

FILED

OCT 12 2007

Terri A. Lorenzon, Director
Environmental Quality Council

10 October 2007

Environmental Quality Council
122 West 25th St.
Herschler Bldg.
Cheyenne, WY 82002

To all that this concerns:

I once had the fortune, and that is not a typo, of being stranded for a day on the Skull Rim after a passing thunderstorm turned the 2-track access road to muck. Along the rim, mist rose among the spectacular towers and badlands and curled over the rim itself, utterly silent. The view east was unbroken by any signs of human activity.

The next morning, while the sun dried the road, I scrambled down a rocky gully, stopping to examine what looked like a cat track, and then continuing onto the Skull Rim flats below. Fantastic boulders littered muddy benches below the rim and odd inclusions protruding from the sandstone caught my attention, some resembling perfect cannonballs. Walking along washes still running from the rain, I approached and climbed a small slippery butte, where I sat on a rock warming myself in the morning sun and scraping mud off my tennis shoes. Below me, a pair of wild horses made their way up one of the washes, unaware that I was watching them.

Those who oppose protection for Adobe Town and the Skull Rim may groan at this romantic anecdote about one person's experience. But I have traveled backcountry and not-so-backcountry in much of the western United States, South America, Europe, Africa and Asia. I can tell you that to sit on the Skull Rim, alone, watching a summer storm clear, is an exceptionally rare and valuable experience that we will come to grieve, and that is not too strong a word, if the opportunity for it is taken away by our hunger for minerals and other extractable resources. Even in our National Parks, one cannot experience this awesome silence, or feel so acutely the power of a place that has changed so little in thousands of years.

I'm sure that many will testify to historical and archaeological values (I once found a partially worked medicine pipe hidden among the pillars of Adobe town), the importance of this area for wildlife habitat, the unique geology, and the rugged scenery. I concur as a scientist and a citizen. But for me, the irreplaceable value of Adobe Town and Skull Rim is in the opportunity for you, your children and their children to experience a Wyoming fast disappearing, consumed by powerful forces hungry for energy and resources.

Sincerely,



Ken Driese
500 South 11th St.
Laramie, WY 82070