

ORPHANED WELL PROGRAM

James Hix, East Orphaned Well Program EPS

RMEHSPG MEETING
April 23, 2026



COLORADO
Energy & Carbon Management
Commission

Department of Natural Resources

Before We Begin: What does the OWP do?



Program Update



Growth

- New Staff
- Funding Sources

Funding Sources

- Bonds
- State Appropriation
- Federal Initial Grant
- Enterprise Fund

By the Numbers

- Wells Plugged
- Backlog

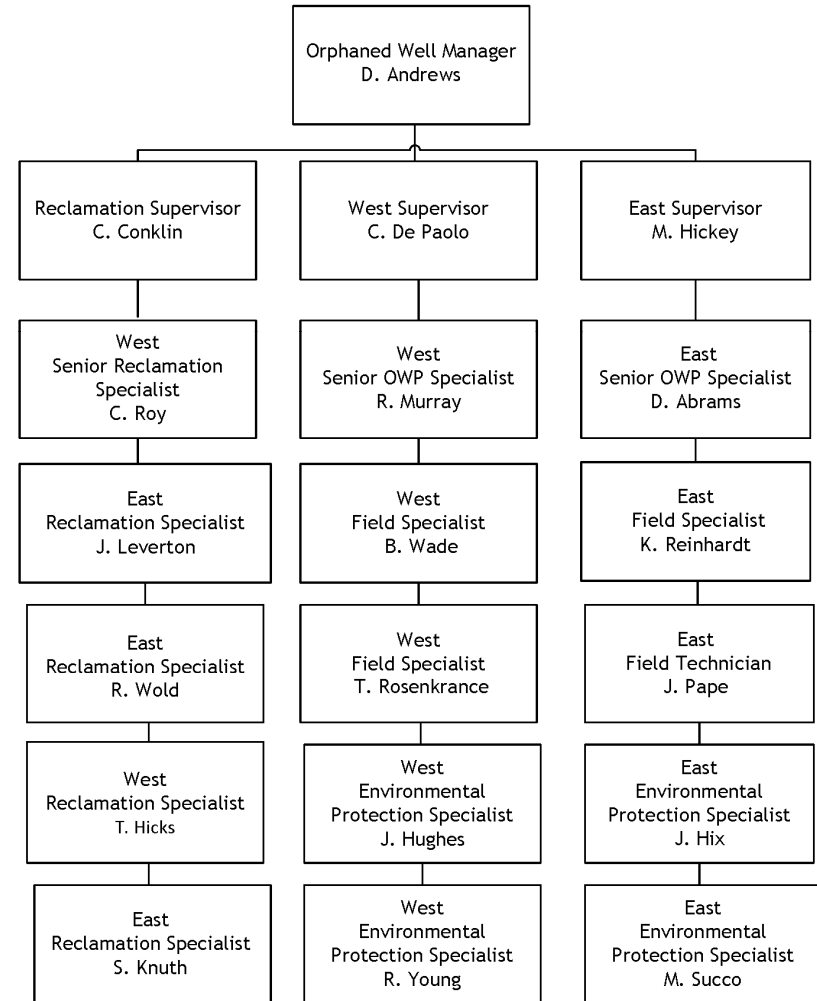
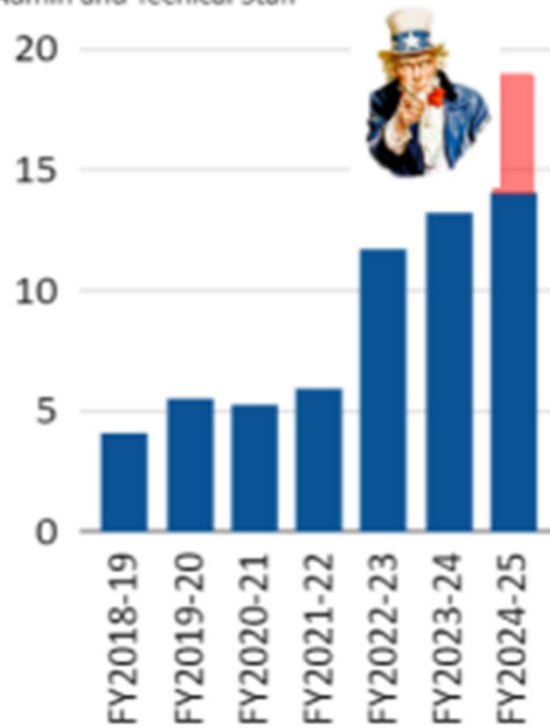
What We Do - Resources

