The Rocky Mountain

L · A · N · D · M · A · N

Volume 41 Issue 7 www.dapldenver.org March 2024

March 20, 2024 | 11:30 AM - 1 PM

DAPL

11:30-12:00: Networking and Buffet
12:00-12:50: Presentation
12:50-1:00: Q&A

Every Lessee for Himself: Cromwell v. Onshore and the 'Anadarko Washout'

Brad Gibbs

Brad represents clients in connection with upstream energy transactions, complex mineral titles, pooling issues, lease analysis, joint operating agreements, surface use issues, solar development and accommodation, title curative, and general oil and gas business matters. His primary focus is on North Dakota, Texas, and New Mexico.

Brad is active in numerous oil and gas and Landman industry associations and frequently speaks at energy conferences and events. He serves on the board of WHAPL and the HBA Energy Law Section. Brad is Board Certified in Oil, Gas, and Mineral Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and has been recognized as a top-rated energy and natural resources lawyer in Houston since 2018.

OLIVA GIBBS LLP

$45 for DAPL Members $60 for Non-members
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The University Club
1673 Sherman St. Denver, CO 80203

UPCOMING EVENTS

DAPL and Family Homestead Volunteer Day	DAPL April Luncheon	8th Annual Energy Industry Happy Hour	DAPL May Luncheon	DAPL Annual Golf Tournament

The Denver Association of Professional Landmen
Telephone: (303) 446-2253
E-Mail: dapl@dapldenver.org
Web Site: www.dapldenver.org
Mailing Address:
730 17th Street, Suite B1
Denver, CO 80202

The Denver Association of Professional Landmen is a non-profit organization operated by its membership for mutual benefit to further the knowledge and interests of Professional Landmen, and to better acquaint the public with the scope of the Landman's work.

The Rocky Mountain Landman is a publication of the Denver Association of Professional Landmen.

Tabatha Reed
DAPL Office Administrator
Phone: (303) 446-2253

Column Coordinators:

Education	**Bresee Carlson** **Crosby Garrison**
Minutes	**Chad Sullivan**
Legal	**Estee Sanchez**

Contributions from our readers are welcome. All suggestions and manuscripts should be emailed to the editor at the DAPL office. We reserve the right to edit all material according to standard practices.

Bylined and credited articles represent the view of the authors; publication neither implies approval of the opinions expressed nor accuracy of the facts stated.

Officer's Forum—AAPL Director

Hello DAPL Members,

March is upon us and the weather has already started teasing us that spring is nearly here. We are lucky to have all four seasons in Colorado. We are also fortunate to not only be working in a great industry, but to be able to do that in the greater Denver area.

I hope that you are getting everything out of your DAPL membership. If not, please ask yourself if it is because you could be:

- Attending more events
  - The DAPL hosts events ranging from networking happy hours, golf scrambles, clay shoot, ski day to monthly educational luncheons that are also in webinar format to be viewed anytime you need a continuing education credit.
  - Join a committee to both participate, but also to expand your personal network.
- Digesting more DAPL information
  - The DAPL provides monthly newsletters that offer more than simply event reminders. Several useful subject matter articles are included in each newsletter to help you stay sharp in your land knowledge.
  - The DAPL sends regular emails with information from event reminders to a periodic Energy Advocacy Brief

Or do you feel DAPL is not providing the offerings you find important to aid your land career? If that is the case, I encourage you to do the following:

- Reach out to Tabatha Reed our office administrator. If you don't know Tabatha, she is the one that makes the DAPL world go 'round. She can point you in the right direction.
- Reach out to the DAPL Board of Directors (found on the DAPL website) to voice your opinion/share feedback.
- Find a committee of interest, reach out to that committee chair to see if you can join and bring your ideas to the committee discussions.

I also encourage you to become an AAPL member and take advantage of all of their offerings. Did you know that they have a Professional Development Assistance program? You can choose from their Institutes, Seminars & Workshops, RPL/CPL Exam Reviews, Annual Meeting, NAPE Summit Energy Business Conference and receive assistance for two programs a year up to $300 each program. To me that basically pays for the annual membership.

