

# THE FACTS ABOUT OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT ON UTAH'S PUBLIC LANDS

The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA) supports a balanced approach to energy issues in Utah that includes protecting Utah's special places and promoting energy efficiency and conservation.

**Fiction:** Industry doesn't have access to enough public land in Utah.

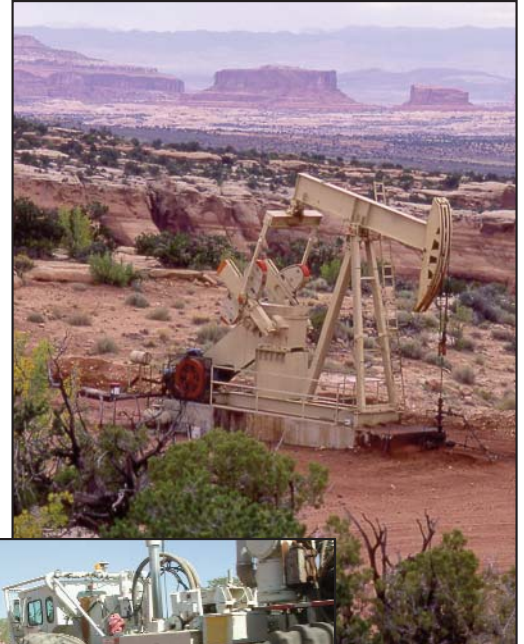
**Fact:** At the end of fiscal year 2013, while industry held more than 3.8 million acres of oil and gas leases on BLM lands in Utah, only 1.11 million acres of those leased lands were actually in production. Currently, more than three-quarters of Utah's BLM lands are available for oil and gas leasing.

**Fiction:** In Utah, oil and gas companies don't have enough permits on hand to drill new wells.

**Fact:** From January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2013, the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining approved 16,132 permits from industry to drill new oil and gas wells in Utah. As of December 31, 2013, 6,176 of those approved permits had not yet been drilled.

**Fiction:** Conservation groups in Utah have filed countless lawsuits to block oil and gas drilling.

**Fact:** Between January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2013, when oil companies were issued 16,132 permits to drill wells, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance challenged only a handful of these drilling projects. Legal challenges are clearly not an impediment to oil and gas development.



Above: Photo  
© James W. Kay.  
Left: Photo by Liz  
Thomas/SUWA

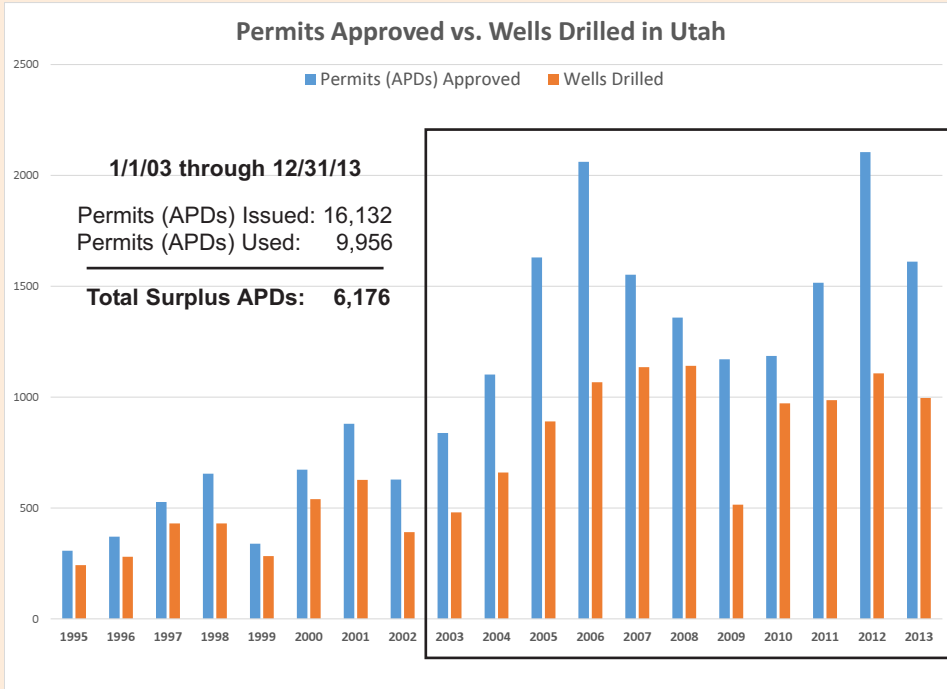


Photo by Kevin Walker

**Fiction:** Developing the lands proposed for wilderness in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act will produce meaningful amounts of oil and gas.

