



Inactive Oil Well Engagement: What We Gathered



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Objective

In January 2023, Argyle Communications Inc. (Argyle) was contracted to identify and engage the rightsholders and stakeholders most highly impacted by inactive wells in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, yet who were underrepresented among public records on the subject. Supporting tactics employed to fulfill this objective included:

- A **comparative analysis** of existing rightsholder and stakeholders against individuals and groups quoted or referenced publicly. The analysis was done through traditional and digital media coverage, and public records including but not limited to meeting records and annual reports.
- A **series of capsule interviews** with a sample of rightsholders and stakeholders disproportionately underrepresented among media and public record content which sought to understand (1) the experiences of the impact of inactive wells, and (2) perspectives on opportunities and solutions to address inactive wells.

Scope

The geographic scope area of the study includes Alberta, British Columbia (with most inactive well activity limited to the northeast corner of the provinces) and Saskatchewan (with clusters of well activity in the southwest and southeast corners of the province). Researchers also took care to define search terms appropriately. When referring to inactive wells, the term inactive is often used interchangeably with “orphaned” and “abandoned.” There are, however, differences in what each term refers to depending on the jurisdiction. Below are some general distinctions:

- **inactive:** An inactive well is one suspended and not producing oil, but the operator intends to resume production in the future. In Western Canada, inactive wells must be properly maintained and secured;
- **orphaned:** An orphaned well has been abandoned by its operator and has no owner responsible for its maintenance, remediation, and reclamation;
- **abandoned:** An abandoned well is permanently closed and is no longer producing. The well must be properly plugged and sealed. In Western Canada, abandoned wells are typically the responsibility of the well operator and must be properly abandoned and reclaimed according to provincial regulations.

Thus, not all *inactive* wells are *orphaned*. But all *inactive, orphaned wells* must eventually be properly *abandoned* (i.e., decommissioned) and reclaimed. These are the working definitions applied to the search terms in this report.

Primary stakeholder and rightsholder groups

Stakeholder or rightsholder Group	Area(s) of interest or impact
<p>Farmers and landowners</p>	<p>Farmers and landowners face risks of contaminated land, air, and water, which can lead to environmental damage, such as biodiversity loss and altered soil chemistry.</p> <p>They also experience direct economic losses, including decreased property values, reduced crop yields, and the potential for liability claims.</p>
<p>Local municipalities</p>	<p>Local economies are impacted by the presence of inactive wells in a variety of ways. This can include decreased demand for goods and services, economic downturns caused by financial loss, unemployment, reduced property values, and the potential for litigation.</p> <p>Local municipalities are threatened by the release of hazardous substances, such as volatile organic compounds and hazardous air pollutants, which can degrade local air quality. This can lead to an increase in ozone concentrations and the potential for adverse health effects among community members.</p>
<p>Indigenous communities</p>	<p>Indigenous communities are often the most adversely impacted by the presence of inactive wells, as their land is often disproportionately affected by the extraction and transportation of oil and gas.</p> <p>In addition to exposure to health risks, community access to land and wildlife is threatened because of inactive wells and their contributions to biodiversity loss, altered habitats, and decreased populations of certain species.</p>

Comparative analysis

The Argyle research team proceeded to identify and assess the frequency of public expressions of impact by or on behalf of each stakeholder and rightsholder group through a traditional and social media scan, and public record scan.

Methodology

For those communities proximal to highly dense well site activity, the research team examined public documentation related to the issue of inactive and orphaned wells. Research materials considered as public documentation included:

- rural municipality meeting minutes, including Rural Municipalities of Alberta convention notes,
- band council meeting minutes,
- tribal council meeting minutes,
- provincial regulatory hearing minutes (e.g., the Alberta Energy Regulator, the British Columbia Energy Regulator, the British Columbia Oil and Gas Commission),
- Orphan Wells Association annual reports and press releases,
- provincial surface rights boards meeting minutes and annual reports, and
- land and property rights' tribunal records.

From in-depth, desktop research including public meeting records of First Nations governments (i.e., Chief and Councilors) and municipal or town council meeting minutes where inactive and orphan wells were referenced (see **Appendix I**), researchers scanned and documented Indigenous communities and municipalities where inactive well operations are particularly high (see **Appendix II** for the List of Tribal Councils researched).

Document types evaluated included:

- governance and board meeting minutes,
- community newsletters and updates,
- annual reports,
- official position statements,
- vision and strategy statements and,
- any information related to land resource management available on the official websites.

Public information findings from Indigenous and First Nations records: There is a distinct lack of Indigenous voices in the dialogue on inactive, orphaned oil and gas wells in all three provinces. Although minimal, Alberta's First Nation groups seemed to be the most publicly involved in wellsite reclamation and oil well clean-up efforts. For instance, the Siksika Nation of the Blackfoot Confederacy in April of 2022 hosted the Wellsite Abandonment & Reclamation Training Program¹ provided by the National Energy Business Centre of Excellence and the Indian Resource Council. This program helped train individuals who want to be employed through the site reclamation program to work on abandoned well-sites. They also host Land Use Community Sessions within the nation, and in a meeting with

¹ Siksika Nation Tribal Administration. (2022, April 6). *Wellsite Abandonment & Reclamation Training Program – Siksika Nation*. Siksika Nation. <https://siksikanation.com/wellsite-abandonment-reclamation-training-program-siksika-nation/>

Government of Alberta Officials in October of 2021² one of the discussed priorities was “*more environmental protection practices of natural areas are needed within the territory and on-reserve lands.*”

Likewise, the Woodland Cree FN (First Nation) 474 of the Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council have a Developing Nation plan for Site Rehabilitation Program Funding work³ “*which is a site rehabilitation program for abandoned wells in the area and identifying which wells we want reclamation work completed on,*” as indicated in their October 2021 Newsletter. The Whitefish Lake First Nation of the Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council also identified orphan wells and other inactive sites as a concern in its submission⁴ to the National Energy Board Trans-Mountain Expansion Reconsideration Hearing in 2018.

The Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation of the Yellowhead Tribal Development Foundation in their 2020 leadership report⁵ to members, identified Backwoods Energy Services Inc. “*as the leading Indigenous contractor in the billion-dollar Site Rehabilitation program wherein BW will be working on reclamation and remediation of suspended and [orphaned] wells throughout the province.*”

British Columbia and Saskatchewan have almost no information on the official positions or opinions of First Nations regarding orphan wells. The land-use and resource management issues in British Columbia are primarily related to fisheries and oceans, and pipelines, while in Saskatchewan they are primarily related to forestry and farming. The Ulkatcho First Nation of the Carrier Chilcotin Tribal Council of British Columbia did undertake a Spatial Mapping Project to have a digital mapping system for lands, resources, and civic planning to identify where all the wells, lines, valves etc. are located on their territory according to their 2019 Community Report⁶.

Nearly all Tribal Councils or representative First Nation groups, however, have a contact, committee or department dedicated to land use and resource management. Many also have in place official legislation or agreements regarding environmental protection and stewardship.

These findings suggest that while First Nations groups may not be very vocal publicly, they are likely involved in inactive, orphaned well reclamation work within their own communities in some capacity, particularly in Alberta. These results yielded outreach recommendations for targeted interviews with Indigenous communities, particularly in northeast British Columbia.

² Chief Ouray Crowfoot, N. (2021, October 14). *Siksika Nation Chief and Council Community Update: October 2021*. Office of Chief and Council Government of Siksika Nation. <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://siksikanation.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/SNCC-Update-Oct-2021.pdf>

³ Woodland Cree First Nation. (2021, October). *October Newsletter*. Woodland Cree First Nation. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.woodlandcree.net/files/ugd/0911dc_1e084c1419e74f96ac6e5c32111acf7e.pdf

⁴ Whitefish Lake First Nation 459. (2018, December 5). *Submission of the Whitefish Lake First Nation to the National Energy Board Trans-Mountain Expansion Reconsideration Hearing*.

⁵ Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation. (2020, September 23). *Leadership Report to the Membership*. Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.ansn.ca/images/ANSN_Leadership_Report_2nd_Quarter_Band_Meeting_September_23_2020.pdf

⁶ Ulkatcho First Nation. (2019, June 22). *Community Report – June 22, 2019 Unity In The Community*. Ulkatcho First Nation. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.ulkatcho.ca/docs/community_report_%E2%80%93_june_22_2019.pdf

Additionally, researchers also conducted an earned media scan of inactive and orphaned wells by influential voices that produced recommendations for targeted interviews with landowners and industry stakeholders.

Social and traditional media scan

Methodology

Researchers undertook a thorough scan of digital and print media landscape and conducted an analysis that would determine the next steps for the engagement portion of the project (i.e., interviews and capsule studies.) The timeframe considered for the analysis was from November 2021 through to February 2023 (i.e., 15 months).

The first objective was to identify the key stakeholders and rightsholders surrounding these inactive wells, as well as become knowledgeable about their perceptions of the issue. The Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) and British Columbia Energy Regulator provide public access via their respective websites to geographic information systems mapping of inactive and orphaned wells within their provinces. The Ministry of Energy and Resources, Government of Saskatchewan does not provide public access to its mapped inventory of sites. Available mapping informed which communities were geographically located near inactive and abandoned wells. This allowed the team to geotarget its engagement efforts to communities within 20km, and then 50km of inactive and/or orphaned well sites in British Columbia and Alberta.

Researchers ensured not to repeat what had already been publicly stated. By building on preliminary research, they identified locally relevant concerns and issues that need to be explored in more depth. From there, the team determined where there were gaps in public discourse related to inactive and orphaned wells, while focusing on the rightsholders and stakeholders of particular interest (i.e., First Nations communities, municipalities, and landowner advocates).

