

**FILED**

**FEB 14 2006**

February 11, 2006

Mr. Mark Gordon, Chairman  
Environmental Quality Council  
Herschler Building 1 W  
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Terri A. Lorenzon, Director  
Environmental Quality Council

Dear Mr. Gordon,

Mark, as you know the Shepperson family ranches in the Salt Creek drainage near Howell's Salt Creek field. My family has been ranching here for four generations. This letter is a response to you concerning the recent (December 7<sup>th</sup> 2005) petition of the PRBRC to the Environmental Quality Council; PETITION TO AMEND WYOMING WATER QUALITY RULE, CHAPTER 2, APPENDIX H. Our ranches are concerned with the content and outcome of this petition. We are opposed to any component of it and recommend that you do not agree to consider any portion of it for Rule making, as it would obviously lead to a curtailment of this source of valuable water that we depend on for the sustenance of our ranch. Enactment of this initiative into law would unnecessarily do harm to many ranchers livelihood.

The petitioners seek to have the WDEQ control the quantity of discharge to that which the cattle that I have today can drink. So, with the ice formation, evaporation or the movement of wildlife into the area, there could be no water for my cattle, ducks, or geese. (Salt Creek field has become a major duck and goose hunting area because of the open water). We are opposed to any decrease in water quantity. When decreases in Howell's discharges have occurred in the past, the water became saltier and it was not good for livestock. In fact, the natural waters in Salt Creek, Castle Creek and Teapot Creek are naturally very salty and high in sulfates. Ben Schiffer has monitored Salt Creek, Castle Creek and Teapot Creeks above and below the discharge points. Ben said that Castle Creek above the discharge point was the poorest quality water he had ever monitored. I depend on the produced water to dilute this water and be a source of high quality water for my livestock.

Ranchers in this area must test natural water in reservoirs and creeks during these dry years because the naturally occurring sulfates and minerals get so high it kills livestock and game (except antelope which has an unbelievable tolerance).

The Powder River Conservation District and ranchers in this area have spent time, money and resources (with help from grants) to evaluate the problems with this watershed and hopefully come up with a workable watershed management plan. We hope we can continue to evaluate the scientific evidence collected and finish the plan we have started.

This petition could adversely affect ranchers, wildlife, recreation and our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

  
Frank Shepperson