



Advisory Member: State of WYOMING

COALBED METHANE COORDINATION COALITION JPB
621 W. FETTERMAN
BUFFALO, WY 82834
CELL: (307) 751-4657

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Environmental Quality Council
122 W. 25th Street
Herschler Bldg. Rm. 1714
Cheyenne, WY 82002

ATTN: Jim Ruby

Jim,

I was able to listen in on the phone conference yesterday afternoon and, at the request of several of our members, I would like to emphasize strongly that the desire for a socio-economic study of the short and long-term consequences of the proposed regulations on produced water quality is not just restricted to those county commissioners we heard from yesterday afternoon. The CBMCC was created in the fall of 2000 to act as a clearinghouse for information on coalbed methane development, with a particular focus on local governments and resident stakeholders. Wyoming's past history has shown a sequence of boom and bust over the past 100 years and local, county governments, conservation districts, and the agricultural community wanted to prevent this financial sequence from occurring again. Our mission was to provide stakeholders with enough information on CBM development that they could make knowledgeable, proactive decisions about their property and their family's future.

We proceeded to gather data, both written and anecdotal, and created a product for general consumption that assisted our clients in learning about the exploration and development of coalbed methane. By mid 2005 we realized that we were going to have to expand our arena to include all energy development, since many of the issues and participants were the same regardless of which form of energy was being developed. Our database creation began on January 2, 2001 when Ed Swartz called our office at 7:30 AM and wanted to know how we could help him with water trespass. That began a long process of collecting water quality and quantity information to assist us in understanding one of the most recurrent issues in energy development; water discharge.

Over the past eight years we have been involved in multiple issues related to energy development in almost every county in the state. Our five member counties and two conservation districts were, of course, the primary focus of our investigations. Each county, city or town, or citizens group that we visited had issues that varied from location to location. There are three issues, however, that are the same for every county that we have visited. The three issues are:

- 1.) Water discharge
- 2.) Air quality from dust
- 3.) Socio-economic impacts to the community

The first two issues are fairly site specific and can be lumped into several categories, such as poor water quality or dust suspended in the air. When we visit these issues we are usually serving one or several landowners or citizens groups and have to view each incident as a separate issue. Impacts to communities from energy development are most strongly felt in the social and economic structures of the local populace.

The trickledown effect arising from issues related to energy development is pervasive throughout our entire culture. Almost every public meeting that we have attended inevitably comes back to how development affects our local citizens and their way of life.

The CBMCC began a major socio-economic study of energy development and its effects on our five member counties a little over a year ago. We have finished phase one of this study, which primarily covers large scale impacts to social amenities such as hospitals, jails, and social services. Many counties in the state have performed local impact assessments of energy development and have pieces of the overall development picture within the state. We have been gathering these datasets and compiling them to facilitate comparisons between counties generated by real data. Our phase two and a phase three work is expected to be performed over the next 2 to 3 years and will cover every county in the state by the time we finish.

Our board of directors and members of the Coalition feel that energy impacts to our socio-economic well-being is the most important issue of our times and it affects every person in the state in one way or another. We cannot emphasize strongly enough that **assessment of impacts to our citizens' daily lives created by new regulation must be mandatory at all times**. A company that wants to operate in Wyoming must follow our statutory guidelines to assure our citizens and leaders that their operations will be performed in a professional and neighborly manner. As public servants, we should do the same.

Our world of 2008 is not the world of the 20th century. Our ability to gather and disseminate information on a global scale is unprecedented in history and will continue to accelerate in the future. We have reached a point when our stakeholders appropriately want to have enough information to make decisions about their lives. This information can be readily assembled and disseminated in multiple ways. Because of this, we now have higher expectations of our local governments and leaders and their education about energy development is a continual process. Rules or regulation that affects our citizenry must be viewed from all angles; environmentally, socially, scientifically, and economically and all the effects of new statute must be well understood prior to enactment. Regulations are a static entity in an increasingly fluid global society and their effects can have serious, long-term consequences to a large number of people.

We appreciate all the hard work that the EQC puts into their decision-making and are confident that future communication regarding energy development and its regulation will be a two way street. Socio-economic impacts to our local communities is just one of the vital issues we face in our foreseeable future. Our members believe that information about concern over these financial and social impacts need to be conveyed to you in as strong a manner as possible. We neither criticize nor minimize your good work of the past; we only want to provide this insight as an item for consideration.

Thank you for allowing us to visit with you yesterday. We appreciate your care and concern about our populace and know that ultimately the health and safety of our citizenry is always your primary focus.

Sincerely,



Bj Kristiansen – CBMCC Coordinator



Delbert Eitel – CBMCC Chairman