

Linda Raynolds

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Moneta Divide oil & gas field pollutant discharge permit.

I do not think this proposal should be granted a permit. I think the level of environmental degradation and risk to human health and livelihoods is far too great. If this industrial operator can't develop these wells without incurring harm to other resources, then the privilege of extracting Wyoming's petroleum reserves should be given to another company. If the reserves are there, a more responsible operator will apply to produce them. Waiting for a company who makes a better show of concern for local people and the environment, or requiring Aethon to submit a plan to deal responsibly with their polluted water, will be well worth it for the future of our surface waters and the ecosystems, wildlife, and communities who depend on them.

Aethon should not be allowed to dump millions of gallons per day of wastewater into the drainages that flow into Boysen Reservoir. These are fragile desert watercourses, with plants and animals that are adapted to specific conditions. Changing the chemistry and temperature of the water flowing into these drainages will either immediately or gradually alter these ecosystems. Ordinary cycles of droughts and floods will concentrate the effects of these chemical changes. Aethon should be required to run their drilling wastewater through a water treatment process before discharging it into Wyoming's waters. Besides discharging estimated large amounts of sodium, Aethon would be discharging fracking compounds, proprietary mixes of many toxic and carcinogenic substances, which would eventually end up in the drinking water systems of downstream communities.

I am also concerned with the proposed volumes of solids that would be discharged into the streams, and thus into Boysen Reservoir. Again, any industrial operator in Wyoming should be required to deal with their pollution at its source, and not use our waterways as open sewers.

I hope DEQ can rise above the political pressure to rubber stamp this permit. DEQ has lost a lot of public trust over appearing to have hidden this proposal from public scrutiny. If it hadn't been for investigative journalism, none of the surrounding affected communities or stakeholders would have known about this project till it was a done deal. That is a disgrace, and can only be viewed as corruption and collusion by this member of the public.

There would be a brief boom of temporary jobs created by this oilfield expansion, but those same jobs and more would be created by requiring Aethon, or a more responsible operator, to build a wastewater treatment plant for its discharges.

Wyoming's recreational waters, trout fisheries, wildlife, and downstream communities are more important than the profits of a few corporate CEOs.

Sincerely, Linda Raynolds, Cody, Wy