



Department of Environmental Quality



To protect, conserve and enhance the quality of Wyoming's environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

Dave Freudenthal, Governor

John Corra, Director

September 4, 2009

John A. Bickley
Development Manager
Shell Rocky Mountain Production, LLC
4582 S. Ulster St. Suite 500
Denver, Colorado 80237

RE: Modified ground water monitoring

Dear Mr. Bickley:

The Wyoming DEQ recognizes that those Pinedale operators (Ultra, Shell, Questar individually, or the 'USQ' collectively) who are cooperating and working with the BLM, DEQ, and EPA to develop a modified ground water monitoring program through aquifer characterization have concerns regarding various issues related to that characterization, to include but not being limited to future modification of sampling parameters, the time at which study wells can be plugged and abandoned, and responsibility for further investigation. It is the intention of this letter to clarify those issues.

Modification of sampling parameters

The DEQ has worked with the operators, their consultant (Geomatrix), the BLM, and the EPA in the development of Plans of Study (PoS) that will include chemical analysis of ground water samples obtained from various study wells. Those PoS list and identify the chemical constituents, or Constituents of Potential Concern (CoPCs), that samples are to be analyzed for in order to evaluate the impacts, if any, to groundwater from oil and/or gas development in the study area. At this time, the DEQ believes the list to be adequate for the purposes of the PoS developed as this part of the overall project. In the event that information becomes available after the characterization studies and other evaluations have been completed, suggesting that other CoPCs in addition to, or in place of, those identified in the PoS should be evaluated, DEQ, BLM, EPA, and the USQ will work cooperatively to ensure that any modifications to the CoPC list are reasonable.

Plugging and abandoning study wells

Upon conclusion of the characterization study various study wells may necessitate plugging and abandonment. The DEQ believes that it is possible that some study wells may serve a useful purpose in a modified ground water monitoring program to be described in the *Final Groundwater/Aquifer Pollution Prevention, Mitigation and Monitoring Plan* (the Plan) as described in the Geomatrix *Interim Groundwater/Aquifer Pollution Prevention, Mitigation and Monitoring Plan*, or alternatively for the addressing of future contamination identified, if any. Any decision of which study wells will be plugged and abandoned will be made upon filing of the Plan.

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Responsibility for further investigation/corrective action

In evaluating the need for further investigation and/or corrective action of contamination, if any, identified in study wells, the DEQ will consider and evaluate all reasonable and likely potential sources of such contamination. The DEQ will be responsible for contacting potential responsible parties associated with those sources and initiating any further investigation/corrective action requirements."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John F. Wagner". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

John F. Wagner
Administrator
Water Quality Division

JFW/KDF/bb/9-0777

cc: Merry Gamper, BLM, Pinedale
Greg Oberley, EPA
Mark Thiesse, DEQ, Lander
Kevin Frederick, DEQ, Cheyenne