

12/28/16

Obama Declares Bears Ears National Monument in Southern Utah

[Click here](#) to read this story by Matthew Piper of the Salt Lake Tribune

[Watch VIDEO](#) by the Salt Lake Tribune

[Click here](#) to read this article by Brian Maffly and Thomas Burr of the Salt Lake Tribune

[Click here](#) to read this article by Amy Joi O'Donoghue of the Deseret News

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Stephen Trimble in the LA Times

[Click here](#) to read this opinion peice by Paul Rolly of the Salt Lake Tribune called "Utah Officials Say They Can Manage Lands Better, But Look at Their Record"

[Click here](#) for opinion piece by George Pyle of the Salt Lake Tribune called "All of Rural America is Shrinking, Monuments or Not"

Additional Information:

[Click here](#) to read the proclamation of Bears Ears NM

[Click here](#) to download the boundary map of Bears Ears NM

[Click here](#) to view map of proposed Escalante National Monument from 1936 when Harold Ickes was Interior Secretary

[Click here](#) to read the history of the proposed Escalante National Monument of 1936

12/22/16

Nuclear Project Foes Turn Out for Hearing

[Click here](#) to read this story by Lara Gale of Moab Sun News

News Release by Living Rivers and Uranium Watch

December 5, 2016

Contact:

- Sarah Fields, Uranium Watch: 435-260-8384; sarah@uraniumwatch.org
- John Weisheit, Living Rivers: 435-260-2590; john@livingrivers.org

Blue Castle Holdings Fails to Make First Water Rights Payment

Blue Castle Holdings Inc. (BCH) failed to make their First Pre-Operational Payments to the Kane County Water Conservancy District (\$100,000) and San Juan County Water Conservancy District (\$80,000) for the lease of water rights for the proposed Blue Castle Project nuclear reactor near Green River. The payments were due after the State Engineer's authorization of the use of 53,600 acre-feet of Green River water for the reactor project became final. The authorization became final in September, when plaintiff's did not appeal the Utah Court of Appeals' decision—upholding the State Engineer's decision—to the Utah

Supreme Court. In addition to their failure to make the payments, BCH failed to even notify the Districts that they would not be making the First Pre-Operation Payments on time.

According to the KCWCD, they are renegotiating the lease with BCH. Plaintiffs Living Rivers, Uranium Watch, and HEAL Utah have asserted that BCH does not have the financial resources to move forward with the nuclear reactor project. Plaintiffs stated that they did not believe that BCH would have the financial resources to make the annual payments, which now has been shown to be the case. The last time BCH sent a letter to the NRC was in 2011. Since then there have been no letters to the NRC, pre-application meetings, or efforts to complete an Emergency Response Plan.

On December 20, 2016, Living Rivers, HEAL Utah, and Uranium Watch will participate in a hearing on the KCWCD request for an extension of time to show proof of beneficial use for the water rights leased to Blue Castle Holdings. The hearing will take place at the Green River City Office at 11:00 am.

Protesters to the KCWCD Request have asserted that there is no reasonable assurance that the water rights approved for the proposed reactor will ever be put to beneficial use. KCWCD and BCH have failed to show due diligence within the past 50 years to make use of the water water rights. "It is about time that the State Engineer demand financial and other documentation for the public record to demonstrate support the Water Conservancy District's assertion that the water will be used for a nuclear reactor," says Sarah Fields, Program Director of Uranium Watch.

Adds John Weisheit, Conservation Director of Living Rivers and Colorado Riverkeeper, "In 2013 we heard testimony under oath that Blue Castle Holdings' annual net investment income is 8 million dollars per year. It is not unreasonable to assume the financial viability of this company has changed and the administrative record should be updated before the State Engineer makes his decision."

###

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

KCWCD Water Right documents:

<http://waterrights.utah.gov/cblapps/wrprint.exe?wrnum=89-74><http://waterrights.utah.gov/cgi-bin/docview.exe?Folder=89-74>

The Financial Woes of the Nuclear Power Industry

[Click here](#) to read this December 28, 2016 story by Mark Chediak of Bloomberg News called "Toshiba Corp Stock Plunges by Most on Record as Nuclear Renaissance Turns Into a Nightmare"

[Click here](#) to read this story in E & E by Kristi E. Swartz called "Toshiba' s Possible Westinghouse Sale Throws Regulators."

News: March 29, 2017

[Westinghouse declares bankruptcy](#)

News: April 24, 2017

[Vendors Line Up to Demand Returns from Westinghouse](#)

12/19/16

Moab Master Leasing Plan: Where Energy and Scenery Co-exist

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb of the Grand Junction Sentinel

[Click here](#) to read the press release from the BLM

[Click here](#) to review the Record of Decision

12/18/16

Long-term Plan for Colorado River Water Won't be Sealed Before Trump Takes Office

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of the Arizona Daily Star

12/15/16

Havasupai Nation files complaint about impacts from mining groundwater

[Click here](#) to read this story by Emery Cowan of the Arizona Daily Sun

[Click here to read the complaint](#)

12/15/16

Record of Decision Signed for Glen Canyon Dam Operations

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell signed the protocols for operating Glen Canyon Dam at the annual meeting of Colorado River Water Users Association in Las Vegas.

[Record of Decision](#). December, 2016.

[Biological Opinion](#). US Fish & Wildlife Service.

[OpEd of December 30, 2015](#). Editorial Board of Arizona Daily Sun.

[Click here](#) to read the response from the Bureau of Reclamation to the Editorial Board of Arizona Daily Sun.

[Complete document: 2016 Glen Canyon Dam Final EIS](#)

[Executive Summary](#)

12/13/16

Is a Utah Tar Sands Project Drying Up Oasis Below?

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune
Related Stories:

[Click here](#) to read this story by Rudy Herndon of the Moab Sun News

[Click here](#) to listen to this KUER radio broadcast by Judy Fahys

[Click here](#) to read this press release from US Oil Sands concerning there strip mining and processing operations at PR Springs on the East Tavaputs Plateau.

The company's first promise to investors to begin operations was in 2010 when their company name was Earth Energy Resources [PRESENTATION](#)

[CLICK HERE](#) to read this investor analysis of US Oil Sands. Seeking Alpha.

12/13/16

The Progressive: Reflections from the Center of the Universe

[Click here](#) to read this story in *The Progressive* by Mrill Ingram about a river trip through Canyonlands National Park

12/08/16

US Oil Sands Announces Temporary Plant Closure & Employee Lay Offs

Energy firms in sticky situations: Tar sands projects look to overcome challenges of lower oil prices: [Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb of the Grand Junction Sentinel

[Click here](#) to read this story by Rudy Herndon of the Moab Sun News

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune

[Click here](#) to listen to this KUER radio broadcast by Judy Fahys

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[CLICK HERE](#) to read this investor analysis of US Oil Sands. Seeking Alpha.

12/06/16

United States' First Tar Sands Mine Delayed; Companies and investors reject Utah's unconventional fuels

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 6, 2016

Contacts:

John Weisheit, Living Rivers and Colorado Riverkeeper, (435) 259-1063, john@livingrivers.org

Lesley Adams, Waterkeeper Alliance, (541) 821-3882, ladams@waterkeeper.org

Jennifer Eckstrom, (208) 304.2319, jenneks@gmail.com

Lauren Wood, Green River Action Project, A Colorado Riverkeeper Affiliate, (801) 647-1540, lwood1988@gmail.com

United States' First Tar Sands Mine Delayed

Companies and investors reject Utah's unconventional fuels

Vernal, Utah - US Oil Sands Inc., the company attempting to open the United States' first commercial tar sands mine, announced that is putting the project on hold due to an inability to attract investors. Forecasts of worsening climate change and water shortages have compelled the close scrutiny of speculative plans, like those of US Oil Sands, to develop high-carbon, water-intensive tar sands and oil shale deposits in the Colorado River Basin.

"Despite this temporary reprieve, defenders of the Colorado watershed remain aware that the foreign corporation pushing for the first commercial tar sands strip mine in America is chomping at the bit to move forward, and claim they will do so in January of 2017," said Jennifer Ekstrom, director of the award-winning documentary Last Rush for the Wild West: Tar Sands, Oil Shale and the American Frontier. "Under the upcoming Trump Administration, the entire landscape containing tar sands and oil shale, almost a million acres, is at even greater risk of this dirtiest type of strip mining. We will remain vigilant and continue fighting this extraordinary threat."

The company's PR Spring mine is located in a remote landscape behind the Book Cliffs in eastern Utah. US Oil Sands plans to strip mine for the tar sands and then use an industrial strength solvent to access the hydrocarbon. The process results in 100% land destruction, carries a hefty carbon footprint, and threatens to contaminate scarce groundwater resources in the arid high desert.

"We see here that US Oil Sands continues to be stilled up by the few with deep pockets and opposed by the many with clear and steadfast vision for a better future," says Lauren Wood of Green River Action Project, A Colorado Riverkeeper Affiliate. "Even under a Trump administration, it is nonsensical to advance an industry with a carbon and water footprint so extreme that it threatens the very future of the Colorado River Basin."

US Oil Sands' statement comes on the heels of announcements that numerous major companies have ended their attempts to exploit oil shale and tar sands in the Colorado River Basin. ExxonMobil, Shell, American Shale Oil, and Chevron all terminated their oil shale research, demonstration, and development efforts in the Green River Basin. And a pending federal commercial lease for the Asphalt Ridge tar sands mine in Utah's Uinta Basin has been stalled since 2014.

