

10/13/2010

WYOMING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL
HERSCHLER BUILDING
122 WEST 25TH ST., ROOM 174
CHEYENNE, WY
82002

FILED

OCT 20 2010

Jim Ruby, Executive Secretary
Environmental Quality Council

SUBJECT: MINING IN SAND CREEK VALLEY

DEAR SIR,

WE ARE OPPOSED TO MINING IN SAND
CREEK VALLEY, SEE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION
ALLIANCE'S POSITION ON OPPOSITE SIDE, WE
SUPPORT THEIR POSITION.

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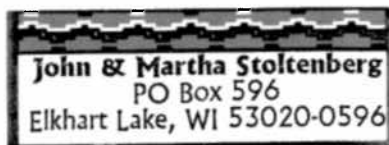
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Jim Ruby, Executive Secretary
Environmental Quality Council**John Stoltenberg**

From: "BCA News and Alerts" <erik@voiceforthewild.org>
To: <jpstolten@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2010 3:11 PM
Subject: Help save a rare ecological gem in the Black Hills!



The Sand Creek Valley needs protection from open-pit mining - and you can help!

Sand Creek flows out of one of the last roadless areas left in the Black Hills, bearing a blue-ribbon trout stream, large tracts of old-growth forest, and a collection of botanical rarities seldom found in Wyoming. But a Canadian company named Golden Predator has bought up mineral claims in the headwaters of Sand Creek, threatening the watershed's unique plant and fish populations. **BCA has petitioned the Wyoming Environmental Quality Council to designate this area as Very Rare or Uncommon under state law**, and the Council has set a public hearing to make a final decision whether to protect these lands or not.

This hearing is your chance to speak out on behalf of Sand Creek! Attend and speak at the hearing scheduled for October 27 and 28 in Sundance, Wyoming, or mail in written comments.

The upper watershed of Sand Creek is a biological ark filled with unusual plant communities that hail from distant lands. Oak-ironwood woodlands and paper birch, along with dozens of species understory plants, hail from the hardwood forests of the eastern United States. The white spruce, common in the mountains above of the Arctic Circle, were marooned in this cool, moist valley when glacial ice sheets retreated northward thousands of years ago. The horsetail, a primitive plant common in the temperate rainforests of the Pacific Northwest, but found almost nowhere else in Wyoming, grows in moist, shady valley bottoms of upper Sand Creek. Known as an ecological refugium, this area represents one of the finest examples of botanical diversity in the Black Hills, an area itself recognized as an island of biodiversity in the midst of the High Plains.



Falls on Upper Sand Creek

For details of the Very Rare or Uncommon features of this area, visit [http://deq.state.wy.us/eqc/Docket/09-1103%20Sand%20Creek/Sand%20Creek%](http://deq.state.wy.us/eqc/Docket/09-1103%20Sand%20Creek/Sand%20Creek%20)

[20Amended%20Petition.8-12-09.pdf](#) to read the petition itself (this is a large file and may take some time to download).

The Environmental Quality Council needs to hear from the people of Wyoming that Sand Creek needs to be protected from mining!

Very Rare or Uncommon designation would protect Sand Creek from non-coal surface mining, preventing open-pit mines that can destroy large tracts of forest habitat and potentially poison streams, killing off fish populations. Local county commissioners and legislators, industry interest groups, and ranchers are opposing the protective designation, while local property owners and conservationists are supporting it. Given the powerful political interests arrayed against us, Sand Creek could really use the support of the people of Wyoming.

If you have been to Sand Creek, or simply want to see one of Wyoming's richest botanical treasures protected, attend the hearing and speak out or write a letter supporting Very Rare or Uncommon designation to the Environmental Quality Council. Your personal perspective makes a big difference. **Letters must be received by October 27th**, and should be mailed much earlier to have the greatest effect. Mail your letter to:

Environmental Quality Council
Herschler Building
122 West 25th Street, Room 1714
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

The hearing will be held at the Multipurpose Building in the Crook County Fairgrounds in Sundance, Wyoming, at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, October 27th, with a possible extra half-day of testimony taken on October 28th if needed.

Thanks for using your voice on behalf of one of the last remaining wild places in the Black Hills!

Sincerely,



Erik Molvar
Executive Director



Old-growth ponderosas mixed with paper birch in a very rare plant association

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