Dominant Voices

- Landowners and Farmers
- Surface Rights Advocates
- Indian Resource Council
- Rural Municipalities in Alberta
- Subject Matter Experts
- Provincial Politicians

Underrepresented Voices

- First Nations communities in British Columbia
- First Nations communities in Saskatchewan
- Urban Municipalities in Saskatchewan
- Former Oil & Gas Workers
- Youth (i.e., younger generations)

Social and traditional media sources

Methodology

Researchers reviewed the social and traditional media landscape surrounding orphan well remediation from November 2021 to February 2023. The team investigated:

- **social and traditional activity:** an overview detailing the key drivers of the activity and themes on both social and traditional media as it relates to the situation of inactive and orphan wells in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan;
- **social perspectives analysis:** Social analysis of key individuals / groups discussing the topic online in B.C., Alberta, and Saskatchewan, their perspectives / concerns, possible solutions, and affiliations; and,
- **media perspectives analysis:** analysis of key individuals representing the subject in traditional media, their perspectives/concerns, possible solutions, affiliations.

Meltwater, a social listening and media monitoring tool, and Google Trends were used to support this research. When researching social perspectives, the team focused on users with high follower counts and users that garnered high levels of engagement on their Tweet when discussing the topic of inactive orphaned wells. To understand traditional media's perspectives on the topic, researchers looked to mainstream media across Canada.

It should be noted that there are gaps in the perspectives heard researchers found, particularly from younger generations, oil and gas workers and local community members.

Traditional media activity

Over the last 15 months (Nov 2021 – Feb 2022), there were 3,445 print / online news mentions of orphan wells as it relates to the situation in Western Canada. More than 40% of this activity was driven by outlets in the United States reporting on stock related news for energy companies who mention environment goals relating to orphan wells. The other 60% of the media activity is occurring in Canada with much of it focused on political and economic factors relating to the clean-up of inactive and orphan wells.

Additionally, researchers reviewed voices present in media during key announcements relating to the topic before November 2021, such as the:

- Supreme Court Redwater Energy Decision (2019),
- Auditor General Report – British Columbia Oil and Gas Commission's Management of Non-Operating Oil and Gas Sites (2019) and,
- 1.7B of federal funds promised to clean up orphan wells in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan (April 2020) followed by the \$100M promised to First Nations in Alberta (2020).

Mainstream media across Canada shared a relatively balanced overview of the situation in their reports, but at times skewed negatively towards the industry or government (depending on the outlet). For the most part, statements featured in stories are from leaders in the federal, provincial, or municipal levels

of government, First Nations leaders, subject matter experts, researchers in energy and environment, community members, and landowners or farmers affected.

Social media activity

There were 3,736 Twitter mentions of inactive and orphan wells as it relates to the situation in Western Canada. The discussion was almost fully driven by users in Canada. Albertans appear to be driving Twitter activity with three out of the top five cities discussing inactive wells being within Alberta. Additionally, the word “Alberta” or names of Albertan political leaders were referenced in nearly a third of the discussion.

Much of the conversation is political in nature, meaning discussions are focused on the performance (or lack thereof) of provincial or federal parties and their leaders as it relates to efforts around clean-up for inactive and orphan wells. This is at times being driven by opposition parties or leaders at all levels of government.

Funding announcements and new policies targeted at energy companies for inactive and orphan well clean-up garnered the most engagement. Users were quick to react with likes, shares, retweets, and comments of support in response to these media reports.

Additional statistical insights are as follows:

- more than 11% of tweets included the term “money,”
- more than 50% of Twitter users discussing the topic are over the age of 55,
- more than 25% of Twitter users are professors, researchers, and subject-matter experts, and,
- 25% of users are journalists, reporters, and media outlets.

Traditional and social media activity related to well remediation announcements

Key announcements related to well remediation created spikes in traditional and social media activity. The top 11 social media moments are listed below:

- **The AER announces new regulations** to push industry to clean up sites sooner and ensure the cleanup costs and responsibilities for inactive wells “rests on the shoulders of industry, where it should be” said AER president Laurie Pushor. Twitter activity was driven by media outlets and users re-sharing the news with support and excitement.
- **A report from the Parliamentary Budgetary Officer estimates it will take \$1.1B by 2025 to clean up orphan wells** in Alberta and Saskatchewan. A Twitter thread⁷ from Globe and Mail energy writer, Emma Graney, drove a lot of activity on this day as well as a thread⁸ from AB Senator Paula Simons - both concerning the report’s details.
- **Alberta Sen. Paula Simons is informed by the parliamentary budget analyst that no orphans wells in AB were cleaned with the grant money** given to large energy companies. This greatly

⁷ Graney, E. [EmmalGraney]. (2022, January 25). *Interesting new report from Ottawa this morning on the cost of cleaning up orphan wells* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/EmmalGraney/status/1485977302445948929>

⁸ Simons, P. [Paulatics]. (2022, January 25). *The report finds that about half of all the federal orphan well funds that went to Alberta went to just 10 companies* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/Paulatics/status/1485980796103974914>

upset users, especially after the media reported on skepticism towards the funds earlier in the year and these beliefs were pushed aside. General support for the Senator who pushed for this information contributed to the increased level of activity on this day.

- **Crescent Point Energy Corp. announces its operating and financial results for 2021 and highlights they are on track to meet targets for inactive wells.** Their press release was syndicated more than 230 times.
- **Ottawa's auditor general gives qualified approval of how Alberta spent oil well cleanup money through the Site Rehabilitation Program.** In response, Twitter users express their disappointment and criticism.
- **Energy companies announce 1st quarter operating and financial results.** The respective reports highlight work targets for inactive wells.
- **Crescent Point Energy announces sale of some of its core assets and claims it is on track to reduce its inactive well count by 30% by 2031.** The company's press release was syndicated more than 300 times.
- On Twitter, **Gerald Butts, Vice Chair of Eurasia Group and Director of World Wildlife, questions the industry's efforts for orphan well clean up** along with carbon capture, utilization and storage. He responded to Canada's environment minister saying the federal government could give oil and gas companies extra time to fully meet 2030 emissions reduction targets. This Tweet garnered more than 100 retweets including one from former Climate Minister Catherine McKenna.
- **Crescent Point announces Q3 2022 results and 2023 budget.** They reference commitments to clean up orphan wells.
- **Reports of concerns from Albertans regarding long-term implications of the renewable energy boom.** Outlets across Canada amplified this story including the Globe and Mail, National Post, and CityNews.
- **In response to Alberta Minister Brian Jean saying Prime Minister Trudeau is destroying the lives of Albertans, Max Fawcett opposes this idea and highlights the money spent on energy projects like the orphan well bailout.** The tweet⁹ from Max Fawcett, lead columnist for Canada's National Observer, garnered more than 300 retweets.

Traditional media findings

Researchers reviewed responses to the aforementioned orphan well announcements from local, provincial and federal leaders, First Nations leaders, subject matter experts, energy and environment researchers, community members, landowners and farmers. The profiles, perspectives, and quotes of 15 key leaders are highlighted below.

⁹ Fawcett, M. [maxfawcett]. (2023, February 6). *For the love of all that's holy, can we stop with this nonsense about him trying to "destroy their livelihoods"?* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/maxfawcett/status/1622696274431733760>



Name: Regan Boychuk

Affiliation(s): Cofounder and researcher at Reclaim Alberta, Alberta Liability Disclosure Project, ARO Working Group, Polluter Pay Federation and most recently Green Party Banff-Kananaskis candidate for May 2023.

Perspectives: In response to the \$1B orphan well cleanup bill estimate released in 2022, Boychuk said it left out the most expensive parts including the clean up of pipelines or other energy infrastructure on the land like oilsands. He said the report's focus on orphan wells is misleading and unreliable. In response to the Liability Management Incentive Program (previously known as Rstar), he said that, in addition to transferring wealth to companies that don't need it, RStar would use a taxpayer-owned resource to bail out hundreds of Alberta companies that have run their wells dry without cleaning them up.¹⁰



Name: Andrew Leach

Affiliation(s): University of Alberta Energy Economist

Perspectives: Strongly against RStar, saying that beyond undermining the polluter-pays principle, it's contradictory as it would subsidize work that almost all companies do anyway as a legal condition of their drilling license. He has told media that companies able to take advantage of this aren't the ones they are worried about, as these companies aren't distressed. Andrew believes a better solution would be to put the cash into the Orphan Well Association (which takes ownership of orphan wells without an owner).^{11,12,13}

¹⁰ Weber, B. (2022, Jan 25). \$1B orphaned oil and gas well cleanup bill estimate leaves out 'most expensive part,' critics say. CBC News. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/orphaned-wells-liability-alberta-1.6326942?_vfz=medium%3Dsharebar

¹¹ Weber, B. (2022, October 31). Critics warn proposed Alberta well cleanup plan a royalty giveaway: 'Money for free'. The Canadian Press. <https://globalnews.ca/news/9240132/critics-alberta-well-cleanup-royalty/>

¹² Leach, A. [andrew_leach]. (2022, October 30). *AB has a big orphan and potential orphan well problem in the oil patch* [Tweet]. Twitter https://twitter.com/andrew_leach/status/1586750315969523712

¹³ Leach, A. [andrew_leach]. (2020, January 23). *This is the piece a lot of people miss about orphan and abandoned wells. It's not just gov't vs industry* [Picture] [Tweet]. Twitter https://twitter.com/andrew_leach/status/1220392723221381120



Name: Paul McLauchlin

Affiliation(s): President of the Rural Municipalities of Alberta

Perspectives: McLauchlin believes Albertans deserve a direct say on Rstar. He says,

“If you’re dealing with future royalties, you should actually make that an election (or) referendum conversation”.

“(If) you’re taking your great-great grandchildren, your grandchildren’s future payments and you’re using them now to promote reclamation, that’s a big discussion all Albertans need to have.”¹⁴



Name: Lenore Newman

Affiliation(s): Canada Research Chair in Food Security, Director of the Food and Agriculture at University of the Fraser Valley

Perspectives: Newman tells the media that farmers in the Northern B.C. area are increasingly concerned about the impacts of the oil and gas industry. She says while farmers weren't opposed to development, they were worried about the scale and speed they were seeing over the past decade. Lenore believes the increasing number of orphan wells highlights regulatory gaps that put British Columbia farmland at risk:

“The weakness of the current system is that the OGC has been handed a blank cheque to develop their industry as rapidly as possible. They don’t have the knowledge or the manpower in-house to adequately address the long-term impact on farmland.”

