



Matthew H. Mead, *Governor*  
Jason Fearnelyhough, *Director*  
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*The Wyoming Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources and quality of life.*

December 29, 2014

Richard Thorp  
WDEQ/WQD, Herschler Building 4-W  
122 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Dear Mr. Thorp:

Following are the comments from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) on Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 2014 Integrated 305(b) and 303(d) Report (Report).

Our comments are specific to our mission: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources, and quality of life. As this proposed vegetation restoration project affects our agriculture industry, our natural resources, and the welfare of our citizens, it's important you continue to inform us of proposed actions and decisions and provide us the opportunity to express pertinent issues and concerns.

The WDA would like to thank DEQ for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Report. The WDA works closely with the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) as well as the local conservation districts across the state by funding their efforts with water quality grants to develop educational workshops, sample and analyze data, implementation of Best Management Practices, and development of Watershed Implementation Plans.

We believe WACD has the most comprehensive set of comments regarding the Report. The local conservation districts may also have provided their own comment letters. We strongly encourage the DEQ work closely with WACD and local conservation districts and consider their comments as accurate and complete.

The WDA has the following general comments:

The WDA would like to highlight the requirements detailed in Chapter 1, Section 35(a)(i) of the Wyoming Environmental Quality Act, and ask DEQ to ensure all data submitted meets all the credible data requirements listed on past, present and future data submissions. This entails ensuring proper laboratory and field methods and equipment are being used, making sure proper Quality Control/Quality Assurance procedures are used, ensuring individuals have the required specialized training needed to perform the proper submissions, and ensuring there is no preconceived bias associated with the data collection process. Clarity in these areas will only help DEQ in the integrity and defensibility of data submitted.

The WDA is very concerned about the acceptance of data being collected and submitted by special interest groups with a significant bias toward Wyoming's livestock industry. Any submission submitted by such organizations should not be accepted due to their inherent bias towards one of Wyoming's leading economic industries.

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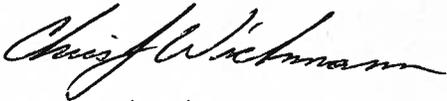
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Again, we would like to thank DEQ for the opportunity comment and urge DEQ to consider our comments as well as those from WACD and local conservation districts.

Sincerely,

  
JF  
Jason Fearneyhough  
Director

JF/cw

CC: Governor's Planning Office Wyoming  
Game and Fish Department  
Wyoming Board of Agriculture  
Wyoming Stock Growers Association  
Wyoming Wool Growers Association  
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation  
Wyoming State Grazing Board  
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