



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE TRUST LANDS
RESOLUTION 2021-05**

Orphaned Wells

Whereas, the National Association of State Trust Lands (“NASTL”) and its member states manage over 500 million acres of trust lands, minerals, and waterways; and

Whereas, members of NASTL have state constitutional mandates to manage millions of acres of lands for economic development, public education, conservation, recreation, and other public purposes provided by state law; and

Whereas, over 56,000 orphaned oil and gas wells exist today on federal, state, private, and tribal lands—especially in the Western United States; and

Whereas, orphaned wells can serve as conduits for migration or emission of large volumes of oil, other fluids, and natural gases such as methane and pose a harm to people and the environment; and

Whereas, there are an unknown number of orphaned wells located on state trust lands that pose environmental and health risks to trust assets and the public; and

Whereas, there are clear environmental and human health benefits to plugging orphaned wells including the prevention of contamination to water, air, and soil, and releases of dangerous gases or migration of dangerous fluids; and

Whereas, Congress has failed to provide funding for cleanup efforts of orphaned wells; and

Whereas, bi-partisan legislation is pending before Congress to fund clean-up of orphaned wells on state, private, tribal, and federal lands.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. NASTL urges Congress to enact bi-partisan legislation to fund and implement the plugging of orphaned wells and clean-up of well sites on state trust lands, private lands, tribal lands, and federal lands; and
2. NASTL urges Congress to fund an orphaned well inventory and assessment project to assist states, communities, and federal land managers in assessing sites posing the greatest risks to health and the environment; and
3. NASTL urges Congress to provide annual appropriations to carry out remediation and reclamation of orphaned wells on state trust lands, private, tribal, and federal lands.

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Adopted this 21st day of September, 2021.



President, NASTL



Secretary, NASTL

*This Resolution will remain in effect through July 31, 2023
unless otherwise terminated, amended, or replaced by the Association.*