

# Wyoming Department of Agriculture

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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.*



Dave Freudenthal, Governor  
John Etchepare, Director

October 30, 2008

Mr. Marty Sharp  
NEPA Coordinator  
203A Yellowstone Avenue  
Cody, WY 82414

Dear Mr. Sharp:

Following are the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's (WDA) comments pertaining to the Scoping Notice for the proposed natural gas development of Federal Well #26-2 in the Clarks Fork Ranger District of the Shoshone National Forest (SNF).

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 project affects our agriculture industry, our natural resources, and the welfare of our citizens, it's important we be kept informed of proposed actions and decisions and that we continue to be provided the opportunity to express pertinent issues and concerns.

We understand that this natural gas development includes one well involving less than 3 acres of surface disturbance for the well pad. In addition, 140 feet of new road will be developed. The project will create minimal impacts to livestock grazing in the area. However, we do offer the following comments on the proposal.

Following are some specific individual effects upon livestock grazing needing analyzed: increased on- and off-road traffic, construction of new roads, increased number of vehicles in the area causing death or impairments of livestock, cut fences, gates left open, damaged range improvements, decreased palatability of vegetation and forage from road dust and development activities, unsuccessful reclamation of disturbed areas, and the introduction and spread of noxious weeds.

We strongly encourage SNF staff and Windsor Energy Group LLC to work closely and consistently with all affected grazing permittees and agriculture producers to learn of their concerns and recommendations regarding this project. It is imperative that the SNF officials continuously inform all livestock grazing permittees who are directly or indirectly affected by natural gas development of the issues, decisions, and resulting actions regarding this proposal. We support compensatory mitigation discussions between Windsor Energy Group LLC and livestock permittees to lessen livestock stress and economic impacts to grazing permittees from this development.

The impacts of this project may increase costs and decrease revenues for grazing permittees. The accumulated impacts of this and nearby projects could jeopardize the

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continued existence of grazing operations in this area. The SNF needs to identify and evaluate impacts and proposed remedies in the analysis.

In addition, timely and successful reclamation and mitigation are needed and should be required. Reclamation and mitigation requirements and the consequences of Windsor Energy Group LLC failing to accomplish this reclamation and mitigation should be clearly stated.

Peer-reviewed science should underlie decisions that are made. The analysis needs to identify the science supporting the decisions and discussions regarding this project.

Decisions in the proposed plan should allow SNF officials, grazing permittees and private landowners the opportunity to work cooperatively. We encourage flexibility to make the best site-specific, case-by-case decisions that are in the best interests of the affected resources and citizens throughout the life of this plan.

In conclusion, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the scope of the proposed action. We encourage continued attention to our concerns and we look forward to hearing about and being involved in proposed actions and decisions.

Sincerely,



John Etchepare  
Director

JE/jc

CC: Governor's Planning Office  
Wyoming Game and Fish Department  
Wyoming Board of Agriculture