



Western Local Elected Officials ask the Royalty Policy Committee to Update the Oil and Gas Leasing Process

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Denver, CO: On September 13, 2018, The Royalty Policy Committee (RPC) met for the fourth time since it was established by Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke in April 2017. The RPC was established as a Committee to review and recommend policies regarding fair valuation of resources produced on public lands.

Royalty rates, which ensure the American people are properly compensated for the extraction and sale of oil and gas from public lands, do not reflect the present-day value of public lands, nor do they reflect rates charged on state and private lands for minerals of equal value. Increasing royalty rates from 12.5% to 18.75% on federally managed lands, as has been done by many states, would increase taxpayer revenue from [\\$400 to 700 million](#) over the next ten years. Likewise, if rental rates and minimum leasing bids for land parcels were raised, an additional [\\$400 million](#) and [\\$100 million](#) in revenue, respectively, would be realized by taxpayers. This increase in revenue could be used to fund conservation and management of all federal public lands.

Mayor Pro Tem of Frisco, Colorado, Hunter Mortenson said, “The RPC has enacted a long list of industry wishes in support of the administration’s ‘energy dominance’ agenda. There are now 2.9 million acres on the auction block – more than offered at any point in history – at bargain basement \$2 per acre prices. This is surely not an adequate return on investment for the American people. And meanwhile, tying up lands from other uses, such as recreation, farming, conservation, hunting/fishing, and more – all economic drivers and values of the American people and mountain communities.”

Kalen Jones, City Council, Moab Utah said, “Thoughtful stewardship of public lands and accurate valuation of all their resources are crucial for mountain communities’ long-term well-being. The proposals being reviewed by the RPC maintain the prioritization of oil and gas development over other values and sustainable yield economic activity. The RPC needs to reevaluate rates to maintain broad public lands access for all Americans, balance multiple uses, and ensure taxpayers are getting a fair deal from responsible energy development.”

Western local elected officials submitted comments from The Mountain Pact members asking the RPC, “Continue to follow common sense environmental safeguards, and respect voices from mountain

communities that rely on healthy, well-managed public lands for economic stability, outdoor recreation, and cultural vitality.” Officials stated that, “There needs to be a sweeping review of the oil and gas leasing process to create proper valuation of resources produced on public lands - lands that are crucial for mountain communities.”

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See more about the Royalty Policy Committee Here: <https://www.doi.gov/rpc>

See more on today’s meeting here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/08/13/2018-17346/royalty-policy-committee-public-meeting>

More about The Mountain Pact

[The Mountain Pact](#) is an organization that works with over forty mountain communities in all eleven states across the American West to empower them to build resilience in the face of economic and environmental stresses through a shared voice on federal policy related to climate, public lands, and outdoor recreation.

Mountain Communities for Environmental & Economic Resilience

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