

Environmental Quality Council
(attn.: Kim McGee)
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Please consider my comments below concerning coal bed methane discharges in Wyoming. This is an area of critical concern. We can either do it the right way, or the wrong way. Right now, we're doing it the wrong way.

1. The current water management system for coal bed methane discharges, administered primarily by DEQ is not working. Ranches are being inundated with too much polluted water that is causing erosion, sedimentation, siltation and flooding.
2. There is a need to impose greater restrictions on the volume of water that can be discharged from CBM wells -- since most of it is too dirty to allow the native grasses to thrive, and since there is too much of it in any event.
3. Only water that will actually be used for beneficial purposes -- and no more -- should be allowed to be discharged from CBM wells. As for the rest of it, the industry should reinject it underground.
4. The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality does have the legal authority to address this issue, since it is causing serious environmental problems in the Powder River Basin, and it is their duty to "prevent, reduce and eliminate pollution" under the Wyoming Environmental Quality Act.

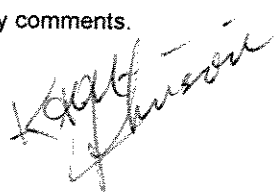
Over the past several years, the discharge of coal bed methane (CBM) produced water in the Powder River Basin into ephemeral drainages has destroyed native vegetation and replaced it with vegetation that that is much less palatable and less nutritious for livestock, as well as wildlife. The CBM discharge water has also killed hundreds of cottonwood trees and is loading these drainages with salts that are causing irreversible damage to the soils in these drainages.

Again, the Wyoming DEQ does have the authority to address this issue.

Thank you for listening to my comments.

Sincerely,

Mr. Kim Johnson
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Terri A. Lorenzon, Director
Environmental Quality Council