As the AAPL Director for DAPL, I have the privilege to attend the AAPL Board Meetings. Please reach out to me for additional information needed or any questions you may have regarding your DAPL and AAPL memberships, or anything you are concerned about and would like me to be your voice at the next board meeting.

Best,

Tyler Aylor

AAPL Director
Denver Association of Professional Landmen
Managing Member
Impact Land, LLC
(405) 414-0219 I tyler@impactland.us

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From a Legal Perspective

Participating but Not Paying: A review of the remedies for nonpayment of JIBs

In the oil and gas regulatory environment, operators are familiar with the following increasingly common pattern. As part of the process of pooling the working interests in a drilling and spacing unit ("DSU"), an operator sends AFEs and election letters to working interest owners and other parties with interests in the DSU. A non-operator signs and returns its election letter, in which it agrees to participate by paying its proportionate share of the drilling, completion, and equipping costs associated with a particular well. The operator obtains regulatory approval pooling all interests in the DSU and granting the operator the right to recover costs against nonparticipating working interest owners. The operator then sends an invoice to the consenting non-operator, who does not pay. In some cases, the operator discovers that the non-operator's interest was sold to a third party shortly after the non-operator returned its signed election letter; in other cases, the non-operator simply fails to pay.

The scenario raises questions of whether certain parties are signing election letters only to strengthen the value of their interest in a well and DSU before ultimately selling their interests. However, it is difficult for operators to recover against nonpaying parties, particularly those nonpaying parties who have sold their interests. Below is a brief summary of the enforcement mechanisms available to an operator to recover unpaid JIBs.

<u>Joint Operating Agreements</u>

Although becoming more uncommon now, a joint operating agreement (JOA), properly executed between the parties, can include some powerful standard and custom provisions that may deter delinquency and allow more efficient recovery. Generally, the JOA will grant the parties reciprocal liens on leasehold and other property then owned or later acquired in the contract area. So long as the lien has been perfected and notice was provided as required by applicable law, each party has a power of sale over any property subject to the lien. Wyoming case law, for example, has held that parties can take action on JOA power of sale provisions via the procedures outlined in the state's real property foreclosure statutes. In addition, after proper notice of default, JOAs may provide operators with the ability to require advance payment (cash calls) from defaulting parties for costs, including those required for drilling and completing a well. A JOA may also impose hefty interest payments that begin accruing days after the defaulting party's receipt of invoices. While operating under the terms of a JOA offers these protections when developing a contract area, JOAs are sometimes unattractive for other reasons, and parties are not required to sign a JOA. In the absence of a JOA, the following other remedies may apply.

<u>Obtaining a Statutory Lien</u>

Another option for the operator is to take advantage of the lien statutes that Rocky Mountain states apply to oil and gas development. Some election letters will specifically provide that participating parties are subject to a lien on their interest in the well. Colorado, North Dakota, and Wyoming provide that parties providing labor and equipment for oil and gas operations, as well as operators in oil and gas properties, may be able to take advantage of state lien statutes under C.R.S. § 38-24-101, *et seq.*; NDCC §§ 35-24-01, *et seq.*; and Wyo. Stat. Ann. §§ 29-3-101, *et seq.* While these liens may attach to the leasehold and properties within the subject area, states differ as to whether they attach to proceeds of production. Generally, within six months from the time that services or materials were provided, these statutes require that liens be perfected by recording in the office of the county clerk and recorder a lien statement containing the amounts due, a description of the property, and other required information. In general, lien statutes are strictly construed according to the particular statutory language, and operators should obtain an attorney's assistance when filing liens.

<u>Statutory Pooling</u>

Even after a defaulting party agreed to participate and a pooling and cost recovery order was obtained, if an operator can show that the party has failed or refused to pay, operators may petition the state oil and gas commission to have the defaulting party deemed nonconsent. Some nonpaying parties may agree to be treated as a nonconsenting party despite electing to participate in the costs of drilling and completing a well, expecting operators to "net" their unpaid JIBs. Such a "supplementary" cost recovery order could be sought in conjunction with other remedies, such as the filing of a lien. Recording a lien statement and a declaration that a party is being treated as a nonconsenting interest for failure to pay JIBs will also put future purchasers on notice of a lien against the party's interests.

From a Legal Perspective cont'd.

