



EARTHWORKS

# IMPACT REPORT 2021

## YOU ARE MAKING HISTORY

Time is short to act in order to prevent a climate catastrophe. There is much to do and little time left to do it. Defeating the political and economic power of the fossil fuel and mining industries will not be easy — but we know it must be done.

Though it may sometimes seem that progress is impossible, remember that the momentum for change keeps building. And it's so important to keep speaking up for what's right.

Instead of standing on the sidelines, you are standing in solidarity with those on the frontlines to demand justice and a better future.

You understand that we are on the precipice of historic change — and that everyone can be a part of making that history.

**Thank you for being part of this movement, and for helping make a better future for everyone.**

## WE MUST ACT NOW Meeting this historic moment

### Stop Expansion of Fossil Fuels

Proposed projects would lock in oil and gas production for another generation or more, dooming our prospects for a livable climate. Instead, we must reject new fossil fuel production and consumption while speeding the transition to renewable energy.

### Reduce Methane Emissions

Since methane is 86 times worse for the climate than carbon dioxide in the short term, controlling it quickly buys us more time to prevent climate catastrophe.

### Make Renewable Energy Clean, Just, and Sustainable

We must act to ensure that the clean energy sources of the present and future don't repeat the mistakes of the past. New mining is not the best or only way to supply the minerals needed for renewable technologies.

### Clean Up the Mess Left by the Extractive Era

Let's address the legacy pollution from abandoned mines and oil and gas wells by restoring the water and land while investing in frontline communities' future.



Representative Raúl Grijalva and Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland viewed optical gas imaging of normally invisible air pollution in New Mexico's San Juan Basin in 2019. Showing policymakers hard evidence of pollutants has real impact.

Together, we can move away from fossil fuels to a renewable energy future that doesn't rely on dirty mining. Inside you'll find stories of the impact made this year with your support. Thank you for making history with us.



Climate protest in front of the White House in Washington, D.C. in October.



A well and other infrastructure next to a cemetery in Texas.

## Reining in Fossil Fuels Demanding accountability of the fossil fuel industry in Texas

Twenty one states have set targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, according to the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions. That includes Colorado, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania, all heavily invested in oil and gas extraction. Those targets give Earthworks a new lever to shut down the fossil fuel industry.

Oil Terminal (SPOT) export facilities. The two Texas Gulf Coast projects would pump millions of barrels of crude oil to offshore terminals, threatening water, air, and communities. In response to our community organizing in opposition to GulfLink, the Maritime Administration and Coast Guard re-opened comments on the draft environmental impact statement, admitting that their community outreach was insufficient.

### PERMIAN CLIMATE AND HEALTH CRISIS

**REVEALED** — A new multi-media report series *The Permian Basin Climate Bomb*, analyzes the climate, public health, economic, and social impacts of the Permian fracking boom.

With your help we are stopping the further expansion of the fossil fuel industry.

In Texas, oil and gas extraction, pipelines, export terminals, and plastics manufacturing are all booming. Since the lifting of the U.S. crude oil export ban in 2015, oil production in the Permian Basin has actually risen. U.S. refiners are unable to process more Permian

oil, so virtually every new barrel produced in the Permian leaves the country. The fossil fuel industry proposes more than a dozen new oil and LNG export facilities across the U.S. Gulf.

**FAILING REGULATORS EXPOSED** — Our report published in August of this year, *Flaring in Texas*, documented that up to 84% of methane gas flares are unpermitted. The response from the regulators: “No, only 69% of what you saw were unregulated flares.” Do they think 69% noncompliance is acceptable?

**COMMUNITY OPPOSITION ORGANIZED** — We mobilized rapid responses to the proposed GulfLink and Sea Port

Your support made these exposés possible. Thank you.



Sue and Jim Franklin traveled to D.C. from the heart of the Texas Permian Basin to share the impacts of the fracking boom at the People vs. Fossil Fuels protest in October, led by frontline and Indigenous groups from across the country.

## Advancing Federal and State Regulations

**Demanding More from States** — Our *California Oil and Gas Waste* report calls out the state for their failure to safely manage oil and gas waste. California is one of the worst states when it comes to regulating the industry’s waste. We’re exposing their shortcomings and demanding tighter regulation.

**Achieving Results** — In March, New Mexico finalized a new rule to limit venting and flaring of methane by the oil and gas industry. The rule is an important lever to reduce methane in our atmosphere. Next we will make sure it’s enforced.

**Advocating on Capitol Hill** — The pressure is working, and President Biden’s Build Back Better legislation may include a fee on methane. Earthworks and our partners continue to call on the Biden administration to use the full strength of the Clean Air Act to reduce existing pollution, and to include a fee of \$1,500 per ton on methane on the reconciliation package.



# Stopping New Oil and Gas Infrastructure

## Louisiana's Communities Lead in Campaign to Delay \$9.4 Billion Plastics Complex

Led by RISE St. James, the Formosa Plastics Coalition has significantly delayed a massive plastics complex proposed for St. James Parish, Louisiana.

Earthworks released a report showing how Formosa is a serial offender of environmental and human rights. We provided mutual aid support to RISE St. James and surrounding communities in the aftermath of Hurricane Ida, and canvassed and engaged Parish Councils throughout the summer to pass resolutions opposing the plastics complex.