- GIS Map
- Annual Reports
- Website

OWP Growth: New Staff

OWP Full-Time Employees

Admin and Technical Staff



Growth: Funding Sources

Through FY2025-26, funds for project work from:

- Bond claims (former Operator – bonds/financial assurance)
- Grants from the Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or BIL (a.k.a. the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act or IIJA), for work on State and Private or “Fee” wells & orphaned sites
- Orphaned Well Mitigation Enterprise Fund (OWME)

Beginning in FY2023-24, funding increased to include funds from a BLM Cooperative Agreement:

- Allows OWP to coordinate with BLM and perform work on Federal wells and orphaned sites

Growth: BIL/IIJA Federal Grants

Federal Grants for Orphaned Wells are available through FY30 under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (a.k.a. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) with multiple funding opportunities

Initial Grant - \$25 million

- *Work in progress: FY23, FY24, and the first two months of FY25*

Formula Grant - \$54 million (initial estimate for Colorado and likely will change)

- *Prepare Application this fall: \$25 million for the first phase*

Performance Grants - Regulatory Improvement - \$40 million

- Grant for Strengthening Plugging Standards & Procedures – up to \$20 million
- Grant for Improvements to Programs Designed to Reduce Future Orphaned Well Burdens – up to \$20 million

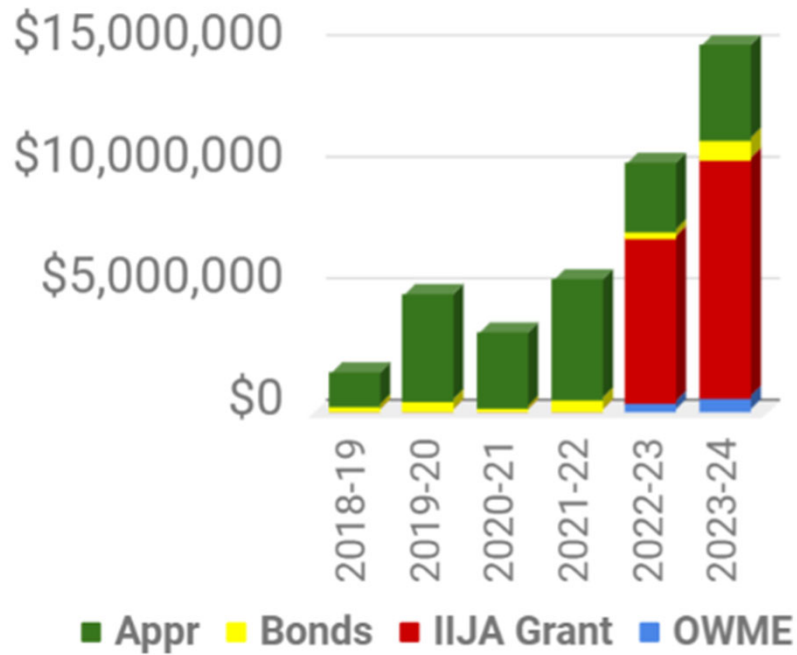
Performance Grants - Matching - up to \$30 million

- Federal – State match

Spending Mix: Last Five Fiscal Years

Contractual Spending by FY

as of July 14, 2024



- State Budget Appropriation
- Operator Bonds
- Federal Grants - IIJA Grant
- OWME

Estimated for FY2026-2027

Bonds: less than \$1 million

State Appropriation: \$3.8 million

Federal Grants, project costs: \$25 million

- Performance period includes the first two months of FY25 (July and August 2024)