Although a state commission like Wyoming's Oil and Gas Conservation Commission has the authority to determine the "proper cost" in the event of a dispute over costs, beyond authorizing statutory cost recovery, its enforcement mechanism over unpaid JIBs is limited. Contract disputes are beyond the scope of their rules and regulations and must be addressed through the courts.

Lawsuits

Perhaps the most time-consuming and expensive remedy is filing a lawsuit. Colorado and Montana courts have held that signed election letters and AFEs have formed contracts; thus, a breach of contract claim, among other potential causes of action, could be appropriate for participating parties that have failed to pay JIBs. In addition, Wyoming's new Chancery Court may offer operators a faster way to resolve JIB disputes through litigation.

Conclusion

Hundreds of thousands of dollars in costs are potentially at stake when parties are unable or unwilling to pay their invoices on development operations. However, there are a number of options available to the operator. The options discussed above are not mutually exclusive, and a combination of such remedies could be advantageous in the right circumstances.

Craig Rowland
Beatty & Wozniak, P.C.

DAPL
Community Service Committee

Volunteer Opportunity

On Saturday, April 13, 2024 the DAPL Community Service Committee in coordination with Family Homestead, will have a volunteer work day.

The specific location and start time of the event will be announced closer to the date of the event but will take place in Denver.

In past years we have painted apartments being used for transitional housing for homeless families with children

REGISTER NOW!
Click here

DAPL 2024 GOLF TOURNAMENT

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!!

This year the tournament will once again be held at the Ranch and River Golf Courses in Keystone, Colorado on Friday, July 19th, 2024

The Golf Tournament is a wonderful opportunity to network, see old friends, and make new acquaintances. There will be team prizes for 1st place in all three flights and of course, as usual, great food, great prizes, and giveaways for participants.

TOURNAMENT: Limited to 54 teams (216 golfers)!

ENTRY FEE: $300.00 - Member / $325.00 - Non-Member *(Entry fee includes green fee, cart, range balls, breakfast, and lunch)*

REGISTRATION: Registration is on a first come, first serve basis and you are **not** considered registered until the entry fee has been received. ****No Refunds after June 14th. Substitutions allowed*****

TOURNAMENT DAY: Check-in will begin for all golfers at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, July 19th, 2024 in front of the clubhouse(s). The driving ranges will be open with breakfast available. The tournament will begin with a shotgun start promptly at **9:30 a.m.**

FORMAT: 4-Person Scramble.

MULLIGANS: Available for purchase at check-in ($15/each - No Limit). ****Please bring CASH*****

The Golf Tournament is the major fundraiser for the DAPL Scholarship Fund, Inc., which funds scholarships to college students enrolled in accredited Petroleum and Energy Management Programs. Sponsorship funds will also be used to help defray the costs of the tournament. Funds in excess of those expenses will supplement DAPL's general operating fund.

THANK YOU SPONSORS

IMPACT
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It is finally that time of year again for the Annual DAPL Golf Tournament! We hope you're doing well! This year the tournament will once again be held at the Ranch and River Golf Courses in Keystone, Colorado on Friday, July 19th, 2024.

The Golf Tournament is a wonderful opportunity to network, see old friends, and make new acquaintances in beautiful Summit County! The first 54 teams (216 players) that **register a complete team and pay** will be sure of a spot in this year's tournament. Course designation and placement will be on a first come, first serve basis. There will be pro-shop gift cards and prizes for the top finishers in each flight, along with great food, door prizes, on course competitions, and giveaways for all the participants. Flights will be determined by the Teams combined handicap, so please use your honest judgement when registering!

The Golf Tournament is the major fundraiser for the DAPL Scholarship Fund, Inc., which funds scholarships to college students enrolled in accredited Petroleum and Energy Management Programs. Sponsorship funds will also be used to help defray the costs of the tournament. Funds in excess of those expenses will supplement DAPL's general operating fund.

In that regard, we are asking for your support of the 2024 DAPL golf tournament. The sponsorship levels detailed below will be acknowledged through signage at the tournament site, in handouts included in each player's goodie bag, in the DAPL newsletter, and on individual tee boxes (tee box sponsors - 36 holes total). Please fill in your desired level of sponsorship and return it with your check to the DAPL office as soon as possible. After you have received this letter you may receive a follow-up call or e-mail within 30 days (if we have not heard back from you).