^{15,16}

¹⁴ Bennet, D. (2022, November 10). *“How a Fox would design a henhouse’: Alberta rural leaders on oil well cleanup plan.”* Toronto Star. <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2022/11/10/how-a-fox-would-design-a-henhouse-alberta-rural-leaders-on-oil-well-cleanup-plan.html>

¹⁵ Kurjta, A. (2019, March 14). *Oil and gas cleanup costs in B.C. are \$3B and rising, auditor general finds.* CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/orphan-wells-british-columbia-oil-gas-auditor-general-1.5056633>

¹⁶ McIntosh, J. (2019, January 5). *Orphan oil and gas wells raise contamination fears on northeast B.C. farmland.* The Globe and Mail. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/british-columbia/article-orphan-oil-and-gas-wells-raise-contamination-fears-on-northeast-bc/>



Name: Sen. Paula Simons

Affiliation(s): Independent Senators Group

Perspectives: Sen. Simons is concerned that the funds directed towards orphan well cleanups have not been adequately implemented. She notes that over half a billion dollars have been contributed towards cleanups, but not a single well has been removed in the 2 years since funding began. She has also voiced concerns about how the majority of funds have been provided to fossil fuel companies, yet they have done nothing and still receive funding. She believes there needs to be more oversight along with an investigation into the distribution of funds.¹⁷



Name: Chief Greg Desjarlais

Affiliation(s): Chief of Frog Lake First Nation, Alberta

Note: Of the 2,600+ orphan wells in B.C., 2,000 are on First Nation land, and 400 of which are on the Frog Lake First Nation.

Perspectives: In response to \$100 million cleanup funding in Feb 2021 going towards sites on First Nations and Métis Settlements, Chief shared hope for the future:

“Many oil companies swept through our First Nations and became profitable. We’re hopeful one day again we can gather medicines, and have our children ride through these fields on their ponies.”

The Chief has shared perspectives on how many First Nations have been accustomed to a like of *“oil and gas, of land disturbance, of revenue sharing, and becoming millionaires overnight, at one time, eight years ago.”*^{18,19}

¹⁷ Kanygin, J. (2022, February 22). 'What exactly did we get?' Alberta senator questions hundreds of millions to clean up orphan wells. CTV News. <https://calgary.ctvnews.ca/what-exactly-did-we-get-alberta-senator-questions-hundreds-of-millions-to-clean-up-orphan-wells-1.5792062>

¹⁸ Johnson, L. (2021, February 12). Alberta rolling out next rounds of funding under federal oil and gas well site cleanup program. Edmonton Journal. <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/savage-and-oregan-to-announce-new-cash-for-oil-well-site-cleanup-this-afternoon>

¹⁹ CBC News. (2021, October 2). Doc shines light on dark side of Alberta oil & gas: orphan wells. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/orphaned-documentary-gillian-mckercher-1.6197530>



Name: Keith Hirsche

Affiliation(s): President of RenuWell Energy Solutions which aims to transform and repurpose inactive oil and gas well sites into solar energy sites.

Perspectives: Keith believes we should focus efforts on re-using disturbed land for energy generation, rather than disturb additional land that is productive in other capacities.²⁰



Name: Luisa DaSilva

Affiliation(s): Leads Iron+ Earth, an organization founded in Fort McMurray by unemployed and underemployed oil workers who “took it upon themselves to figure out how to upgrade and diversify their skills.”

Perspectives: When asked by media what people on the ground who are going through energy transitions are saying in places like Fort McMurray and Taber, she said they are listening to politicians and it’s all quite confusing with governments acting at “cross-purposes” (i.e., Alberta government vs. federal).²¹



Name: Stephen Buffalo

Affiliation(s): President and Chief Executive Officer of the Indian Resource Council of Canada (represents more than 100 First Nations with oil and gas reserves)

²⁰ Penalzo, D. (2022, July 4). *Solar project repurposing abandoned oil and gas wells launches pilot in sunny Alberta town.* Canada’s National Observer. <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2022/07/04/news/solar-project-repurposing-abandoned-oil-and-gas-wells-sunny-alberta>

²¹ Kennedy-Glans, D. (2023, Jan 29). *Dishing with DKG: Never mind Justin Trudeau, this oilpatch woman's getting the job done.* <https://nationalpost.com/news/oilpatch-woman-gets-just-transition-job-done>



Name: Billy Morin

Affiliation(s): Grand Chief of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations and Chief of Enoch Cree Nation



Name: Chief Roy Fox

Affiliation(s): Blood Tribe in southwest Alberta

Perspectives: Mr. Buffalo and Chiefs Morin and Fox perceived the government of Canada's 2019 \$1.5B of clean up funding as a missed opportunity to allocate funds directly to Indigenous communities to lead their own clean up efforts. After months of advocacy, the government of Alberta responded with a commitment to set aside a total of \$100 million for the dedicated clean up of wells on First Nation and Metis lands.

"It was really gratifying...it sure took some time, but we just kept giving them a reason not to say no. To me, it just made a lot of sense."²²



Name: Tony Bruder

Affiliation(s): Rancher with wells on his property; municipal council member of the District of Pincher Creek No. 9, Alberta

Perspectives: Tony is supportive of federal funds for cleanup but is critical of what has gone on for it to get to that point and blames mismanagement by government for allowing this to happen by not ensuring proper bylaws and rules.

"It's really sad that they've let the companies get off scot-free that actually own the wells and did the drilling. But the fact that

²² Bakx, K. (2020, November 27). Indigenous communities secure \$100M to clean up oil and gas wells. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/irc-savage-alberta-1.5818506>

they're actually putting some money into getting them cleaned up is a good thing.”²³

Name: Scott Owens

Affiliation(s): Vice President of Broder the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan; Farms near Maidstone, Saskatchewan

Perspectives: Scott is supportive of reclamation work being done, as well as the jobs the program has created, but would rather see companies, not governments, sponsor orphan well cleanup.

“Why are we putting public funds to help them basically put back what they’ve built? To me, that seems like a misallocation of public money. I understand why the federal government put money towards it, and I’m glad to see that it got the ball rolling, but I think at some point, this should be the responsibility of the oil companies.”²⁴



Name: Daryl Bennett

Affiliation(s): Farmer and the director of the Action Surface Rights Association

Perspectives: Daryl is focused on leaving a positive legacy. He has spent years attempting to assure he and his neighbours are fairly compensated by the companies that drill wells on their land. He believes many companies have learned to “game the system” and take advantage of it.

In opposition to Rstar he says *“They’re just abusing the system to cut payments to landowners and kick the can down the road for years”²⁵*

²³ Anderson, D. (2020, April 17). *\$1.7B to clean up orphaned and abandoned wells could create thousands of jobs*. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/federal-oil-and-gas-orphan-wells-program-1.5535943>

²⁴ Simes, J. (2022, August 26). *‘Certainly helped’: \$380M doled out to clean inactive Sask. oil wells*. Regina Leader-Post. <https://leaderpost.com/business/energy/certainly-helped-380m-doled-out-to-clean-abandoned-sask-oil-wells>

²⁵ Riley, S.J. (2020, May 22). *Alberta picked up \$8 million tab for land rent left unpaid by oil and gas companies in 2019*. The Narwhal. <https://thenarwhal.ca/alberta-8-million-tab-land-rent-left-unpaid-oil-gas-companies-2019/>



Name: Ronald Huvenaars

Affiliation(s): Farmer and Chairman of Action Surface Rights

Perspectives: Ronald is worried that companies in Alberta aren't taking into account the costs they'll have to pay to clean up wells when they reach the end of their productive life.²⁶



Name: Gillian McKercher

Affiliation(s): Documentary Filmmaker of [Orphaned](#)

Perspectives: Gillian McKercher, a geologist who has worked in Alberta's oil and gas industry since the late 1980s, created a documentary about the issue of orphan wells, during which she visits Frog Lake First Nation. She joined the Alberta Advantage podcast and discussed the stability and wealth that has been provided to the community, and many communities, at the cost of damage to their land. She also speaks of the tension that arises from an inability to choose between methods of generating economic prosperity. She shared various possible solutions regarding inactive wells:



- Stop drilling any more wells at the current estimated cleanup costs.
- Stop companies from putting off costs of cleanup until the end.
- She dislikes the idea of making companies spend part of profit on clean up citing
- Establish a system that's not sensitive to the price of oil, so if prices crash, rules remain in place.

McKercher believes *“there is going to be a lot of work which will take a lot of engagement, and a lot of knowledge from the oil and gas sector to do the cleanup properly.”*

“I hope I can engage in a way that is approachable for people who already have their opinion of the oil and gas industry. I'm hoping

²⁶ Riley, S.J. (2018, November 2). *The story of Alberta's \$100-billion well liability problem. How did we get here?*. The Narwhal. <https://thenarwhal.ca/the-story-of-albertas-100-billion-well-liability-problem-how-did-we-get-here/>

I can show them how it's complicated and not just as simple as 'I hate them and want them to go away.'

Social Media Findings

Possible solutions for inactive and orphan well abandonment and reclamation are not a key focus in social media and users often appear more frustrated with political leaders or parties than with the issue itself.

Social discussions appear to be motivated by politics rather than genuine care for the environment, land and people affected. While positive social media discussions occurred in response to government funding announcements, Twitter threads were often tied in with criticism towards current or past governments and their leaders. There were some instances of divides between provinces, with British Columbia and Saskatchewan users blaming Albertans.

Some individuals expressed belief that federal taxpayers should not be impacted by clean-up efforts in Alberta, for example, saying, *"they did this to themselves; let them pay for it."* Some people are excited about opportunities for solar and wind infrastructure on inactive oil sites. However, more recently, Albertans expressed concerns over this trend and compare it to the orphan well issue, where renewable infrastructure requires reclamation yet the site is orphaned. There is ample opportunity to better understand these perspectives.

