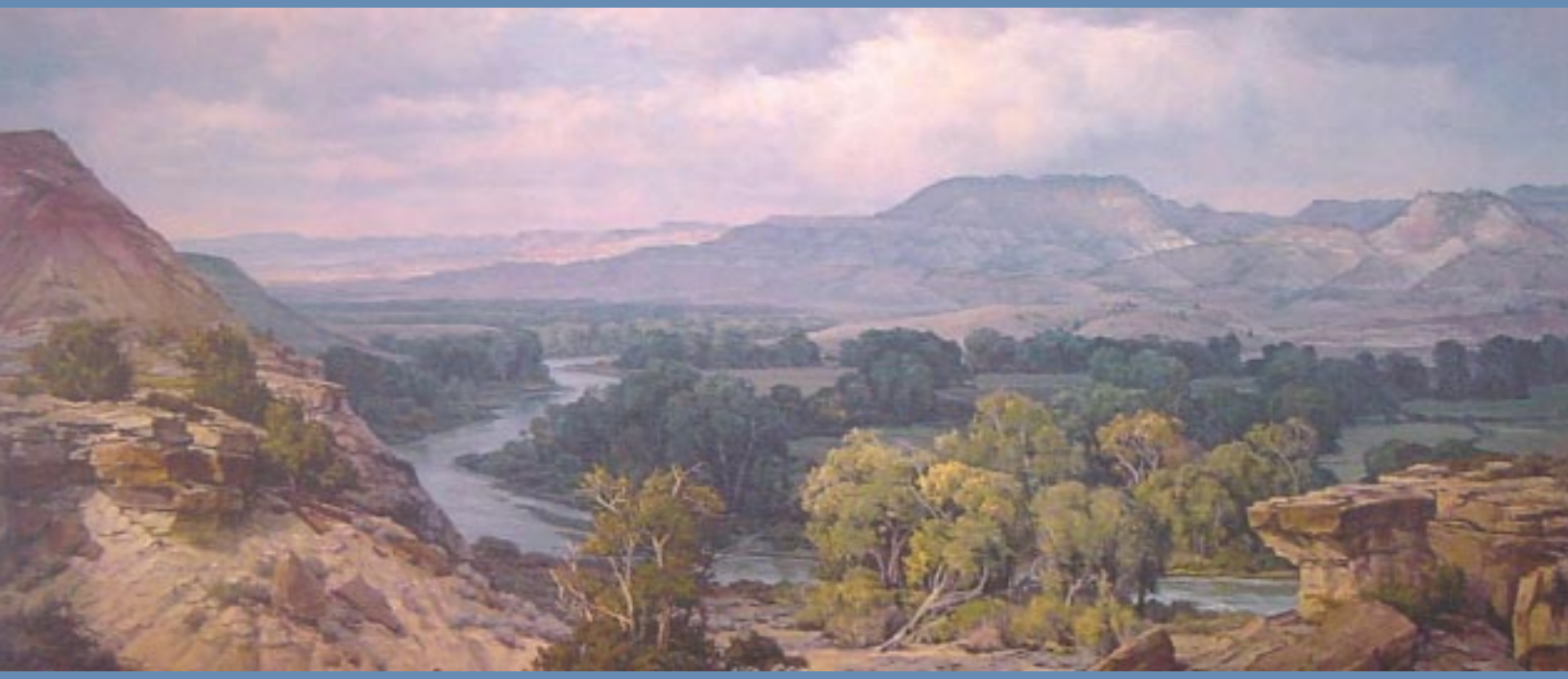
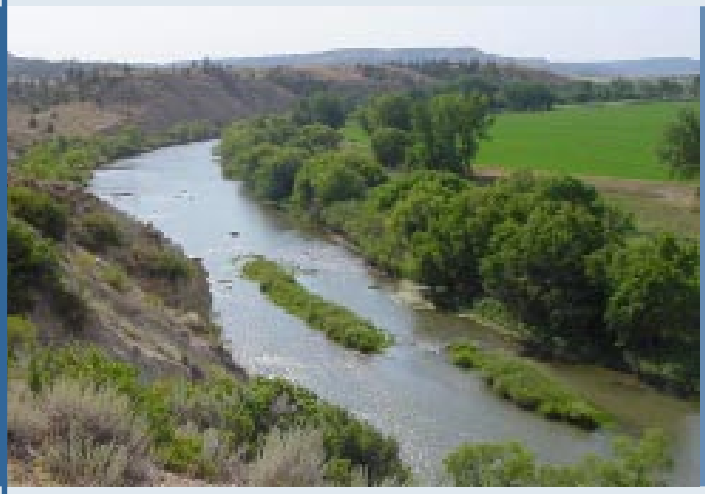
Doing It Right



