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Comments on
Strata Energy's proposed Ross Uranium Mine near Devil's Tower

Jim Ruby, Executive Secretary
Environmental Quality Council

“What happens to the water happens to the people.” should be the focus of Wyoming DEQ. Citizens of Wyoming and their representative agency Wyoming DEQ needs to consider the future of the water quality and purity rather than short term gain for an international corporation.

DEQ should consider the serious and long-standing concerns about in-situ leach (ISL) uranium operations in Wyoming, including the inability of ISL operators to restore groundwater to pre-mining conditions, and the number of leaks, spills, and excursions of injection and production fluids at ISL mines before issuing the permit

- DEQ must consider and fully analyze the presence of contamination pathways caused by improperly abandoned drill holes. There are thousands of abandoned uranium exploration wells in the area and DEQ must require Strata to survey and ensure plugging of all abandoned drill holes.

- DEQ should fully critique Strata's bond for the project, in light of ISL projects being difficult – if not impossible – to reclaim. The bond should be raised to fully account for water restoration costs and difficulties.

- The DEQ permit should clearly state, before mining begins, what water restoration targets will be achieved and by what methods. This is necessary for DEQ to assess impacts to water resources as required by W.S. § 35-11-428.

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