"US Oil Sands has been promising immediate development with breakthrough technology for six years and now, with 98% of the infrastructure in place, all but essential personnel have been laid off. This

clearly indicates that investors have no confidence in this project,” says John Weisheit of Living Rivers and Colorado Riverkeeper.

“The announcement represents yet another example of an oil shale or tar sand project that is unable to make the finances work,” says Lesley Adams of the Waterkeeper Alliance. “Developing unconventional fuels in the Colorado River Basin would fundamentally undermine our national climate goals and threaten scarce water supplies; it is simply not a viable path towards energy independence.”

About Waterkeeper Alliance

Waterkeeper Alliance unites more than 300 Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates around the world, focusing citizen advocacy on issues that affect our waterways, from pollution to climate change. Our movement patrols and protects more than 2.4 million square miles of rivers, streams and coastlines on 6 continents. For more information, please visit: www.waterkeeper.org.

Additional Information:

[CLICK HERE](#) to read this investor analysis of US Oil Sands. Seeking Alpha.

12/05/16

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News Release

Living Rivers and Uranium Watch

December 5, 2016

Contact: Sarah Fields, Uranium Watch: 435-260-8384; sarah@uraniumwatch.org

John Weisheit, Living Rivers: 435-260-2590; john@livingrivers.org

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Additional information: KCWCD Water Right documents:

01: <http://waterrights.utah.gov/cblapps/wrprint.exe?wrnum=89-74>

02: <http://waterrights.utah.gov/cgi-bin/docview.exe?Folder=89-74>

11/22/16

In Water Scarce Regions Desalination Plants are Risky Investments

[Click here](#) to read this story by Keith Schneider in Circle of Blue

11/21/16

Nuclear power: After legal victory, Blue Castle has yet to pay Kane and San Juan counties per water lease agreements

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune

11/11/16

USU: Center for Colorado River Studies Weighs in on Fill Mead First Plan

[Click here](#) to read this story by Mary-Ann Muffoletto of Phys.org

[Click here](#) to read the executive summary

[Click here](#) to read the 80-page analysis

###

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

[Click here](#) to read Phase One of Fill Mead First Proposal submitted by Glen Canyon Institute to the Bureau of Reclamation for their 2012 Basin Study

[Click here](#) to read Phase Two & Three of Fill Mead First Proposal

[2009 - Fluvial Systems Tied Together Through Common Base Level](#). Majeski.

[1986 -Simulation Analysis Water Level Changes Navajo Sandstone Changes Altitude Lake Powell Wahweap Utah Arizona](#). Thomas.

[Loss Rates from Lake Powell and Their Impact on management of the Colorado River](#). Myers; 2013.

11/05/16

CU Boulder Team: Feds May Order First Cuts in Water from Colorado River & Issues Warning to Next President

[Click here](#) to read this story by Bruce Finley of *The Denver Post*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Colorado River Future Project Team at Colorado University at Boulder

[Click here](#) to read their roadmap to the executive branch

[Click here](#) to read this story by Matt Reisner of *Water Deeply* called "On the Colorado River, Climate Change is Water Change"

11/04/16

Conflicting Interests Target Declining Great Salt Lake

[Click here](#) to read this story by Jonny Bonner of Courthouse News Service

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

[Salt Lake Study](#). USU.

[Powerpoint: Great Salt Lake Water Issues](#). Clyde.

11/02/16

Moab City Presses Pause on Poop from National Parks & BLM

[Click here](#) to read this story by Amy Joi O'Donoghue

[Click here](#) to read this story by Laura Haley of *The Times-Independent* called "After Heated Debate City Council Approves Partial Sewer Hookup Moratorium"

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

[Public Notice](#)

[Public Notice Verification](#)

[Transmittal Letter](#)

[Utah Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permits](#)

[Fact Sheet & Statement of Basis](#)

[Final Environmental Study](#)

[Capacity Evaluation of Moab City Wastewater Plant](#)

[Wasteload Analysis](#)

[City Council Packet on special meeting for a potential moratorium on sewer hook ups](#)

[Notes by citizen attending the sewer service moratorium meetings.](#) Bill Love.

[Announcement of Sewer Hook Up Moratorium](#)

[City Letter to Contractors](#)

10/25/16

Lower Dolores River in Peril

Stories by Jim Mimiaga and Sam Carter of the *The Cortez Journal*

[Click here](#) to read *State Exercises Claim to River Water to Benefit McPhee Reservoir*

[Click here](#) to read *Lower Dolores Study Details Native Fish Needs*

[Click here](#) to read *Lower Dolores River Gets Impaired Status*

[Click here](#) to read *Flash Flood Show Sad State of Dolores River*

[Click here](#) to read a study called *Lower Dolores Native Fish Status and Trends (2010)*

10/22/16

'Farming Nature' Helps Restore Colorado River Delta Cottonwoods, Willows

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of the Arizona Daily Star

[Click here](#) to view repeat photography by Karl Flessa of the "pulse flow," during and after

[Click here](#) to read the Interim Report of the monitoring program at the Limitrophe and Delta

[Click here](#) to read the appendices of the Interim Report

10/20/16

Critics Say Water Plan Appears to Move 90% of Pipeline Cost to Utah Taxpayers

[Click here](#) to read this story by Emma Penrod of the Salt Lake Tribune.

[Click here](#) to read additional information on the Lake Powell Pipeline

10/10/16

Colorado River Managers Snub Climate Change Again: Society and Ecology at Greater Risk

For immediate release:

October 10, 2016

Contacts: John Weisheit, Colorado Riverkeeper: 435-260-2590
Tom Martin, River Runners for Wilderness: 928-556-0742; 928-856-9065
Robin Silver, Center for Biological Diversity: 602-799-3275

(Moab, UT) On October 7, following six years of study, the Bureau of Reclamation [released](#) revised guidelines for operating Glen Canyon Dam. Though the dam is viewed by many as integral to the Colorado's existing water delivery infrastructure, leading Colorado River observers point out that the new operating regime, scheduled to take affect next month, is based on antiquated objectives propped up by outdated science.

"In this era of climate change it's unbelievable that Reclamation continues to employ modeling results that suggest shortages are decades down the road when their reservoirs are at all time lows," says John Weishiet with Living Rivers/Colorado Riverkeeper.

The new guidelines rely entirely on surface water forecasts from Reclamation's widely criticized 2012 Colorado River Water Supply and Demand Study. In October of last year 23 Colorado River scholars [requested](#) Interior Secretary Jewell engage the National Academy of Sciences to review these findings, due numerous deficiencies. And just last week the journal [Science reported](#) that if current trends continue, "We find that regional temperature increases [in the Southwest] alone push megadrought risk above 70, 90, or 99% by the end of the century."

Principally, these new guidelines are to improve habitat conditions for endangered native fish in Grand Canyon National Park, downstream of the dam. However, beyond downplaying climate change, Reclamation stresses its new guidelines are not required to "...create a plan for providing water to the Colorado River in Grand Canyon during extended drought."

"Glen Canyon Dam inflicts the greatest harm on Colorado River native fish, once among the most unique assemblages in the world," says Robin Silver with Center for Biological Diversity. "Interior's cavalier attitude toward providing water for thier recovery is wholly inconsistent with its mandate under the Endangered Species Act."

So too is Reclamation's mismanagement of Colorado River flows, says Tom Martin with River Runners for Wilderness. "The biotic community in the river below the dam has been devastated and is in desperate need of sediment, much more woody material, water temperature and flow regime consistent with the river corridor's historic natural conditions, not just prescriptions for redoing old experiments that perpetuate business as usual."

Lack of complete information on water scarcity is not the only major omission the public should be concerned about. The study also lacks a truthful and up-to-date assessment of the known safety risks associated with the continued operations of Glen Canyon Dam.

“We may be in a drought situation now, but no credible scientist denies the basin won’t again experience a major flood even as climate change persists,” add Weisheit. “New [research](#) reveals that historic flooding on the Colorado River is of a frequency and magnitude twice what Reclamation has planned for, and Glen Canyon Dam almost failed from a comparatively minor flood in 1983.”

“The more we try to work with Glen Canyon Dam, and the complexities of the impacts it creates, the more we really need to address whether it might be best to eliminate it from the system altogether,” stresses Weisheit. “Better we do this in a controlled way than before nature does it for us.” ###

10/08/16

Arizona State University Series: Water Future in the Southwest

[Click here](#) to read this three part series by Scott Seckel of ASU Now.

10/08/16

The ProPublica Series: Killing the Colorado

[Click here](#) to read this six-part series called Killing the Colorado by Abraham Lustgarten and others of ProPublica from the summer of 2015

10/07/16

Marriage of Coal and Water in Arizona Renews Vows

[Click here](#) to read this story about Navajo Generating Station by Brett Walton of Circle of Blue

10/05/16

Reservoirs Are a Major Source of Greenhouse Gases

[Click here](#) to read this press release by Oxford Press

[Click here](#) to read the BioScience Paper by Deemer et al. called *Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Reservoir Water Surfaces: A New Global Synthesis*

[Click here](#) to read this story by Gary Wockner in EcoWatch called *The Hydropower Methane Bomb No One Wants to Talk About*

[Click here](#) to view photos of the water evacuation of Lake Powell during the last 16 years of over-consumption and reduced precipitation: sediment dewatering, methane springs, hydrogen sulfide springs, river entrenchment into sediment, and sediment slumping.