There is a strong belief that the cost of orphan well cleanup should be put on the companies behind the drilling in what is known as the Polluter Pay Principle. Some express this belief with criticism towards government for their role in allowing the issue to occur in the first place through the lack of rules, regulation and enforcement or accountability. Notably, the topic's complexities are not showing up in these discussions in meaningful or in-depth ways.

Some landowners and community members feel like they have been taken advantage of. Despite this, there is hope that government and industry can work together with communities to fix past mistakes. Additionally, community members and landowners have expressed general concerns about the money needed based on the estimates, as well as the labour force needed to do reclamation work.

The perspectives shared on the following slides represent individuals who discussed orphan wells over the past 15 months in relation to cleanup in Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan. The following sample set of users was based on users who garnered high levels of engagement.

Note: Some users are featured earlier in the media perspectives analysis who are also active on social media. These users are not duplicated between sections.



Name: Mark Dorin

Affiliation(s): For several years, a well was leaking gas into the air on his family's land near Didsbury, Calgary. His mother, Shirley, said it impacted her health after years in their yard. He is now the Vice Chair for the Polluter Pay Federation.

Perspectives: As Vice Chair of the Polluter Pay Federation, he believes not only that the oil and gas companies must be held accountable, but also the regulatory bodies that allowed this problem to grow should be held responsible. He believes these wells pose a serious threat to public safety, and that landowners should be compensated for the damage that has been caused.

On Twitter in April 2022, he questioned whether more government officials whistle blowing would do anything and was skeptical towards the AER.

"Current and former AER staff who have contacted me are afraid to do so."^{27,28}



Name: Gil McGowan

Affiliation(s): President of the Alberta Federation of Labour, President; Former NDP candidate

Perspectives: In support of Sen. Paula Simons questions and concerns regarding details from the PBO in Feb 2022. McGowan's tweet notes that although Alberta dedicated \$500 million to cleaning orphan wells, the money instead fell to "large, profitable companies."²⁹

At a conference in June 2022, McGowan said: *"We need a plan for economic transformation and the money and the political will to back it up. That doesn't mean shutting down our oil and gas sector, but*

²⁷ Bakx, K. (2019, April 8). *Old, unproductive oil and gas wells could cost up to \$70B to clean up, says new report.* CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/orphan-wells-alberta-aldp-aer-1.5089254>

²⁸ Dorin, M. [mark_dorin]. (2022, April 1). *Orphan / inactive well / lack of liability management / poor public safety / inadequate landowner compensation / deadbeat companies who refuse to pay municipal tax* [Tweet]. Twitter https://twitter.com/mark_dorin/status/1509880695639842818 - Low engagement and no comments from any high-authority users.

²⁹ McGowan, G. [gilmcgowan]. (2022, February 21). *Ottawa handed out \$500 million to clean up orphan oil and gas wells in Alberta* [Tweet]. Twitter <https://twitter.com/gilmcgowan/status/1495911967218880512> - Given McGowan's reach and stature, his tweet received high levels of engagement, with many replies from Conservative leading users pushing back against his stance.

it does mean helping them pivot, and decarbonize so that they can remain competitive and viable for as long as possible,”³⁰



Name: Jeff Walters

Affiliation(s): Leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party

Perspectives: In response to the province of Saskatchewan boosting cannabis retailers' fees, Walters criticized the conservatives and called out Premier Scott More specifically for “*reducing orphan well levies by 75% for the Oil/Gas sector*” but are raising fees for small businesses (i.e., cannabis retailers).³¹



Name: Eric Denhoff

Affiliation(s): Former Deputy Minister and chief negotiator in Alberta’s and BC’s public sectors in environment, climate change and aboriginal affairs

Perspectives: In response to a media report of big oil paying out years of dividends in a single day during COVID, he tweeted: “*Why dont we get them to pay out years of environmental bonds for the orphan well cleanups & future oil sands etc clean ups? Ottawa, pass a windfall oil tax now! 25% of profits!*”³²



Name: Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA)

Affiliation(s): Advocates to the provincial government on behalf of the municipalities

Perspectives: In April 2022, SUMA called on the Government of Saskatchewan to take immediate action to more frequently and fully

³⁰ Johnson, L. (2022, June 24). *O'Regan stops in Edmonton to tout talks with unions over federal green transition plans*. Edmonton Journal. <https://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/oregan-stops-in-edmonton-to-tout-talks-with-unions-over-federal-green-transition-plans>

³¹ Walters, J. [JeffWaltersSask]. (2022, March 20). *Fearing less "PROFIT" due to COVID [Tweet]*. Twitter <https://twitter.com/JeffWaltersSask/status/1505559924746735620> - Moderate engagement. Users express support for Walters and criticism towards the Conservatives.

³² Denhoff, E. [EDenhoff]. (2022, August 6). *Why dont we get them to pay out years of environmental bonds for the orphan well cleanups & future oil sands etc clean ups? [Tweet]*. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/EDenhoff/status/1556111002164293634> - Moderate engagement.

enforce The Environmental Management and Protection Act and Regulations that requires owners of abandoned hydro-carbon sites in the province to fulfill a variety of obligations.³³



Name: Gerald Butts

Affiliation(s): Eurasia Group (Political Risk Consultancy), World Wildlife Fund

Perspectives: Butts amplified news that Environment minister Steven Guilbeault announced he would give more time to the oil and gas to meet emissions milestones set forth by the national government. He is critical towards funds being spent and appears skeptical of the results (i.e., where it's being spent and how).

Former Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Canada, Catherine McKenna, re-shared Butts' perspective on Twitter, receiving moderate engagement.^{34,35}



Name: Nagwan Al-Guneid

Affiliation(s): NDP candidate for Calgary-Glenmore, Alberta

Perspectives: Strong supporter of orphan well cleanup with indigenous involvement. On Twitter, expressed support for Iron and Earth's solar energy project on an inactive well site.³⁶

³³ SUMA. [SUMAConnect]. (2022, April 4). *Be it resolved that SUMA advocate the Government of Saskatchewan to take immediate action* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/SUMAConnect/status/1511103688366039047> - Overall engagement on the thread was low, receiving just one reply.

³⁴ Butts, G. [gmbutts]. (2022, July 23). *Reminder: Canadians have given \$10B to the oil and gas industry in the last 2 years for abandoned well clean up and CCUS* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/gmbutts/status/1550880748315500545> - Moderate engagement.

³⁵ McKenna, C. [cathmckenna]. (2022, July 23). *Fact: GHG emissions from oil & gas sector in CA have risen 20% since 2005 & now make up over 25% of Canada's total emissions* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/cathmckenna/status/1550889239369351168> - Moderate engagement.

³⁶ Al-Guneid, N. [NagwanYYC]. *This is exactly the type of future-fit activity we need to see in #Alberta* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/KCundal/status/1522317628236189698> - Little engagement, no replies.



Name: Druh Farrell

Affiliation(s): NDP candidate, Calgary-Bow

Perspectives: Believes those who profited from the wells should pay to clean them instead of passing off as a problem for the next generation to face.³⁷

Social and Traditional Media Key Takeaways

The research team collated various profiles and perspectives through the social and traditional media analysis and identified these key takeaways:

- **Possible solutions on ways forward for cleaning up is not a key focus on social and users often appear more frustrated with political leaders or parties than with the issue itself.** For the most part, social discussions appear to be motivated by politics rather than genuine care for the environment, land and people affected. While positive social media discussions occurred in response to government funding announcements, Twitter threads were often tied in with criticism towards current or past governments and their leaders.
- **There were some instances of a divide between provinces with users blaming Albertans.** Some individuals expressed belief that federal taxpayers shouldn't be impacted by clean up needed in Alberta (i.e., "they did this to themselves, let them pay to fix it").
- **People are excited about the opportunities of solar and wind on inactive oil sites.** However, most recently, Albertans are expressing concerns over this boom and comparing it to the orphan well issue. There's ample opportunity to better understand these perspectives.
- **There is a strong belief that the cost of orphan well clean up should be put on the companies behind drilling.** Some express this belief in conjunction with criticism towards government for their role in allowing the issue to occur (i.e., lack of rules, regulation or enforcement). It is notable that the complexities of the topic are not showing up in these discussions in ways that are meaningful or in depth.
- **Some landowners and community members feel like they've been taken advantage of.** Despite this, there is hope government and industry can work together with communities to

³⁷ Farrell, D. [DruhFarrell]. *Tomorrow, tomorrow, we'll clean up that orphan oil well tomorrow* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/DruhFarrell/status/1487465308273065988> - Little engagement, some replies including criticism from of knowledge towards the clean up.

fix past mistakes. Additionally, community members and landowners have expressed general concerns about the money needed based on the estimates, as well as the labour force needed to do the work.

Stakeholder and rightsholder gaps

Findings from the Public Information research indicate that while, overall, there is a dearth of records available across all three provinces, there is a lack of information and dialogue particularly amongst Indigenous communities in northeast British Columbia and southern Saskatchewan. While information is not abundant within Treaty 6, 7, and 8, either there is more involvement by First Nations in southern Alberta than in the north.

Likewise, municipalities most impacted by inactive and orphan oil wells in British Columbia and Saskatchewan are most lacking in information, conversation and / or debate, as indicated by the lack of public records.

These findings informed Argyle researchers to conduct the following Capsule Studies with the following **First Nations leaders in northern Alberta and northeast British Columbia:**

- Chief George Arcand Jr., Alexander First Nation;
- Government of West Moberly First Nations; and,
- Government of Saulteau First Nations.

The findings also informed researchers to seek targeted interviews with the following Saskatchewan **associations representing provincial municipalities:**

- Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, and,
- Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA).