a **blueprint** for responsible
coal bed methane development
in Montana

Southeastern and southcentral Montana is a region marked by rolling hills, prairie rivers, and clear blue skies. The area's deep coulees, ephemeral streambeds, and sagebrush flats support thousands of family farms and ranches. Small towns dot the landscape, fed by the trade of wheat, cattle, alfalfa, and sheep.

This region has stood the test of time. The challenges posed by the hot summers, harsh winters, and periodic drought are met with proud resilience, scrappy ingenuity, and a contentment that comes from living a deliberate life.



Introduction

Thick veins of coal lay beneath nearly every farm, ranch, and town in this region. On the surface of the coal are molecules of methane gas, held in place by water pressure from the region's many coal seam aquifers. Remove the water, and the methane detaches from the coal, pools together, and rises to the surface.

With rising natural gas prices and advances in technology, coal bed methane has become a valuable resource. As its value increases, so do conflicts between those who are committed to caring for the surface of the land, and those whose primary concern is to retrieve the valuable methane as quickly and cheaply as possible.

The Bureau of Land Management estimates that between 14,000 and 39,000 coal bed methane wells will be developed in Montana in the next ten years, with development stretching as far west as Gallatin and Park Counties. The boom is expected to last 20 to 30 years.

A typical well dewaters an average of 16,000 gallons of high saline groundwater from coal seam aquifers **per day.** Currently, most of this water is discharged into rivers, streams, and unlined impoundments. Methane production also brings access roads, pipelines, transmission lines, containment ponds, drill pads, compressor stations, and generators – all of which chop up agricultural land and fragment wildlife habitat.

This guide represents the insights and expertise of farmers, ranchers, townspeople, irrigation managers, water and soil experts, wildlife biologists, hydrologists, geologists, ecologists, outfitters, hunting guides, and other Montana citizens.

The six provisions listed below summarize their recommendations. Together they provide a reasonable framework for responsible development. We hope that you will help build support for responsible methane development and endorse **Doing It Right** by signing and mailing the postcards on the back.

Let's do it right!

RESPONSIBLE Coal Bed Methane Development Means...

1. Effective **monitoring** of coal bed methane development and active **enforcement** of existing laws to protect private property rights, Montana citizens, and Montana's natural resources.

2. **Surface owner consent**, **surface use agreements** and reimbursement of **attorney fees** to help landowners better protect their property rights.

3. Use of **aquifer recharge**, **clustered development**, **mufflers for compressor stations**, and other low-impact, best-available technologies to minimize impacts on underground water reserves, rivers and streams, and surface resources.

4. Collection of **thorough fish, wildlife, and plant inventories** before development proceeds to protect habitat, followed by **phased-in development** to diffuse impacts over time.

5. Meaningful **public involvement** in the decision-making process.

6. **Complete reclamation** of all disturbed areas and **bonding** that protects Montana taxpayers from all cleanup liability costs.

Southeastern and southcentral Montana is marked by an arid to semi-arid climate. Much of the region's domestic water supply is pumped from aquifers or supplied by natural springs, and most farmers and ranchers depend on well water for stock watering.

Every drop of water withdrawn for coal bed methane production simultaneously depletes the region's precious aquifers.

Aquifers

AQUIFER DEPLETION

Coal bed methane production involves withdrawing massive volumes of groundwater from coal seam aquifers. The United States Geological Survey estimates that an average well in Montana withdraws 11.6 gallons of water per minute (gpm), or over 16,000 gallons a day. At 10 gpm, a mid-range estimate of 24,000 producing wells would pump out **345 million gallons of water per day from underground water reserves.** Most of this groundwater is discharged into rivers, streams, and dry creek beds, or held in unlined impoundments, where it can seep into rivers and streams.