10/03/16

White Mesa Ute Tribe Worries About Contamination

[Click here](#) to read this story by Emma Penrod of the Salt Lake Tribune

[Click here](#) to read this story by Jim Mimiaga of the Cortez Journal (before the community meeting)

[Click here](#) to read this story by Jim Mimiaga of the Cortez Journal (after the community meeting)

[Click here](#) to watch the film "Half Life: America's Last Uranium Mill."

[Click here](#) for information provided by the Ute Mountain/White Mesa Tribe

[Click here](#) for information provided by the Grand Canyon Trust



Sponsors of this event included Green Action for Health and Environmental Justice, Grand Canyon Trust, Uranium Watch, Canyon Country Rising Tide & Living Rivers

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Tuesday, October 11

**MARCH TO OPPOSE THE WHITE MESA URANIUM MILL
PLEASE JOIN THE WHITE MESA UTE COMMUNITY ON A MARCH FROM THE WHITE MESA TRIBAL
COMMUNITY CENTER TO THE MILL.**

Meet at 8:00 am at the White Mesa Community Center White Mesa Community Center, 14 Willow St, White Mesa, UT 84511. The Mill is about 4 miles north of the Community Center.

Going South on Hwy. 191, turn Right on the street just before the Mobile Gas Station on White Mesa, about 12 miles south of Blanding. Turn Left on next street, Cowboy Street, to the Community Center, on the Right.

Bring Signs, Water, Warm Clothes

The White Mesa Uranium Mill continues to operate, polluting the air, groundwater, and the land on White Mesa.

For more information call: Sarah Fields Uranium Watch 435-260-8384

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Click here](#) to read a summary of activities in 2016 called "Upstream/Downstream Voices" by Green Action for Health and Environmental Justice

[Click here](#) to read this blog post by Kate Savage for Holiday River Expeditions

[Click here](#) to read this story by John Harrington of the Salt Lake Weekly

09/30/16

Lake Powell Pipeline Repayment: Scam or Incompetence?

From our allies at [Utah Rivers Council](#):

Last week 19 PhD economists from two Utah universities released their analysis of a repayment plan created by the Washington County Water District to support funding for the Lake Powell Pipeline at the 2016 Legislature. The economists found the plan fails to grasp basic economic principles and fails to repay Utah taxpayers the billions of dollars they will pay for the Pipeline. Shockingly, the district plans to repay only 28% of the total cost of the pipeline, leaving taxpayers on the hook for the other 72%.

According to the economists, if the water district truly intended to repay the cost of the pipeline, water rates would have to increase 576% and impact fees 128% in Washington County. Water officials and their lobbyists have been using this flawed model to mislead our legislators and the public by claiming they can repay the debt with little to no increases in water rates or impact fees. Now we know that is a lie. In case you missed it, here is a great article from the Salt Lake Tribune.

Upon the release of the economists' analysis we presented our concerns to the State Water Development Commission. The very same lobbyists who deceived the Legislature are also on the Commission, including the Washington County Water District.

When one of the economists, Gail Blattenberger, tried to outline some of their concerns along with Utah Rivers Council staff, the Commission quickly tried to change the subject. It's clear the lobbyists are running the show and it's time we take this Commission, and our Legislature back so the people can be heard!

We need your help! Please write your legislators and ask that the water lobbyists on the Water Development Commission be removed.

Read the economist's cover letter that they sent to the Governor [HERE](#)

[Click here](#) to read a handout about the costs of building the Lake Powell Pipeline

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by the editorial board of the SL Tribune

09/29/16

Colorado Riverkeeper Takes A Stand Against Tar Sands and Oil Shale

By Jennifer Ekstrom and Lauren Wood

From the 2016 Summer Issue of the Waterkeeper Magazine

[Click here](#) to read the story.

09/04/16

Study: Lake Powell Could Dry Up in as Little as Six Years

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of the Arizona Daily Star

[Click here](#) to view presentation by Eric Kuhn (West Slope Round Table) about risk management at Lake Powell

08/31/2016

Tar Sands Threaten Majestic Green River

Waterkeeper and activists from the Colorado River basin participate in a Desolation and Gray canyon river trip in central Utah to promote their campaigns to keep dirty fossil fuels in the ground.

[Click here](#) to read this story by Robert Kennedy, Jr. in EcoWatch

[\(archived here\)](#)



08/18/16

Is Conservation Going to Prevent a Water Shortage Declaration at the end of 2017?

[Click here](#) to read this article called "Climate Change is Water Change: Why the Colorado River System is Headed for Major Trouble" by Chelsea Harvey of the Washington Post

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of the Arizona Daily Star

[Click here](#) to read, by John Fleck, "Lower Colorado Basin Water Savings not as Big as I Thought"

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

[Click here](#) to view this West Slope Risk Study Presentation by Eric Kuhn

[Click here](#) to review the 24-month Report of October 2016

[Click here](#) to review Bureau of Reclamation's five-year Projection

08/11/16

Group drops water battle, still fighting nuclear plant plan

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by the Salt Lake Tribune Editorial Board

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune

Here is the AP story:

By MICHELLE L. PRICE, Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Environmentalists who've spent almost a decade fighting a plan to build Utah's first nuclear power plant said Wednesday that they're dropping a legal battle against the eastern Utah project but are still fighting the facility.

The groups HEAL Utah, Uranium Watch and Living Rivers said they would not contest a Utah Court of Appeals ruling last month allowing the facility to pull water from the Green River to cool nuclear reactors once it's built.

HEAL Utah executive director Matt Pacenza said that by dropping the battle over water rights, the company that wants to build the plant, Blue Castle Holdings, will be forced to start paying hundreds of thousands of dollars on those water rights to local water districts.

"We frankly do not believe they have those resources," Pacenza said. He said the project has not attracted significant investments and no Utah utility companies have stepped up to say they're interested in nuclear power.

"It's a project that we're confident is going nowhere," he said.

David C. Wright, an attorney for Blue Castle Holdings, said he doesn't know specifics about the company's finances but he's confident they'll make the payments. Wright said he's glad to hear the environmental groups won't fight the ruling, but he's confident the state Supreme Court would have ruled in Blue Castle's favor if the case continued.

The 3,000-megawatt plant would occupy a proposed industrial park about five miles from the small city of Green River, about 40 miles upstream from Moab and two national parks, and about 180 miles southeast of Salt Lake City.

Critics argue the nuclear plant would harm endangered fish, swallow a major portion of limited water on the dry Colorado Plateau and hamper outdoor recreation in the area. Green River, a city of about 1,000 people, is known for its melon growing and is a waypoint for hikers venturing out to nearby geologic features and canyons and rafters who are braving the rapids of the Green River and Colorado River. Blue Castle said the fast-growing state will need an additional power source and the plant would be in an area where about 360,000 acre feet of water are unused each year. The project would pull 53,000 acre-feet of water a year from the river.

Wright said the project can move forward now that it's not being bogged down with a court fight. The proposal is a year or two away from getting a site permit from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Wright said.

After that, Blue Castle would need an operational permit from the commission. If approved, construction would take five to seven years, according to Blue Castle, which is headed by former state Rep. Aaron Tilton.

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Additional information:

Minutes of Kane County Water Conservancy District

1. March 2016 KCWCD Meeting AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: BLUECASTLE HOLDINGS--NUCLEAR POWER PLANT: Mike reported that we had the hearing on January 26th which went very well. There was no new evidence or information brought up from the trial. Attorney John Mabey reported to Mike that he doesn't feel there is any chance that they will be granted an appeal to the Utah Supreme Court on this case. If they decided to appeal this case to the Supreme Court of Utah, there is less than a 10% acceptance rate unless there is new evidence brought up in the appellat court. We should hear back on the decision in June.

2. May 2016 KCWCD Meeting AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: BLUECASTLE HOLDINGS--NUCLEAR POWER PLANT: Mike reported that we are just waiting for the court decision and we believe that we will win the case and will not go to the Supreme Court. We should know by June and at that point we will be getting \$100,000 per year which moves up to \$300,000 and then when the plant is constructed to \$1 million per year.

3. June 2016 KCWCD Meeting AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: BLUECASTLE HOLDINGS--NUCLEAR POWER PLANT: Mike reported that there is no word on a decision from the Appeals Court. John Mabey reported that there are two cases that will go ahead of us.

4. July 2016 KCWCD Meeting AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: BLUE CASTLE HOLDINGS--NUCLEAR POWER PLANT: Mike reported that we won our court case after 3 years. The decision was unanimous by the appellat court. This is great news and our attorney said the chances for an appeal is almost none. We will have our \$100,000 in 30 days. The next step will be to complete the site plan.

08/07/16

Utah Assessing How Much Rocky Mountain Power Coal Waste Washed into Price River

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune
This coal fired plant is being decommissioned.

[Click here](#) to read this story of 16 months ago.

[Click here](#) to view a photo taken two days after the spill.

08/02/16

Colorado River's Tale of Two Basins

Water diversions upstream increase risk in stressed watershed.

