

Gwen Alexandra Lachelt

Durango, Colorado 81301

BIOGRAPHY

Gwen Alexandra Lachelt (pronounced "Lak-ult") was born in New Mexico on February 9, 1963. Lachelt's mother, Lora Jean MacKenzie Lachelt, hails from Montana and her father, DeWayne, was raised in the Black Hills of South Dakota. As a child, Gwen lived in Alaska and moved with her family to Aurora, Colorado in 1972. Gwen moved to Durango June 1, 1981. She is a La Plata County commissioner and the founder and director of Western Leaders Network.

Gwen graduated from Fort Lewis College in 1985. In 1987, she began her nonprofit career working as a community organizer in Durango for Western Colorado Congress, later serving as its executive director. In her time with WCC, Gwen worked on numerous community issues including highway safety, affordable housing, renters' rights, oil and gas, and public lands. She served as the first executive director of the San Juan Citizens Alliance and was a visiting Sociology instructor at Fort Lewis College. In 1999 Gwen founded Earthworks' Oil & Gas Accountability Project to work with communities nationwide to prevent and minimize the impacts caused by oil and gas development. In 2005 the Ford Foundation selected Gwen as a national finalist for the prestigious Leadership for a Changing World award. OGAP received \$5,000 for Gwen's award.

Lachelt's work has been covered in media outlets such as *The Durango Herald*, *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek*, *People*, *ProPublica*, *Mother Jones*, *CNN*, *The Denver Post*, *The Fort Worth Weekly*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Anchorage Daily Times*, *National Public Radio*, *PBS*, *CBS Evening News* and *NBC Nightly News*.

A lifelong cycling enthusiast, Gwen has completed several bike tours including one from Durango to Zion National Park and back, *Ride the Rockies*, two *Iron Horse Bicycle Classics* and several *American Lung Association* tours. Gwen enjoys spending time with her two sons, Benjamin and Caleb, her two cats, Kitee and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and her dog, Skye. She also enjoys mountain biking, lake kayaking, hiking and tennis. She was a member of the *Fort Lewis College Tennis Team* and captain of her high school tennis team.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Western Leaders Network – Founder & Director	2017 - Present
La Plata County Commissioner	2013 – Present
Earthworks' Oil & Gas Accountability Project – Founder & Director	1999 – 2012
San Juan Citizens Alliance – Executive Director	1998 – 1999
Western Colorado Congress – Executive Director	1994 – 1998
Western Colorado Congress – Community Organizer	1987 – 1994
Durango Herald – Circulation, Advertising, Accounting swing employee	1986 - 1987
Gazette Telegraph – District Supervisor - Circulation Department	1985 - 1986
Fort Lewis College Utility Department	1982 - 1984

EDUCATION

Antioch University

Yellow Springs, Ohio

1997-1998: Graduate level course work in Environment and Community Program

Fort Lewis College

Durango, Colorado

1985: BA in Political Science

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fort Lewis College

1998: Visiting Instructor for Sociology course on social change

Western Organization of Resource Councils

1987-1997: Principles of Community Organizing trainings

Since 1987 Gwen has participated in and led trainings on topics such as fundraising and organizational, campaign and strategy development and is invited to speak frequently throughout the United States and Canada.

PAST COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES & AFFILIATIONS

Leadership La Plata; Fort Lewis College Environmental Center Board of Directors; Durango Community Access Television founding board member; BearSMART Durango co-founder

PUBLICATIONS

Lachelt is the principle author or contributing editor to numerous oil and gas publications including:

Comments to the EPA on the draft study report: *Evaluation of Impacts to Underground Sources of Drinking Water by Hydraulic Fracturing of Coalbed Methane Reservoirs*

Our Drinking Water at Risk; What the EPA and the Oil and Gas Industry Don't Want Us to Know About Hydraulic Fracturing

Oil and Gas at Your Door? A Landowner's Guide to Oil and Gas Development

The Landowner's Guide to the New Mexico Surface Owner's Protection Act

The Landowner's Guide to the Colorado Landowner's Protection Act

Comments to the EPA on its study to develop *Permitting Guidance on the Use of Diesel Fuels in Hydraulic Fracturing Fluids*

