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Terri A. Lorenzon, Director
Environmental Quality Council

Wyoming Environmental Quality Council
122 West 25th Street, Room 1714
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Re: Proposed rule changes for discharged water

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am an exploration geologist who has lived in Thermopolis for the past 20 years. I have two very relevant situations to tell you about that may affect your decisions on the proposed rule change.

Shortly after moving to Wyoming, I purchased an old, small field called Kirby Creek Oil Field. I drilled a few shallow wells and was able to make a living from the minor production achieved. The Oil & Gas Commission asked me to plug three very old oil wells that were flowing fresh water into Alkali Creek, an ephemeral drainage. I did as ordered and observed a wild life oasis that had been frequented by ducks, mule deer, antelope, beaver, and game birds literally disappear along with the source of water.

Norman Sanford, the local rancher, had often thanked me for not fencing the 8+ acres that were part of the field and contained discharged water skim ponds. His cattle relied on the available water and spent a large part of their time at the oil field. I am sure that if Norman were still alive, he would be testifying in opposition to any changes that would jeopardize the beneficial use of oilfield discharge waters.

The second situation is related to my discovery in 1991 of Centennial Oil Field four miles NE of Thermopolis. I have been slowly developing this discovery using profits from the small-scale production and now have four producing wells. The discharge water is marginally within current guidelines for a discharge permit and would probably not qualify under more stringent rules. In order for this field to become truly economic, I must initiate a water flood which will result in significantly larger volumes of discharge water. This field is jointly owned with my father and we could not afford to produce and further develop this field with out a continuance of our discharge permit.

Besides allowing development of the field, the extra water would be beneficial to Debbie Axtel who has the grazing permit for the State and federal lands involved. Also, the wildlife in this area would be less impacted by the drought conditions that we currently face in the Bighorn Basin.

Sincerely,

Daniel C. Wychgram, Wyoming Certified Geologist #1911

