



# Fossil Fuels

## Position Statement

*Fossil fuels have provided the energy for modern industrial development, with oil and gas joining coal starting in the 1920s. The extraction, refinement, transportation and combustion of fossil fuels have, however, been uniquely destructive to ecosystems, causing climate change and impacting the health of humans and wildlife. The U.S. is the largest oil and gas producer on the planet with 25% of oil and 12% of natural gas production coming from federal territories (land and waters).*

- Broads supports closure of coal mines on public lands. The US is the 4th largest global producer, with half coming from public lands, and a net exporter of coal.
- Oil and gas operations release carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases, all of which cause climate change. Methane has a global warming potential ~80 times greater than carbon dioxide over 20 years. Broads supports robust methane mitigation, including prevention of leaks, venting and flaring in oil & gas operations.
- In an era of climate change-driven drought, especially in the West, Broads advocates for substantial reductions in the extraordinary volume of water used to fracture modern oil and gas wells. The enormous volume of water co-produced with oil and gas contains high concentrations of salts, metals and toxic chemicals used in the fracturing operation. Most operators dispose of this highly contaminated water by injection, removing it permanently from the hydrological cycle. Broads advocates for responsible reuse of produced water by operators until use of water in fracturing is eliminated.
- Broads works to protect public lands and waters from impacts of fossil fuel operations wherever they occur, including Designated Wilderness, Wildlife Refuges, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Roadless Areas, and critical wildlife habitat and corridors. Furthermore, new legislation to designate protected areas should prohibit any new fossil fuel exploration, operations, extraction, and industrial carbon dioxide sequestration.

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**The U.S. is the largest oil and gas producer on the planet.**



# 25%

**of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions originate from fossil fuels extracted from public lands.**



**Methane leaks from inactive, unplugged wells in the US are equivalent to emissions from**

# 2-5 million

**automobiles.**



# 40%

**of all U.S. coal is mined on public lands.**

*The activities undertaken by Great Old Broads for Wilderness are guided by the overriding principle that the focus of attention must be on what is best for the land and water, for Mother Earth.*

## Great Old Broads for Wilderness–Fossil Fuels Position Statement (*Cont.*)

- Broads supports adoption of new rules that modernize oil and gas operations on public lands to be maximally protective. Regulations should include full-cost bonding and should increase accountability for timely clean up and reclamation. Reclamation standards should be updated to require return to the native plant biodiversity of the surrounding landscape.
- Broads does not support industrial carbon capture and storage because it has not been demonstrated to work at scale and serves as a crutch that fosters continued fossil fuel operations.
- Federal and state policies must not allow fossil fuel operations or energy corporations to shift the costs of climate disruption to society while reaping profits from public lands.
- Broads supports a rapid transition to renewables for power generation and transportation to mitigate the impacts mentioned above. Installations of renewable power generation and distribution require the same careful consideration of impacts to environment, human health and wildlife as any development on public lands.

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