Should you have any questions about sponsorship, please do not hesitate to call us at one of the numbers or emails listed below. As always, your support and generosity will be greatly appreciated by all members of the DAPL. Thank you!

Sincerely,

DAPL Golf Tournament Committee Chair
Teale Stone – Fundare Resources
Phone: (918) 694-3231
Email: tstone@fundareresources.com

DAPL Golf Tournament Committee Co-Chair
Andrew Stone – Lincoln Energy Partners
Phone: (918) 694-1393
Email: Andrew.Stone@lincolnenergypartners.net

DAPL Office Administrator
Tabatha Reed
Phone: (303) 446-2253
Email: dapl@dapldenver.org

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Sponsorship Opportunities Available

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  - ***Add a tent on a tee box for only $500 more w/ a Titanium Sponsorship***
    - (please contact Teale Stone for details)

- **Platinum** **$1000**
  - Allows you to have a tent on a tee
    - (please contact Teale Stone for details)
  - Includes one-month free advertising on the DAPL website

- **Golf Ball Company Logo Sponsor** (54 dozen-Vice Balls) **$1750**
  - ***3 available***

- **Driving Range Sponsor** (signs on driving range) **$1000**
  - ***2 available per course.*** *Please specify course preference.*

- **Putting Green Sponsor** (signs on putting greens) **$1000**
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- **Gold** **$500**
  - Includes one-month free advertising on the DAPL website

- **Tee Box Sponsor** (sign on one individual tee box) **$250**
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- **Golf Tees Company Logo Sponsor** **$500**

- **Ball Markers Company Logo Sponsor** **$600**

- **Beverage Cart Sponsor** **$550/each**

Sponsors, please email your logo and a brief description of your company to dapl@dapldenver.org.

Checks should be made payable to:
Denver Association of Professional Landmen
730 17th Street, Suite B1
Denver, CO 80202
If you would like to pay by credit card please contact the DAPL.
phone: (303) 446-2253; email: dapl@dapldenver.org

THANK YOU! As always, your support is greatly appreciated by all members of the DAPL!

2024 DAPL Calendar of Events

March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Education Committee Meeting	13 Board Meeting	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Luncheon	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

March 2024

12th-Education Committee Meeting
13th-Board Meeting
20th-Luncheon - - *see page 1 for more information*

April 2024

9th-Education Committee Meeting
10th-Board Meeting
12th-Bill Goodin Scholarship Applications Due - *see page 17 for more information*
13th - Family Homestead Volunteer Day - *see page 6 for more information*
17th-Luncheon
23rd - 8th Annual Energy Industry Happy Hour - *see page 15 for more information*

April 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Education Committee Meeting	10 Board Meeting	11	12 Bill Goodin Scholarship Applications Due	13 Family Homestead Volunteer Day
14	15	16	17 Luncheon	18	19	20
21	22	23 8th Annual Industry Happy Hour	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Field Landman Question

A DAPL member has asked: Has there been any judicial treatment regarding the Colorado Energy and Carbon Management Commission's ("ECMC") recently-adopted administrative/regulatory rules governing financial assurance?

Yes. "Financial assurance" is a requirement imposed on Colorado oil and gas operators mandating that they provide the ECMC with proof of the operator's financial ability to cover all costs associated with well plugging, abandonment and reclamation, typically through the posting of a surety bond. In early 2024, K.P. Kauffman Company, Inc. ("KPK") filed a lawsuit in the District Court for Denver County, Colorado, Case No. 2024CV30005, against the ECMC, the Town of Frederick, Colorado ("Frederick") and the City of Dacono, Colorado ("Dacono"), regarding an ECMC financial assurance plan order under ECMC Rule 702, a newly revised financial assurance administrative rule that became effective in April 2022.

