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New Mexicans Increasingly Concerned with Climate Change, Leasing System, Loss of Nature

Tomorrow, the [Department of the Interior's public forum](#) on the agency's oil and gas program will bring together panelists from around the country to discuss climate solutions and the broken public-lands leasing system, including New Mexicans Mario Atencio and Nathalie Eddy.

Right now, drilling and fracking on public lands accounts for nearly 25% of domestic greenhouse-gas emissions, and oil and gas companies have [stockpiled millions of acres of lands](#) that are sitting idle as demand for oil continues to decline. According to the BLM, about 97.5% of eligible New Mexico federal land has already been leased to oil and gas drilling. On top of leaving surrounding communities with the cost of reclamation and pollution cleanup, landscapes are blocked from revenue-producing usage like recreation, conservation projects and renewable energy.

During the Biden administration's pause on new leasing of public lands, oil and gas industry groups poured millions of dollars into PR campaigns to push false narratives, including misrepresentations of Western communities. New public opinion polling shows New Mexicans and other Americans across the Southwest and West are growing increasingly concerned with the loss of nature, climate change and damage from oil and gas drilling on public lands.

In New Mexico:

- 74% believe oil and gas development on public lands should be halted or significantly limited.
- 58% of New Mexicans support bold action to prevent the loss of nature.
- 65% prefer Congress prioritize conservation and recreation over energy development on public lands.
- 71% favor a transition to 100% clean, renewable energy.
- 69% support making public lands a net-zero source of carbon pollution.

See [Colorado College's 2021 State of the Rockies](#) results in New Mexico for more.

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About the Sierra Club

The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3.8 million members and supporters. In addition to protecting every person's right to get outdoors and access the healing power of nature, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. For more information, [visit www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org).