DRIED UP WELLS

Every drop of water withdrawn for coal bed methane production simultaneously depletes the region's precious aquifers. The Bureau of Land Management estimates that a single well can lower aquifer levels by 34 feet within ten feet of the well. The cumulative lowering of water levels from as many as 39,000 wells is unknown, but coal mining studies suggest that it could take over 1000 years for aquifers to recharge. As underground water levels drop, landowners and rural communities can expect to see their wells, seeps, sub-irrigated fields, and natural springs go dry.

MASSIVE VOLUMES

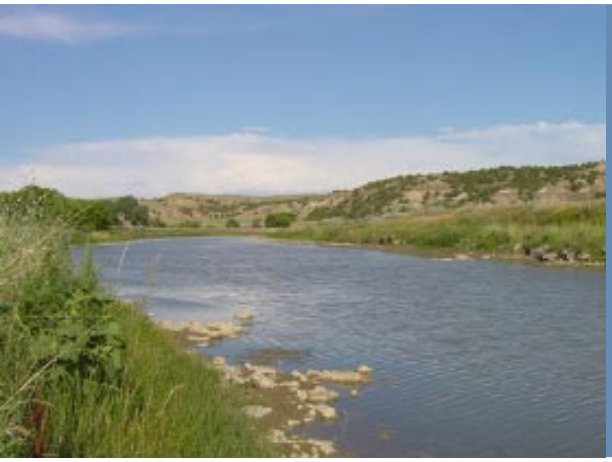
Methane water is unsuitable for irrigation because of high concentrations of dissolved salts. Industry proponents claim that methane discharge water could provide stock water for farmers and ranchers. While this may seem like an ideal solution, there's one complication: all of Montana's cattle, sheep, and pigs combined would be unable to drink the amount of the water that will be produced.

Doing It Right

Aquifer Recharge: While mineral owners have a right to retrieve their minerals, they do not have a right to deprive southeastern Montana of its underground water reserves. Luckily**, it is possible and affordable to put coal bed methane produced water back in the ground where it is most needed**. Aquifer recharge is the most sustainable, reasonable, and appropriate method for dealing with water produced by coal bed methane wells.

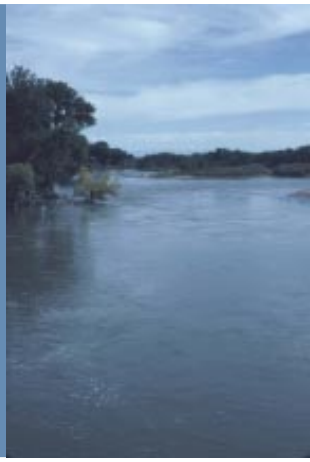
Water Rights: Most uses of water in Montana require a water right. Currently, methane well operators are not required to secure a water right before using massive volumes of water. This double standard reinforces confusion over ownership and responsibility for underground water reserves. The state of Montana must clarify a rational system for the use of underground water reserves that respects existing water rights and preserves aquifer levels for the future.

The Yellowstone River and its tributaries help sustain agriculture, Montana's number one industry, and the towns, rural communities, and families that depend on farming and ranching.



Discharging high saline coal bed methane water into Montana's rivers and streams is unacceptable.

Rivers and Streams



SALINE WATER

While coal bed methane produced water is suitable for domestic and stock use, it is toxic to Montana plants and crops. As water percolates through the ground, it leaches out salts. Methane produced water can come from as deep as 700 feet below the surface, and generally contains high concentrations of dissolved salts, making it unsuitable for irrigation.

DAMAGE TO SOIL

The ratio of dissolved salts (referred to as the sodium absorption ratio, or SAR) of methane water is 10 to 12 times the level at which soil and plant productivity declines and **3 to 4 times the level Montana native plants and most crops can tolerate**. Soil irrigated with this water will accumulate these salts, which destroy soil structure and inhibit water absorption by plants.

DAMAGE TO FISHERIES

Discharging high saline coal bed methane water into Montana's rivers and streams is unacceptable. Even treated, the influx of high volumes of groundwater into Montana's rivers and streams could change stream temperature and hydrology, adversely affecting fisheries. Likewise, the increased erosion and sedimentation from discharges can plug irrigation canals and destroy spawning grounds for fish. **Fishing brings over a million dollars into the region each year as Montanans and visitors to the state come to catch trout, walleye, smallmouth bass, paddlefish, and catfish.**

Doing It Right

Aquifer Recharge: The solution that best addresses these concerns is **aquifer recharge**, through reinjection or similar means.

