From:	Kerrie Romero
To:	NMOAI, NMENV; WasteRule, EMNRD, EMNRD
Subject:	[EXT] NMCOG Public Comment on Draft Methane Rule
Date:	Tuesday, September 15, 2020 7:31:12 AM

Dear New Mexico Environment Department & Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department,

On behalf of the New Mexico Council of Outfitters and Guides, I appreciate the opportunity to comment publicly on the state's draft methane rules. These proposed rules, if enacted, would not only impact the oil and gas industry but also affect the state's many other industries, including outdoor recreation.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, New Mexico's outdoor economy was growing steadily alongside oil and gas development on public, private, and tribal lands, contributing to our state's job and revenue growth.

As the second highest-grossing outdoor recreational activity in the state, hunting is critical to our burgeoning outdoor economy and contributes a significant portion of the roughly $700 million generated by New Mexico's tourism industry annually.

Our state's professional fishing and hunting guides rely on a healthy environment and wildlife to make a living. They also rely on revenue from oil and gas production to help support the schools, roads and services in even the most rural and remote corners of our state.

In this way, the oil and gas industry supports countless industries – including outdoor recreation – and provides thousands of New Mexicans with well-paying jobs. Both outdoor recreation and energy production have successfully coexisted for decades, and it's critical that we maintain this harmony to keep our state on the path of progress.

The recently proposed methane rules could, if passed as written, jeopardize our balanced approach to energy development and our economy.

Overbearing rules will adversely impact the hard-working guides and outfitters by decreasing state revenue for conservation and other critical uses and potentially incentivizing companies to take production – and their local employees' hard-earned tourism dollars – elsewhere.

New Mexico's unparalleled natural beauty is worth defending. But playing politics with our livelihoods is unacceptable. New Mexico needs a balanced approach to regulation.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

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