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Jennifer Krill is our new Executive Director

February 1st, Jennifer Krill became EARTHWORKS' third executive director, leading us in our third decade of achievement as the only national environmental advocacy organization focused exclusively on the environmental and social issues surrounding mineral extraction.

We are very excited to have Jennifer leading the EARTHWORKS team.

She comes to us from a distinguished eleven-year tenure at [Rainforest Action Network](#) (RAN), where she led several campaigns and served as Program Director. Her strengths as a strategist, corporate campaigner and fundraiser will reinforce and strengthen EARTHWORKS programs.



[\[Read the press release\]](#)
[\[Read Jennifer's bio\]](#)

EARTHWORKS launches the Texas Oil & Gas Accountability Project, releases *DRILL RIGHT TEXAS: best oil & gas development practices for Texas*



On February 24th, EARTHWORKS formally launched the Texas Oil & Gas Accountability Project (OGAP), a new citizens' group that will work to ensure that Texas' burgeoning Barnett shale gas industry operates while respecting the environment and the rights of its neighbors.

Simultaneously, the new watchdog group released its best practices platform: [DRILL-RIGHT TEXAS: Best Oil & Gas Development Practices for Texas](#).

Gas wells can be and are drilled where people live, on their property – and often without their consent. So where drilling occurs, it needs to occur responsibly – as it all too often doesn't. Created by and for Texans, Texas OGAP – by watchdogging industry and government, and by showing the way forward with *DRILL RIGHT TEXAS* – will change that.

[\[Read the EARTHblog post about the launch\]](#)
[\[Download DRILL-RIGHT TEXAS\]](#)
[\[Go to the Texas OGAP webpage\]](#)

No Dirty Gold campaign releases *Tarnished Gold*, a responsible sourcing report card for jewelry retailers

When consumers buy jewelry, they don't want their purchase to underwrite environmental destruction; they don't want to support throwing people out of their homes; they don't want their wedding rings to cause the pollution of drinking water.

Tarnished Gold: assessing the jewelry industry's progress on ethical sourcing of metals evaluates progress jewelers have made in pursuit of cleaner sources of precious metals.

Tarnished Gold evaluates jewelers large and small. It includes those who committed to responsible sourcing of their metals, and some who did not. Released on February 10th, it finds signs of hope as well as shortfalls.



[\[Read the press release\]](#)
[\[Download Tarnished Gold\]](#)

Modernize the General Mining Law of 1872

February 9th, the Missoulian (in Montana) ran [an excellent opinion column](#) calling for the modernizing of the [1872 Mining Law](#).

The law, largely unchanged since Custer's Last Stand, allows for multinational mining companies to claim mineral-rich publicly owned land and extract the gold/copper/etc without payment of a royalty. Needless to say, it contains no environmental protections – they weren't thinking about such things in 1872.

A bill to update the mining law has passed the House, and [Senator Bingaman from New Mexico has introduced similar legislation in the Senate](#) – so we're poised to bring mining regulation from the 19th century into the 21st.

The author of the op-ed is Jon Krutar a rancher, veteran and former economics professor with whom EARTHWORKS has worked closely. He endorses the Bingaman bill in his op-ed, which you should really [read in its entirety](#).

[\[Read the column: Modernize the 1872 Mining Law\]](#)
[\[Learn about the Bingaman mining reform bill\]](#)
[\[Learn more about the 1872 Mining Law\]](#)

You win some, you lose some: industry rollbacks fail in the New Mexico legislature, but so does citizen suit initiative

New Mexico has some of the most progressive drilling regulations in the country.

During this year's legislative session (which ended last week) the drilling industry did their best to undo those protections. On the other hand, champions of communities and the environment attempted to give regulators some much needed help.

None of these initiatives succeeded.

[One industry attack was specific](#). Industry advocates attempted to rescind the "pit rule" that protects water resources by requiring waste pit liners -- and by forbidding pits entirely when groundwater is within 50 feet of the surface.

The second attack was general, and pure spitefulness. Any local government so bold as to regulate drillers to protect its citizens/water/wildlife would have been denied severance tax revenue generated by drilling.

[The citizens' proposal](#) -- which came very close to passing the House -- would have allowed citizens to enforce state environmental statutes and regulations by lawsuit.

As state enforcement budgets continue to shrink, this type of proposal becomes more important. You shouldn't have to wait for the state to act if a driller is polluting your drinking water.

This is a big deal nationwide because New Mexico is a bellwether for the entire country. Drilling laws and regulations in New Mexico influence other states wrestling with similar issues -- like the rulemakings in process in [New York](#) and [proposed](#) in Pennsylvania.

Take Action!

Keep drilling toxics out of drinking water.

Click the pic to urge your Congress critters to support the FRAC Act.



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Recycle your cell phone from home!



Cell phones contain toxic metals that can pollute the environment and threaten human health.

When recycled responsibly, these metals can be put back into circulation, decreasing the need for new metal mining.