

Mine protests resolved

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WORLAND — An amended mining permit filed by a Grey-bull-based bentonite company has resolved protests over its mining application to the state Department of Environmental Quality.

Five landowners in the Shell Creek valley protested the original permit filed by Wyo-Ben, Inc., according to Jack Smith, an environmental specialist with the DEQ's Land Quality Division.

But Wyo-Ben, after meeting with the landowners, agreed to withdraw 750 acres from the more than 7,000 acres in the mining permit application, Smith said. The landowners then withdrew their protests, he said, filed with the Wyoming Environmental Quality Council.

Smith said the five landowners were primarily concerned with possible bentonite mining adjacent to their property. The landowners cited impacts to aesthetic values, property values and water quality as some of their concerns, he said.

The DEQ will likely issue a decision on Wyo-Ben's amended mining permit by the end of the year. Smith said all of the land in the application is administered by the Bureau of Land Management, which has leased the mining interests to Wyo-Ben.

The company could reapply in the future to add the 750 acres to their mining permit with the state, but it would require a formal review process and property owners would have another opportunity to protest, according to Smith.

Environmental Objections To Wyo-Ben Mining Application Resolved

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Wed, Apr 22, 2020