As part of the Defund, Denounce, Divest campaign, we joined the coalition in launching No Formosa Fridays throughout the month of October, asking Bank of America to denounce the proposed project.

These successes underscore the power of diverse and coordinated coalitions led by frontline groups. Given Formosa's track record of environmental and human rights violations, we have connected the U.S. and the international Break Free From

Plastics movement to organize joint actions in Louisiana and Taiwan, where Formosa is based.

Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities along the Gulf Coast have long borne disproportionate health and environmental impacts of polluting industries. With uprisings against systemic racism and a pandemic killing BIPOC communities at vastly higher rates, there has never been a more critical time to build power to challenge the fossil fuel and petrochemical industries.

With your support, we will keep up the pressure and amplify frontline voices.



**"Taking down Formosa's *Sunshine Project* has given Black and Brown communities across the state hope. We have been able to do something that has never been done in the history of our state — break down barriers and highlight the environmental racism plaguing Louisiana."**

—Our Louisiana-based Gulf Coast Campaigner, Kaitlyn Joshua (left), about her experience fighting Formosa.

## Pushing for Federal Action

***With your help we're pushing President Biden for a transition to a clean energy future and to restore America's leadership on climate.***

### AN AGENDA FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Our four-year agenda has concrete actions President Biden can take to avert climate catastrophe, and we're already seeing results. President Biden responded to pressure by restoring Obama-Era methane standards and signing onto the Global Methane Pledge at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP26.

### DEMANDING ACCOUNTABILITY

In April 2021, Gulf Coast community leaders and allies kicked off a "Defend the Gulf" week of action across the Gulf and in Washington, D.C. calling on President Biden to end fossil fuel exports. We called out the inconsistencies between the Biden administration's stated environmental goals and their actions. By exposing how oil, gas, and plastics threaten Black, Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color in the Gulf, we brought this conversation to the national stage.



# Making Clean Energy Clean



## Preparing for Transformation

It's time to create a renewable energy economy that won't harm our planet or communities. A renewable energy future will mean increased reliance on minerals for batteries and other technologies. We've put together a plan to ensure that we do the right thing at every stage — from extraction to end-of-life recycling and reuse of minerals.

## Shaping the Conversation

This year, Earthworks has been quoted in more than a dozen media stories related to the Biden administration and a just mineral transition, including the *Los Angeles Times*, an exclusive with *Reuters*, *National Geographic*, and multiple stories in *Grist*, and *Greenrocks*. We also published an op ed in the *Sierra Nevada Ally*.



## Creating a Circular Economy

**Demanding Ethical Mineral Extraction:** We're working with electric vehicle (EV) makers including BMW, Daimler-AG, and Tesla, and the industry group Drive Sustainability, on responsible minerals sourcing. Several EV companies joined the Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA), which advocates for high industry standards for the environment, labor, and human rights.

**End-of-Life Recycling and Reuse:** President Biden's executive order calls for a circular minerals economy, so we can rely less on extraction and more on recycling of existing minerals. We will make sure this vision becomes a reality and not an empty promise.

**Groundbreaking Research:** An April 2021 report prepared for Earthworks by the Institute for Sustainable Futures at University of Technology Sydney shows that there is potential for recycling to offset demand for newly mined metals for electric vehicle batteries. **Effectively recycling end-of-life batteries could reduce global EV mineral demand 55% for newly mined copper, 25% for lithium and 35% for cobalt and nickel by 2040.**

## Progress in Reforming Mining

Our report, *Just Minerals*, informed the Biden administration's executive order on resilient supply chains. The executive order calls for most of the reforms that Earthworks has been advocating, including 1872 Mining Law reform, regulatory policy changes, a focus on recycling and a circular economy, and more responsible mining options.

This July, our authoritative research was front and center for a House subcommittee hearing on reforming the law. We assisted committee staff, prepared witnesses, and provided information to Representative Alan Lowenthal (D-CA).

## Communities Win Against Irresponsible Mines

- ▶ **Alaska** — The EPA announced they will pursue permanent protections for Bristol Bay from harmful mining. We are still in the fight against Northern Dynasty's Pebble Mine and will continue to advocate until permanent protections are finalized.
- ▶ **Montana** — A federal district court ruled in our favor on our Endangered Species Act challenge against the proposed Rock Creek Mine. On the Montanore mine, the Montana Supreme Court ruled in our favor. These wins help protect the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness.
- ▶ **Idaho** — The U.S. Forest Service will conduct further review of the proposed Stibnite open-pit cyanide leach gold mine in the headwaters of the Salmon River.

Thank you! Your support keeps us going!

**SUSTAINABILITY CIRCLE** — Give monthly.

**DEFENDER CIRCLE** — Give \$1,000 or more annually.

**LEGACY CIRCLE** — Give through your estate plans or life insurance policy.

**OTHER WAYS TO GIVE** — Learn about giving through stocks, bonds, mutual funds, or qualified charitable distributions from your IRA.

Contact Ann Corbett at 202-887-1872 x106 or [acorbett@earthworks.org](mailto:acorbett@earthworks.org).

[earthworks.org/donate](https://earthworks.org/donate)



EARTHWORKS

1612 K Street NW, Suite 904 • Washington, D.C. 20006  
202.887.1872 • [info@earthworks.org](mailto:info@earthworks.org) • [earthworks.org](https://earthworks.org)  
EIN/Tax ID #52-1557765 • Combined Federal Campaign #41290

