

ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT TODAY ~ FOR TOMORROW

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PRESS RELEASE

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Citizens' Group Proposes Changes to WOGCC Rules and Regulations

Powder River Basin Resource Council calls for stonger regulation of oil and gas development

Sheridan, WY– This week the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission accepted public comment on changes to their rules and regulations. The Powder River Basin Resource Council submitted comments and proposed strong rule changes to protect water supplies and public health. The citizens' group submitted the comments on behalf of themselves and the Biodiversity Conservation Alliance, EARTHWORKS' Oil and Gas Accountability Project, Sierra Club, Wyoming Office of The Wilderness Society, Wyoming Outdoor Council and thousands of members throughout the state, including many who live and work in close proximity to oil and gas activities.

During the past decade, oil and gas operations in Wyoming have dramatically changed, both with respect to technologies being used, such as extensive hydraulic fracturing, along with the pace and scale of activity. Notwithstanding the recent (and most likely temporary) lull in drilling, the State is experiencing a significant and extended boom in oil and gas drilling, and new measures are needed to strengthen protections for water supplies and public health.

The citizens' group asked for stronger regulations to:

- *Protect drinking water, ground water, and surface water from oil & gas operations.
- *Implement strong well casing requirements.
- *Implement strong waste pit regulations.
- *Fully disclose all chemicals used during oil and gas operations.
- *Implement strong buffers (setbacks) between oil & gas operations and areas vulnerable to adverse impacts.
- *Implement strong regulations for hydraulic fracturing.

“Impacts to our water is what spurred our involvement,” said Deb Thomas, who organizes for Powder River Basin Resource Council and lives in Clark, “Loss of water in the Powder River Basin, and drinking water contamination in Clark and the Pavillion area have had huge impacts not only to our water, but also our health.”

As John Fenton, chair of the Pavillion Area Concerned Citizens explains, "Our family can no longer go to the kitchen and drink a glass of water from the tap; our water comes from 5 gallon jugs that we haul 25 miles, one way. Our loss of water is not an isolated event. It's happening to people all over the country where oil and gas is being developed. We must protect our drinking water and the air we breathe! Our comments and proposed rules are a good first step towards protecting what's essential for life; drinking water and air."

Powder River Basin Resource Council's comments as well as all other comments the Oil & Gas Commission received by Monday's deadline will be considered at two public meetings. An informal public discussion will be held on March 30, 8 A.M. to noon, resuming at 1 P.M. The meeting will be held in Hearing Room 129 at the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission Offices, 2211 King Blvd., Casper Wyoming. A formal hearing will be held on April 13, 9 A.M. at the same venue. Members of Powder River Basin Resource Council will be in attendance at both events.

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