

Mr. Alan Edwards, Deputy Director  
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality  
200 W 17<sup>th</sup> St  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

April 5, 2020

Mr. Director,

My name is Anton Bocek and I live at 11 Slater Creek Lane in Ranchester, Wyoming. I am also a joint partner for my family farm at 25 Monarch Rd, Ranchester, Wyoming. Both properties are in the half mile boundary of RAMACO's proposed Brook Mine.

First and foremost is my concern for the domestic water wells on these properties. I know that both wells could be impacted by nearby coal mining activities. I would ask that both properties have a Pre-Blast Survey and any other survey to ensure protection of those water wells. Both wells are used daily and any damage due to blasting or mining activities would put an extreme burden on both households. In a previous interview with lawyers representing Ramaco, I was asked if there was any damage to my well, would it be ok if it was repaired within 6 months. I replied "no". These water wells are used daily. This attitude of lack of respect for the landowners is unacceptable.

I have worked on powder crews at Big Horn Coal and I have seen the damage that blasting can do to nearby landowners. Regardless of what the guidelines are set regarding pounds of explosive that can be set off with respect to the distance to the nearest dwelling, these guidelines don't always protect the landowners. I would also request a Pre-Blast Survey for the foundations on both properties. There is also a 100+ year old rock structure barn and root cellar on the family farm (25 Monarch Road) that need to be included in this survey.

With regards to blasting, I believe that blasting should be limited to Monday thru Friday, excluding weekends. Their proposed schedule has excluded only holidays. With all the nearby walk in areas and recreation areas, blasting is not necessary on weekends. Notices will somehow need to be reached in the recreational areas as many outdoor users may not be aware of blasting in these areas. Along with

the recreational users, some of the landowners do not have computers to see a schedule and they must be notified as well.

I believe a closer look into the Brook Mine impact on our water in the Tongue River Valley needs to be made. How will the ground water be replaced that will be pumped from the mine? How can the aquifers be refilled? I believe that the Slater Creek drainage and all tributaries have been grossly underestimated. Having lived here for 68 years, I have seen spring runoff and summer rains swell Slater Creek to unthinkable levels for such a small creek. This needs to be planned for to prevent pollution from the mine from running into the creek and eventually into the Tongue River. The Tongue River is a very vital waterway for our irrigation and recreation for miles downstream. Every effort needs to be made to keep this river free of any new pollutants that may be added through poor mining attempts. This alluvial valley depends on clean water not only for the homes but for the fields, gardens, animals, etc.

Since we still don't have a clear plan of coal transportation from the mine if coal ever gets extracted, I would ask who will pay for the added cost of repairs to our state and county highways and roads? One or both of these means of transportation will be needed to haul coal to a yet to be determined loadout site. Our tax dollars are stressed enough without the added burden to continually repair these roadways as hauling this kind of tonnage will indeed cause extra road damage. There was severe damage to the paved Slater Creek Road when the coal haulers used that road to haul coal from the Ash Creek pits. There was always a problem keeping up with the big chuckholes on that county road. It is now an unpaved road.

The mine plan on subsidence seems quite inefficient for the life of the mine as it only touches on the first phase of the mine. What about the entire life of the mine which will supposedly be more underground mining in the later phases of the mine plan? Subsidence from the old underground mines from 70+ years ago

continues every year, endangering human lives as well as livestock and wildlife. We need to learn from the past mining mistakes and make sure this doesn't happen in the future. There was an incident last fall when a pickup fell in and had to be pulled out near the area. Some subsidence areas have caused some extreme fire dangers as well.

Finally, I would like to touch on the whole idea of a new coal mine in this area at all. While not opposed to coal mining, as my grandfather, father and I were all coal miners. The fact that this particular mine is supposedly for carbon research, which in his own words, Charles Adkins said they "would only need a tote full of coal for their research", what will the proposed tonnage be used for? After all in Randall Adkins' words, "Coal is not for burning", then why so much and for what? Why would we need a new coal mine with no customers in sight? Millions of tons of coal are available from existing mines in Wyoming and Montana with loadouts and rail service available for delivery to any port willing to take the coal.

In closing I would finally ask for an informal hearing, hopefully to answer questions that have fallen on deaf ears since the formation of the Brook Mine and the evolution of the RAMACO Corporation in Sheridan County.

Thank you,

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Jill Morrison, Executive D  
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