Enforcement: **Careful monitoring and rigorous enforcement of existing laws**, such as the Clean Water Act and Montana Water Use Act, are essential to protecting existing beneficial uses of water. **The methane industry cannot be allowed to monitor itself.**

Minimize Roads: **Minimizing roads** and **requiring wells to be set back from rivers** would help reduce sedimentation.

Phased-in development: **Phasing in development** over several years would disperse impacts over time while providing public agencies with the time necessary to ensure Montana's rivers and streams are protected.

Agriculture is Montana's largest industry, generating more than $2 billion annually. In southeastern Montana, income from the trade of stock and crops provides a steady flow of cash into rural communities, and small towns provide support for the outlying farmers and ranchers.

The best way to ensure responsible coal bed methane development is to empower landowners to have a real say in the course of mineral development on their land.

Agriculture

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

The region's agricultural economy is based on strong protections for private property rights and water rights. Individual landowners steward their own land and water with a view toward long term productivity, which benefits the whole region.

MINERAL RIGHTS

Coal bed methane production, like many forms of mineral development, threatens this careful balance. Because mineral owners have a legal right to retrieve their minerals, landowners who don't own their minerals are largely powerless to stop irresponsible development on their land. Meanwhile, mineral owners have little incentive to develop responsibly because, unlike landowners, they will not have to live with the long-term implications of destroyed soils, degraded water, and dried up aquifers.

ATTORNEY FEES

While landowners are entitled to compensation for any damages caused by mineral development, they must prove damages in a court of law, which can cost $30,000 to $50,000 in attorney's fees and expenses.

Doing It Right

Surface Owner Consent: The best way to ensure responsible coal bed methane development is to empower landowners to have a real say in the course of mineral development on their land. **Requiring methane operators to secure permission to drill from surface owners would greatly increase the ability of landowners to ensure responsible development**.

Surface Use Agreements: Methane operators should be **required** to negotiate a **surface use agreement** with landowners, detailing the placement of roads, wells, drill sites, pipelines, and compressor stations. The state and federal government should provide a model surface use agreement that provides strong protections for landowners.

Attorney Fees: Landowners who successfully prove damages to their property in a court of law **should be awarded compensation for their attorney fees** in order to prevent the cost of litigating from deterring landowners from seeking fair compensation.

The relatively undisturbed semi-arid breaks and sagebrush grasslands of eastern Montana are home to a diversity of wildlife, including elk, mule and white-tailed deer, pronghorn, wild turkey, sharp-tailed and sage grouse, golden and bald eagles, falcons, and prairie dogs.

Along with the intangible benefits of watching pronghorn browse sagebrush or golden eagles soar overhead, southeastern Montana's wildlife brings real benefits to the region's economy.

Wildlife

WILDLIFE BENEFITS

Along with the intangible benefits of watching pronghorn browse sagebrush or golden eagles soar overhead, southeastern Montana's wildlife bring real benefits to the region's economy. Montanans and out-of-state visitors spend millions of dollars each year enjoying the region's superb hunting and fishing opportunities. In 1999 alone, hunting for deer, pronghorn, and upland birds generated over $34 million in economic benefits for southeastern Montana.

THREATS TO WILDLIFE

The access roads, drill pads, pipelines, power lines, transmission stations, compressors, and increased traffic that accompany coal bed methane development can chop up wildlife habitat and disrupt home range, winter range, and migration routes. State and federal agencies estimate that each coal bed methane well disturbs **three to four acres of land**, and results in the construction of **a quarter to a third of a mile of new roads**. With up to 39,000 methane wells predicted in the next ten years, methane production could disturb tens of thousands of acres of critical wildlife habitat.

Doing It Right

Fish, Wildlife, and Plant Inventories: In order to ensure the long-term viability of Montana's invaluable wildlife, state and federal agencies must conduct **thorough biological inventories** of each proposed coal bed methane field **before production begins,** and **establish buffer zones** around critical habitat.

Clustered Development: The state and federal government should require that methane operators cluster pipelines and access roads together and bury power lines within existing rights-of-way to the extent possible. Clustered development could dramatically decrease the amount of land disturbed, and be accomplished at a minimal cost to the industry. Likewise, because gas from methane wells is normally measured at the well site, flow lines to compressor stations should be shared by different operators, which will reduce surface land disturbance as well as development costs.