**Fact:** According to British Petroleum's 2013 Statistical Review of World Energy, the United States has approximately 2.1% of the world's proved oil reserves and 4.5% of the world's proved natural gas reserves. According to the federal government's Energy Information Administration, of those national proven reserves the state of Utah holds approximately 1.2% of the nation's proved oil and 2.7% of the nation's proved natural gas. A similarly small percentage of oil and gas is predicted to exist beneath the lands proposed for wilderness designation in America's Red Rock Wilderness Act (ARRWA). An analysis completed by researchers at The Wilderness Society concluded that the technically recoverable undiscovered resources below the lands in ARRWA amount to less than 4 weeks of natural gas and 1 week of oil. Because "technically recoverable" figures do not take into account the cost of recovering the resource, these figures significantly overestimate the volume of resources that may be economically recoverable. Regardless, the devastation to Utah's stunning redrock wilderness necessary to recover such trivial amounts of oil and gas is—quite simply—unacceptable.

## Not Enough Permits?

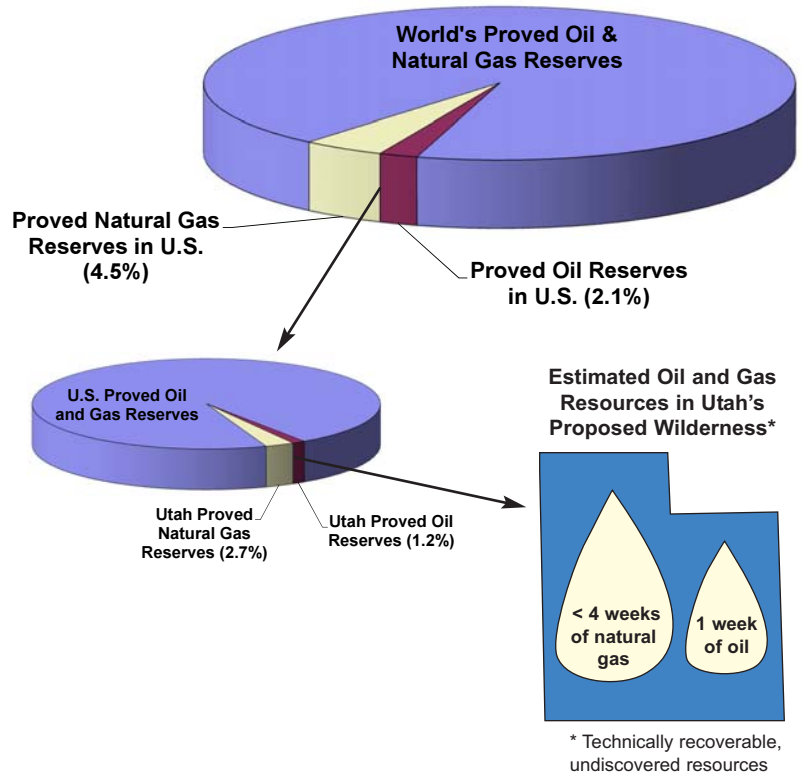
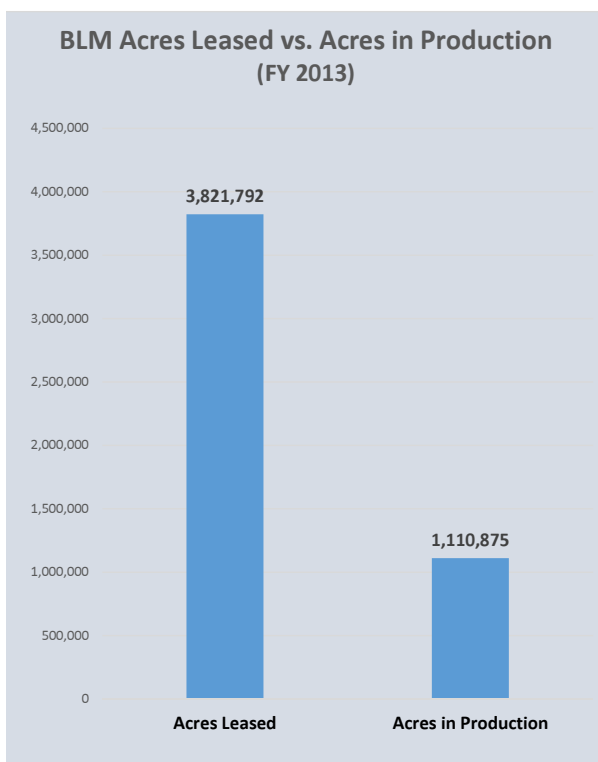


## Not Enough Rigs?

According to the *Baker Hughes Rig Count*, as of May 16, 2014, there were 27 drill rigs operating in Utah. Citing low gas prices and an emphasis on other regions of the country, industry has pulled back on the number of drill rigs operating in the Rocky Mountain states. With a surplus of leases and drill permits, there's simply no need to open new, sensitive areas to oil and gas development.

## Not Enough Leases?

As in most Intermountain West states (including Colorado and Wyoming), oil and gas companies hold millions of acres of non-producing federal oil and gas leases in Utah.



For more information, contact SUWA's Steve Bloch at (801) 486-3161 or visit our website at [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org).

