands**
- Last year, BLM received **over 150,000 comments – the vast majority opposed delay to the methane rule**. [Members of Congress](#)⁶, [over 90 western faith leaders](#)⁷, [50 environmental org leaders](#)⁸, [22 Western stakeholders](#)⁹, and tribal leaders all wrote protesting a delay of the rule.

¹ <https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/Proposed%20Waste%20Prevention%20Rule%202.12.18.pdf>

² <https://www.edf.org/how-reducing-methane-emissions-creates-jobs>

³ <https://energyfactor.exxonmobil.com/perspectives/methane-regulation-stay-pragmatic/>

⁴ <http://www.xtoenergy.com/en-us/responsibility/current-issues/air/xto-energy-methane-emissions-reduction-program>

⁵ <https://www.coloradocollege.edu/stateoftherockies/conservationinthewest/>

⁶ <https://www.politicopro.com/f/?id=0000015f-8992-d061-a7df-c9bae6a30001>

⁷ <http://www.methanefacts.org/files/2017/12/Faith-Leader-Letter-11.6.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.methanefacts.org/files/2017/12/Environmental-Coalition-Letter-11.6.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.methanefacts.org/files/2017/12/Western-Stakeholder-Letter-11.6.pdf>