

Gregory Epstein

Every year my friends and family travel to many of Wyoming's blue ribbon fisheries, and the Wind River canyon and Big Horn River have always been at the top of our list. We help local economies by staying in hotels, hiring guides and eating at restaurants in many of these rural towns. We are not the only ones, thousands of people rely on Boysen Reservoir and Boysen State Park for fishing, camping and recreation, as well as the revenue those activities provide. Recognizing that, the DEQ rules designate Boysen Reservoir a "high quality water" requiring "the highest statutory and regulatory requirements for all new and existing point source discharges . . . "

Boysen flows into the Wind River, a vital resource for many communities. It cuts through the beautiful Wind River Canyon and becomes the Bighorn River at Wedding of the Waters just south of Thermopolis. The Blue Ribbon trout fisheries are integral to outfitters and the local tourism industry. The Bighorn provides municipal water for Thermopolis, and is a lifeline for irrigated agriculture throughout the Bighorn Basin.

I'm asking the DEQ to analyze other options. If surface discharge is necessary, the produced water should be purified and piped to Boysen Reservoir, not dumped into Alkali and Badwater creeks, where the environmental impacts will be devastating.

If done right, the Moneta Divide Project could be a "win-win" for local economies and downstream communities. The construction of advanced water treatment facilities and pipelines to transport purified water from the Moneta Divide field to Boysen Reservoir would provide high-paying jobs and protect the environment.

If done incorrectly, the discharge of massive quantities of produced water could devastate the Wind River and Bighorn River blue ribbon fisheries, contaminate municipal drinking water supplies, and render irrigation water unsuitable for crop production, leaving a legacy of pollution for future generations to clean up.

A robust energy industry doesn't mean we must sacrifice our vital clean water resources. Energy development can be done responsibly.

Thank you for your consideration,

Greg Epstein
Jackson, WY