

January 22, 2017

**Kyle Wendtland, Administrator
Department of Environment Quality
Land Quality Division
200 West 17th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82002**

Re: RAMACO Brook Mine

Mr. Wendtland:

I am a landowner in Sheridan County who will be affected by the proposed Brook Mining Permit and would like to issue a written objection to the issuance of this mine permit in its current state. My family has resided in the Monarch area for over a century and I have many concerns regarding the impact to our land, water, and air quality if the Brook Mine permit is approved. I also have serious concerns in Ramaco's ability or willingness to address issues that could arise during mining.

Listed below are my specific concerns:

- 1) The constantly changing mine plan. How are landowners supposed to identify issues when the mine plan varies so significantly? Their mine plans vary from estimates of two to ten million tons with no consistency to their changing plan. It's impossible to know how operations will affect the land, water, and air in the area when the mine plan continues to change so significantly. Their maps and plans are also incomplete in regards to the affect on surrounding landowners. Ramaco cannot possibly project the affect on landowners when they do not appear to have any permanent plan in place.**

- 2) I have personal experience with Ramaco's unwillingness to be accountable for damage to local property. My brother's property (John Buyok) borders mine, and he had a coal fire approximately 100 yards from my home, and approximately 50 feet from one of my out buildings. Because Ramaco owns the mineral rights to my brother's property, DEQ needed permission from Ramaco to put out the fire. The fire began in the spring of 2014 and my brother immediately contacted the DEQ Abandoned Mine Lands Division, who promptly responded. However, they could do nothing without permission from Ramaco. Only after months of my brother contacting every agency he could think of, did Ramaco finally give**

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permission to put the fire out. I had an active coal fire burning within 100 yards of my front door for several months; including the hot summer months of July and August. This does not reflect well on what kind of accountability they will have for any damage their mining operations inflict on landowners.

- 3) I have serious concern on how blasting and mining operations will impact former coal mine subsidence. There have already been subsidence issues near our home from the former coal mine operations. The Brook Mine plan does not appear to address these concerns thoroughly. Considering that I have already experienced their response to a coal fire, I have significant concern about their response to any new underground coal fires.
- 4) My well is listed as being potentially affected by mining operations and I have serious concern about the impact on my well and groundwater. We already have water issues and it must be treated for drinking purposes. We cannot afford to have additional drawdown in our well. Family has attempted to drill for additional wells, down to 1000 feet and have been unable to find another aquifer. According to the mine plan, Ramaco would only be responsible for replacing adjudicated wells, which mine is not. Most wells affected by the mine's plans are not adjudicated; therefore, Ramaco would not be responsible for replacing the water supply for the majority of the landowners they would affect.
- 5) The potential pollution affect on the Tongue River and subsidiaries would have massive affect on both small and large farms and ranches in the area. Due to the limited groundwater situation, I rely heavily on my Tongue River irrigation rights to grow and produce a large portion of our food. Ramaco's mining operations will be very close to the Tongue River and potential pollution issues are not adequately addressed.
- 6) There is significant evidence that Ramaco's mining operations will have a negative impact on property values in the area. Quality of life will be affected by the noise and traffic generated from the mine. Any surrounding landowners with breathing issues will be adversely affected due to the effect blasting and mining will have on air quality.
- 7) It appears that most of the coal that is mined will be moving through the Taylor Quarry. If Ramaco mines as much coal as originally

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indicated; ten million tons, the traffic from the delivery trucks will create significant safety concerns, especially along the Frontage road.

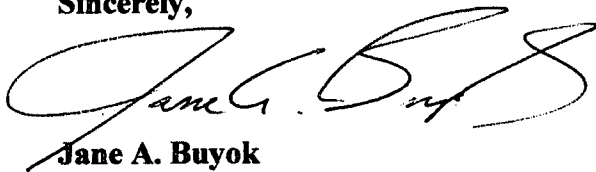
- 8) Ramaco's bond for their permit appears to be inadequate in numerous ways. The dollar amount of their bond would not even come close to covering the potential damage the mining would and could inflict. Roads, pollution, groundwater, air quality, irrigation, subsidence, and reclamation issues alone would cost considerably more than their proposed bond. Prior coal mining in the area has proven that some of the most significant issues regarding subsidence show up years after mining is complete. Ramaco will be long gone and landowners will have no ability to seek compensation for damage.

In conclusion, I find it very difficult to believe Ramaco's projected economic impact on the area. The total number of jobs generated has been reduced with each changing mine plan. The actual amount of coal removed and sold from the proposed mine seems illogical at best.

I would like to request an informal conference with the DEQ Administrator to voice my concerns in regards to the Brook Mine Permit.

Thank You for addressing these issues.

Sincerely,



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