

**FILED**

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Terri A. Lorenzon, Director  
Environmental Quality Council

I am Marjorie West, a rancher who lives in the Spotted Horse area of the Powder River Basin, Wyoming.

I am so proud to live in a state where there are still a few individuals who stand up for what is right in spite of attempted interference from the Governor's office.

My ranch encompasses a portion of Spotted Horse Creek, which is an ephemeral drainage. This is where our hay meadows, the most productive part of our ranch are located.

Devon Energy flooded our hay meadows with Coal Bed Methane(CBM) gas discharge water from wells upstream of our property despite the fact that our attorney had previously warned them not to do this, and despite the fact that during the winter of 2000-2001 Devon Energy had no surface use agreement with us. We were finally able to sign a surface use agreement with Devon in early 2002. This agreement states that Devon Energy will reclaim our hay meadows by May of 2002. We are still waiting.

Within hours of Marathon's turning on its pumps to de-water their CBM gas wells on our property, three of our artesian wells that provided winter water for our cattle stopped flowing. We currently use CBM gas discharge water to water our cattle during the winter. When my husband asked Marathon if they would leave us one operational well with which to water our cattle, they said "NO. WE DON'T HAVE TO!"

How much will the cost of drilling a new stock water well be? Will we be able to afford to drill a new well? As we all know, you cannot raise cattle with out water.

For the past two years, water from Yates's CBM gas wells, NOT located on our property, has flowed across our land ---- a violation of our surface use agreement with Yates. We were forced to go to court in order to determine that our surface use agreement with Yates means what it says.....that Yates cannot allow their CBM gas discharge water to flow across our land.

Lance dumped their CBM gas discharge water across our hay meadows by illegally piping it into the middle of a culvert located on the south prong of Spotted Horse Creek.

I am very sorry to say that our experiences with the CBM gas industry have not been happy ones. We have lost artesian wells, and a good portion of our hay meadows. Over two hundred of our beautiful old stand cottonwood trees along Spotted Horse Creek were drown due to being flooded. Four of our calves drowned in Spotted Horse Creek when it was running full of CBM gas discharge water. We have had reservoirs wash out during sudden summer storms because they were full of discharge water. Has industry chosen to compensate us for any of these losses? Of course they have not.

In closing I would like to say, however, that I AM NOT OPPOSED to the CBM gas industry. What I AM opposed to is their blatant disregard for the water, the land and the people.

However, the responsibility for the CBM gas industry's actions lie not only with industry, but also with the state of Wyoming. The CBM gas industry does only what the state of Wyoming allows it to do. We desperately need you to implement these rules to protect our water, our land, and our people. We NEED rules in place to regulate the CBM gas industry.

Thank you,  
Marjorie West

*Marjorie West*