Finally, findings from the Social and Traditional Media research identified the following rightsholders and stakeholders to provide further **perspectives from landowners:**

- Daryl Bennett, Farmer / Director of Action Surface Rights Association,
- Carla Davidson, Founder of Endeavour Scientific, Inc.; and,
- Gillian McKercher, Former O&G Geologist / Documentary Film Producer.

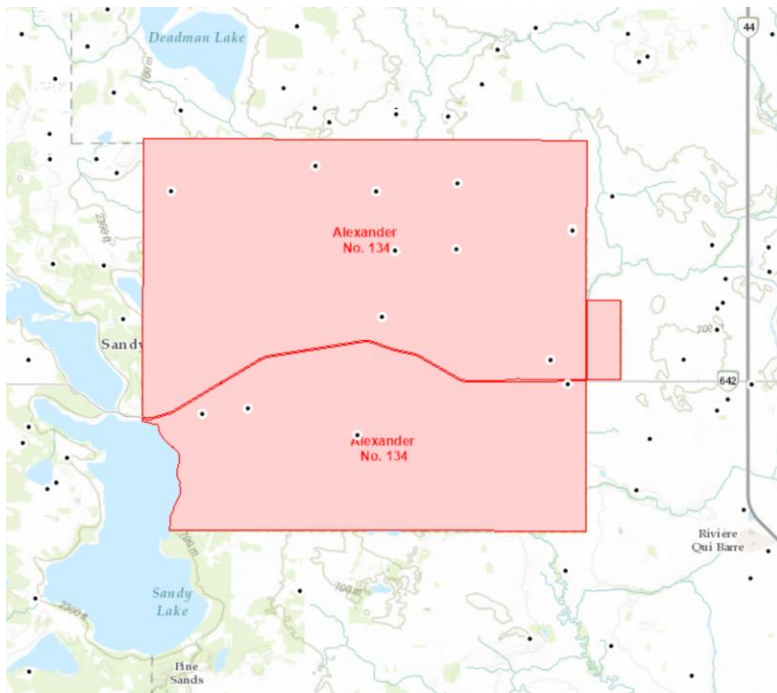
Capsule Study 1

Community: Alexander First Nation

The Alexander First Nation is located in central Alberta, northeast of Edmonton. Of the 12 inactive wells situated within Alexander's Treaty lands, only two have been remediated.

Nation Representative: Chief George Arcand Jr,

Current Chief of Alexander First Nation since 2020, George Arcand Jr. Simultaneously served as Grand Chief of the Confederacy of the Treaty Six First Nations through 2022. Prior to his election, Arcand's senior leadership roles included CEO for Fort McKay First Nation, regional director general for the federal government and community development director for the Alexander Nation in the 1980s.



On the community impacts of inactive and orphaned wells:

New Infrastructure Limitations

The lack of available housing in Alexander First Nation is a pervasive and long-standing issue that has had detrimental impacts on the community and its members. The locations of surrounding wells and their associated risks have impeded any opportunity to expand residential developments for new homes. As a result, many members are forced to live off reserve in nearby towns or cities, leaving them disconnected from their own community. Beyond the physical separation from home and family, members are also separated from their culture and sense of belonging and identity.

Reversing Stigmas

Chief Arcand believes that a solution is possible but reiterates that no matter the size and scope of remediation and reclamation that is required, if a massive clean-up does occur, a public awareness campaign will be needed to reverse the stigma reinforced by generations of warnings and transform the community perspective of “unsafe land” to “land that is safe to live on.”

Opportunities and solutions:

Economic Development

Chief Arcand acknowledges the potential for economic development opportunities presented by utilizing inactive oil and **gas wells for renewable energy sources**. With the right amount of financial and technical support, these projects can result in long-term economic growth and sustainable change for the communities, but going forward measures need to be put into place to ensure that past mistakes are not repeated. Measures such as: requiring interest-generating remediation deposits from industry players; the implementation of strategic and coordinated plans for remediation and reclamation; and formal partnerships that identify roles and responsibilities for clean-up, all need to be in place for new claims or the retrofitting of old sites for renewable energy sources.

The process of remediation and reclamation presents economic development opportunity when First Nations are appropriately engaged. Considering the well concentration scenario in his own region where the volume of wells is lower than others, Chief Arcand suggests an aggregated effort between Nations managing smaller footprints to form a joint enterprise and lead the clean up efforts.

Key Dependencies

Imperative to the success of any economic development opportunity is a coordinated discussion between industry and government-to-government partners (i.e., First Nation, federal, provincial) regarding an aggregated clean-up effort. Chief Arcand recognizes that, indeed, some larger First Nations could deal independently but most smaller communities will need partners.

Chief Arcand believes a dedicated conversation around funding is the first step. As the Indian Resource Council advocates on behalf of its membership for change to federal policy that will improve and increase economic development opportunities for First Nations and their members, the IRC is the

appropriate organization to convene this meeting. However, federal, and provincial governments must commit to funding and collaboration before any conversations are planned.

Key Findings:

1. Public Education and Awareness are critical components of remediation and reclamation; and,
2. Key rightsholder and stakeholder collaboration and coordination is key to any approach to remediation and reclamation, as are funding solutions directed from provincial and federal governments.

Capsule Study 2

Community: West Moberly First Nation

The West Moberly First Nation is a First Nation community located in northeastern British Columbia, Canada, Treaty 8 Territory. The West Moberly First Nation's traditional territory encompasses an area of approximately 14,000 square kilometres. The community's main reserve is the Moberly Lake Indian Reserve, which is located approximately 100 kilometres north of Fort St. John, British Columbia.

Chief and Council of West Moberly First Nation regard the concentration of inactive wells near their community as a significant and daily concern, noting the dangers of the wells are widely known among community members who hold particular fear of a contaminated water supply given their downstream location in relation to the wells.

Mandatory Remediation and Reclamation Deposits

Since the early 1900s construction of the Alaska Highway, followed by oil and gas development in the area, the Nation has been actively engaged in protecting and preserving its traditional territory and resources. In regard to inactive wells, the Nation has been advocating for stricter regulations on the oil and gas industry to ensure that companies are held accountable for properly decommissioning and reclaiming their wells through early remediation deposits.

In addition, the West Moberly First Nation has developed its own Oil and Gas Policy, which outlines the Nation's expectations for responsible oil and gas development on its traditional territory. The policy includes requirements for companies to properly consult and engage with the Nation, minimize environmental impacts, and provide fair compensation for any damages caused by their activities.

Nation Led Reclamation Certification

The Nation has also been working with industry and government to develop and implement remediation plans for existing inactive and orphaned wells and has voiced expectations that an impacted Nation be positioned as the final authority to assess and issue remediation or reclamation certificate through their own analysis.

Government (Chief and Council) of West Moberly First Nations

On the community impacts of inactive and orphaned wells:

Barrier to Rights and Healing

The Chief and Council indicated the presence of inactive and abandoned wells prevent members from fully exercising their Treaty rights to hunt and gather on the land. Due to the extent of environmental damage and the unknown risks of contamination from leaks that may occur, inactive and orphaned wells in and around West Moberly severely impact the community by denying rights holders the ability to practice traditional land use activities that have traditionally included hunting, fishing, and gathering of food and medicines that were once found in and on the land. These traditional land uses represent a critical pathway to reconnecting community members to their cultural and spiritual beliefs, a connection

disrupted by centuries of colonial harm and traumas. The failure to address these injustices to the land was regarded as “yet another broken promise” and barrier to the process of healing and reconciliation.

On the most realistic and practical means to inactive and orphaned well remediation around West Moberly First Nation:

While there is greater public awareness regarding the impacts of inactive and orphaned wells around the community, the debate is about *who will fund* the clean-up rather than *who will clean up*. Regardless, even when the conversation focuses on the remediation and decommissioning of inactive and orphaned wells, it never goes beyond this. Remediation is seen as the endpoint for industry when the community needs reclamation, also. Returning the land to its traditional state, complete with native plants that will bring back wildlife corridors, is an essential part of reconciliation.

An important aspect that is missing from these conversations is collaboration. Landowners argue over fault. Industry argues over expense. Governments argue over funding. The issue has grown so large, now, that we all own a part of it. What is missing from the debate is a fulsome discussion, led by First Nations, about where, how, and when sites impacting the community should be remediated and reclaimed. Well sites need to be prioritized and industry needs to work together with First Nations not just to remediate these sites but also to focus on cultural needs and environmental factors that result in the reclamation of the land.

The first step is to understand the infringement of rights by industry and the lack of accountability by Provincial and Federal governments as one more in a series of cumulative effects impacting First Nations communities such as West Moberly. Cumulative effects refer to the incremental impact that multiple stressors, such as oil and gas development, can have on the environment, human health, and cultural resources over time. In the context of the West Moberly First Nations, the cumulative effects of orphaned wells on their traditional territory are of particular concern as they infringe on the Nation's Treaty rights.

The Treaty 8 agreement, signed by the West Moberly First Nation, provides the Nation with certain rights, including the right to hunt, fish, and trap in their traditional territory. These rights are protected under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution and must be upheld by the federal and provincial governments. However, the presence of orphaned wells on the Nation's traditional territory has a cumulative effect on the land, water, and wildlife, which ultimately impacts the Nation's ability to exercise its Treaty rights. For example, if the contamination from multiple orphaned wells causes the degradation of important fish habitat, the Nation's ability to fish in that area could be severely limited.

Furthermore, the cumulative effects of orphaned wells have cultural impacts on the Nation. For example, if the contamination from multiple wells impacts the Nation's ability to access traditional gathering places or cultural resources, this harms the Nation's cultural practices and traditions. The Nation has been advocating for stricter regulations and remediation plans to address the issue of orphaned wells to minimize the cumulative effects of oil and gas so that their Treaty rights are upheld. And, while these plans are necessary, they should be led by First Nations who should collaboratively be deciding how, when, and where to remediate sites. As for reclamation, First Nations should lead these efforts, outright, to properly restore the land to its traditional state.

