

**Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance
Greater Yellowstone Coalition**

July 18, 2008

Dale Deiter
Jackson District Ranger
Bridger-Teton National Forest
25 Rosencrans Lane
P.O. Box 1689
Jackson, WY 83001

Dear Mr. Deiter;

The Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition appreciate the opportunity to provide the Bridger-Teton National Forest with our comments and concerns regarding the proposed Gros Ventre Mineral Exploration Project. Our organizations represent members who have spent time on this forest hunting, fishing, watching wildlife and pursuing other recreational activities for many years. We advocate for multi-use of the lands and work to ensure that human activities do not disrupt other's enjoyment or negatively impact wildlife and other resources.

The mitigations for the proposed project cover a wide array of potential impacts. We would like to express our concerns about impacts that may not be included on that list or are worthy of repetition.

While no new roads will be allowed, and the use of equipment will minimize impacts to soils and vegetation, we request that the operators also minimize disturbance created by daily movement of personnel and vehicles on the site. To protect wildlife and habitat, vehicle trips into and out of the project site should be minimized and there should be no use of OHVs except on designated motorized trails and roads. All equipment, vehicles, and activities should not contribute to a decrease in air quality.

No water diversions should be permitted and short- and long-range impacts due to uncovering substrate that may contain contaminants such as, but not limited to, hydrocarbons from previous projects, naturally occurring hydrocarbons, leachable metals, oxidization of minerals, and naturally occurring acidic rock and soil, should be monitored and corrected if necessary. An analysis should be made of potential drainage from the disturbed rock, gravels and soils during rain events or due to leaching caused by possible change in a surface watercourse. A hydrogeochemistry analysis and model should be completed prior to permitting mining operations. Remedial plans for any foreseeable adverse impacts must also be described.

Of considerable concern is the potential for invasion of noxious weeds, the vegetative reclamation of the site, and the impact on surrounding native plant communities. We request regular monitoring of these issues. The final reclamation of the site should reflect the natural contours and plant species present prior to the beginning of the project. If there is an excess or

deficiency of material to reproduce original site contours, how will this be remedied? How will the material removed from the site for processing be disposed of? Is there a hazardous materials concern from naturally occurring components of the material?

With extended presence of the operators on the site, there are concerns related to time and non-mining activities in the area. Although this is remote, many people still access this area for camping, hiking, hunting and other recreational pursuits. We request that the operators:

- Maintain the site to address proper disposal and containment of trash and sewage,
- Provide proper storage for food to avoid bear conflicts,
- Avoid activities that might ignite forest fires,
- Preserve the sense of solitude for campers and other recreationists in the area by controlling noise levels,
- If pets are allowed on the site, in order to protect wildlife of all species, ensure they not be allowed to run free,
- Store and transport any hazardous or toxic materials utilizing the appropriate safety standards,
- Abide by all laws existent on the forest, within Teton County and the state of Wyoming. Wildlife including wildlife laws to prevent potential poaching.

Of utmost importance to our organizations is the protection of wildlife and other natural resources during this project on the Bridger-Teton Forest. The safety of the operators and other forest users should not be impaired by any project activities nor should the ability for any users to enjoy these lands be compromised. We are grateful for the continued opportunities to work with the Bridger-Teton on issues that our memberships and the public recognize as critical to a healthy, sustainable forest.

Thank you,

Louise Lasley
Public Lands Director
Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance
P.O. Box 2728
Jackson, WY 83001 307-733-9417
Louise@jhalliance.org

Lloyd Dorsey
Wyoming Representative
Greater Yellowstone Coalition
P.O. Box 4857
Jackson, WY 83001 307-744-6004
ldorsey@greateryellowstone.org