Orphaned Well Mitigation Enterprise Fund, project costs: \$2.2 million

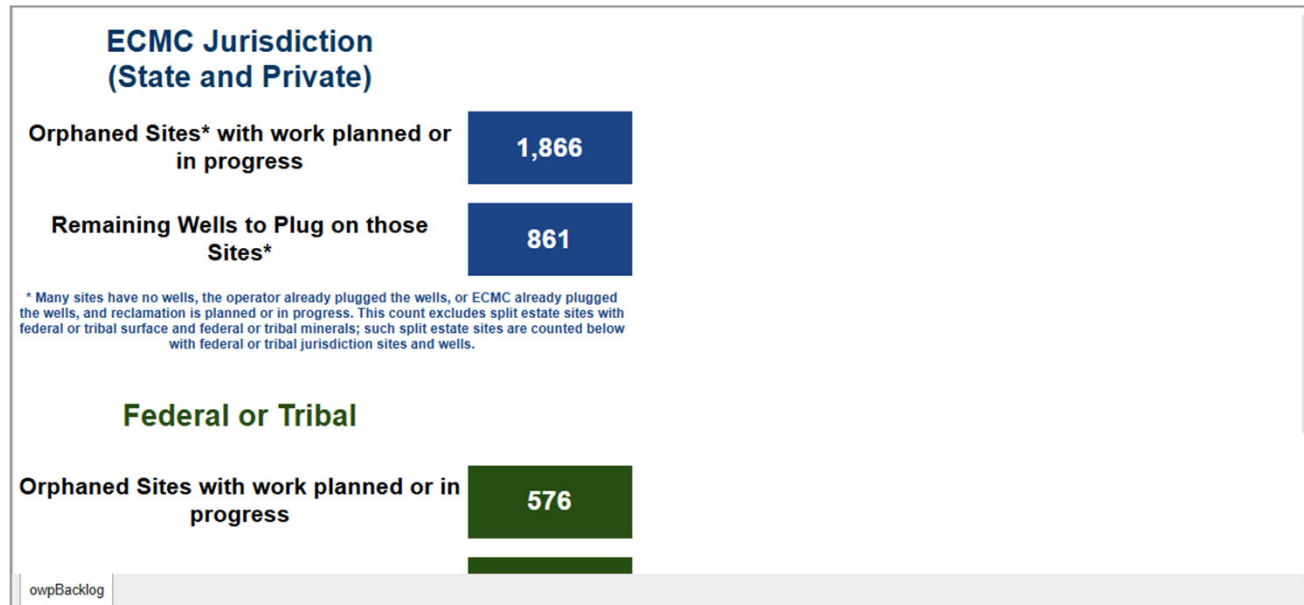
BLM Cooperative Agreement, project costs: up to \$2 million

- For Federal Sites
- Performance period includes the first two months of FY25 (July and August 2024)

OWP Projects - By the Numbers:

OWP Backlog

Home
Program Purpose & History
Federal Grant
Project List
GIS Map
Backlog
Reports
Expenditures
Contractors
Example Projects
Contact Us



Orphaned Well Program Backlog by Fiscal Year

Excludes Federal and Tribal sites and wells

OWP Projects - By the Numbers:

Fiscal Year	Wells Plugged	Flowlines & Decom	Sampling / Remediation	Reclamation
FY2025-26	113	199	405	127
FY2024-25	95	147	371	117
FY2023-24	126	138	209	71
FY2022-23	65	142	202	62
FY2021-22	76	28	47	17
FY2020-21	54	12	47	18
FY2019-20	61	28	51	25
FY2018-19	15	16	16	17

