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## Introduction

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## INTRODUCTION

Issue 56.1 of the *Natural Resources Journal* took you to America's National Park System. This issue, Issue 56.2, takes you to a subject at least as close to the Mexican national psyche as national parks are to ours: Mexican energy policy.

Since the arrival of resource-hungry Spanish colonists, Mexico's history has been shaped by rivalries over natural resources. In 1938—sometimes characterized as the true culmination of the Mexican Revolution—President Lázaro Cardenas expropriated foreign investors from the petroleum industry, cutting off exploitation of Mexico's vast petroleum resources and placing the sole responsibility for industry development in state-run *Pétroleos Mexicanos* (PEMEX). The reaction of the Mexican populace—and the 75-year longevity of the ban—demonstrates the importance of energy policy to Mexico's nationhood. It also underscores the significance of the 2013 Energy Reform, which tentatively re-opens the door to private contracting and foreign investment.

It is our hope that this issue provides thorough insight into the energy issues particular to Mexican history and society, as well as a broader lens for analyzing twenty-first century energy policy. Foreign investors must not forget the pattern of exploitation that runs through Mexico's energy history. First among the broader policy questions raised by the 2013 Energy Reform is how Mexico can best manage petroleum revenues for present and future generations. Amid structural and legal reforms to its once state-run energy sector, Mexico has new possibilities for international cooperation in natural gas exploration and development. At the same time, Mexico has emerged as a leader in international commitments to reducing climate change. The Reform advances sustainability through market-based schemes like green energy certificates to promote renewable energy development. Finally, questions of energy justice, i.e. democratic distribution of resource revenues and management, remain as important today as in 1938.

We had the honor of working with a diverse cross-section of authors in producing this issue: students, scholars, attorneys, and industry leaders from Mexico and the United States. Their insight into the challenges and opportunities of Mexico's energy reforms are an apt sample of the *Natural Resources Journal's* tradition of bringing minds together across borders and disciplines. We extend our thanks to the students, faculty, authors, and readers who made it possible.

Saludos,  
Natalie Zerwekh and Lance Hough  
Co-Editors in Chief, Volume 56