

Powder River Basin Resource Council Members

Please see the attached comments from Powder River Basin Resource Council members

Citizen Comments to the Water & Waste Advisory Board
Regarding Proposed Rules for Public Records Fees
Compiled by the Powder River Basin Resource Council

In order for a democratic republic form of government to survive it is important that all records of a given department of state or federal government be available for the general public without any form of obstruction from the state, including fees and other roadblocks to timely access. The public must have a right to participate in the processes of government in order to assure fairness and common sense for the people of state of Wyoming.

Nancy Sorenson
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I grew up on a ranch near Clearmont, Wyoming. While I no longer live in Wyoming, I have many relatives in the Sheridan area, and I am still vitally interested in the environment of the State.

Thus, I often check the DEQ website to better understand what the State is doing to protect the environment. It would be much more difficult to do this if there was a cost, or any other hindrance, to my ability to do that in a timely and efficient matter.

It also seems unlawful to charge taxpayers (on both the state and federal level) for information we've already paid for through our taxes. I understand a major requirement of the Wyoming Environmental Quality Act is to provide easy, comprehensive no-fee access to records of all of DEQ's information. It doesn't seem reasonable or cost-effective for the Agency to open itself up to inevitable, and costly, lawsuits by violating one of its key requirements.

In fact, one of the best services DEQ can provide at this time is to make your records more easily and accessible in a more timely manner. The technology is available to do this; the next step is to have the will to do it through making it a priority when determining staffing levels and duties.

Doris Sanders

In order for the public to remain informed access to PUBLIC records must remain without charge. As most records are now electronic it is even easier for these to remain accessible.

Kathleen Connell
Buffalo, WY

TO: DEQ
FR: Bighorn Audubon Society, Dr. Jackie Canterbury, President
RE: Environmental Quality Records Open to the Public
DA: September 13, 2017

Bighorn Audubon Society is a non-profit whose mission is to protect birds and their habitat. We recently worked with DEQ involving possible wetland violations of the Clean Water Act, section 404 on County Road 77 in Big Horn.

In that process, it became clear that agency permitting, transparency, and the public need for access for information regarding our environment are primary concerns of our group. It is imperative that Wyoming DEQ do not limit our access to information. In fact, DEQ should be required to make the process both more efficient and transparent. Because we are a non-profit, with limited financial assets, it is critical to have access to information without elaborate fees.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jackie Canterbury
President, Bighorn Audubon
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