Based on the KPK and ECMC court filings to date, the circumstances leading to the pending KPK v. ECMC, *et al*. litigation began with KPK's submission of its financial assurance plan to the ECMC pursuant to ECMC Rule 702 (which governs an operator's financial assurance requirements), covering KPK's more than 1,000 operated wells. KPK's financial assurance plan requested the ECMC's approval of single well financial assurance, to secure well/location plugging, abandonment and reclamation, pursuant to demonstrated costs (rather than under the default financial assurance amounts set forth in the ECMC Rules). KPK's financial assurance plan was denied by the ECMC Director, allegedly because the plugging, abandonment and reclamation costs demonstrated by KPK came from a KPK-related well service company, rather than from a third-party service provider. The ECMC Director in turn applied for a hearing on KPK's denied financial assurance plan, and shortly thereafter, adverse petitions concerning the same were filed by Dacono and Frederick.

KPK filed a motion with the ECMC, allegedly requesting permission to conduct prehearing discovery – a single deposition – but such request was denied by the ECMC, and a case management order, containing a prehearing statement deadline, was issued. KPK then sought to engage in informal information exchange with the ECMC, allegedly in an effort to better understand the specific types of documentation that would be viewed by the ECMC as adequately supporting KPK's demonstrated costs financial assurance plan. In response, the ECMC allegedly directed KPK to review other Colorado operators' approved and denied financial assurance plans. KPK allegedly did so, and instead of filing a prehearing statement, KPK instead submitted materials supplementing its ECMC Director-denied financial assurance plan. Upon review of such supplemental materials, ECMC Staff recommended approval of KPK's "supplemented" financial assurance plan.

The first hearing on KPK's "supplemented" financial assurance plan occurred in August 2023, during which testimony allegedly showed that KPK's "supplemented" financial assurance plan was: (i) "within reason," in light of the example wells/locations used by KPK and the demonstrated costs financial assurance plans approved by the ECMC for other operators and (ii) reasonable as to KPK's estimated per-well reclamation cost. Additional testimony at this hearing also discussed whether approval of KPK's financial assurance plan for plugging, abandonment and reclamation must also include financial assurance associated with remediation costs for wells/locations with known contamination issues, as required under other ECMC Rules. Following two days of testimony by KPK and the ECMC, the hearing was continued, with the ECMC finding that financial assurance based on demonstrated costs under ECMC Rule 702 must also include financial assurance for remediation costs for wells/locations with known contamination pursuant to ECMC Rules 702 and 703. The parties were then directed to submit supplemental information regarding KPK's known contamination site remediation costs, and the hearing was continued to October 2023.

KPK submitted a supplemental prehearing statement regarding remediation costs, allegedly increasing KPK's financial assurance plan demonstrated costs. The ECMC also submitted a supplemental prehearing statement, and therein, allegedly recommended that KPK's financial assurance plan amounts be increased, in addition to the increases set forth in KPK's supplemental prehearing statement. At the continued hearing in October 2023, KPK and the ECMC allegedly presented evidence related to KPK's known contamination site remediation costs (although KPK was allegedly prohibited from providing further evidence as to financial assurance related to plugging, abandonment and reclamation), followed by the case presentations of Frederick and Dacono. Following the October 2023 hearing, the ECMC issued its final order, denying KPK's demonstrated costs financial assurance plan, and instead requiring KPK to provide financial assurance at the default levels found in ECMC Rule 702, totaling $131,166,000.00.

KPK then filed its now-pending lawsuit against the ECMC, Frederick and Dacono, seeking judicial review of the ECMC's final order regarding KPK's financial assurance plan under C.R.S. § 24-4-106, the entry of a declaratory judgment concerning such final order, compensation for a constitutional taking, and a stay of the ECMC's final financial assurance order pending the litigation's outcome.

Field Landman Question cont'd.

Although this lawsuit is in its nascent stages, the case does represent an important step in vetting Colorado's relatively new oil and gas conservation laws and the ECMC Rules promulgated in support of the same. Specifically, this case represents the first time that there has been a request for judicial review of an ECMC action involving the recently-adopted financial assurance ECMC Rules. Colorado's energy industry will be watching the process and outcome of this case closely.

