

## **DECLARATION OF SCOTT CROCKETT**

I, Scott Crockett, do hereby declare the following:

1. I am a split estate landowner in the Powder River Basin, Campbell County, Wyoming. My ranch is 15,000+/- acres. Currently, I am running a cow-calf operation.
2. I own the surface land of this ranch, no mineral rights. The largest percentage of mineral rights are owned by the Federal government with a minor interest being owned by the State of Wyoming and/or private individuals. My ranch is a true split-estate.
3. In the past there have been several oil wells drilled, developed and abandoned on my property. Currently there is no coalbed methane (CBM) gas development on my property. Producers have approached me with initial proposals, but no development has taken place as of May 10, 2006.
4. There are numerous sites of abandoned oil wells, pipe (including above ground), pumping equipment, tank batteries, dilapidated buildings, exposed pipelines, oil leaks (resulting in possibly contaminated soil), erosion, and generally, debris scattered throughout. Additionally, there is a water injection site with abandoned equipment which includes a large diesel engine, broken windows, doors, glass and debris all left on my surface by Federal lessees.
5. Pipe casings are most probably eroding and could result in oil seeping into the ground as well as the contamination of ground and/or surface water.
6. Roads to the sites have not been reclaimed and are now severely eroded.
7. Open pits have not been reclaimed and old fencing is in disrepair. I have found my cattle stranded behind these fences with no food or water.
8. All of these conditions pose a potentially dangerous situation for the environment, my family, and my cattle ranching operations now and in the future.
9. Since 1995 I have been in constant communication with the BLM field office in Buffalo, Wyoming. I attended, and spoke, at a meeting in Gillette, WY with Kathleen Clarke, Director of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). I attended, spoke, and presented pictures at a meeting in Buffalo, WY with a delegation from the BLM/Dept of Interior, Washington, DC. While everyone listened and were appalled at the conditions on my property, absolutely no action has been taken to physically plug the abandoned wells, remove the hazardous equipment, or reclaim the surface.

10. Since 1995 the BLM has been telling me that the BLM does not have sufficient funds to assume responsibility for reclamation since adequate bonding had not been required.

11. Currently the Bureau of Land Management is in a legal battle in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit with a secondary lessee, Mr. Rex Monahan (Case #05-8068) attempting to ascertain responsibility for reclamation. Had the BLM required adequate bonding in the first place, this case, which will cost the taxpayer many thousand of dollars, would have been unnecessary.

12. These conditions have persisted for 10 years or more.

13. I have been forced to spend thousands of dollars in legal fees in an effort to protect myself, my family, my livelihood, and my land because the BLM has refused to accept the ultimate responsibility in this matter of reclamation.

14. Because the abandoned oil field issues have remained unresolved, my property value has decreased, dangerous liability questions loom, and non-reversible environmental damage may be happening.

15. Unless the BLM reflects the true, actual costs of reclamation in their current bonding requirements for coalbed methane development, all of my current “abandoned oil field” issues will become “abandoned CBM” issues of the future. For this reason, I am completely reluctant to welcome CBM development on my property.

16. I am equally concerned about the water discharge issue associated with coalbed methane development. Current bonding requirements will not begin to cover the costs associated with surface reclamation, contaminated farm/ranch land, contained pits, dead trees, and restoration of water walls.

17. As an affected surface owner, I am aware, first-hand, of the effects of inadequate bonding requirements. The BLM should learn from past mistakes and properly prepare for the future by adopting the Bonding and Reclamation Petition by the Western Organization of Resource Councils et al.

I declare that the foregoing declaration is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.  
Executed this \_\_\_\_ day of May, 2006.

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SCOTT CROCKETT