Phased-in Development: State and federal agencies should establish a permitting schedule that **phases in development over time**. This would allow the economic benefits to last longer while reducing the concentration of impacts.

Full Reclamation: All areas disturbed during coal bed methane production should be **fully reclaimed** with native vegetation and soil types immediately following cessation of methane production.

Clean air and quiet days are some of the amenities of living away from metropolitan areas. Montana's rural residents enjoy healthy air, wide-open spaces, and the peace and quiet of country life.

Most landowners have a vested interest in disturbing as little land as possible, and, given the chance, will steward their land as they have for generations.

Rural Life

AIR POLLUTION

Most people don't equate methane – a so-called "clean-burning" fuel – with air pollution, but production of the gas can seriously degrade air quality. Generators are necessary to supply electricity to pump methane and power the compressor stations that compress the gas so that it can be shipped to market. Compressors and generators emit dangerous toxins such as sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and formaldehyde, a known carcinogen. Methane itself is a pollutant. Lowering water pressure not only releases methane into methane wells, but can vent it through fractures in the coal seam and natural faults and allow it to build up in homes, barns, and other structures.

DUST

Dust from increased traffic on country roads can cause respiratory problems and obscure the wide open views that so many take for granted. **Dust is rarely regulated, and the burden is on local people** to complain long enough and loud enough until the owner of the road takes action.

NOISE

Compressors produce noise levels that can be a serious nuisance to area residents.

Doing It Right

Enforcement: Active enforcement of existing laws is critical to protecting Montana's clean air.

Best Technology: Methane companies should be required to use generators and compressor stations with the lowest possible emissions, and to take every precaution possible to avoid methane venting. Generators should be fueled by natural gas, which results in lower emissions than diesel fuel, and guidelines should be established maximizing the number of wells allowed for each compressor station. Compressors should be fitted with high-quality mufflers to reduce noise.

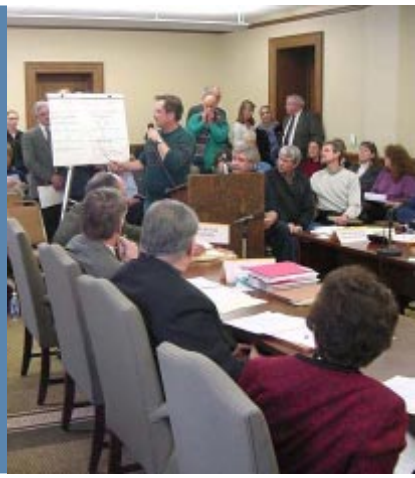
Dust Maintenance: To reduce dust on country roads, methane operators should be required to regularly treat gravel roads with treated methane water or other dust suppressants. **Limiting the number of vehicles and roads by clustering development** will help reduce overall airborne dust.

Surface Use Agreements: Methane operators should be required to secure a surface use agreement with surface owners so that those who care about the land can have a say in the course of construction. Most landowners have a vested interest in disturbing as little land as possible, and, given the chance, will steward their land as they have for generations.

One of the cornerstones of American democracy is the involvement of citizens in decisions that affect their lives. Many state and federal laws are designed to incorporate citizen input into decision-making processes.

The state of Montana and the federal government must make every effort possible to include the public in a meaningful way in decisions about the future of coal bed methane development.

Citizen Involvement



GOOD DECISIONS

Involving the public invariably creates a longer decision-making process, but the benefits far outweigh delays. By including the public, state and federal agencies can educate citizens, while gathering invaluable on-the-ground information. The more involved citizens become in the process, the better the final outcome.

PUBLIC INPUT

The unprecedented scale of proposed coal bed methane development, along with the fact that water – Montana's most precious resource – is at the heart of the controversy, suggest that now, more than ever, state and federal agencies need to make every effort to include the public in the decision-making process.

RUSHED DEVELOPMENT

Ensuring public participation in decisions concerning the course of coal bed methane involvement is the responsibility of government agencies and individual citizens. Thus far, state and federal agencies have focused on producing an environmental impact statement as quickly as possible at the expense of meaningful public involvement.