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brett Walton of Circle of Blue

[Click here](#) for the reference to the 2007 hydrologic determination of the Upper Colorado River Basin

[Click here](#) to review Bureau of Reclamation's five-year Projection

[Click here](#) to view presentation by Eric Kuhn (West Slope Round Table) about risk management at Lake Powell

07/26/16

Let the Water Flow! Navajo in Utah Closer to Water Rights Settlement

[Click here](#) to read this story by Anne Minard in Indian Country Today Media Network

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of the Arizona Daily Star called "Tribes, Farms Wary of Proposed CAP Cuts as Lake Mead Falls"

At present, there is a 56% chance the Secretary of Interior will declare water shortages in the Colorado River basin on January 1, 2018 ([news](#) & [presentation](#)).

[Click here](#) to learn more about Indian water rights

07/24/16

Appellate court upholds water rights diversion for planned nuclear power plant

[Click here](#) to read this story by Rudy Herndon of Moab Sun News

[Click here](#) to read this story by Dennis Webb of the Grand Junction Sentinel

[Click here](#) to read this story by Amy Joi O'Donoghue of the Deseret News

[Click here](#) to read this story by Courtney Tanner of the Salt Lake Tribune
Analysis of the project status:

- 1) Blue Castle Holdings (BCH) will have to start paying \$180,000 per year for the lease of the water rights. In 5 years the lease goes up to \$580,000 per year.
 - 2) BCH has not submitted an application to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for an Early Site Permit (ESP). The ESP process would take about 5 years. It would take between \$50 and \$100 million to finalize the ESP application.
 - 3) In order to actually construct the reactor, they need a construction and operation license, which also costs millions of dollars.
 - 4) No utility has expressed any interest to participate in this project.
 - 5) It will be necessary for BCH to approach the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a biological assessment for the project's impact on critical habitat for endangered species.
 - 6) It will be necessary for BCH to apply for a contract with the Bureau of Reclamation to release water from Flaming Gorge Reservoir (upstream).
 - 7) At present, there is a 56% chance the Secretary of Interior will declare water shortages in the Colorado River basin on January 1, 2018 ([news](#) & [presentation](#)).
-

06/30/16

With Doomsday in Mind, California Officials Are Ceding Water to Arizona, Nevada (Contingency Planning)

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ry Rivard of Voice of San Diego

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ian James of the Desert Sun called "Negotiations Moving Forward on Plan to Avert Colorado River 'Crash.'"

DOCUMENT ARCHIVE

[California River Board Packet, June 2016](#)

[Colorado River Update by San Diego Water Authority, June 2016.](#)

[Colorado River Drought Contingency by Metropolitan Water District of SoCal, June 2016.](#)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brett Walton and Circle of Blue called "Lake Mead Record Low Reflects Changing American West"

06/23/16

Twenty arrested at June 19 protest at PR Spring mine

[CLICK HERE](#) to donate to the legal fund for resistance to tar sands development in Utah

Media Contacts:

Melissa Graciosa, Canyon Country Rising Tide; Tel: 503-409-7710 email: ccrt@riseup.net

Secondary Contact: Natascha Deininger, Wasatch Rising Tide, Tavaputs Action Council; Tel: 435-414-9299; Email: wasatchrisingtide@gmail.com

[Click here](#) to read the June 19th media advisory of the Tavaputs Action Council

Website: <http://www.canyoncountryrisingtide.org>

[Click here](#) to read this story by Rose Egelhoff of Moab Times-Independent

[Click here](#) to read this story by Sharon Sullivan of Moab Sun News

06/21/16

Groups write U.S. Attorney General asking for investigation of coal shipping terminal deal

[Click here](#) to read the LETTER from Earthjustice on behalf of their clients

[Click here](#) to read this story by Molly Marcello of Moab Times-Independent

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ben Lockhart of The Deseret News

[Click here](#) to read this story by Manuel Quiñones of E & E News

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of Salt Lake Tribune

[Click here](#) to read the minutes of Utah's CIB meeting of April 2016

[CLICK HERE](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION

###

For immediate release June 20, 2016

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Groups call for federal investigation of Utah plan to finance Oakland coal export terminal Letter to Attorney General Loretta Lynch cites potential legal and ethical violations of federal law

SALT LAKE CITY? Conservation, health, and good government groups today sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch calling for a formal investigation into potential legal and ethical violations in Utah's extraordinary \$53 million taxpayer-funded loan to build a deepwater terminal in Oakland, Calif., to export coal.

The letter, which also was addressed to Gregory J. Gould, director of the Office of Natural Resources Revenue, and Mary Kendall, interim Inspector General of the Department of the Interior, cites Utah's misuse of federal community development funds and the elaborate web of potential conflicts of interest that propelled the scheme through state agency and legislative approval processes with scant public scrutiny.

"It's staggering that the Legislature and Governor were willing to throw tens of millions in taxpayer money at a project so rife with conflicts of interest," said Michael Shea, Policy associate at HEAL Utah. "It is very clear that someone from the outside should take a careful look at this."

The letter lays out the twists and turns in the decades-long effort to export Utah coal overseas through a Pacific port. Several Utah counties began seeking funding to build transport operations to export coal from mines owned by Bowie Resource Holding Partners as early as 2001. In late 2014, in a deal brokered by Jeffrey Holt, a private investment banker, "strategic infrastructure advisor" to the counties and then-chairman of the Utah Transportation Commission, the counties requested a \$53 million loan from Utah's Community Impact Board to finance the terminal.

The Community Impact Board (CIB) is charged with administering proceeds from the royalties to the state under the federal Mineral Leasing Act (MLA). The Act restricts the use of the money to community planning, construction and maintenance of public facilities, and provision of public services to mitigate the adverse impacts of mining on the communities.

The Community Impact Board approved the loan, and then, when questions arose about the misuse of funds, the 2016 legislature gave fast-track approval to Senate Bill 246, a procedure designed to evade the Mineral Leasing Act's funding limitations by swapping state general fund money with Mineral Leasing Act money for the loan.

"It is inconceivable that this is an intended or proper use of \$53 million of MLA, CIB or taxpayer funds and this appears to represent the worst kind of corporate cronyism that members of the Utah legislature are usually so fond of rallying against," said Joshua Kanter, Board Chair, of the Alliance for a Better Utah. "Diverting these funds is not only improper but will leave these communities without the money they really need to help them retool their economic base as the coal industry continues its decline. There has been no showing that there is a shortage of available port capacity for Utah coal or that exporting Utah coal to Asia makes economic sense, either of which is easily addressed by the free-market without this shell-game and abuse of the public trust."

Many of the bill's proponents in the legislature and the governor who signed the bill had received campaign contributions from Bowie, the coal company expected to be the largest beneficiary of the export terminal deal. At the same time, Strategic Infrastructure Advisor Jeffrey Holt and his investment firm could reap millions if the project is completed.

"From the very beginning, the proposal to use Utah taxpayer resources to prop up an out-of-state coal export terminal has never had the best interest of Utahns at heart," said Lindsay Beebe, Utah Organizing Representative for the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign. "We need to develop real solutions to help our communities as our state transitions away from coal. Instead, our public officials have shown that they are more eager to hand out political favors than to help Utah communities across the state that deserve our support."

Meanwhile in California, public records and media reports revealed that Holt and port developer Phil Tagami attempted to conceal the plan to ship coal through the Oakland terminal, instead emphasizing that it would be used to ship agricultural products.

Many residents near the terminal, who already are burdened by significant air pollution, have vocally opposed coal shipments through their communities due to the environmental and public health impacts. The Oakland City Council is meeting June 27 to consider placing “health and safety” restrictions on the operation of any coal terminal in the city. Utah’s legislation to transfer \$53 million in state funds for the project also goes into effect July 1, lending increased urgency to the call for a federal investigation.

06/15/16

Groups to Feds: Plan for America’s First Commercial Oil Shale Facility Not in Public Interest Strip Mining Plan Threatens Land, Water, Wildlife, Climate

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 15, 2016

Contact

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Denni Cawley, Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment, (415) 937-3887, dcawleyuphe@gmail.com

Photos: [LINK](#) to aerial photos by Ecoflight

VERNAL, Utah—Fourteen conservation groups submitted formal comments to the Bureau of Land Management’s Vernal Field Office Tuesday urging the Obama administration to deny rights-of-way across federal public lands that would allow an Estonian energy giant to sidestep environmental review and pave the way for the first commercial oil shale project in the United States, north of Utah’s scenic Book Cliffs ([map](#)). The groups also delivered more than 35,000 comments from citizens opposed to the project.

The BLM is [moving forward](#) to grant utility rights-of-way to Enefit American Oil, a subsidiary of Estonian government-owned Eesti Energia. Enefit seeks to strip-mine 9,000 acres for oil shale near the Green and White rivers, and ultimately expand its operations to process up to 1.2 billion barrels of kerogen oil.

“The BLM is charged with safeguarding the American public interest and our national inheritance – our federal public lands,” said Anne Mariah Tapp, energy program director for the Grand Canyon Trust. “But instead the BLM is preparing to flip the ‘on’ switch for Enefit’s massive oil shale strip mine and jumpstart development of one of the world’s most polluting industries. The interests of an Estonian mining giant should not trump those of the American public.”

The groups argue the BLM would be allowing Enefit to sidestep critical environmental reviews designed to protect public health, land, air, water, and wildlife. The company has yet to reveal a development plan for its mining project, but requests approval for its rights-of-way nonetheless.

