

PRBRC CITIZEN PETITION COMMENTS:

SUBMITTED BY GENE E. LITTON, CAMPBELL CO. RANCHER

Rec'd
1-17-07

The requirements that the Powder River Resource Council Petition is asking for would not be acceptable for our ranch or many other ranches in our area. Some of those ranch representatives are here with us today.

First of all, the water in our area is good enough for human consumption and that includes CBNG water. When the CBNG water and our house water were tested, it was found that if we did not treat our water with a softener and reverse osmosis, we would be better off drinking the CBNG water, it is that good. We have no problem with the water.

To add to that, we have planted 1200 trees in our shelter belt, various trees in our ranch yard. And have over an acre of lawn, along with them, that we water with the CBNG water. Not to mention we have 2 other home sites, where there are trees, lawns, lot of flowers, and all kept growing hardily with CBNG water. And a garden that also flourishes because of CBNG water.

The petitioners and the EQC are looking at too broad of a spectrum with this petition. If, in fact, there is not a water quality problem in our area, why should we all (state wide) be put in jeopardy of losing the one sustainable resource we have counted on for several years. Why should we be put in a position where our ranch could not operate as we have in the past, where our water is involved?!

With our water infrastucture in place, provided by the coal bed methane industry, it would be a shame if, because of the proposed regulations, we could no longer use this established system for our continued ranching operation. It was designed to be a future asset to our ranch.

I might add that though we have had four (4) years of severe drought, we have had to reduce our livestock numbers. We have been able to survive and stay in business because of this good water supply. We could not have done it without that water!

Yet I wonder what will happen to us and many more people in Wyoming if the methane gas industry has to shut down because of this highly restrictive proposed

petition. I'm not sure the tax payers or the legislators will be too happy at the loss of all that revenue, when there are better ways to handle this matter.

I see in a couple of papers that the Governor states that the oil & gas industry expects to be drilling between 4,000 to 5000 new wells each year for the next four or five years. This would certainly keep our economy bright.

If the proposed petition is accepted & adopted, many of these wells and maybe all of them, might not be able to get a discharge permit that would allow them to drill, let alone operate these future wells.

Therefore, it would be a tragedy for Wyoming to have a blanket policy adopted for the discharge of methane waters in our state. Why sacrifice the beneficial use of the good methane discharge waters, when it is such a vital asset to our state. There can be rules and regulations worked out on those waters that are possibly not as beneficial as others. This could well be developed between those ranchers and the methane companies, and become a win win situation.

I really don't feel that the methane waters will be with us for a long period of time, as it has already in some areas beginning to decline. Let's not be hasty in adopting a plan that doesn't take in to consideration, there are areas that need and want the water, and are willing to negotiate a positive solution for the discharge or storage or use of that water.

The methane water on our ranch has become a most viable resource, and we can ill afford to lose it!! We have built in a system that allows us to use this water in the most beneficial, and sustaining way. And this was done with the help and the guidance of the methane companies we have had the opportunity to work with.

Although I've spoken mostly about methane water, because that is the water that affects us at this time, I have a real concern with the proposed petition before the Committee. And that is, this petition affects all discharged waters in this state. Whether it be from wells, methane waters, stored waters, etc. And there lies a big concern. That's why I feel a blanket policy is not the way to go. Each situation has to be considered on its own merit. Good water or bad, it is not the same!!

In these drought years, you can survive with a little feed, but we can not survive without water. We have that water now, with the methane water - and we sure don't want to lose it. We followed the proper procedures with every well site and discharge of the water from these wells. We're happy! We're satisfied!

The state of Wyoming - State Engineers office has done an outstanding job, with the applications for water permits, etc.

Don't regulate something that is going to be impossible to monitor, or regulate.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gene E. Litton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G" and "L".

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