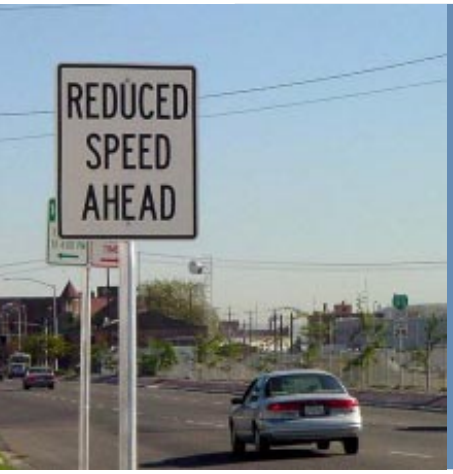
Doing It Right

Adequate Public Notice: The state of Montana and the federal government must make every effort possible to include the public in a meaningful way in decisions about the future of coal bed methane development. Notice for public meetings for the ongoing environmental impact statement, as well as future environmental reviews, should be posted at least one month previous to the meetings, and should be sent to all Montana newspapers and radio stations. Written comments should be accepted for at least one month following public comment meetings.

Public Comments: Comments gathered during public meetings should be seriously considered and incorporated into government documents. Testimony at public hearings should be thoroughly recorded and incorporated into the public record.

Public Involvement: Montanans have a civic responsibility to get involved in the decision-making process. Citizens can express their concerns by commenting on the upcoming draft environmental impact statement, testifying at public meetings, writing letters to the editor of local newspapers, or calling their elected state and federal representatives.

Montana has numerous laws designed to protect our precious natural resources. Their usefulness is related to the extent to which they are enforced. Self-regulation and voluntary compliance, as a rule, are inadequate to hold individuals and corporations accountable.



State and federal agencies should hold methane operators fully responsible for violations of state and federal laws.

Accountability

ENFORCEMENT

If the citizens of Montana wish to hold the methane industry accountable, then our common sense laws must be enforced. Right now, data concerning the quality and quantity of coal bed methane discharges and the quality of the rivers and streams into which they flow come directly from the industry. This is akin to letting a fox guard the hen house: it just doesn't work.

ACCOUNTABILITY

A single citizen inspection of a coal bed methane field revealed two blatantly illegal discharges of methane wastewater with toxic levels of sodium and dissolved salts into a tributary of the Tongue River. Twelve months earlier, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality had notified the company that these discharges were illegal. The methane company admitted that one of the discharge pipes had been illegally discharging for over six months! Without the citizen inspection, the illegal discharges could have continued indefinitely.

Doing It Right

Agency and Citizen Inspections: Regular inspections of coal bed methane fields and collection of soil and water samples are essential to ensuring compliance with Montana's common sense laws. Regular inspections should occur no less than four times annually for each field, with one surprise inspection each year. Citizens and interest groups should have the right to petition for further inspections.

Public Access: Real-time surface and groundwater flow monitors should be installed at methane water discharge points and in aquifers, and data should be made readily available to the public on the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's website.

Fines: State and federal agencies should hold methane operators fully responsible for violations of state and federal laws, implementing fines as well as increased monitoring to detect future violations.

Bad Actor Provision: Drilling for methane in Montana is a privilege. Any methane operator who repeatedly violates state or federal laws should be barred from receiving further permits to drill for methane in Montana.

Southeastern and southcentral Montana is a region rich in cultural and historic resources. Nearly two hundred years ago, the Lewis and Clark Expedition traveled across the region. The Northern Cheyenne and Crow Indian Tribes live in the area, and sacred sites abound.

These sites tell the story of two cultures coming together, of homesteaders seeking a new life, and of the struggles to defend a homeland.

Heritage

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SITES

Nearly 600 cultural and historic resource sites have been identified in the Tongue River drainage as eligible for listing under the National Register of Historic Places. These sites and others could be negatively impacted by irresponsible development.

HISTORY

These sites tell the story of two cultures coming together, of homesteaders seeking a new life, and of the struggle to defend a homeland. For the Northern Cheyenne and Crow Tribes, these sites are an integral part of their spiritual and cultural identity. Many sites are also a source of tourism revenue. Hundreds of people travel to the area each year in remembrance of the Battle of the Little Big Horn and Custer's Last Stand. History buffs from around the nation travel great distances to trace the path of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

RISKS

Cultural and historic sites are protected under the National Historic Preservation Act. Under this Act, government agencies must consult with Indian Tribes, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office before taking any action that may disturb a historic, cultural, or ancient burial site. Thus far, state and federal agencies have all but ignored this requirement, putting southeastern and southcentral Montana's important cultural and historic sites at risk.