On who must be involved in solutions:

West Moberly recognizes there are other landowners who have inactive and orphaned wells on their properties that impact the safe usage that stewardship implies so their voices must be heard as well. In addition, oil and gas extraction are not the only industries impacting the land. Mining, rail, and hydropower all leave infrastructure on the land that impacts current and future use. All these impacts present cumulative effects. So, in a way, these stakeholders must be included in the broader conversation of remediation, reclamation, and cumulative effect.

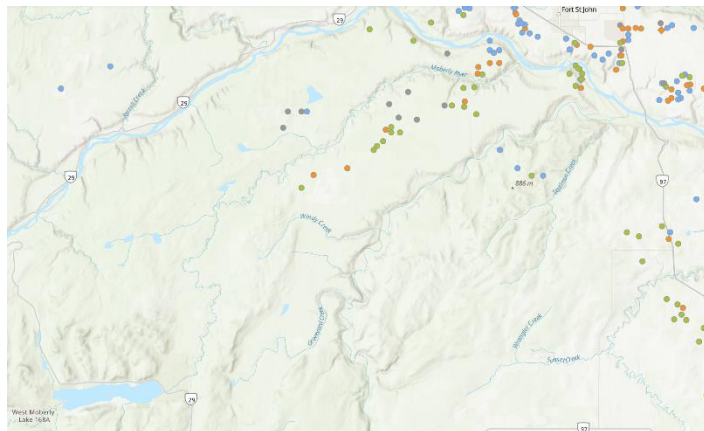
On how to be involved:

As stated, First Nations are necessary rightsholders in the conversation of remediation of inactive and orphaned wells. In a conversation about reclamation, First Nations should show collaborative leadership, promote capacity, and demonstrate expertise in returning the land to its natural state. Regarding the past, and whether bonding future projects will prevent further oil and gas wells from being orphaned? The Chief and Council are not optimistic but have no alternatives to offer. Regarding future economic development and the potential of renewables: there are only questions at this point, such as: how long does a capped well last? 50 years? 100 years? What happens after that? The sovereignty of First Nations is tied to the safety of the land for however long that is.

Key Findings:

1. The failures of industry, provincial and federal governments to follow-through on commitments related to remediation and reclamation of inactive and orphaned wells is but one more of several cumulative impacts on the sovereignty of First Nations in Canada.
2. First Nations, such as West Moberly, should be involved in prioritizing remediation of well sites and should lead reclamation efforts, as experts, in returning the land to its natural state.

West Moberly
First Nation



Capsule Study 3

Community: Sauteau First Nation

The Sauteau First Nation is a First Nations community located in the Peace River region of northeastern British Columbia, Canada. The community has a population of approximately 1,200 members and is located in Treaty 8 territory.

Inactive and orphaned oil and gas wells have had significant impacts on the Sauteau First Nation and other Indigenous communities in the region. These wells, which are no longer in use or have been abandoned by their owners, can leak methane and other pollutants into the air and water, leading to environmental and health risks.

The Sauteau First Nation has expressed concern about the impact of inactive and orphaned wells on their land and water resources. The community has identified several wells that are no longer in use and may pose a risk to the environment and their way of life.

Government (Chief and Council) of Sauteau First Nation

On the community impacts of inactive and orphaned wells:

Inactive and orphaned oil and gas wells have contaminated the soil, native plants and grasses, and our wildlife, with pollutants. The high-value traditional use areas of our territory have been disturbed and fragmented resulting in cumulative impacts and significant infringements of Treaty Rights for the Sauteau First Nations.

On the most realistic and practical means to inactive and orphaned well remediation around Sauteau First Nation:

When asked what it thought about current efforts to address the overwhelming issue of inactive and abandoned wells in the area, the Chief and Council feel that it is “too little, too late.” In its view, provincial and federal governments have let industry get away without expense or responsibility to remediate and reclaim the land. Further, it feels there has been no measurable difference in efforts even following significant changes to regulations.

Sauteau First Nation witnesses constant delays to scheduled remediation of well sites around its community. When remediation is conducted, often the process fails to meet existing standards, as articulated in the regulations. Reclamation seems not to be prioritized, at all, as native horticulture (i.e., planting ecologically suitable species) seems all but abandoned. In the eyes of this government, a site is not returned to its natural state unless proper reclamation has been conducted.

To this end, Sauteau First Nation has formed its own reclamation company, which, as part of its business model, includes a native plant nursery to supply ecologically suitable species back to areas being remediated and reclaimed. Although the company is trying to engage with the BC Government and its regulators, the response and uptake of services have been limited, as though there is a lack of urgency, from the Sauteau First Nation’s perspective. The argument is straight forward: the Sauteau First Nation can perform reclamation better and to higher standards than what is currently being done.

And, if provincial or federal governments are unable to hold industry to account for the decommissioning of well sites, then First Nations should be granted authority, or joint authority, to issue certificates and restoration once sites are reclaimed.

On who must be involved in solutions:

Industry and government need to contribute more than they currently are. Saulteau First Nations have significant contributions to make in the reclamation of the land and while provincial and federal governments need to recognize and support this expertise, remediation needs to be funded, first.

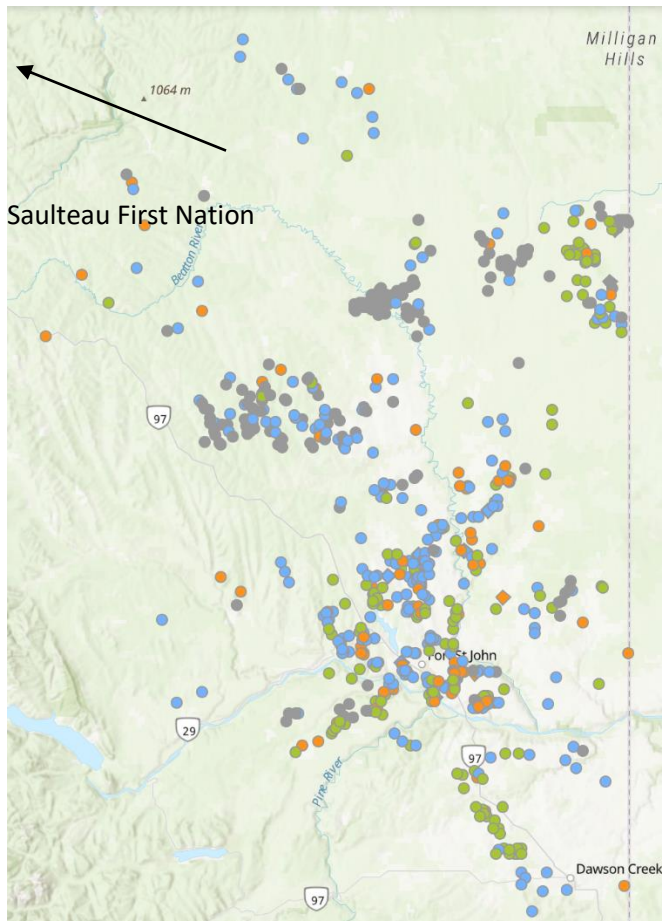
On how to be involved:

The issue needs to be looked at from a broader, more holistic perspective. Inactive and orphaned wells are symptoms of a much larger environmental problem. Well sites, access roads, seismic lines, landings, and other infrastructure related to piped natural gas (PNG) are all in need of remediation. High value areas, like riparian wetlands adjacent to rivers and streams, also require restoration but such complex systems seem not to be included in remediation plans. This does not include other natural resource development such as mining and forestry.

When asked in orphaned sites could be retrofitted with renewable systems, the Saulteau First Nation is clear. The sites need to be returned to nature. There is no alternative suitable to the community, given its experiences. And, requiring future wells to provide a bond before drilling elicits a similar response, “everyone knows the bonding is insufficient in BC.” The suggestion is a non-starter for an industry grounded in bad faith.

Key Findings:

1. The Saulteau First Nations, through its remediation company complete with native plant nursery, can perform remediation and reclamation better and to a higher standard than what is currently being done.
2. Inactive and orphaned wells are symptoms of a much larger environmental problem that requires better accounting for all-natural resource development (e.g., PNG, mining, forestry).



Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association

The Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) represents the voices of 444 municipalities in Saskatchewan. Their focus includes improving government legislation, programs, and services that empower our members to build and maintain safe, healthy, and sustainable communities. SUMA has been advocating for the provincial government and working with its members to address the inactive and orphaned wells issues in Saskatchewan.

On the community impacts of inactive and orphaned wells:

SUMA and its members have expressed that inactive and orphaned wells have different impacts on their hometowns such as environmental hazards, economic loss, public safety risks, legal liability, and land use limitations. The organization asserts that when discussing inactive and orphaned oil wells, health concerns, social and cultural impacts, economic impacts on local businesses, liability, and legal issues, and impacts on future generations need to be considered.

On the most realistic and practical means to inactive and orphaned well remediation around municipalities:

SUMA offered several realistic and practical solutions to addressing inactive, orphaned wells in Saskatchewan including a combination of regulatory, financial, technological collaboration and partnership approaches along with education and increased public awareness. Their members have also called for specific action related to increased government funding, industry accountability, increased education and public awareness and proposed alternative land use and reclamation.

On who must be involved in solutions:

SUMA highlighted that governments and stakeholders have unique considerations and roles to play in the solutions process. For example, Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan have unique rights and interests related to land use and resource management. Any remediation efforts should respect the rights and interests of the indigenous communities and involve meaningful consultation and engagement. Additionally, SUMA points out that municipalities are directly impacted by inactive and orphaned wells and have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of their residents. Municipalities should be involved in any remediation efforts to ensure that the needs of their communities are being met. Further, landowners who have inactive or orphaned wells on their property have a right to a safe and healthy environment. They should be involved in any remediation efforts to ensure that their land is properly restored.

SUMA also believes that the oil and gas industry is responsible for the plugging and abandonment of inactive wells and should be held accountable for any wells that are left inactive or orphaned. The industry should be involved in any remediation efforts to ensure that they are meeting their obligations. SUMA stated that the government also has a responsibility to regulate the oil and gas industry and protect the health and safety of its citizens. The government should be involved in any remediation efforts to ensure that regulatory requirements are being met, and to provide financial support where necessary. SUMA emphasizes that all levels of government might have a role providing regulatory

oversight, funding support, community and First Nations engagement and consultation, provide technical expertise, development, and implementation of policies.

