

Oil and Gas Extraction in Northwestern and Southeastern New Mexico

Problem: The health of the most marginalized and frontline communities in northwestern and southeastern New Mexico have been impacted by a 10-fold increase in oil and gas production since 2010, leading to a surge of air and water pollution. This issue is part of a larger picture in which the entire state of New Mexico is treated as a sacrifice zone for extraction, mining, and dumping, forcing people to pay with their health.

Background: The Permian Basin in southeastern New Mexico is home to the highest emitting oil and gas project in North America and one of the largest oilfields in the world. The extraction of oil and gas have caused air and water pollution, land disputes, and public health issues, disproportionately harming frontline communities and youth who live in or near the Permian Basin. The ongoing oil boom in the Permian is a story of toxic infrastructure, environmental racism and climate overshoot. Each of those issues alone would be reason enough to stop oil and gas extraction in the Basin, but together they are devastating.



Chaco Canyon is a sacred Native American archeological site in northwestern New Mexico. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland recently announced a 20-year moratorium on oil and gas leasing within 10 miles of the Chaco Culture National Historical Park. “Protection of Chaco Canyon is a great first step, but protections for the Greater Chaco Region, where there are living communities of Diné relatives, wildlife, and plant life, including countless sacred sites throughout the region, are just as critical,” said Robyn Jackson, executive director of Diné CARE. New Mexico’s congressional delegation has introduced legislation that would permanently remove the lands around Chaco Canyon from future mineral leasing.

Current Status: Environmental activists are advocating for strong methane regulations on a state and national level, water quality regulation that will better protect frontline communities, and an end to new oil and gas leasing on public and ancestral lands.



Local Advocates: Citizens Caring for the Future and NM/El Paso Interfaith Power and Light bring together southeastern New Mexico community members who support protecting air, water, public health, and safety. Diné C.A.R.E. works with Native communities and others affected by energy and environmental issues.

Advocacy Needed Now: Weigh in with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) opposing more sales of leases through public comments. These lease sales occur several times a year.

Oil and Gas Extraction, New Mexico

1. [New Mexico Sued Over Failure to Control Skyrocketing Oil, Gas Pollution](#)
2. [The Permian basin needs clean air - WildEarth Guardians](#)
3. [Permian Climate Bomb](#)
4. [Haaland order extends Chaco Canyon drilling protections for next 20 years - Albuquerque Journal](#)