“Enefit’s massive strip-mining and refining operations will unleash significant air and climate pollution in an area that’s already suffering from some of the nation’s most unhealthy wintertime smog,” said Ted Zukoski, an attorney with the pro bono law firm Earthjustice. “But Enefit has refused to provide federal agencies or the public with information about the project’s air and climate pollution until after it gets BLM’s okay to start building access for water, power, and roads. That’s backwards. Enefit can’t be allowed to game the system by getting federal approval first, but only owning up to the project’s damage later.” The groups’ comments assert that the rights-of-way would amount to a federal subsidy.

“The Interior Department is working against President Obama’s climate goals here,” said Taylor McKinnon, with the Center for Biological Diversity. “Subsidizing the development of one of the world’s dirtiest fossil fuels is the opposite of climate leadership. Doing so in the Colorado River Basin is the opposite of prudent water policy. The administration should abandon this project now.”

The BLM lacks critical information it needs to assess whether or not the project is in the public interest, including the long-term air quality and climate impacts of emissions from mining and processing; the quantity and source of water required; water-quality impacts related to the estimated 23 million tons of spent shale waste a year the project would produce; and potential consequences for endangered species.

Amy Mall, a senior policy analyst with the Natural Resources Defense Council’s Land and Wildlife Program, said: “It’s unfathomable—and inconsistent with the administration’s climate goals—for BLM to give Enefit access to public lands so it can damage them, threaten surrounding communities, and worsen both air quality and climate change. Enefit has not provided enough data on the potential impacts of its mining project and BLM shouldn’t make a decision based on an incomplete environmental assessment.”

Local groups draw attention to threats to Utah. “The utility corridor will facilitate a massive oil shale development that will further compound the damage to Utah’s air, water, wildlife, and land,” said Denni Cawley, executive director of Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment. “This is not the right direction to go to secure a sustainable future for those who live in that area.”

“Shale waste runoff will contaminate Evacuation Creek, the White River, and the Green River, which are all important for the recovery of endangered fish, and for communities downstream,” said John Weisheit, conservation director for Living Rivers.

An Estonian environmental advocate recently stated [in an op-ed](#) in the Salt Lake Tribune that in her country “the oil shale industry has permanently damaged many of our most important natural resources” and warned Utahns against similar harm.

###

BACKGROUND

About Enefit:

Enefit American Oil owns or holds leases to approximately 30,000 acres of federal, state and private lands in eastern Utah. They are seeking to develop oil shale deposits there.

The company:

Filed a 26 million euro impairment loss for activities associated with its Utah holdings in January 2016; holds a 10-year lease for oil shale research on BLM lands; the lease was issued in 2007, has yet to start work.

About the 5 Rights-of-Way:

Rights-of-way across public lands Enefit has applied for include: 19 miles of water supply pipeline; 8 miles of natural gas supply pipeline; 10 miles of oil product line; 29 miles of 138kV powerlines; 5 miles of upgrading a county dirt road.

Enefit’s Plans:

Massive Refinery: Building a half-square mile industrial complex in the desert – the first commercial-scale oil shale-to-shale oil plant in United States history, nearly doubling the oil production in the Uinta Basin, which already has over ten thousand oil and gas wells.

Strip Mining:

Up to 28 million tons of rock per year, resulting in waste rock totaling up to 750 million tons Depleting

Rivers: Removing up to 100 billion gallons of water from the already over-allocated Colorado River Basin during the next three decades.

Air Pollution:

Emitting a toxic soup of air pollutants in an area that already suffers from some of the worst smog in the nation.

The Wrong Way on Carbon:

Using an mining and refining process that requires up to nearly 40% more carbon per unit of energy than conventional oil, and more even than notoriously dirty tar sands.

###

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the comments submitted to BLM by the above groups

06/13/16

Nature Walk Participants Arrested for Trespassing Near Tar Sands Operation

[Click here](#) to read this OpEd by Paul Rolly of the Salt Lake Tribune called "Don't think Utah has a double standard on public lands? Just ask unwitting hikers."

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ami Joy O'Donoghue of Deseret News

[Click here](#) to read this story by Judy Fahys of KUER

[Click here](#) to read this media advisory by Canyon Country Rising Tide

06/10/16

'The well needs to be plugged' — Utah goes after nonproducing oil wells on federal leases

[Click here](#) to read this important story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune

[Click here](#) to read this story by Robert Gehrke of the Salt Lake Tribune called "Oil Bust Hitting Eastern Utah Hard."

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD OF HOT ROD

[Comment Letter Burt DeLambert 4 May 2016](#)

[Division Of Oil Gas And Mining Exhibits 25 April 2016](#)

[Motion To Approve Stipulation To Judgment Or Dismissal Stipulation Proposed Order 23 May 2016](#)

[Notice Of Agency Action 11 April 2016](#)

[Order Approving Stipulation To Judgment Or Dismissal 24 May 2016](#)

[Response Letter Bureau Of Land Management 9 May 2016](#)

[Response Of Hot Rod Oil To Notice Of Agency Action 3 May 2016](#)

06/06/16

Water Justice Symposium at University of Colorado, Boulder

Living Rivers provided financial assistance to ensure tribal participation from the Colorado River Basin in this very successful event at CU, Boulder. Many thanks to the professors for inviting us!

[2016 - Indigenous Water Justice Symposium](#)

[2016 - Martz Summer Conference Program](#)

06/01/16

Action Alert to stop the strip mining and retorting of oil shale (kerogen) in eastern Utah

From Earthjustice:

[Click here](#) to record your comments on this Earthjustice web page.

From Western Resource Advocates:

[Click here](#) to visit this action alert from Western Resource Advocates

For more information about the oil shale EIS for Enefit Corporation, please visit [this website](#)

Narrative: The Bureau of Land Management has announced that it would pave the way for dirty oil shale development in the Uinta Basin, near Utah's scenic Book Cliffs and the Green and White rivers.

The plan would permit Enefit, a foreign company, to build oil, gas and electric transmission lines across miles of public land to enable up to 9,000 acres of strip mining for oil shale. We have until June 14 to write the BLM and stop this plan from going through!

Oil shale is not oil at all, but a rock that, if superheated to hundreds of degrees for long periods, will release a goo that can be further refined into liquid petroleum.

Current oil shale technology requires that the land be effectively strip mined, which destroys wildlife habitat and requires massive amounts of water—already precious and dwindling in the arid and over-allocated Colorado River basin where oil shale rocks are found. It would likely also require large amounts of energy—and huge amounts of climate pollution—just to process the rock into petroleum.

Enefit hopes to produce 50,000 barrels of petroleum a day, every day, for 30 years. The company estimates that producing and burning this fuel will cause nearly 40% more greenhouse gas emissions than similar amounts of regular oil. To prevent the worst impacts of climate change we need to be moving to cleaner fuels, not dirtier ones.

For years Earthjustice has worked with groups in this region to stop any efforts to move forward with oil shale development. Now the public has an opportunity to send a message to the BLM that it should stop subsidizing dirty fossil fuels and not allow Enefit to use our lands to pollute the climate, poison the air and guzzle water from our shrinking rivers.

05/24/16

Bears Ears Opponents Posting Phony Fliers & Letters to Scare Utah Navajos

June 5, 2016 [Click here](#) to read this story by Juliet Eilperin of The Washington Post

May 24, 2016 - [Click here](#) to read this story by Paul Rolly of the Salt Lake Tribune

May 18, 2016 - [Click here](#) to read this story by Robert Gehrke of the Salt Lake Tribune

April 28, 2016 - [Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune

April 20, 2016 - [Click here](#) to read this story by Thomas Burr of the Salt Lake Tribune

August 21, 2015 - [Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of the Salt Lake Tribune

July 28, 2015 - [Click here](#) to read this story by Thomas Burr of the Salt Lake Tribune

05/16/16

Upstream & Downstream Voices: Short Film Festival? and Forum

[CLICK HERE](#) for news clips of the event

[CLICK HERE](#) for the poster of the event

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

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Indigenous & Community Voices to Protect the Colorado River, Its Tributaries, People and Sacred Places

What: Upstream Downstream Short Film Festival and Forum

When: Tuesday May 24th at 7pm ?**Where:** Grand Center (182 N 500 W, Moab, Utah)

Admission: Free (donations welcomed to help cover costs)

Moab, Utah – In the face of ongoing threats to the Colorado River, its tributaries, people and sacred places, the “Upstream – Downstream Film Festival & Forum” will be held in Moab, Utah on Tuesday, May 24th at 7 pm.

The evening will feature four short films as well as speakers from tribes in Utah and Arizona. Concerned about the proposed Green River nuclear power plant and funding cuts in the cleanup of radioactive uranium tailings next to the Colorado River, tribal leaders and Elders from the Colorado River Indian Tribes will be traveling nearly 600 miles to Moab from their home along the river in Parker, Arizona for the film festival and forum.

They will be joined by tribal members from the White Mesa Ute Community, Hopi Tribe, Navajo Nation and Uintah Ouray Ute Tribe who will discuss efforts to protect the rivers, people and sacred sites from

destruction and desecration. Local Moab residents and grassroots groups concerned about pollution, climate change and protection of indigenous sacred sites are organizing the film festival and are working to bring together “upstream and downstream” communities and tribes in Utah and Arizona to strengthen ongoing efforts.

The films to be screened are:?

Half Life - the story of American's last uranium mill?In southeast Utah lies America's last remaining Uranium Mill. The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe worries that lax regulations and the mill's aging infrastructure threaten their water supply and way of life.??

