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The Mountain Pact Encouraged by the Biden Administration's Efforts to Clean up Abandoned Oil and Gas Wells and Tackle Methane Emissions, Urge Further Action

Today, the Biden administration [announced](#) new efforts to clean up abandoned oil and gas wells and tackle methane emissions - a major contributor to climate change that is emitted during the [production and transport of coal as well as oil and gas](#).

In response, **Anna Peterson, Executive Director of [The Mountain Pact](#)**, an organization that works with local elected officials across the West on federal climate and public lands policies, said:

"The Mountain Pact is thrilled with the administration's announcement today to do more to clean up orphaned oil and gas wells; to minimize methane leaks; and to work with communities to repurpose fossil fuel infrastructure for new industries. We encourage the administration to expand on these efforts to truly address the growing orphaned and abandoned well crisis by holding oil and gas companies accountable to pay for cleanup.

Taxpayers are currently on the hook for billions in clean-up costs for wells abandoned by oil and gas companies and local communities, public lands, wildlife, and drinking water sources are harmed when industry leaves a mess behind.

Moreover, [fossil fuel extraction on public lands generates 25% of our country's climate emitting emissions](#) and local governments recognize how climate change is dramatically and negatively impacting their communities on a daily basis. From the fires in Boulder County and in California to flooding in Flagstaff, to [mudslides closing highways](#), [smoke-filled air](#), [drought](#), [national forests closing](#), and [temperatures reaching levels never seen before](#) - climate destruction is putting a [strain](#) on already under-resourced departments and negatively impacts communities' public health, [tourist](#), [outdoor](#), and [agricultural](#) economies.

We are encouraged by the administration's efforts and urge additional reforms either through congressional or administrative action to further address the broken oil and gas leasing system. Additional reforms that are needed include updating oil and gas bonding standards and minimum bids, rents, and royalty rates. These reforms would lower federal liability and economic waste, raise billions of dollars in revenue, and increase taxpayer returns while also saving taxpayers from having to foot the bill in perpetuity for cleaning up the industry's mess."

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Founded in 2014, [The Mountain Pact](#) mobilizes local elected officials in over 80 Western mountain communities with outdoor recreation based economies to speak with a collective voice on federal climate, public lands, and outdoor recreation policy.