Brent D. Chicken
Member, Steptoe & Johnson PLLC

Do you have a land issue you would like discussed? Do you need supporting documentation to win a bet with a colleague? Is there a question you are too embarrassed to ask your boss? If so, the DAPL would like to hear from you! Please submit your question to joe.martin@highwestresources.com. Each month, we will publish a question chosen from those submitted, along with a Steptoe & Johnson PLLC attorney's discussion of the issue. The foregoing article discusses general legal principles and laws applied to a generic fact situation, is not intended to constitute legal advice or create any attorney-client relationship, and no representation or warranty of accuracy or applicability regarding the same is made by the author or Steptoe & Johnson PLLC. The content of and views expressed in the foregoing article are those of the author, and are not the views of the DAPL.

GEOLAND SKI DAY—THANK YOU!

DAPL

RMAG

2024 brought DAPL and RMAG back together for GeoLand Ski Day! With over 40 attendees the Après was a great way to reconnect with industry friends after a day on the slopes! Thank you to all the registrants that made it up for the day! A special thanks to Tjornehoj Hack & Lovell for breakfast at the bus and Ascent Geomatics Solutions for the bus ride back drinks!

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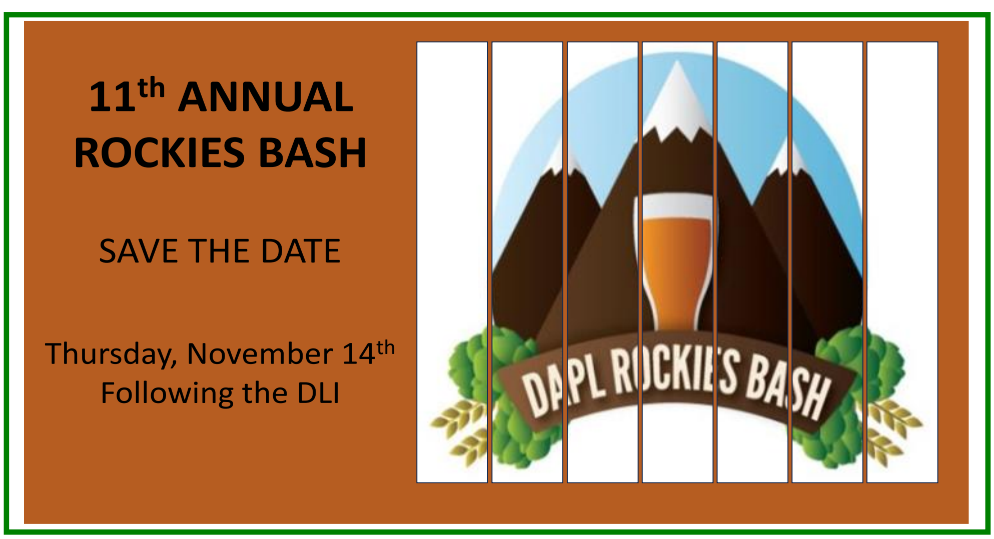

