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WESTERN LEADERS NETWORK APPLAUDS EPA METHANE RULE, URGES SWIFT IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Today, the Environmental Protection Agency [finalized a federal rule](#) to reduce methane emissions and other pollutants from new and existing oil and gas operations nationwide.

“We thank President Biden and EPA Administrator Regan for taking this bold step to protect our climate and frontline communities across the Interior West. With the oil and gas sector [responsible for one-third of global warming](#), this rule is essential to controlling climate-damaging methane emissions and the needless waste of taxpayer revenues,” **said WLN Executive Director Gwen Lachelt.** “Our communities deserve clean air, a healthier climate future and a fair return for developing oil and gas resources. We now urge the administration to work with states and swiftly implement and enforce these important safeguards.”

Methane, a byproduct of oil and gas development, is a powerful greenhouse gas and significant contributor to the climate crisis. The climate-heating gas became a widely known issue in Colorado and New Mexico in 2014 when NASA satellite images showed the [methane hotspot over the Four Corners](#) area. Wasteful industry practices such as venting and flaring that allow natural gas to escape into the atmosphere – rather than be captured and sent to market – also deprive communities of [much-needed revenues](#) that could fund schools and public services.

In November 2022, the EPA released an [updated draft rule](#) to reduce methane emissions and other pollutants from new and existing oil and gas operations, building upon a draft rule released in 2021.

EPA’s new rule will help achieve national climate goals, build environmental justice by protecting frontline communities from air pollution, and reduce emissions leaks that result in wasted taxpayer revenue.

Since the organization’s inception in 2017, Western Leaders Network has worked to defend and advocate for stronger state and federal safeguards to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector.

[Western Leaders Network](#) is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that harnesses the power of local, tribal, and state elected officials across the Interior West to advance energy transition, clean air and water initiatives, and strengthen election security.