


WYOMING STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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 2987 Prospector Drive
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October 16, 2006

RE: Casper Resource Management Plan Draft EIS

Dear Casper Field Office,

Alan Ver Ploeg, Regional Geology and Mineral Resources Manager of the Wyoming State Geological Survey, has the following comments on the Casper Resource Management Plan Draft EIS:

3.1.2 Geologic Resources:

Page 3-9: Geologic resources section should include a bedrock geologic map for the area in the planning area. The Geologic Map of Wyoming (Love and Christiansen, 1985) is available digitally at 1:500,000-scale; and, the bedrock geology could be clipped and pasted into the planning area boundary and included with the map volume for reference purposes.

Page 3-9: The Geologic Formations section would be easier to follow if a stratigraphic column was included as a figure in the text showing the stratigraphic relationships of the formations present in the planning area both in outcrop and subsurface. This would make the discussion of formations easier to follow. The Stratigraphic Chart showing Phanerozoic Nomenclature for the State of Wyoming (Love, Christiansen, and Ver Ploeg, 1993) is available with stratigraphic columns reflecting nomenclature in the Hartville Uplift, Laramie Range, Powder River Basin, and Wind River Basin. This information would be useful in any discussion of the formations in the planning area. Also, the discussion of major geologic formation in the planning area should be more descriptive with respect to lithologies.

Page 3-10, 2nd paragraph, line 17: Permian Minnekatha should be Permian Minnekahta

Page 3-10, 3rd paragraph, line 1: Gypsum Springs should be Gypsum Spring

Nick Jones, Coal Specialist of the Wyoming State Geological Survey, has the following comments:

Section 3.2.2

Leasable Coal-

Paragraph 1.
Producing coal beds—

The discussion pertaining to coal zones and individual coal beds in this paragraph does not agree with previous coal stratigraphic nomenclature and is misleading. According to previous workers, the following is a standard coal litho-stratigraphic nomenclature that is applicable in the northern portion of Converse County. From top to bottom, Eocene age Wasatch coals consist of local beds and the Felix coal. Paleocene Fort Union coal zones and individual coal beds located in the Tongue River Member are the Wyodak Rider Coal Zone which consists of the Smith (a.k.a. Big George), Baker and Taft coals. The Upper Wyodak Coal Zone consists of the Anderson and Canyon coal beds (currently are dominant production coals at the mines, a.k.a. Wyodak-Anderson where interburden is minimal). The Lower Wyodak Coal Zone consists of the Cook, Wall, Pawnee and Lower Pawnee coals. Due to erosion, weathering and natural burns, most of the Felix and Wyodak Rider beds are absent in this portion of the Powder River Basin. I would suggest that a coal litho-stratigraphic nomenclature chart be included to accompany this portion of the document.

References:

U.S. Geological Survey Coal Occurrence Report 79-318, Coal Resource Occurrence and Coal Development Potential Report and Maps, 1979. Northwest quarter, Betty Reservoir, 15' quad., Converse and Campbell counties, Wyoming.

Glass, Gary B., and Jones, Richard, W., Coal Fields and Coal beds of Wyoming, Wyoming State Geological Survey, Reprint No. 47, 1992.

Sincerely,

Joan E. Binder
Executive Assistant

Cc: Governor's Office
Ronald C. Surdam, Director/State Geologist