APPOINTMENTS

Southwest Colorado Council of Governments Board of Directors – 2017 - present

San Juan Basin Public Health Department Board of Directors – 2015 - present

Governor's Blue-Ribbon Oil & Gas Task Force – Co-Chair – 2014 - 2015

Housing Solutions of the Southwest Board of Directors – 2013 - present

National Association of Counties Energy, Environment and Land Use Steering Committee – 2013

New Mexico Oil Conservation Division Environmental Advisory Committee – 2011

New Mexico Oil Conservation Division Pit Rule Advisory Committee – 2010

Western Governors' Association Advisory Committee, Coalbed Methane Best Management Practices - 2002

La Plata County Air Quality Advisory Committee - 1998

COUNTY COMMISSIONER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Gwen Lachelt began her first four-year term as a La Plata County commissioner in January 2013. Lachelt was re-elected to a second term in 2016. Commissioner Lachelt's priorities have included: updating the county's comprehensive master land use plan and land use code; protecting Animas River water quality through installation of a water treatment facility for mine waste runoff on Cement Creek; affordable and attainable housing; living wage jobs; developing permanent supportive housing for the county's homeless population; effectively addressing the Four Corners "methane cloud" and La Plata County's high ozone levels through reduction of methane emissions from oil and gas facilities and pipelines on federal lands; protecting public lands; reducing wildfire risk; diversifying La Plata County's economy; clean, renewable energy development; and addressing the county's declining revenue trend by promoting the need to modernize the county's property tax mill levy and reverse the TABOR and Gallagher amendments. As county commissioner, Lachelt was appointed by Governor John Hickenlooper to co-chair the Oil and Gas Task Force. She serves on the National Association of Counties' Environment, Energy and Land Use Steering Committee. Lachelt represents the county on the boards of San Juan Basin Public Health, Housing Solutions and the Southwest Colorado Council of Governments. Lachelt has also served on the Durango-La Plata County Library Advisory Board and Region 9 Economic Development board.

LEGISLATIVE AND RULEMAKING EXPERIENCE

State Legislation:

Colorado

1990-2007: Developed and promoted various bills aimed at preventing and minimizing the impacts of oil and gas development in the state of Colorado. In 1990, Lachelt's efforts resulted in the passage of legislation that added one public interest member to the Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission.

In 2007, Lachelt was involved in the passage of two separate bills. One restructured the COGCC to include the diverse interests involved in oil and gas development in Colorado. The other was the Colorado Landowner's Protection Act.

New Mexico

2005: Lachelt built a coalition of groups in New Mexico to develop and promote passage of the Surface Owner's Protection Act. That legislation was signed into law in 2007.

Local and State Rulemakings:

Colorado

1989-1991: Participated in La Plata County's process to develop and implement an oil and gas ordinance.

1989-2011: Participated in various state oil and gas rulemakings governing exploration and production waste, air and noise

emissions, fracking fluid disclosure, etc.

1991-2011: Worked with local governments of Las Animas, Pitkin, San Miguel, Routt and El Paso to develop and implement local oil and gas regulations.

New Mexico

2003-2009: Worked with various local governments including Colfax, the City of Aztec, Santa Fe and San Miguel to develop and implement oil and gas regulations.

2003-2011: Participated in various Oil Conservation Commission rulemakings to adopt the Surface Waste Rule, Pit Rule, Inactive Well Rule and Fracturing Fluid Disclosure Rule.

Federal Rulemakings and Legislation:

1990: Worked in Congress to pass legislation aimed at removing the oil and gas waste exemption from the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. This legislation did not pass.

1999-current: Advocated for the EPA to regulate hydraulic fracturing under the Underground Injection Control program. Worked to get the EPA to study the environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing in coalbed methane formations.

2001-2005: Worked in Congress to prevent amendments to federal legislation that would exempt hydraulic fracturing from the Safe Drinking Water Act. In 2005 Congress passed the Energy Policy Act, which exempted fracking from SDWA but restricted the use of diesel fuel in fracking operations.