

EDF's Explanatory Note on Email from Zinke's Staff to Senate

Emails released to EDF under FOIA shed light on Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's efforts to undermine his own agency's Waste Prevention Rule. The emails reveal that, in advance of a Senate vote to repeal this vital protection, Zinke's office worked extensively to schedule personal conversations about the vote between the Secretary and key Senators. The emails confirm that at least some of the conversations actually occurred—even though they do not appear on Zinke's publicly released [calendar](#).

The Waste Prevention Rule limits the [needless waste](#) of American energy resources, provides additional money to communities that can be used to construct roads and schools, and reduces harmful air pollution like climate-damaging methane, smog-forming volatile organic compounds, and carcinogenic benzene. Zinke voted to repeal the Rule while serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, and he has [repeatedly attempted](#) to undermine it since assuming the role of Secretary—all while [maintaining](#) close ties to elements of the oil and gas industry that oppose the rule. Fortunately, a majority of Senators [refused](#) to repeal this important safeguard. And Zinke's related efforts to roll back the Waste Prevention Rule have also hit major setbacks: a federal district court [has twice](#) blocked unlawful actions taken by the Secretary to suspend the rule. On February 22, 2018, Zinke issued a proposal to largely rescind the Waste Prevention Rule; the Department of the Interior will accept public comment on the proposed rule through April 23, 2018.