



WESTERN RESOURCE ADVOCATES

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Report: Efficient Use of Natural Gas Can Protect Sensitive Lands *Efficiency measures yield benefits for consumers, industry, the environment*

(Boulder, CO) The West's rural communities and sensitive public lands could see significant relief from the pressures and impacts of an ongoing natural gas boom if Congress enacted broad energy efficiency standards, according to a new report released today by Western Resource Advocates (WRA), a Colorado-based environmental law and policy organization.

According to the report, "*Using Natural Gas More Efficiently: Saving Money and Protecting our Western Way of Life*," a national initiative to use natural gas more efficiently would also reduce demand and save consumers and businesses billions of dollars. The report is the first of its kind to show how the reduction in demand that results from efficiency measures would give federal agencies like the Bureau of Land Management the time necessary to ensure that natural gas development in the West is done responsibly.

"A concerted national commitment to natural gas efficiency makes sense economically," said Howard Geller, executive director of the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET). "It shows we can significantly reduce demand for natural gas across the board – in homes, stores and factories – and that reduced demand should translate into lower prices," he continued. "This just makes common sense."

Many recent studies have shown how investments in energy efficiency provide substantial savings to industrial and residential natural gas consumers. "*Using Natural Gas More Efficiently: Saving Money and Protecting our Western Way of Life*," uses these same calculations to show the specific areas in the Rocky Mountain West that would see relief from gas efficiency measures.

"By using energy smarter, we can reduce demand and give the federal government the ability to take a step back, slow down, and make more thoughtful decisions about energy projects that affect our water, our wildlife and our western way of life," says Jim Martin, executive director of WRA.

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Natural gas development is currently outpacing historic drilling records in Wyoming's Upper Green River and Powder River Basins, the Piceance Basin of Colorado and Utah, and the San Juan Basin of Colorado and New Mexico.

“More than 42 million acres of lands in the West are under lease to the oil and gas industry, and drilling permits are being issued at a record pace,” said WRA senior attorney, Bob Randall. “This report shows that we can afford to both produce needed energy and protect our communities. We just need to make sure we use natural gas as wisely and efficiently as we can.”

Digital copies of the report can be downloaded at:

www.westernresourceadvocates.org/gasefficiency

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