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Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$50 Million from Investing in America Agenda to Clean Up Legacy Pollution on Federal Lands and Waters



Funding from Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will create good-paying jobs, help clean up more than 120 orphaned oil and gas well sites nationwide

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WASHINGTON — The Department of the Interior today announced a \$50.5 million investment through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda to put people to work plugging, remediating and reclaiming orphaned oil and gas well sites located in national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, and on other public lands and waters. Five bureaus within the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture will address 123 high-priority polluting wells that pose threats to human health and safety, the climate, and wildlife.

This year’s funding is part of an overall historic \$4.7 billion investment from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to address orphaned oil and gas wells across the nation that will create good-paying union jobs, catalyze economic growth and revitalization, improve public health and safety, and reduce harmful methane leaks. Methane pollution from many of these unplugged wells is a serious safety hazard and a significant driver of climate change, with methane being more than 25 times as potent as carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere.

“Toxic orphaned wells pose a significant threat to American communities and our environment,” said **Secretary Deb Haaland**. “I’ve seen firsthand how orphaned oil and gas wells left behind by extractive industries lead to hazardous pollution, water contamination, and safety hazards. This crucial funding reflects President Biden’s vision for a cleaner, safer and more equitable future. It’s a win-win-win – reducing harmful methane emissions, restoring our treasured landscapes, and creating good-paying jobs.”

Today’s allocation is part of a total of \$250 million provided through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to clean up orphaned well sites on federal public lands and is in addition to \$4.3 billion to plug orphaned wells on state and private lands. Today’s announcement brings the total allocated to address orphaned wells on federal lands to date to approximately \$150 million, which is estimated to fund the plugging of nearly 600 orphaned wells on federal lands and waters, 172 of which have already been addressed. The \$50.5 million investment will be distributed across 19 states, covering a diverse array of projects, including plugging, reclamation, methane measurement, and infrastructure removal at various national parks, wildlife refuges, and national forests as well as offshore oilfield locations.

70 percent of selected projects will benefit communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. This program advances the President’s [Justice40 Initiative](#), which set a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities.

See below for a list of funded projects slated for this year:

FY24 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funded Federal Orphaned Well Projects by State:

State	Location	Number of Wells
Kentucky	USFS Daniel Boone NF*	21
Louisiana	FWS Catahoula and Big Branch Marsh NWRs	2
	FWS Sabine NWR	4
Montana	NPS Glacier NP	1
North Dakota	FWS Beaver Lake WPA	**
Ohio	USFS Wayne NF	**
Oklahoma	FWS Deep Fork NWR (Deep Fork River)	11

	FWS Deep Fork and Sequoyah NWRs	15
Pennsylvania	USFS Allegheny NF*	37
Texas	FWS Aransas NWR	4
	FWS Trinity River, Laguna Atascosa, and Lower Rio Grande Valley NWRs	7
	NPS Lake Meredith NP	**
	USFS Angelina and Sabine NFs	**
West Virginia	FWS Ohio River Islands NWR	6
Wyoming	BLM Casper Field Office	3
	BLM Lander Field Office	4
	BLM Rock Springs Field Office	1
	BLM Worland Field Office	1
Combined Multi-State Funding	NPS Multi-Park Well Inspection Program	**
Outer Continental Shelf	BSEE OCS High Island Area	2
	BSEE OCS West Delta Area	4
	Total FY24	123

**Includes a combination of well-plugging projects and projects conducting only pre-or post-plugging activities (e.g., reclamation, environmental compliance)*

****Projects consist of only pre-or post-plugging activities (e.g., reclamation, environmental compliance, inventory)**

In addition to these projects led by federal bureaus, nearly \$645 million in initial and formula grants have already been awarded to states over the past two years to address orphaned oil and gas wells on state and private lands as part of this historic economic and environmental investment.

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