Marking of a Milestone? - The Colorado River Indian Tribes are working to protect the river and sacred sites, and are facing challenges from industrial scale solar power projects in the Mojave Desert.??

Defending the Sacred - ?Story of the long battle by the Colorado River Native Nations Alliance and environmental justice allies that defeated a nuclear waste dump proposed on sacred land at Ward Valley near the Colorado River.??

Bears Ears: The Movement to Protect a Cultural Landscape - ?Hear about the effort by Native Nations to protect the Bear's Ears area, a place rich in indigenous history and culture in a landscape of canyons, mesas, arches, red rocks and the Bear's Ears twin buttes.

###

This event is sponsored by Canyon Country Rising Tide, Uranium Watch, Greenaction, and Living Rivers.

05/08/16

Living Rivers' comments on Draft EIS for Operations at Glen Canyon Dam

The Long-Term Management and Experimental Plan (LTEMP)

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the comment letter of Living Rivers, Colorado Riverkeeper, Center for Biological Diversity, River Runners for Wilderness, Save the Colorado, and Poudre Waterkeeper

Recent News on LTEMP DEIS

[April 26, 2016 - Arizona Daily Sun](#)

[January 20, 2016 - Vail Daily](#)

Additional Information

[CLICK HERE](#) to read LR's scoping comments of January, 2012

[Glen Canyon Dam Draft EIS Released After Six-year Delay](#)

[Glen Canyon Dam Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan & Environmental Impact Statement](#)

05/05/16

UMTRA project may take until 2034 to finish, county liaison says

[Click here](#) to read about the tour of the UMTRA site by various Indian tribes of the Colorado River.

[Click here](#) to read this story by Jeff Richards of the Moab Times-Independent called "UMTRA Project May Take Until 2034 to Finish, County Liaison Says"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Rudy Herndon of the Moab Sun News called "31 Axed in UMTRA Layoffs"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Molly Marcello in Moab Times-Independent called "Thirty to 35 Positions to be Eliminated 'Indefinitely' at UMTRA Site"

[Click here](#) to read this story by Eric Trenbeath in Moab Sun News called "UMTRA Job Cuts Loom"

4/26/2016

Skepticism over New Management Plan for Glen Canyon Dam

[April 26, 2016 - Arizona Daily Sun](#)

[January 20, 2016 - Vail Daily](#)

04/25/16

Big CAP Cuts Coming as 3 State Water Agreement Nears

[Click here](#) to read this story by Tony Davis of the Arizona Daily Star

04/06/16

Obama's Interior Department Pushes Oil Shale Plan Threatening Massive Climate Pollution, Water Use

[Click here](#) to read this story by Ami Joi O'Donoghue of Deseret News

[Click here](#) to read this story by Brian Maffly of Salt Lake Tribune

###

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the press release by coalition of NGOs

For Immediate Release, April 6, 2016

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SALT LAKE CITY— The Bureau of Land Management announced this week that it is moving toward allowing dirty oil shale development that could be a double whammy for the environment, unleashing nearly a half a billion tons of greenhouse gases and consuming vast amounts Colorado River basin water. It would be the first commercial oil shale production facility in the United States.

The Bureau said that on April 8 it will release a draft environmental impact statement for the “Enefit American Oil Utility Corridor Project.” It would allow Enefit, an Estonian company, to build water, oil, gas and electric transmission across federal public land in Utah to enable oil shale mining on state or private land. Enefit hopes to process up to 1.2 billion barrels of kerogen oil — one of world’s most carbon-polluting fuels — with estimated lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions of up to 450 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, about the same as 100 coal-fired power plants emit in a year.

“President Obama was right when he said in his State of the Union that ‘we’ve got to accelerate the transition away from old, dirtier energy sources,’” said Ted Zukoski, an attorney at Earthjustice. “It’s time BLM got the memo and stopped wasting taxpayer money subsidizing companies that would foul our atmosphere and endanger our planet, and our future.”

“The Interior Department is working against President Obama’s climate goals here,” said Taylor McKinnon with the Center for Biological Diversity. “Enabling the development of one of the world’s dirtiest fossil fuels is the opposite of climate leadership. The administration should abandon this project now.”

“We don’t need to take on this environmental disaster that comes with developing the dirtiest fuel on the planet — oil shale,” said Rob Dubuc, senior staff attorney at Western Resource Advocates. “Renewable energy innovations and improvements in energy efficiency make this fuel unnecessary to develop. BLM should not advance this project.”

The draft environmental impact study comes only months after the United States and countries around the world committed, at the Paris climate negotiations, to the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels. Reaching that goal will require dramatic reductions in carbon pollution — the key driver of climate change — and leaving the vast majority of fossil fuel reserves in the ground. Enefit’s mining facility would expand development and use of one of the world’s highest carbon fuels.

“There is more energy in a similarly sized baked potato than in a chunk of oil shale,” said Steve Bloch, legal director for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. “We know that burning oil shale in a giant oven can produce shale oil; the question that needs to be asked is whether proceeding with this type of project makes any sense in a carbon constrained 21st century. The unequivocal answer is no. The time has come to turn our backs on the carnival barker’s promise that oil shale will be answer to our nation’s energy needs.”

“It is true that Enefit has made the mining and production of oil shale work for the energy needs of Estonia. However, Estonia also produces more greenhouse gas emissions per capita than other European countries, including Russia,” said John Weisheit with Living Rivers and Colorado Riverkeeper. “What Estonia has, that Utah does not, is ample water supplies to process that oil shale. Ironically, the similarity between the governments of Utah and Estonia is their subsidy of dirty energy projects with public money.”

The proposed facility will be located in the Uinta Basin, approximately 12 miles southeast of Bonanza in Uintah County, Utah, near the Green and White Rivers. The project is designed to develop oil shale mining and a shale oil production complex, at full build-out producing about 28 million tons of raw oil shale

ore rock per day and 50,000 barrels per day of refinery-ready shale oil from the Green River Formation. "Oil shale is a thirsty industry," said Anne Mariah Tapp with the Grand Canyon Trust. "The Colorado River Basin is already looking at up to a 27 percent decrease in April to July flows due to climate impacts. At a rate of up to four barrels of water per barrel of oil, Enefit's project poses an unacceptable threat to limited Colorado River Basin water supplies. Both in terms of carbon footprint and water demands, the West's water future would be drastically compromised by this oil shale program."

"The legacy of the Green River will live or die on the decisions we as a country make here and now," said Lauren Wood with Green Riverkeeper. "The Green River watershed cannot survive as a vibrant source of life in a desert if the BLM continues to view the landscape it runs through as a source of death and climate devastation. It's time to close this chapter of our shared history where we strayed into such extreme and dangerous forms of energy; that isn't our legacy, it's our nightmare."

"This oil shale project would be another significant source of pollution in an area that just can't take any more," said Dr. Brian Moench with Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment. "During the drilling boom of 2013 the air pollution in the Uinta Basin was literally off the charts, as much as would be expected from 100 million cars, eight times more cars than in all of Los Angeles. It would be unconscionable to allow anything that would make that even worse."

"A century's worth of failed efforts has demonstrated that trying to turn rocks into oil is a fool's errand, but somehow Enefit expects a different result this time," said Bobby McEnaney, a senior analyst for the Natural Resources Defense Council. "The last thing this administration should be considering is a proposal that amount to fossil fuel alchemy, particularly when cleaner energy sources are readily available."

The Bureau of Land Management's webpage for the project is [HERE](#).

[Click here](#) to see a high resolution map of Enefit's oil shale project and the Uinta Basin of Utah by the Grand Canyon Trust

[Click here](#) to see a high resolution photo of the White River by Ray Bloxham of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance

03/29/16

More Than 45 Organizations Back Historic Legal Petition That Takes Aim at Ocean-drilling Damage to Climate, Wildlife, Communities

For Immediate Release, March 29, 2016

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Historic Petition Urges Obama to Halt All New Offshore Fossil Fuel Leases

WASHINGTON— More than 45 climate, conservation, indigenous and coastal organizations representing the major coastal regions of the United States filed a legal petition today calling on President Obama to align U.S. energy policy with his climate goals by issuing an executive order to end new oil and gas lease auctions in federally controlled oceans — including the Arctic, Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico.

The order, under the authority of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, would make federally managed waters that have not already been leased to industry unavailable for new leases. Halting new fossil fuel leases on more than 1 billion acres off America's coasts would keep up to 62 billion tons of carbon emissions in the ground — the pollution equivalent of more than 16,000 coal-fired power plants.

The order would be a step toward limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, consistent with the 2015 Paris Agreement, by preventing the leasing of new offshore oil and gas. To stay within the 1.5 degree limit, the vast majority of known fossil fuels must remain unburned and kept safely in the ground.

The petition, led by the Center for Biological Diversity, comes on the heels of the administration's proposed five-year plan governing future federal offshore oil and gas leasing. The proposal would expand leasing in the Arctic and Gulf of Mexico, risking more disastrous spills, putting wildlife and communities in harm's way and deepening U.S. dependence on the fossil fuels that are driving the global climate crisis.

Despite its name, leases outlined in the five-year program would allow for oil and gas production over the next 40 to 70 years, long past the point that scientists say fossil fuels should be phased out.

Continuing to rely on fossil fuels decades into the future undermines a rapid and essential transition to renewable energy. The petition calls on President Obama to align federal leasing policy with U.S. climate change goals while promoting a rapid transition to a clean energy economy, starting with a halt in offshore leasing.

