



Wyoming Department of Agriculture

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January 23, 2006

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wyoming Regulatory Office
2232 Dell Range Boulevard, Suite 210
Cheyenne, WY 82009

Dear Sir or Madam:

Following are the comments from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) on the application to construct a reservoir near North Stinking Water Creek and Stinking Water Creek in Converse County, Wyoming.

Our comments are specific to our mission within state government: dedication to the promotion and enhancement of Wyoming's agriculture, natural resources, and quality of life. As this proposal will have major impacts upon our agriculture industry, our natural resources and the welfare of our citizens, we believe it is important we are kept informed of proposed actions and decisions and that we are continually provided the opportunity to express pertinent issues and concerns.

The WDA supports Hardy Enterprises in capitalizing on the use of an ephemeral stream and dam to create a reservoir near the confluence of North Stinking Water Creek and Stinking Water Creek. We have discussed the project with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Converse County. NRCS assures us that no harm to property owners further downstream will occur and no adverse affect of the water rights of these neighbors will occur. From our understanding, the private landowner's water rights exceed the amount of water that is actually available for use even after the installation of dam and reservoir.

Ephemeral streams do not support wildlife or livestock in the long term. However, the creation of this reservoir will. The NRCS staff assures us that wildlife, flood irrigation, and livestock are priorities in the design and construction of this project. The reservoir lies in an area rich with deer, antelope, and elk. There are no fences around the reservoir, which would prohibit the use by these animals. Migrating wildlife will also find refuge in this reservoir. Over time, the vegetation surrounding the reservoir will create a wetland habitat, which will also benefit fish. The landowner will have the opportunity to expand hunting and fishing opportunities for sportsman in the area.

The dam funding is utilizing federal money from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). We strongly support the use of EQIP money for long-term projects such as this. As stated above, the landowner is only one of many beneficiaries of this project. A local group of

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Reservoir Stinking Water Creek

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individuals has met to recommend the inclusion of this project in the EQIP program. We trust the decision of this group and believe in allowing locals to make local decisions. We write to support this project and ask of your approval as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



John Etchepare
Director

JE/jw

Cc: Governor's Planning Office
Wyoming Stock Growers Association
Wyoming Wool Growers Association
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union
Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation
Wyoming State Grazing Board
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Tim Schroeder, NRCS Converse County
Wyoming Dept. of Environmental Quality