

January 26, 2007

FILED

Mr. Mark Gordon, Chairman
Wyoming Environmental Quality Council
122 W. 25th St.
Herschler Bldg., Rm. 1714
Cheyenne, WY 82002

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Terri A. Lorenzon, Director
Environmental Quality Council

Dear Mr. Gordon:

My name is Jeff Howe. I was born in Powell, Wyoming and raised in Cody, Wyoming and moved to Gillette when I was in second grade. I have lived in various places since I graduated and ended up in Denver where I got married and started a family. As the CBM industry grew I noticed the possibility to move home and be closer to my family and my wife's family while making the same wages I made in Denver as a Land Surveyor. We made the move back to Gillette in 2003 and haven't regretted it a bit. My wife works in the Campbell County School District and I am a GIS Technician for an operator in the Powder River Basin. My son has special needs and receives the quality of care and resources you would think only available in a big city. This is all possible by funding from the County and State from programs that use money generated in part by mineral royalties.

I was shocked at the petition filed by the Powder River Basin Resource Council (PRBC) and very surprised that it is even being considered. I know that there has got to be some give and take in any relationship but this petition seems to be all take by a few unhappy landowners and no give to the CBM industry and the many landowners and ranchers that benefit from the CBM industry. I have seen the benefits of CBM water on ranch land that has not seen water for many years. The fact ranchers and other industries able to have and use of this water in the middle of a drought is amazing.

As a member of the CBM industry, it is our job and our goal to be stewards of the land and be intelligent about how the water is discharged. Rules and regulations have been put in place and are followed as closely as possible but the PRBC seems to believe that is not enough. Upon reading through the petition there doesn't seem to be any scientific numbers that were used to set the standards for CBM discharge water. The city water I drink, bathe, cook and water my yard with has a minimum standard barium level of 2000 pp/billion. The standard they want to establish for CBM Discharge is 200 pp/billion. Does this mean the city water I use is "polluted" or is "pollution"? If so, I will stop drinking it!!

As stated by the administrator of the DEQ, John F. Wagner, and I quote "Please note that should the council adopt part (a) of Appendix I in its current form, it would essentially prohibit CBM discharges to the surface." With this statement and the standards set forth in the petition, this would essentially shut down 99% of the discharges in the basin and put me and thousands of other people out of work. The State of Wyoming relies on mineral royalties and taxes to create its budgets and fund programs. This money would soon quit coming in and programs that benefit everyone in the state might be cut. Resolutions should and can be made through other means than shutting down a whole industry that benefits the entire State of Wyoming.

Thank you for letting me voice my small opinion on such a big decision that you have to make for an industry and for the residents of the State of Wyoming.

Sincerely,



Jeff Howe
2604 Logan Ave.
Gillette, WY 82718
307-682-1646