Groups joining today's petition are the Center for Biological Diversity, Food and Water Watch, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Oil Change International, Rainforest Action Network, Waterkeeper Alliance, Alaska Inter-Tribal Council, Alaska Rising Tide, Altamaha Riverkeeper, Apalachicola Riverkeeper, Assateague Coastal Trust, Atchafalaya Basinkeeper, Cahaba Riverkeeper, California Coastal Protection Network, Chesapeake Climate Action Network, Clean Ocean Action, Cook Inletkeeper, Courage Campaign, Crystal Coast Waterkeeper, Emerald Coastkeeper, Environmental Defense Center, Environmental Youth Council, Eyak Preservation Council, Friends of Matanzas, Gulf Restoration Network, Institute for Fisheries Resources, Kootenai Environmental Alliance, **Living Rivers**, Louisiana Bucket Brigade, Matanzas Waterkeeper, Miami Waterkeeper, Native Conservancy (Land Trust), Ocean Conservation Research, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, Preserve Our Wildlife, Prince William Soundkeeper, Resisting Environmental Destruction on Indigenous Lands (REDOIL), Riverkeeper, Sea Turtle Oversight Protection, Seneca Lake Guardian, Suncoast Waterkeeper, Turtle Island Restoration Network, Wabash Riverkeeper Network, Whale and Dolphin Conservation, WILD Coast and WildEarth Guardians.

Download the [petition](#).

Statements from petition signatories: "President Obama recognized oil drilling off the Atlantic coast was a bad idea. But the same logic — that we must protect our climate, wildlife and coastal communities from oil spills and carbon emissions — holds true for all ocean coasts," said Miyo Sakashita, oceans program director at the Center for Biological Diversity. "So we're calling on the president to honor his climate change pledges and end future fossil fuel leasing from all federal offshore areas."

"President Obama has acknowledged that in order to prevent climate catastrophe, we must transition away from dirty fossil fuels and keep the vast majority of them in the ground. He has the authority to drive that transition by permanently protecting our public waters from oil and gas exploitation," said Marissa Knodel of Friends of the Earth. "To cement his climate legacy and honor his administration's climate goals, President Obama should not offer any new leases in the 2017-2022 offshore drilling program and withdraw all federal offshore areas from future leasing."

"It's time to stop the corporate giveaway of public lands and waters. Obama has the power to create real, lasting change by ending the fossil fuel leasing program. An executive act would cut 25 percent of U.S. climate change emissions and set the stage to transition beyond fossil fuels," said Amanda Starbuck, program director for Rainforest Action Network.

“President Obama must apply a climate test to offshore drilling and the rest of our energy policy. When he does, he’ll see that offshore drilling fails that climate test,” said David Turnbull, campaigns director at Oil Change International.

“Any areas being opened up for leasing now will not even begin producing oil and gas for at least five years. By then we should be well on our way toward ending destructive fossil fuel extraction, not adding new rigs,” said Marc Yaggi, executive director of Waterkeeper Alliance. “By focusing our investments on a clean-energy future, the Obama administration will secure its climate legacy, ensuring economic and environmental resilience for future generations.”

“The recent Refugio Oil Spill off the coast of California reminds us of the inevitable risks of offshore oil and gas development,” said Linda Krop, chief counsel of the Environmental Defense Center. “These risks are compounded by the devastating and long-lasting effects of climate change on our coastlines, communities, wildlife and public health.”

“Alaska stands on the front lines as an Arctic region whose ecosystems and communities are some of the most dramatically affected by climate change,” said Stephen Jolley of Alaska Rising Tide. “If we are committed to social justice and equality for all, we must act as allies to those communities whose social and spiritual health relies on their continued relationship to the land by halting operations that would send our bountiful home into further decline.”

“From sea level rise and extreme storms fueled by climate change, to coastal erosion, to frequent spills and accidents, the people of the Gulf of Mexico are on the frontline of the impacts from the oil and gas industry,” said Cynthia Sarthou, Executive Director of the Gulf Restoration Network.

“Even after the BP disaster, the industry and its political allies continue to actively resist new safety reforms. It is time for the President to end new offshore leasing and promote a transition to a more stable, sustainable and equitable economy for our communities and climate.”

“While we were glad President Obama listened to the communities and citizens of the Atlantic coast and removed that area from offshore leasing, our work is not done,” said Matanzas Riverkeeper Neil A. Armingeon. “We must support those who continue to fight oil and gas development in their communities, and we hope President Obama will once again do what’s right and end new leasing in the Gulf and the Arctic.”

Background

The American public owns nearly 650 million acres of federal public land, and more than 1.7 billion acres of Outer Continental Shelf (the oceans between 3 and 200 miles off the coast) — and the fossil fuels beneath them. This includes sensitive oceans and coastlines, including Alaska’s Chukchi Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and the Eastern Seaboard. These places and fossil fuels, held in trust for the public by the federal government, are administered by the Department of the Interior for potential leasing.

Over the past decade, the combustion of federal fossil fuels has resulted in nearly a quarter of all U.S. energy-related emissions. An August report by EcoShift consulting, commissioned by the Center for Biological Diversity and Friends of the Earth, found that remaining federal oil, gas, coal, oil shale and tar sands that have not been leased to industry contain up to 450 billion tons of potential greenhouse gas pollution.

Burning the recoverable oil and gas under federal waters would release 61.5 billion tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, the equivalent of driving 13 billion passenger cars for one year.

As of this year, 67 million acres of public fossil fuels were already leased to industry, an area more than 55 times larger than Grand Canyon National Park and containing up to 43 billion tons of potential greenhouse gas pollution. Last year Sens. Merkley (D-Ore.), Sanders (D-Vt.) and others introduced legislation to end issuance of new federal fossil fuel leases.

Days later President Obama canceled the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, saying, "Because ultimately, if we're going to prevent large parts of this Earth from becoming not only inhospitable but uninhabitable in our lifetimes, we're going to have to keep some fossil fuels in the ground rather than burn them and release more dangerous pollution into the sky."

Download a letter from more than 400 groups and climate leaders urging President Obama to [halt new federal fossil fuel leasing](#).

Download [Grounded](#): The President's Power to Fight Climate Change, Protect Public Lands by Keeping Publicly Owned Fossil Fuels in the Ground (this report details the legal authorities with which a president can halt new federal fossil fuel leases).

Download [The Potential Greenhouse Gas Emissions of U.S. Federal Fossil Fuels](#) (this report quantifies the volume and potential greenhouse gas emissions of remaining federal fossil fuels).

Download The Potential Greenhouse Gas Emissions [fact sheet](#).

Download [Public Lands, Private Profits](#) (this report details the corporations profiting from climate-destroying fossil fuel extraction on public lands).

03/22/16

SECURE Water Act 2016 Report to Congress

[Click here](#) to read Reclamation's press release (archived [here](#))

[Click here](#) to read the Report on the Colorado River

Additional Information: SECURE Water Act 2009 - Public Law: SECURE Water Act

[2009 - SECURE Water Act](#)

[2011 - SECURE Water Report](#)

[2016 - SECURE Water Report](#)

[Chapter 3 - Colorado River](#)

Water Sustainability (From the White House)

[2016 - Committents To Action On Building Sustainable Water Future](#). White House.

[2016 - Long-Term Drought Resilience Action Plan](#). White House.

[2016 - Presidential Memorandum Building National Capabilities for Long-Term Drought Resilience](#). White House.

03/16/16

Living Rivers Potash Report

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the report

[Click here](#) to read and listen to the broadcast on KUER (radio).

Executive Summary

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is currently preparing a management plan — known as the Moab Master Leasing Plan — to govern oil, gas and potash leasing and development on approximately 750,000 acres of public lands in eastern Utah. In this report, we detail the important environmental and economic risks of increased potash development and outline strategies for mitigating these risks by adopting responsible zoning decisions, best management practices, and other measures.

Definition: Potash is a type of salt used mainly as a fertilizer.



Potash evaporation ponds near Moab

Under its most recent proposed plan, the BLM estimates that each year potash development would require about 2.8 billion gallons of water. These enormous water demands would impose a considerable burden on the Colorado River Basin where existing supplies are already depleted and demand for water is projected to rise.

Water availability is not the only problem. Low potash prices and market volatilities make future development risky. Market downturns, which have been frequent for potash, could halt operations and leave behind abandoned facilities and infrastructure. Potash development could also negatively impact existing, stable economic output. Outdoor recreation on public lands around Moab — hiking, biking, rafting, jeeping, sightseeing, to name a few — continue to provide sustainable and durable economic growth to local communities. These critical economic contributors must be protected as the BLM seeks to increase potash development around Moab.

While the challenges are many, there are a few concrete steps the BLM can follow to mitigate the impacts of proposed potash development. For starters, because of the water demands and the economic risks involved, BLM should carefully regulate any future potash development on the public lands around Moab. Requiring companies to prove the economic viability of their operations before development is initiated would help ensure proposed developments won't result in abandoned operations with a myriad of impacts to air, water and the local economy. Also, imposing robust protections for air and water quality during production activities, along with strict reclamation and mitigation requirements would help alleviate some of the environmental risks. These types of "best management practices," along with others outlined in this report, are critical to any responsible potash development plan for the public lands around Moab.

