

Mr. Alan Edwards, Deputy Director
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality
200 West 17th St
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Re: Brook Mine Revised Draft Permit Application – Support Letter

Dear Wyoming DEQ,

04/16/2020

Hello, my name is Jessica Weaver, citizen of Ranchester, WY. I am writing this letter in support of the Brook Mine Permit Application.

First, I would like to mention a few key points. Did you notice how resilient our great State of Wyoming has been against the Covid-19 pandemic? I am so proud to be living in Wyoming during this unusual and difficult time in our history. Why is that? I am a Nevada native. Born and raised in a service industry. I have watched heartbreakingly so, my hometown shut down almost completely. Las Vegas, Reno, Carson City and most of the small towns across the State of Nevada are nearly 100% reliant upon tourism. It is a service industry. One virus, shut it down. I would like to ask you this - Is that what you want to see happen in Wyoming? Do you really want it to be a tourist attraction? Only to be on display but have no meat behind its strength? *I do not!* When I moved here in 2009, right after the Subprime Mortgage Crisis, everyone said, Wyoming is in its own bubble, the effects of it will hit us last because we can rely on our own resources. And they were right! I was so very impressed of the sheer magnitude of Wyoming's strength, it held itself together during a very difficult time in our country's history. And we are doing it again through the Covid-19. Thanks to our leadership, its common sense approach and its deep rooted grit.

I also came from a community that had zero forward thinking. Growing up in Hawthorne, NV; the community/region relied on its Army Depot as its main source of employment and tax revenue, Day & Zimmerman Corp., which began operating the Hawthorne Plant, an army facility in Nevada in the 70's and 80's. Located on 236 square miles and featuring more than 2,800 buildings, the plant represented the largest ammunition storage depot in the world, housing 400,000 tons of ammunition. This was such a cornerstone to central Nevada at the time. Families knew that they had dependable work for decades. Those blue collar workers were proud to work day to day for D&Z Corp.

My father and others in Hawthorne worked for D&Z in the early 70's up till the late 1990s. With the end of the cold war, Day & Zimmermann personnel were responsible for demilitarizing much of the munitions stockpiled at the Hawthorne Plant. The company was involved in demilitarizing and destroying obsolete weaponry, making conventional ammunition items from primers and detonators to fully assembled bombs and missiles. Our blue collar community was a red flag on the map – however, diligently working because they loved the work – even back breaking so. By the late 90's the corporation was sold and the facilities dropped its workforce to bare minimums. The town of Hawthorne, NV nearly collapsed due to its reliance upon this one employer. Causing massive economic damage for many decades to come, leaving Hawthorne nearly a ghost town. Today, upon visiting, you can see the damage left from the 90's departure of D&Z Corp. The county leadership has discouraged growth and the

citizens suffer because of the failure of their leaders to have a forward thinking mindset. They lack the mindfulness it takes to be a successful community when faced with hardship. Unfortunately.

Wyoming is one big community with common sense! We need the businesses that want to invest their resources like the Brook Mine to push the forward thinking movement, to innovate with the natural resources for the up and coming new technology, the work force it brings, the strength and reinforcement to our US military and security forces for Kevlar vests and other uses of carbon products and the support industries that follow. The Brook Mine will provide an economic boom and support to our struggling fund. Why would you decline a permit that has so expertly been crafted together to utilize not only the beautiful and valuable resource that is in the ground, but protects every facet of the environment? The tax benefits that the State gains from a coal mine will offset the taxes that could be placed on its citizens. Do you personally like to pay extra taxes?

In short, by denying the Brook Mine its permit is denying Wyoming citizens it's funding for schools, roads and water systems. Shall we get into the recent Legislation Session conversation regarding storm water issues and funding of such? Our beautiful Wyoming has remained beautiful during all the decades of mining. Thanks to DEQ for properly monitoring its footprint. You hear stories about the tours that are held each summer by the Wyoming Association of Municipalities – the staffers visit from Washington DC for a week to get their feet dusty in the Wyoming prairies. They come here with visions of a waste land, where they need to wear personal protective equipment when visiting a coal mine – to be pleasantly surprised that they can actually breathe clean fresh air! The tour has changed the minds of every staffer that has visited. Even to the point of a few buying property in WY! How neat is that? Sadly, over the years, coal has a dirty name and it is frankly unfair. Nobody screams at a gold mine – oh those rings are so beautiful sitting on our fingers...

I am respectfully requesting you to approve the Brook Mine Permit. Please think long and hard about what denying the Brook Mine looks like and how it could have long lasting and sever repercussions. This is a business that wants to do business – here... in Sheridan County! Every ad in the Wyoming Tourism is focused on supporting local businesses. But specifically it never did exclude coal mines; did it? I am part of a special interest group called “That’s WY” – a citizen that wants the strength of the magnificent wild and grit built Wyoming to continue for years to come. Please do not allow the virus of other “special interest groups” to manipulate and shut down our great State. They are divisive and nasty – funded by big money monsters who do not have the interests of Wyoming citizens at heart. Please do not forget that DEQ is charged with protecting, conserving and enhancing Wyoming’s land, air and water for the benefit of current and future generations - for all whom live here! Even those whom love what coal provides!

Let your common sense and your gut lead you to approving this permit.

With utmost respect,

Jessica Weaver
Citizen of Rancho, WY