

January 16, 2008

Butte Action Committee
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Alberta Environment
Central Region-Red Deer
fax: (403)340-5022

Dear Sir or Madam,

Re applications # 15883-8 and # 19021 from Penn West Petroleum Ltd.

The Butte Action Committee submits a “statement of concern” regarding these applications for fresh water realizing that one is for a re-licensing and one is a new application. The end result is fresh water removed from the water cycle. These applications, being in the “green area” and belonging to the people of Alberta, will have no one “directly affected”. BAC will voice the statement of concern on behalf of all Albertans because we are all equally and directly affected.

Alberta must realize the long term ramifications of destroying fresh water. Other countries are realizing, too late, that the costs of short term planning are huge. An article in the *Western Producer* of January 10, 2008 illustrates this fact. The Rio Grande often has no water by the time it gets to Mexico. The aquifers that help feed the river are over exploited. In August, El Paso, faced with the possibility of no water by 2010, has “opened the world’s largest inland desalination plant to turn brackish ground water into fresh water”. Being proactive with their fresh water usage over the years would have been much less expensive than being reactive is now.

Alberta can learn from this example. Albertans have little idea how much fresh water is available. We still have the opportunity to be proactive. These applications should be refused because of potential negative impacts to fresh water in Alberta.

The Capstone hearing decided that the use of fresh water for water flooding must be reconsidered. The oil companies can use the brackish water or produced water for water flooding. It will be more expensive than using fresh water, but with oil at an all time high, the economics cannot be touted as an excuse.

All over the world, countries are concerned about their dwindling supplies of fresh water. Alberta has the opportunity to protect this finite, non renewable resource.

Respectfully yours,

Judy Winter
Secretary, Butte Action Committee