Environmental organizations have an interest in protecting the environment and mitigating the impacts of inactive and orphaned wells. They should be involved in any remediation efforts to ensure that environmental concerns are being addressed. Lastly, the wider public has a right to a safe and healthy environment and may be impacted by the health and environmental risks posed by inactive and orphaned wells. They should be involved in any remediation efforts to ensure that their concerns are being heard and addressed.

On how to be involved:

SUMA shared that collaboration between governments and stakeholders is one way in which parties could be involved in forming solutions. Collaboration could take shape in different forms such as sharing technical expertise, coordination of funding programs, collaboration on remediation planning, engaging with governments and working with industry experts. Collaboration between First Nations could also help to ensure that their rights and interests are being respected and that their perspectives and traditional knowledge are being considered in remediation efforts.

Additionally, collaboration between First Nations could help to facilitate a coordinated approach to addressing the issue of inactive and orphaned oil wells, which could ultimately lead to more effective and efficient remediation outcomes. SUMA pointed out importantly that any collaborative efforts should be conducted in a manner that is respectful, transparent, and inclusive, and that meaningful consultation and engagement with affected communities should be a priority throughout the process.

Key Findings:

1. Realistic and practical solutions to respond to inactive, orphaned well remediation include regulatory, financial, technological collaboration, partnership approaches, education and increased public awareness.
2. Respectful, transparent, and inclusive collaboration between rightsholders, First Nations, governments and stakeholders is key to addressing inactive, orphaned well remediation.



Action Surface Rights (Daryl Bennett, Farmer / Director)

Action Surface Rights is an organization of landowners dedicated to helping fellow landowners understand and navigate government and industry processes when dealing with the energy sectors, whether it be oil and gas, transmission lines, or wind power in Alberta.

On the community impacts of inactive and orphaned wells:

Action Surface Rights named several impacts related to inactive and orphaned wells including financial and economic hardships, environmental safety, and social impacts. When it comes to financial and economic impacts, Action Surface Rights highlighted that local governments are unable to balance their budgets due to a short fall in property taxes after oil and gas companies become bankrupt. Other financial impacts relate to landowners not receiving their annual compensation. The organization also shared specifically that their farmer members are unable to contact oil and gas companies when environmental and safety hazards arise. Additionally, farmers are not able to receive mortgages from the Alberta treasury branch due to concerns over food safety (i.e., contaminated wells because reclaimed pipes can leak in the future). Additionally, there is a lack of responsibility when it comes to weed management. It was mentioned that weeds which propagate onto other portions of the property are unmanaged and complicated further due to herbicide resistant plants. Economic impacts include development limitations due to restrictions on development (i.e., five-to-ten-meter setbacks and access to well heads).

The issue of inactive and orphaned wells has also caused social rifts in the community. Oil workers are upset when other members of their community criticize their role in the sector. Furthermore, the organization's landowners are also in a regulatory limbo when abandoned wells are transferred without the landowner's knowledge. For example, when the well is used to extract non-oil and gas resources, landowners may not be protected or receive compensation from the new owner and operator. Lastly, Action Surface Rights emphasized that the Orphan Well Association (OWA) is also running out of funding to continue its operation.

Action Surface Rights is concerned about the lack of regulation and requirements around the timeliness of abandoned well remediation. There are also concerns around the license management rating system and the lack of contributions the OWA is receiving from companies in poor financial health.

The organization pointed out the concerning trend of well ownership. More financially healthy and well-resourced companies are selling wells to smaller poorly managed owners and operators. These smaller companies end up with the most contaminated wells and are the least able to remediate them. Action Surface Rights stated that the overall system is focused on privatized profits and socialized losses, as such, companies who avoided the cost of well remediation are selling abandoned wells to companies that are not resourced to address contamination.

On the most realistic and practical means to inactive and orphaned well remediation for landowners:

Several solutions were identified and offered by Action Surface Rights. From their farm members' perspective, all inactive and orphaned wells need to be cleaned. The organization also believes orphaned sites could be used for other resource extraction. Resources could include geothermal energy, lithium, helium, and natural gas. The RenuWell Program which uses orphan sites to host solar sites was mentioned. The program leverages existing road access and powerlines to carry energy in southern Alberta. However, there are barriers to this program. For example, Altalink does not prefer this system because RenuWell does not use their transmission lines. Another barrier to renewable energy is linked to the fact that Alberta does not allow renewable energy projects on crown land.

Another solution that was offered relates to converting abandoned well sites into renewable energy generator sites. For example, Indigenous communities with challenges accessing stable electric power

could use orphaned well sites to generate electricity. This was offered as a solution to meet both energy needs and possible economic opportunities. Alongside converting abandoned well sites, Action Surface Rights sees funding from the federal government and regulatory changes from the provincial as part of the solutions package.

Key Findings

1. Inactive and abandoned wells create financial and economic hardships, pose threats to environmental safety, and have negative social impacts on Alberta's landowner community.
2. The trend of larger oil and gas well companies selling operations to smaller companies with fewer resources are unable to remediate inactive and orphaned wells.
3. Opportunities to convert inactive and orphaned well sites into other mineral and resource extraction and renewable energy sites are possible solutions to address remediation and economic opportunities.



**Endeavour Scientific Inc.
(Carla Davidson, Founder / Principal)**

Carla Davidson of Endeavour Scientific Inc. has worked directly with Indigenous communities in Northern Alberta. Carla has deep knowledge related to liability issues with oil sands which have similar impacts, challenges, and solutions.

On the community impacts of inactive and orphaned wells:

Carla revealed several impacts she has witnessed through her work with Indigenous communities. She shared that oil wells disturb and alter the land and are difficult to remediate back to their previous state. The lack of remediation on inactive and orphaned wells also has social impacts such as an erosion of trust between oil and gas companies, government, and Indigenous communities. This was especially heightened after the recent Imperial Oil leak in Kearl mine. Other examples of a trust deficiency stem from what Carla describes as a lack of commitment by government and industry to return land back to First Nations and Métis communities. Further, she shares that there has been a push to absolve the energy industry of their organizations' responsibilities. Other social impacts include the loss of First Nations' community gathering space. The lack of gathering space has created divisions in communities as families are no longer able to use traditional spaces. Carla identified concerns related to regulations, standards, guidelines, and engagement around inactive and orphaned well remediation. She highlighted that remediation and reclamation standards are developed by engineers. While regulations and guidelines exist, their application on the ground is inconsistent. The inconsistency is more evident when it comes to oil sands. Further, there have been limited opportunities for deep engagement when it comes to policy reviews. For example, in the Mine Financial Security review, Carla observed that Indigenous representatives and perspectives were left out of the conversation. As such, it is an imperative that there is collaboration and engagement with Nations and the government.

On the most realistic and practical means to inactive and orphaned well remediation:

Carla highlighted that stronger governance is a part of the solution to ensure that proper reclamation is complete. Additionally, it was shared that liability costs are currently reported by oil and gas companies. Those costs are unverified by third parties. She has seen instances where there is upwards of a 40 per cent difference between actual liability costs and the estimated liability cost. As such, one possible solution is to include impacted communities in the liability verification process. Additionally, she proposed that liability costs should be incentivized. Meaningful and ongoing community consultation and engagement is another solution to minimizing harmful

impacts. Currently, consultation is limited to the initial stage of oil and gas well development and long-term impacts are not identified in the process. Additionally, it was suggested that the full cost of reclamation should be invested at the start of the well-site development process. Lastly, Carla raised a solution around potentially having Nations hold the land in escrow should the oil and gas company be unable to uphold their responsibilities.

On who must be involved in solutions:

Carla's perspective is that inactive and orphan well remediation is firmly in the hands of the provincial government. However, Métis, First Nations communities, municipalities, environmental non-governmental organizations, and possibly recreational organizations should be involved in generating solutions.

Key Findings:

1. There is a history of broken promises from oil and gas companies and the government which has resulted in a trust deficit amongst stakeholders, First Nations, and Métis communities.
2. Enforcement and stronger application of guidelines, regulations and standards is needed for inactive orphan well remediation.
3. Shared decision making, collaboration and meaningful engagement of First Nations and Métis communities for the duration of a well's lifespan is needed.



Gillian McKercher, Documentary Filmmaker

Action Surface Rights is an organization of landowners dedicated to helping fellow landowners understand and navigate government and industry processes when dealing with the energy sectors, whether it be oil and gas, transmission lines, or wind power in Alberta.

On the community impacts of inactive and orphaned wells:

Being based in Calgary, although there are wells within City boundaries that need to be monitored and taken care of, Gillian is not impacted by the issue of inactive and orphaned wells on a day-to-day basis but believes citizens across the province are impacted by it. Specific communities in Alberta, for example the citizens of the Town of Taber are impacted by polluted land and have concerns around when the land is going to be remediated, and whether remediation is happening too fast and according to the proper standard. In Frog Lake, a Cree nation in Alberta, the residents cannot develop buildings on their land over the well because the company or regulator requires access to the well head and landowners do not even have the right to cut weeds on their own property leading to issues of access for the community.

Other impacts include methane leaks from wells that are improperly plugged, and landowners not being paid their property taxes from 'bad actor' oil companies when the price of oil goes down. There are many other issues that come with the rise and fall of oil prices and a general distrust of the oil industry by young people. Communities that house these wells on their land are starting to feel the burden of the end-of-life issues around oil wells.

In Alberta, generally orphan wells are dealt with by the Orphan Well association, however, there are still people who pre-date the Orphan Well Association who get left behind. Inactive wells on the other hand are not necessarily dealt with. A company can sell off inactive wells in a package along with good wells which just shifts the problem to a new owner. One regulatory loophole that companies are taking advantage of is: the owner of a well could turn it on for one day and that would allow them to keep a well inactive for another year and delay the liability cost. Companies will not pay for inactive wells unless there is regulation in place, since there is an attitude of "I'll deal with it later."

