

June 30, 2010

Environmental Quality Council  
122 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Herchler Building, Room 1714  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

Re: Designation of Sand Creek Area as Very Rare and Uncommon

Dear Sir or Madam,

As a young boy I was very fortunate to be introduced to the Sand Creek Valley through my friend Sam Mortimer. Sam and I were fellow boy scouts in Belle Fourche, and there were many times when members of our troop would be invited to Sand Creek to have fun and to learn about nature. It was at Sand Creek that I came to know the beauty of nature and of its wonders. The land and the water were as they had been for centuries, perhaps thousands of years. Sam's father became our scout leader as we grew through scouting and together we formed an explorer post. The word explorer has special meaning because of Sand Creek. Mr. Mortimer taught us new and exciting things about nature and was adamant that we grow up to be the kind of men who would always respect and preserve nature for generations to come. I cannot think of a finer example of his philosophy than the preservation of Sand Creek Wyoming.

Fortunately Sam and I have remained friends to this day, a 64 year friendship. Each summer my wife and I are invited to spend a week or more at the beautiful Mortimer cabin, which, like all of the cabins on the creek, blend with nature and allow the occupants a close-up and first-hand view of a most wonderful place. Just being a part of the area for a period of time serves as a challenge to me to do everything in my power to help in preserving and enhancing the beauty of the land. For me it is a spiritual experience every time I enter the canyon.

I understand that there is a chance that all of this will be sacrificed for the sake of digging and scraping the land near the headwaters of Sand Creek in order to obtain minerals. What are minerals? I believe that they are natural resources. Where do natural resources come from? They come from nature, the very nature I studied and learned to love during those years of scouting. Therefore, the removal of minerals, i.e. natural resources, is a removal of nature. One cannot borrow from a natural area, then expect that area to be repaid and whole again when the tailings are replaced. When natural resources are removed from an area, the area will remain, but it will be empty, void of the life and energy it once possessed, and that can not be remedied with any amount of backfill.

**FILED**  
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Jim Ruby, Executive Secretary  
Environmental Quality Council

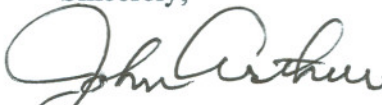
Then the ripple effect begins. When a stone is tossed into a lake it begins a ripple effect which doesn't terminate until it reaches the shore. The stone that you want to toss will begin that ripple effect, and it will begin to damage and eventually kill the land, the water and the wildlife surrounding the epicenter. Sand Creek itself will become nothing more than a rocky hiking trail through a devastated landscape.

Perhaps the devastation will stop when it reaches I-90. Or, it may continue onward indefinitely. Wouldn't it be interesting if the devastation of nature and its beauty throughout different parts of our country eventually collided with the permanent devastation in the gulf? The circle would then be complete, and we could all be so proud that we were a part of taking from ourselves, our future generations and our visitors from other states and other countries, something that God provided for us to cherish and protect. After all, we took it from the Native Americans, why shouldn't we take it from ourselves and our heirs in order to enhance our lives now, with the products that can be produced through the refinement of natural resources. Shall we just complete the circle? Why do we need natural beauty when we can enjoy man-made possessions?

If you want to dig, please dig down deep within yourselves and respect the words of Eric Molvar and the impending petition to designate Sand Creek and the Sand Creek Valley as a Very Rare and Uncommon area. I promise, you will sleep better at night!

Thank you for taking time to review this plea on behalf of a beautiful and delicate valley that wishes to remain pristine, but can only do so with our help, all of us, certainly not with our hindrance.

Sincerely,



John Arthur