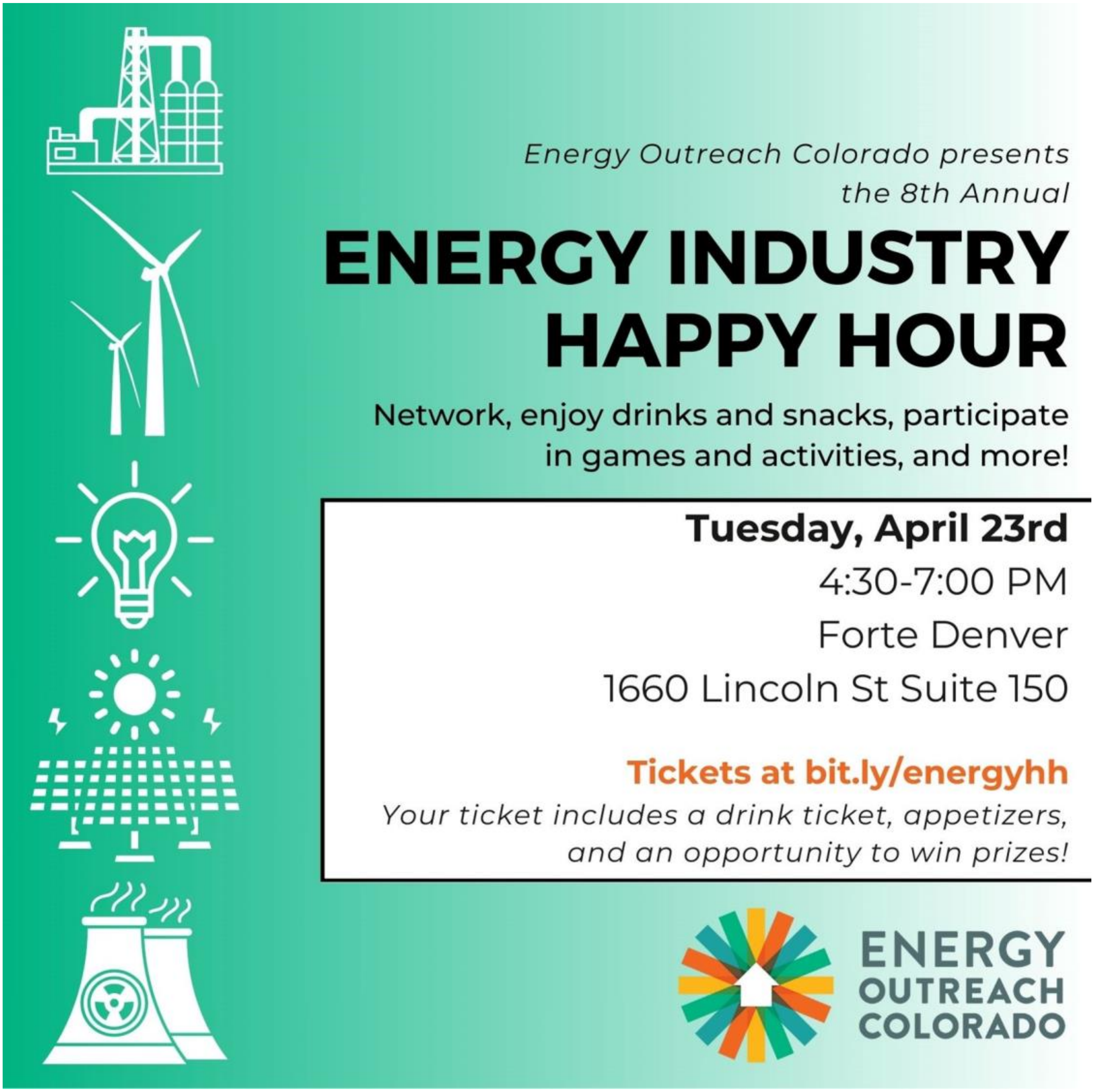
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Size	Dimension (W x H)	1 Time Ea.	10 Times Ea.
Business Cards	2 1/2 x 1	$ 25.00	$ 20.00
1/4 Column	2 3/8 x 2 1/4	$ 40.00	$ 36.00
1/2 Column	2 3/8 x 4 1/2	$ 65.00	$ 58.50
1/3 Page	2 3/8 x 9 or 4 3/4 x 4 1/2	$140.00	$126.00
1/2 Page	7 1/2 x 4 1/2	$195.00	$175.50
Double Column	4 3/4 x 9 1/2	$235.00	$211.50
Full Page	7 1/2 x 9 1/2	$390.00	$351.00

Contact : DAPL Office (303) 446-2253

BILL GOODIN SCHOLARSHIP

Application Now Open

IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE DAPL BILL GOODIN SCHOLARSHIP:

- Students must be pursuing a major in Energy Management at an AAPL accredited college or university within the U.S.
- Student must maintain enrollment in the land management program throughout the academic year.
- Student should have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA.
- Student must be a Sophomore, Junior, or incoming Senior to apply for the Bill Goodin Scholarship.

Scholarship application can be submitted through our website using the below link.
The completed application must be received by April 12, 2024.

Bill Goodin Scholarship Application (click here)

DAPL ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The DAPL Advocacy Committee is responsible for educating the DAPL membership on ballot initiatives and how they affect our industry and overall economy. The Committee is also responsible for training members on industry facts and how to effectively engage others. Please contact Co-Chairs for additional information or to get involved.

The Advocacy Committee is looking for new members! If you are interested or know somebody that is interested/is a good fit please reach out to
Malinda Morain, Advocacy Committee Chair or Tabatha Reed, DAPL Office Administrator

2023/24 DAPL OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Elk Cove……303-564-4326
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