Doing It Right

Enforcement: State and federal agencies must fully comply with the National Historic Preservation Act by consulting with all affected Tribes, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office before putting any of Montana's important historic sites at risk. The integrity of these sites must be maintained.

The true legacy of coal bed methane development will emerge in two or three decades when the last of the methane has been sent to market. While it is impossible to foretell the nature of that legacy, we do know that coal bed methane will be developed and the methane industry will see billions of dollars in profits.

We also know that the methane industry can afford to do it right. It takes approximately $65,000 to establish a producing well in Montana; depending on gas prices, an average well brings in $600,000 to $1.2 million over its productive life. That leaves several hundred thousand dollars – a percentage of which will be paid for taxes and general operations – per well. **Clearly, the methane industry can afford to do it right. Montana citizens, however, cannot afford otherwise**.

Any damages not covered by the methane industry will be borne by the farmers and ranchers who live in areas of proposed methane development, by the surrounding communities, and, finally, by all Montana taxpayers.

Legacy

BONDING

In Montana, coal companies must post a bond – a monetary deposit to cover potential damages – before mining for coal. The same holds true for the hard rock mining industry. **Coal bed methane companies, however, need only post bonds for the cost of plugging and abandoning a well**. That means methane operators can pump out millions of gallons of groundwater from Montana's aquifers, discharge poor quality methane water into Montana's rivers and streams, disturb hundreds of thousands of acres of prime agricultural land, disrupt agricultural operations, and displace wildlife, all without any financial protection for Montana citizens.

TAXPAYER RISK

Any damages not paid for by the methane industry will be borne by the farmers and ranchers who live in areas of proposed methane development, by the surrounding rural communities, and, finally, by all Montana taxpayers.

Doing It Right

Bonding: In order to protect Montana taxpayers and encourage responsible development, state and federal agencies must require bonds that cover the **full** cost of methane development.

Full Reclamation: To ensure complete reclamation of land disturbed by methane production, state and federal agencies must establish clear and enforceable reclamation standards. Full reclamation of all disturbed lands should be a standing provision in a model surface use agreement, and landowners should make it a bottom-line request when leasing their minerals.

Montana is at a crossroads: one path leads to a balanced future in which methane development and other industries exist side-by-side. Down the other path is the specter of dried-up wells, polluted rivers, destroyed soils, and an agricultural economy in shambles.

Montana has a rare opportunity to make sure the methane industry does it right from the beginning, thanks to a temporary moratorium on methane drilling permits. However, a choice for responsible development will require that Montana citizens stand up and demand foresight and true leadership on the part of state and federal elected officials and agency personnel.

Montana has a rare opportunity to make sure the methane industry does it right from the beginning, thanks to a temporary moratorium on methane drilling permits.

Conclusion

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

The provisions outlined in this guide point the way toward coal bed methane development that all Montana citizens can live with. Some necessitate legislative action in the halls of the Montana State Capitol or in the U.S. Congress. Many fall under existing laws. Others rely on a strong environmental impact statement. **All require that Montana citizens be informed and get involved.**

BALANCE

Together, these provisions seek to balance the livelihoods of farmers, ranchers, and townspeople, and protection of Montana's land, air and water, with the rights of methane operators to retrieve their minerals.

CHOICE

One thing is clear: Montana citizens do not have to make a choice between their good water, clean air, and productive agricultural fields on the one hand, and coal bed methane development on the other. They only need to choose to develop methane responsibly.

RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

The methane industry can afford to do it right. Montana cannot afford not to. ***Let's make them do it right!***

The Northern Plains Resource Council is committed to providing the information and tools necessary to give citizens an effective voice in decisions that affect their lives. Recognizing the need to balance the quest for economic gain with social and environmental concerns, members of Northern Plains work to protect Montana's land, air, and water, and to preserve sustainable family agriculture in Montana.

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www.northernplains.org

Doing It Right: a blueprint for responsible coal bed methane development was produced by the Northern Plains Resource Council in October, 2001.

