



WESTERN RESOURCE
ADVOCATES

For Immediate Release
Contact: Peter Roessmann
(303) 444-1188, x. 221
(720)763-3721
David Abelson
(303) 859-1807

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**Western Resource Advocates Releases New Tar Sands and Oil Shale
Report: Organization Cautions that Utah's Resources are at Risk**

SALT LAKE CITY, UT – Today, Western Resources Advocates (WRA) released its new report, “Fossil Foolishness: Utah’s Pursuit of Tar Sands and Oil Shale.” The report evaluates the impacts and wisdom of pursuing development of tar sands and oil shale in Utah. Based on the report findings, WRA cautions against extraction of tar sands and oil shale.

“Developing these resources would degrade Utah’s water and air, use its remaining Colorado River allocations, and change the state’s character by taking water from agriculture,” said Karin P. Sheldon, WRA’s president. “As Governor Herbert develops the state’s 10-year strategic energy initiative, he should take tar sands and oil shale off the table.”

Oil Shale and tar sands are water intensive, high carbon fuels. Using water for commercial development would require a great deal of water in the nation’s second driest state. State data indicates Utah is projected to exceed its limit under the Colorado River Compact in approximately 2025. Further, independent analyses conclude oil shale alone would produce 25-75% more greenhouse gasses than conventional fuels.

“Utah has a choice to make,” Sheldon said. “It could use its precious and limited water supplies for oil shale and tar sands development, or it can save those supplies to ensure that there would be water for future population growth, for irrigated agriculture, for recreation and for the future.”

“Fossil Foolishness” reaches six primary conclusions:

1. Tar sands and oil shale production would not contribute significantly to domestic

COLORADO • 2260 BASELINE ROAD, SUITE 200 • BOULDER, CO 80302 • 303.444.1188 • FAX: 303.786.8054 • EMAIL: info@westernresources.org
NEVADA • 204 N. MINNESOTA STREET, SUITE A • CARSON CITY, NV 89703 • 775.841.2400 • FAX: 866.223.8365 • EMAIL: info@westernresources.org
NEW MEXICO • 409 E. PALACE AVENUE, SUITE 2 • SANTA FE, NM 87501 • 505.820.1590 • FAX: 505.820.1589 • EMAIL: info@westernresources.org
UTAH • 150 SOUTH 600 EAST, SUITE 2AB • SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84102 • 801.487.9911 • EMAIL: utah@westernresources.org
WYOMING • 262 LINCOLN STREET • LANDER, WY 82520 • 307.332.3614 • FAX: 307.332.6899 • EMAIL: info@westernresources.org

www.westernresourceadvocates.org

U.S. oil supply – but, industrial production in Utah would have significant negative impacts to Utah’s air, water and communities.

2. Commercial scale development would require huge quantities of water in the country’s second most arid state. This fact is particularly important as there is little remaining water in the Colorado River Basin.
3. Commercial development of tar sands and oil shale would adversely affect water quality.
4. There is too much uncertainty about how commercial tar sands and oil shale development would proceed. Industry has not explained how much water will be used or how much energy will be required to power the conversion of tar sands or oil shale to liquid fuel.
5. Development of these deposits would harm Utah’s recreation economy. Degraded water and air quality would adversely impact Utah’s \$7.1 billion recreation economy, which provides approximately 113,000 jobs.
6. Utah can be a clean energy leader. By focusing finite human and financial capital on commercial oil shale development, we divert attention from the very real opportunity we have to provide new, renewable energy sources that will power a vibrant economy.

For copies of the report, go to:

<http://www.westernresourceadvocates.org/fossilfoolishness/>

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Western Resource Advocates is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting the West’s land, air, and water. Western Resource Advocates is a regional expert on tar sands and oil shale issues and has offices in Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

Visit us online at www.westernresourceadvocates.org.