Following the Redwater case, people have started to care more about this issue, especially financial organizations, since it created a legal duty to clean up wells which is a positive outcome. Gillian notes there is an "out of sight, out of mind" nature to this problem leading to intermittent coverage in media, and that instead there needs to be continuous attention and pressure on this issue in the media similar to the attention given to "anti-smoking commercials."

On the most realistic and practical means to inactive and orphaned well remediation for landowners:

Recommendations around orphaned well remediation include:

Regulation and legislation:

1. Regulation around paying into the Orphan Well Association.
2. Legislation that acknowledges the volatility of the oil industry, that is designed to “ease off” on companies when oil prices are low but encourages them to pay when high.
3. Ensuring completion bonds that are large enough to properly remediate wells.

Monitoring:

- An avenue for the AER to proactively check on the financial health of companies – that is companies that may be at risk of orphaning wells.
- Monitoring decommissioned oil wells that have decentralized supports.

Other recommendations include giving communities options for what remediated land could be used for, for example park building or solar energy.

Gillian notes that the Government of Alberta needs to change its attitude when there are people interested in learning more about inactive, orphaned, or abandoned wells. The province can be very “defensive” when it comes to oil and gas issues and this defensiveness fuels polarization of this issue. Rather it is much more helpful for the province to share information on this topic.

On who must be involved in solutions:

Stakeholders that need to be involved include landowners, land caretakers, well owners, and non-governmental organizations (e.g., RenuWell) that make a positive economic change.

Government bodies that need to be involved include the AER, municipal governments who are the most at-risk for orphan wells, and provincial governments who have a big role to play in this topic, particularly in a regulatory scope. Government bodies must create policies that hold companies responsible as companies currently are not incentivized to pay for orphan wells. The federal government has a smaller role to play providing funds, if necessary,

On how to be involved:

Gillian agrees that in overlapping territories, there are opportunities for First Nations to collaborate on remediation efforts, adding “the more local knowledge, the better.”

On requiring companies to put up a bond or security deposit before they can drill as a solution in Alberta?

Gillian agrees with implementing this solution in Alberta.

On the potential solution of orphaned sites being reclaimed and used for renewable energy (e.g., solar, wind.):

Gillian agrees with this solution but also notes there is a misperception that every well site can be redeveloped into economic engines. Only a small fraction of well sites can be used in this way.

On concerns that energy companies might also default and abandon sites and equipment for renewable energy in the future:

Gillian shares this concern based on the understanding that the current policy system to put green energy projects in place is a “bureaucratic nightmare”. There is nothing like the AER for green energy projects and this lack of oversight and policy understanding slows down innovation in green energy. She recommends replicating the AER’s system into one that regulates green energy or to have such a corporation as a branch or subsidiary of the AER.

Conclusion

There are tens of thousands of inactive and orphaned wells in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, and the number is increasing every year. Inactive and orphaned wells can have negative environmental impacts, such as potential leaks and contamination of soil and water. There are significant financial costs associated with cleaning up and reclaiming inactive and orphaned wells, which are currently borne by taxpayers and landowners. There are legal and regulatory frameworks in place to address inactive and orphaned wells, but enforcement and oversight have been described by some as inadequate. First Nations communities have raised concerns about the impacts of inactive and orphaned wells on their lands, and have called for greater consultation, involvement, and autonomy in decision-making processes. Municipalities have also called for greater involvement in decision-making processes regarding inactive and orphaned wells and have advocated for increased funding for cleanup and reclamation efforts. Landowners have expressed frustration with the impacts of inactive and orphaned wells on their properties and have called for greater accountability and transparency from oil and gas companies and government agencies. Overall, there is a need for increased collaboration between government agencies, oil and gas companies, landowners, and other stakeholders to address the issue of inactive and orphaned wells in a timely and effective manner.

The differences in positions between First Nations communities, municipalities, and landowners in relation to inactive and orphaned wells in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan can be summarized as follows:

First Nations communities have expressed concerns about the impacts of inactive and orphaned wells on their traditional territories due to which can affect their ability to exercise their treaty rights (e.g., hunt, fish, gather traditional foods and medicine). They have also raised concerns about the lack of consultation and accommodation by industry and government that leads to yet another of many cumulative impacts that erodes trust and places more barriers on the path to reconciliation. First Nations communities and their governments have rights to make decisions on issues that affect their lands and resources. To this end, some First Nations have taken proactive measures to address inactive and orphaned wells, such as advocating for the authority or joint authority to develop their own certification standards for well closure and reclamation.

Municipalities have raised concerns about the financial and environmental costs of inactive and

orphaned wells, including the potential risks to public health and safety. They have also called for more regulatory oversight and enforcement, and for industry to be held accountable for the costs of well closure and reclamation. Municipalities have also expressed the need for greater consultation and communication with industry and government to ensure that local concerns and interests are addressed.

Landowners have expressed concerns about the impacts of inactive and orphaned wells on their property values and ability to use their land for other purposes, such as agriculture or residential development. They have also raised concerns about liability for well closure and reclamation, and the need for greater clarity and transparency around the responsibilities of industry and government in this regard. Landowners have also called for greater accountability by provincial and federal governments to hold industry accountable for properly abandoning well sites for which they are already legally responsible.

In conclusion, this report suggests that the issue of inactive and orphaned wells in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan is a complex and multi-faceted one, with significant environmental, financial, and social implications. While there are legal and regulatory frameworks in place to address the issue, there are also concerns about enforcement and oversight, as well as calls for greater consultation and involvement from affected communities and stakeholders. Ultimately, addressing the issue of inactive and orphaned wells will require increased collaboration and cooperation between all parties involved. The absence of such collaboration may have a detrimental impact on Canada's ability to fully realize the goals and principles of reconciliation.

APPENDIX I: First Nations and BC, AB, SK Municipalities within 50km of Inactive Wells

British Columbia	Alberta	Saskatchewan
<p>First Nations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blueberry River First Nation • Doig River First Nation • Fort Nelson First Nation • Halfway River First Nation • Kwadacha Nation • Prophet River Band, Dene Tsa'a Tse K'nai First Nation • Sauleau First Nation • Tsa'y Keh Dene • West Moberly First Nation <p>Municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Nelson • Prophet River • Trutch • Fort St. John • Dawson Creek • Wonowon • Goodlow • Doig River • Rose Prairie • Peejay • Altona • Prespatou • Kobes • Rolla • Attachie 	<p>First Nations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexander First Nation • Samson Cree Nation (part of Maskwacis) • Montana First Nation (part of Maskwacis) • Ermineskin Cree Nation (part of Maskwacis) • Louis Bull Tribe (part of Maskwacis) <p>Municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort McMurray • Tar Island • Bitumont • Fort McKay • Anzac • Lac La Biche • Athabasca • Westlock • Barrhead • Mayerthorpe • Bon Accord • Morinville • Gibbons • Legal 	<p>First Nations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pheasant Rump Nakota Nation • Nekaneet First Nation • Onion Lake Cree Nation • Ministikwan Lake Cree Nation - Meadow Lake Tribal Council • Makwa Sahgaiehcan First Nation - Meadow Lake Tribal Council • Thunderchild First Nation • Witchehan Lake First Nation • Moosomin First Nation • Sauleaux First Nation • Little Pine First Nation <p>Municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estevan • Kindersley • Lloydminster • Swift Current

APPENDIX II: Tribal Councils Researched

British Columbia	Alberta	Saskatchewan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrier Chilcotin Tribal Council • Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council • First Nation of the Maa-Nulth Treaty Society • Fraser Thompson Indian Services Society • Gitksan Local Services Society • Ktunaxa Nation Council Society • Kwakiutl District Council • Lillooet Tribal Council • Lower Stl'atl'imx Tribal Council • Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw Tribal Council • Naut'sa Mawt Tribal Council (Approval needed for meeting minutes) • Northern Shuswap Tribal Council Society • Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council • Okanagan Nation Alliance • Scw'exmx Tribal Council • Secretariat of the Haida Nation • Shuswap Nation Tribal Council • Sto:Lo Nation • Sto:Lo Tribal Council • Treaty 8 Tribal Association • Tsilhqot'in National Government • Wuikinuxv Kitasoo Nuxalk Tribal Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athabasca Tribal Council Limited • Blackfoot Confederacy • Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council • Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council • Maskwacis Cree Tribal Council • North Peace Tribal Council • Stoney Nakoda - Tsuut'ina Tribal Council Ltd. • Tribal Chiefs Ventures Incorporated • Western Cree Tribal Council • Yellowhead Tribal Development Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Chiefs Tribal Council • Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs Inc • File Hills Qu'appelle Tribal Council Inc. • Mltc Program Services Inc. • Northwest Professional Services Corp. • PAGC Management Company Ltd. (Prince Albert Grand Council) • Saskatoon Tribal Council • Touchwood Agency Tribal Council Inc. • Yorkton Tribal Administration Inc. (Approval needed for meeting minutes)

APPENDIX III: Interview Guide Questions

Community Impacts

- What community impacts of inactive and orphaned wells have you experienced or observed?
- What is your organization's assessment of past or current efforts to address the issue of inactive wells?
- What community issues are *not* being addressed, publicly, when discussing inactive, orphaned oil wells?

Potential / Preferential Solutions

- What is the most realistic and practical means to inactive, orphaned well remediation around AB communities?
- What solutions have community members raised to address inactive, orphaned oil wells around AB community?

Who to Involve in Solutions?

- When considering your potential / preferential solution(s), please list all stakeholders and rights holders who should be involved and why?
- What role should governments (i.e., Federal / Provincial / First Nations) play in order to assist in remediation / reclamation?

How to be Involved in Solutions?

- In overlapping territories, might there be opportunities for First Nations to collaborate on remediation efforts?
- What might these opportunities look like?