For additional copies, please call (406) 248-1154, or email us at **info@nprcmt.org.** You can also download it from our website at **www.northernplains.org.** For a complete documentation of sources, go to **www.northernplains.org.**

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Page 1:	Tongue River near Birney, Montana. Photo by Megan Dishong.
Page 2:	Rocker Six Cattle Company. Photo by Megan Dishong.
Page 3:	Windmill powered water well in southeastern Montana. Photo by Tana Patterson.
Page 4:	Tongue River near Decker, Montana. Photo by Megan Dishong.
Page 4:	Yellowstone River. Photo by Tana Patterson.
Page 5:	Hay field at Swartz ranch, Wildcat Creek, Wyoming. Photo by Megan Dishong.
Page 6:	White-tailed deer. Photo courtesy of Montana Wildlife Federation.
Page 7:	Wheat field in southeastern Montana. Photo by Tana Patterson.
Page 8:	Montana Legislative committee hearing. Photo by Frank James.
Page 9:	Street sign in Billings, Montana. Photo by Amy Frykman.
Page 10:	View of the Little Bighorn River at Little Bighorn Battlefield. National Park Service photo.
Page 11:	Aerial view of methane drilling in Colorado. Photo by Rebecca Clarren, courtesy of *High Country News.*
Page 12:	Neighbors chatting in Birney, Montana at the annual Birney BBQ. Photo by Alan Rolston.
Back:	Farmland near Decker, Montana. Photo by Amy Frykman.

Thoughts on responsible coal bed methane development...

"We must hold the methane industry to the highest standards to ensure that coal bed methane development contributes in a positive way, rather than continuing a legacy where the economic benefits go primarily to developers, while environmental risks, costs, and impacts are forced on Montana…. We must demand that our state and federal agencies establish solid and responsible rules of the game necessary to protect our heritage and our ecosystem before further coal bed methane development begins in Montana."

Thomas Schneider, Petroleum Engineer and former
Chair of the Montana Public Service Commission.

"It certainly appears that coal bed methane extraction can be an important part of the solution to our energy stress; however, I believe it must and certainly can be done in a prudent and orderly manner."

William Edwards, former Wyoming State Legislator, Ph.D.

"Those of us who depend on good water for irrigation and productive land for our livelihoods know that if we don't stand up and demand that state and federal agencies enforce the laws that are designed to protect our interests, then we are out of luck. We don't want to be out of luck."

Roger Muggli, Manager of the Tongue
and Yellowstone Irrigation District

Place 21 cent stamp here

Northern Plains Resource Council
2401 Montana Avenue, Suite 200
Billings, Montana 59101

Place 21 cent stamp here

The Honorable Governor Judy Martz
State Capitol
Helena, Montana 59620-0801

Take action!

what you can do

1. **Endorse Doing It Right** and help build support for responsible coal bed methane development in Montana! Sign the right-hand postcard below and drop it in the mail. It's that easy!

2. **Send a postcard to Montana Governor Judy Martz** indicating your support for the common sense provisions outlined in Doing It Right. Sign the left-hand postcard and drop it in the mail.

3. **Volunteer to solicit other endorsements**. Spread the word! Call (406)-248-1154 or email info@nprcmt.org for more information.

4. **Comment on the upcoming draft environmental impact statement** to be released in mid-December. Let your voice be heard! Log onto www.northernplains.org or call (406)-248-1154 for more information.

Dear Governor Martz,

Please support the following common sense provisions outlined in **Doing It Right: a blueprint for responsible coal bed methane development in Montana**:

1. Effective monitoring of coal bed methane development and active enforcement of existing laws.
2. Surface owner consent, surface use agreements, and reimbursement of attorney fees to landowners.
3. Use of aquifer recharge, clustered development, mufflers for compressor stations, and other low-impact, best available technologies.
4. Collection of thorough fish, wildlife, and plant inventories before development proceeds, and phased-in development over time.
5. Meaningful public involvement in the decision-making process.
6. Complete reclamation of all disturbed areas and adequate bonding.

Sincerely,

_____

Yes! I support the following common sense provisions outlined in **Doing It Right: a blueprint for responsible coal bed methane development in Montana:**

1. Effective monitoring of coal bed methane development and active enforcement of existing laws.
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5. Meaningful public involvement in the decision-making process.
6. Complete reclamation of all disturbed areas and adequate bonding.

Sincerely,

_____

Please include your name, address, and email!

_____

_____