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03/15/16

Legal Protest Challenges Fossil Fuels Auction on 8,000 Acres in Colorado

Fracking Threatens Climate, Endangered Fish, Roadless Forests

For Immediate Release, March 15, 2016

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DENVER— Conservation groups filed a formal administrative protest on Monday against a Bureau of Land Management plan to auction off more than 8,000 acres of publicly owned oil and gas in the San Juan National Forest and Little Snake Field Office in western Colorado.

“Each new federal fossil fuel lease takes us closer to climate disaster,” said Taylor McKinnon with the Center for Biological Diversity. “Leaving a livable climate for future generations requires keeping fossil fuels in the ground now, and we should start with the public lands that President Obama controls.”

The protest, filed by the Center for Biological Diversity, Living Rivers, Utah Rivers Council, Rocky Mountain Wild and Sierra Club, calls on the BLM to abandon its auction plans and keep fossil fuels in the ground to protect the climate, wildlife and public lands. The protest identifies the plans’ failure to analyze climate impacts or consider an alternative that would suspend public lands fossil fuel development to protect the climate.

The protest challenges the Bureau’s failure to protect the endangered Colorado pikeminnow and its Colorado River and San Juan River Basin habitat from the impacts of water depletions caused by oil and gas development, toxic spills, climate change and corresponding declines in river flows. It also challenges leasing on four parcels located on U.S. Forest Service lands designated as roadless areas under the 2011 Colorado Roadless Rule. “We understood that when Congress passed the 2005 Energy Policy Act, it was bad news for the Colorado River basin for this one fundamental reason: That water consumption by the energy corporations would increase the demand for water in an over-appropriated system, compounded by the impairment to the water cycle from greenhouse gas emissions,” said John Weisheit with Living Rivers and Colorado Riverkeeper. “The federal government must make the right choice and deny these permits so people and wildlife will have secure and clean water.”

Monday’s protest is part of a rapidly growing national movement calling on President Obama to define his climate legacy by halting new federal fossil fuel leases on public lands and oceans — a step that would keep up to 450 billion tons of potential carbon pollution in the ground. “Keep It in the Ground” rallies opposed to federal fossil fuel auctions have been growing across the country, and have caused several of those auctions to be postponed.

“BLM’s decision to lease thousands of acres within designated roadless areas undercuts the importance of this designation,” said Matt Sandler with Rocky Mountain Wild. “These undeveloped, contiguous areas

are essential for many species like Canada lynx and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse.” Download the protest [here](#).

Background

The American public owns nearly 650 million acres of federal public land and more than 1.7 billion acres of Outer Continental Shelf — and the fossil fuels beneath them. This includes federal public lands like national forests and wildlife refuges that make up about a third of the U.S. land area — and oceans like Alaska’s Chukchi Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and the Eastern Seaboard. These places and fossil fuels beneath them are held in trust for the public by the federal government; federal fossil fuel leasing is administered by the Department of the Interior.

Over the past decade, the combustion of federal fossil fuels has resulted in nearly a quarter of all U.S. energy-related emissions. An August report by EcoShift consulting, commissioned by the Center for Biological Diversity and Friends of the Earth, found that remaining federal oil, gas, coal, oil shale and tar sands that has not been leased to industry contains up to 450 billion tons of potential greenhouse gas pollution. As of earlier this year, 67 million acres of federal fossil fuel were already leased to industry, an area more than 55 times larger than Grand Canyon National Park containing up to 43 billion tons of potential greenhouse gas pollution.

Last year Sens. Merkley (D-Ore.), Sanders (D-Vt.) and others introduced legislation to end new federal fossil fuel leases and cancel non-producing federal fossil fuel leases. Days later President Obama canceled the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, saying, “Because ultimately, if we’re going to prevent large parts of this Earth from becoming not only inhospitable but uninhabitable in our lifetimes, we’re going to have to keep some fossil fuels in the ground rather than burn them and release more dangerous pollution into the sky.”

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Download [Public Lands, Private Profits](#) (this report details the corporations profiting from climate-destroying fossil fuel extraction on public lands).

03/01/16

Intervenors of Lake Powell Pipeline issue comments to FERC

[Click here](#) to read the comments of the coalition to stop the Lake Powell Pipeline To read all the comments, go to [THIS PAGE](#) of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

In the text box "Date Range" adjust the range from 12/01/2015 to the present date.

In the text box that says "Docket Number" enter this number **P- 12966**

Click the "Submit" button.

02/05/16

US Oil Sands Halts \$60 Million Utah Project As Prices Tank & Contractors Close

[Click here](#) to read this story by Saqib Rahim of E&E News [Click here](#) to read this story by Dan Healing of the Calgary Herald

[Click here](#) to read this story in the Salt Lake Tribune by Brian Maffly

[Click here](#) to read and listen to this story on KUER by Judy Fahys

[Click here](#) to read this story in the Moab Times-Independent

[Click here](#) to read this story in the Moab Sun News

See also this collection of news regarding the faltering of proposed oil shale projects [HERE](#)

Associated Press

Company slows work on controversial Utah tar sands project

Environmentalists are celebrating after the Canadian company behind a controversial tar sands development in eastern Utah announced it is scaling back work on its project.

Calgary-based U.S. Oil Sands Inc. announced plans Thursday to cut back on construction on its PR Spring project, which is located in the Book Cliffs about 170 miles from Salt Lake City and is 85 percent complete. The company said low oil prices forced two of its major contractors to shutter operations in Utah, and said it didn't have all the financing it needed.

"The oil industry is facing one of the most challenging environments it's ever seen and it is prudent for us to adjust our construction plan accordingly," said US Oil Sands CEO Cameron Todd, adding that the cutback would be designed so it can restart quickly when conditions improve. "The company's actions today help ensure US Oil Sands will be a future industry leader."

While companies extract petroleum from sand in Canada and Venezuela, the \$60 million Utah project would be the first commercial effort of its kind in America. U.S. Oil Sands says it uses natural citrus extract to safely process the sand, but opponents say it will contaminate water and destroy wildlife habitat.

Conservation groups have challenged the permits authorizing the project and have been arrested for chaining themselves to equipment in an effort to thwart construction. But the biggest obstacle appears to be crude oil prices that have tumbled to about \$31 a barrel, down from a peak of \$147 a barrel in 2008.

Rob Dubuc, a Utah-based attorney with the environmental group Western Resource Advocates, says the work slowdown was at least a temporary victory.

"That makes my day and everyone's day who likes clean air, clean water and a friendly climate," he wrote in a blog post on the group's website, arguing that tar sands result in up to three times the carbon pollution of conventional oil.

"Mindless of how ridiculous this policy choice is, Utah politicians continue to declare that the state is "open for business" when it comes to development of these very dirty fossil fuels," Dubuc said, calling the endeavor "a bad idea at any price."

01/11/16

CBD & LR Challenge BLM To Frack 45,000 acres in Utah

The Center for Biological Diversity and Living Rivers on Monday filed a formal administrative protest challenging the Bureau of Land Management's decision to auction more than 45,000 acres of public land in Utah for fracking. The sale, which was postponed in November due to impending protests, includes parcels in the BLM's Moab, Price, Vernal and Fillmore field offices in central and eastern Utah and within the Fishlake National Forest in Sevier County.

"If President Obama wants to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, as he agreed to do at the Paris climate talks, he needs to end the federal fossil fuel leasing program," said the Center's Taylor McKinnon. "Each new auction undermines that goal with more carbon pollution while destroying fragile Utah canyon country and harming air, water and habitat for imperiled species like endangered Colorado River fish, Mexican spotted owls and greater sage grouse."

The filing calls on the BLM and the Obama administration to cancel the fossil fuel auction and "keep it in the ground." A study commissioned by the Center and Friends of the Earth late last year projects that the potential greenhouse gas pollution from unleased federal fossil fuels is incompatible with any U.S. share of global carbon budgets to keep warming below 2 or 1.5 degrees Celsius, a goal world leaders agreed to in the Paris climate pact. It also found that banning new fossil fuel leases on public lands and oceans would keep up to 450 billion tons of greenhouse gas pollution out of the atmosphere.

"With oil companies in liquidation, a warming climate and dwindling Colorado River supplies, committing more Utah canyon country to fossil fuel industrialization makes no sense," said John Weisheit, conservation director at Moab-based Living Rivers. "Now is the time to transition to clean, renewable energy, and to keep climate-destroying fossil fuels in the ground."

Avoiding dangerous warming requires leaving the vast majority of already proved fossil fuels undeveloped. By opening new fossil fuel deposits, federal fossil fuel auctions perpetuate a stark conflict between the Obama administration's climate goals and its "all of the above" energy policy.

Facing growing public support for the "Keep It in the Ground" movement to end new leases for federal oil, gas and coal extraction, federal officials halted oil and gas auctions slated for Utah and Washington, D.C. Hundreds of people turned out for similar protests last fall in Nevada, Wyoming, Colorado and Alaska. More than 400 organizations and leaders working on the "Keep It in the Ground" campaign have called on Obama to end new federal fossil fuel leases following reports that doing so would keep up to 450 billion tons of greenhouse gas pollution in the ground, and that the president has the legal authority to do so now, without Congress. Those emissions would be incompatible with any reasonable U.S. share of global carbon budgets to avoid catastrophic warming.

[Press Release](#)

[Letter of Protest](#)

[EPA 2015 Impact Analysis](#)

[Knick, et al., 2013: Modeling Ecological Distribution of Greater Sage Grouse Leaks](#)

[Incident Report: Vernal Field Office](#)