What We Do: Well Plugging and Abandonment



Preparation

Site Access - Surface Owner Notice
Form Submittals: Form 6 NOI,

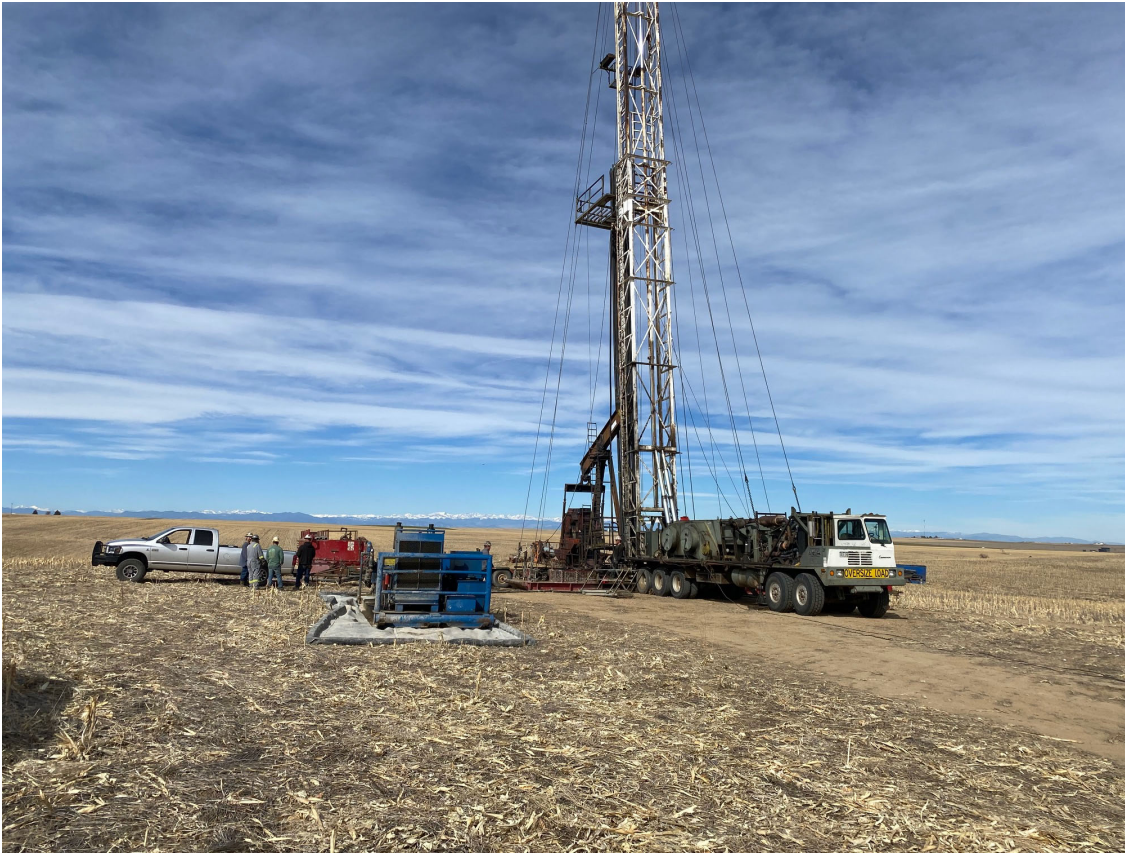
Form 27, Form 42

Well Condition/Configuration Well
Bore Diagram (Depth, Age,
Formation and Basin)

Pre-plugging Methane Monitoring
Units (1 g/hr, ppm-m)

Trace Gases (H₂S, CO)

What We Do: Well Plugging and Abandonment



- Well Plugging
 - Challenges with Plugging and Abandonment Operations
- Site Access
- Casing and Cement Configuration (Depth, Age, and Basin Characteristics)
- Oil, Gas, and Water Zones
- Standards (Past and Present)
- Complications - “Fish”

What We Do: Decommissioning



- Production Facility Decommissioning
- Assess Age of Equipment
- Past Operations and Maintenance Practices
- Waste Characterization
- TENORM Sampling
- E&P Waste Disposal
- Environmental Soil Sampling Beneath Equipment
- Equipment Removal

What We Do: Decommissioning



- Flowline Removal/
Decommissioning:
On-Location and
Off-Location
- Site Access/Crops
- Age of Equipment
- Construction Materials
- Condition
- Past Operations and
Maintenance Practices
- Standards (Past and Present)
- Environmental Sampling

What We Do: Site Investigations



- Subsurface Investigation
 - Site Access
 - Age of Oil & Gas Location
 - Past Operations and Maintenance Practices
 - ECMC Standards (Past/Present)
 - Environmental Sampling (Soil and Groundwater)
 - Nature and Extent of Impacts

What We Do: Site Remediation



- Excavation of Impacted Soils
- Site Access
- Age of Oil & Gas Location
- Past Operations and Maintenance Practices
- ECMC Standards (Past/Present)
- Environmental Sampling
- Nature and Extent of Impacts





