

Jan 27, 2007

Mr. Mark Gordon, Chairman  
Wyoming Environmental Quality Council  
122 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Herschler Bldg., Room 1714  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

**FILED**

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Terri A. Lorenzon, Director  
Environmental Quality Council

Dear Mr. Gordon,

It has come to our attention that you have been presented with a petition by Powder River Basin Resource Council to change Wyoming water quality rules to the Environmental Quality Council and that these proposed changes are aimed at water produced from coal-bed methane wells. After reading a copy of the petition, we are deeply concerned by how such changes would directly affect us personally and our ranching operation, financially.

We, Robert and Charalee Billinger, of Eastern Campbell County, own and operate a ranch that is presently being impacted by discharged coal-bed methane production water. It is flowing at a low level down the Belle Fourche River stream-bed.

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through our hay meadows. We have not suffered any damage to our riparian area, be it to trees, grass or alfalfa. We winter our cattle in that pasture every year, having done so in our ranching operation since the land was obtained in the 1930's. Until the present drought, we had been able to rely on water from springs and naturally occurring run-off. But this drought has been severe enough to even dry up springs along the historic Texas Trail segment that touches our ranch; the first time that has happened since cattle were first brought up the Trail prior to 1890.

For that reason, we have fully appreciated the benefit of having CBM discharge water flow through that pasture. Our cattle have a sure source of good potable water, while they are pastured there. And the deer and antelope also have year round beneficial use of the water.

From our own experience, we recommend the Citizen Petition for

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Rulemaking - Powder River Basin Resource Council et al - Revised Version - WQDC Chapter 2, presented to Mr. Mark Gordon, Chairman of Wyoming Environmental Quality Council, on January 17-18, 2007, be denied.

Some of the matter in the petition appears to us to be based on flawed reasoning. Furthermore, the proposed changes would shut down the very water we are depending on for our cattle at this time. We believe the present rules are adequate and have been and still are being properly administered.

We do not have any coal bed methane gas production on any of our land, nor are we apt to, and the nearest production is 15 miles away, so our comments are not influenced in any way by monetary gain from such production. It is about time those of us who benefit from the discharge water are heard.

To shut that water off would hurt

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us badly, financially, at this time. We would have to drill and complete a well in order to water our livestock. Such a well would cost more than \$15,000<sup>00</sup>, no small amount at any time, and ruinous during a drought. We have already suffered 7 years of drought and appear to be entering the 8<sup>th</sup> year of severe drought conditions.

Thank you for giving us this opportunity to submit our concerns.

Sincerely yours,  
Robert & Claralee  
Claralee Dillinger

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