RESEARCH REFERENCE AND CITATION GUIDE

# U.S. Orphan Well Funding and Plugging

US orphan well funding statistics with all 27 state grant recipients, program accounts, documented inventory, plugging cutoffs and reproducible downloads.

Updated November 2026

A concise reference to the full source-backed study, with exact finding links. Source observation periods remain distinct from the article date.

## Specific findings with their source boundaries

DOI reports $1,862,875,009 in cumulative State Program awards to 27 listed recipients through September 30, 2026. All 27 recipients in DOI Table 2, pp13 through 14; awards, not expenditures; original dash/blank grant-component cells remain nonnumeric. Exact finding 1.

Formula Grants account for 60.76%, Initial Grants 30.86% and Matching Grants 8.39% of the $1,862,875,009 cumulative State Program award total through September 30, 2026. AMR calculation from exact reported category totals. Shares rounded independently to two decimals sum 100.01%; no missing component is recorded as an observed zero. Exact finding 2.

Texas, Pennsylvania, California, Oklahoma and Ohio account for $853,615,185, or 45.82%, of cumulative State Program awards through September 30, 2026. AMR descending ranking by reported award total, all 27 recipients as denominator. Funding concentration is not cleanup performance or a needs ranking. Exact finding 3.

The September 2026 USGS release description reports 130,121 documented unplugged orphaned wells in 28 states, while DOI FY 2026 quotes 130,122. The one well difference is unresolved. Description snapshots and source editions, not comprehensive all-US abandoned well totals or matching dates for every state record. No correction cause invented. Exact finding 4.

The current USGS description has 12,449 more documented unplugged orphan records than the 117,672 August 2022 inventory described by DOI. This is a database vintage difference, not new abandonments. AMR 130121 minus 117672 calculation. Current coverage 28 states versus 27 in superseded description; DOI attributes growth in its own 130122 comparison to improved collection, classifications, databases and inspections. Exact finding 5.

DOI reports 13,108 IIJA funded wells plugged nationally through June 30, 2026; State Program 12,658 and Federal Program 346 use June cutoffs, while Tribal Program 127 uses September 30, 2026. Reported cumulative physical outputs. No unmatched-date sum, total-US plugging count, stock-flow subtraction or national completion percentage. Catalog 11,409 counts submissions received through Jan 31. Exact finding 6.

DOI Table 1 reports $338.3 million awarded or transferred during FY 2026: State Program $326 million and Tribal Program $12.3 million, with no annual amount shown for Federal or IOGCC. Every Table 1 program row and printed precision preserved. Source dashes remain nonnumeric. Annual award/transfer activity differs from cumulative distribution, direct program authority and expenditure. Exact finding 7.

The five federal recipient descriptions in DOI FY 2026 sum to 1,268 intended wells. Their rounded funding displays sum to $242 million, compared with the separately reported $241.3 million direct program amount. AMR sum of published recipient targets and rounded funding amounts, p 9. Targets are not completed wells; no cost-per-well or completion-rate calculation. Exact finding 8.

DOI Figure 4 contains 18 Tribal or project award labels summing to $93.10 million at printed precision, while its program narrative reports $93.2 million through September 2026. AMR transcription of all 18 map labels, p 8, not independently verified legal entity names or expenditures. Printed difference is unresolved; no silent reallocation. Exact finding 9.

DOI reports 6,554 acres remediated and available for beneficial use through June 30, 2026, using recipient reports and median based estimates where acreage was not reported. Reported/estimated restoration acreage, p 16, not independently measured-only area, an acres-per-well benchmark or quantified avoided emissions. Exact finding 10.

## Method, definitions and complete data

All 27 recipients in DOI Table 2, pp13 through 14; awards, not expenditures; original dash/blank grant-component cells remain nonnumeric.

The full HTML article includes source definitions, supporting tables, the complete fixed comparison and a specific permanent link for each finding. Figures are also readable as HTML text. This PDF is a concise reference to the complete article, not a replacement for its detailed methodology.

Use the reproduction ZIP for the pinned source input, complete CSV files, data dictionary and standard-library calculation program. Values are rounded only after calculation. Original producer estimates, material forms and source windows remain attached.

AMR calculations and original figures: CC BY 4.0. Preserve original producer attribution and applicable source terms.

## Sources

Original primary source https://www.doi.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2026-11/owpo-annual-report-congress-202610092026.pdf

Original primary source https://www.usgs.gov/data/united-states-documented-orphaned-well-database-2026

Original primary source https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/united-states-plugged-orphaned-oil-and-gas-well-dataset

American Mineral Registry Research. Fixed November 2026 analysis edition.