What We Do: Site Reclamation

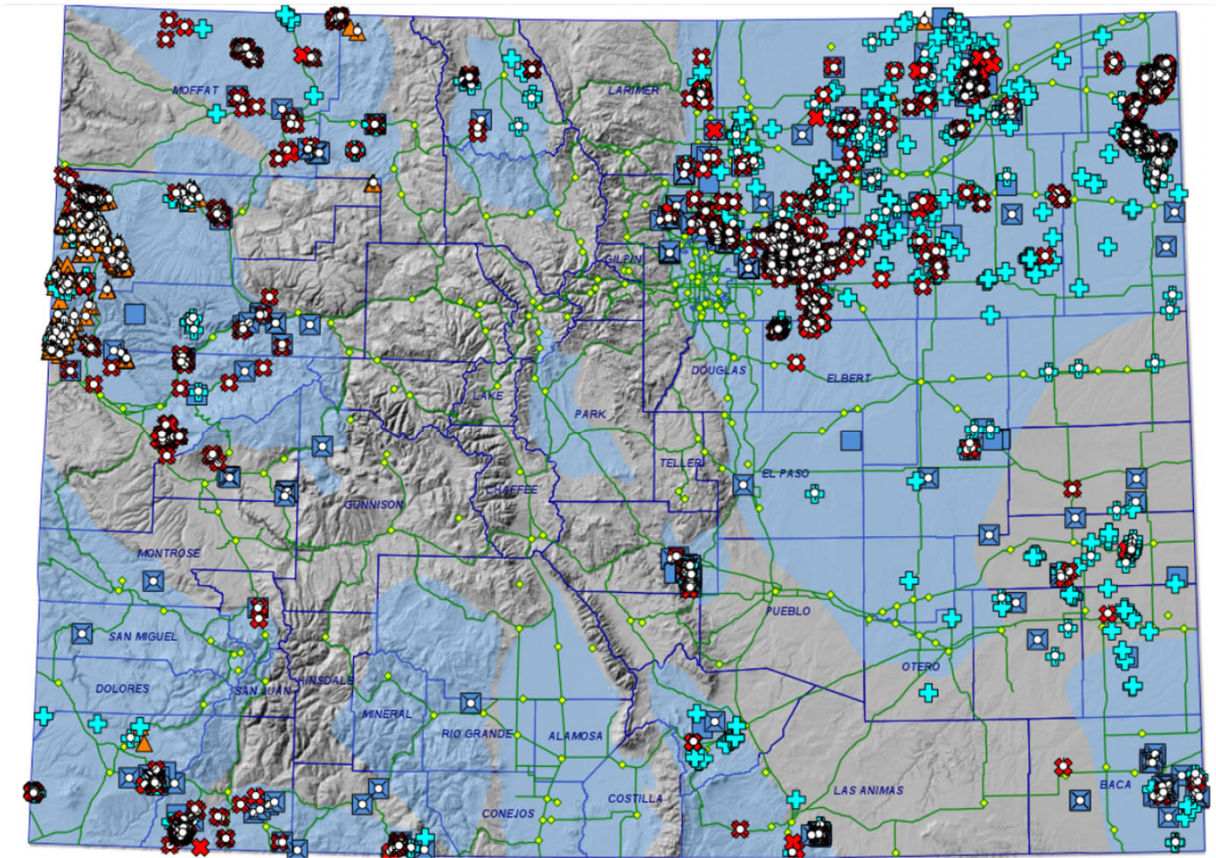


- Preparation of Soils
- Surface Owner - Seed Mix
- Proposed Land Use
- ECMC Standards
- Seed Bed Preparation
- Soil Suitability for Reclamation Parameters
- Stormwater Management
- Weed Management
- Re-Vegetation

Resources: ECMC GIS Map

GIS Online

-  Orphaned Well Program
-  In Progress
-  Planned
-  Completed
-  Federal



https://cogccmap.state.co.us/cogcc_gis_online/

Resources: Website & Annual Reports

<https://sites.google.com/state.co.us/cogcc-owp>



Search

A screenshot of the website for the Orphaned Well Program. The page has a dark blue header with navigation menus: Programs, Regulation, Hearings, Community Resources, Data, Maps, & Reports, Forms & Guidance, and About Us. The 'Programs' menu is open, showing options like Cumulative Impacts, Geothermal, Oil and Gas (with a sub-menu for Flowlines, Marginal Wells, Orphaned Well Program, Orphan Wells Mitigation Enterprise, and Underground Natural Gas Storage), Produced Water Consortium, Solar, Wind & Battery Storage, and Underground Injection Control. The main content area features a large image of an oil rig with the text 'Orphaned Well Program' overlaid. A right-hand sidebar contains a list of links: Home, Program Purpose & History, Federal Grant, Project List, GIS Map, Backlog, Reports, Expenditures, Contractors, Example Projects, and Contact Us. A breadcrumb trail at the bottom left reads 'Home > Programs > Orphaned Well Program'.

Visit our website:
ecmc.state.co.us



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