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To Whom It May Concern

This letter is for the beneficial uses of discharge water from oil or gas production. My family has owned land on Cotton Wood Creek in Hot Springs county since 1936 witnessed, and continue to see, the benefits of the discharge water from Merit Oil Company at Hamilton Dome. The discharged water reduced erosion by providing nutrients for native grasses, shrubs, trees and many other riparian plants. We use the water for irrigation which increased the yield of the crops (alfalfa grass hay) by 300%, also the pasture flourished. The water is used for cattle as well as deer, prong horn, pheasants, ducks, cranes, fish, sheep, and many other wildlife and domestic animals. The steady stream of water has decreased diseases such as selenium (causes abortion, blindness, and death in cattle) and increased the wildlife population. With the current amount of production water in stream, a steady flow of water continued to trickle down the creek, even during the drought years as we have experience in the last 5 years. This water supplied the riparian areas, wildlife, reservoirs, ranchers, hay fields, etc. with water to survive the drought.

With out the production water the land value will decrease, we will have disease problems (due to such strong alkali found naturally in the soil), have less hay for our cattle, and there will be less wildlife. There are numerous of other ranches on this creek, and in the entire county, that depend on production water. Without it ranches will experience severe economical repercussions. By making the oil and gas companies inject the water back down hole, you will be putting a big financial burden on them as well as the farmers and ranchers. There will be a financial burden on the economy as a whole. Gas and oil production companies such as Merit Oil at Hamilton Dome provides jobs to every community that will be lost, taxes to the county and state will be lost, many ranching jobs and irrigation jobs will be lost this in turn causes less money for the schools, law enforcement, roads and many other entities .

The production water is more beneficial , improving the quality of our lives, the wildlife, plants, and domestic animals, flowing down the creeks then being injected into the ground.

Respectively submitted,

Paul Ward

