

News briefs from around Wyoming

From Wyoming News Exchange newspapers

Wyoming brings antitrust action against asset managers for ESG policies

CHEYENNE (WNE) — Wyoming is part of a coalition of states that has brought an antitrust enforcement action against asset managers Blackrock, State Street and Vanguard “for their coordinated and anticompetitive environmental, social, and governance (ESG) schemes to disrupt the energy industry,” according to a news release from Gov. Mark Gordon’s office.

Each defendant — three of the largest institutional investors in the world — has individually acquired substantial stockholdings in every significant publicly held coal producer in the United States.

Each thereby has acquired the power to influence the policies of these competing companies and significantly diminish competition in the coal markets, the release said.

“In 2021, Blackrock, State Street and Vanguard publicly announced their respective commitment to use their shares to pressure all portfolio companies in which they held assets to align with a climate activist agenda. Those goals included reducing carbon emissions from coal by over 50%,” the release said.

“Wyoming is committed to protecting our core industries, whether from federal overreaching regulations or unfair market manipulation. I commend our attorney general for her diligence in pursuing all options to protect the coal industry,” Gordon said in the release.

“Under the guise of ESG policies, they have leveraged their holdings and voted their shares to artificially constrain the supply of coal and significantly diminish competition in

the markets for coal, which resulted in increased energy prices for American consumers and extraordinary profits for the asset managers,” Gordon continued. “Pushing back against anti-competitive ESG policies, especially when they unfairly exact profits from increased energy costs to Wyoming families and businesses, is one of the ways Wyoming continues to defend our coal industry and help power the country.”

Former Smith’s employee pleads guilty to stealing thousands of dollars

GILLETTE (WNE) — A woman accused of stealing money from Smith’s while she worked there will plead guilty.

On Nov. 14, Kathryn Cranmer, 39, reached a plea deal in which she agreed to plead guilty to felony theft and, in return, the state will recommend a four-to-six-year prison sentence, suspended for three years of supervised probation.

On July 11, Smith’s reported that Cranmer had stolen \$43,000 over the past six months while she was a manager at the store.

Another manager told police that Smith’s loss prevention staff had an open investigation due to the store “coming up short in the drawer” for multiple months in a row. One of these employees said the investigation began in March, and it was determined that the shortages started in January.

From watching video footage and looking at logs, employees identified Cranmer as the suspect.

Loss prevention staff estimated that Cranmer stole \$43,000 from January to June. When she was confronted about this, she admitted to taking \$5,800, but was adamant that she didn’t take \$43,000.

She agreed to speak

with police, and said that, since January, she was tasked with refilling the self-checkout kiosks with cash once a month. She used the loan machine to withdraw cash for the kiosks, according to the affidavit.

She started taking no more than \$100 on top of the amount required to refill the kiosks. She admitted to doing this until June and believed she had stolen \$5,800 this way.

Investigators reviewed financial records that showed transactions made by Cranmer that were not consistent with the deposits into the self-checkout kiosks. According to the records, Cranmer took anywhere from \$350 to \$1,800 each time through this method.

Barrasso visits Wyoming National Guard in Middle East on Thanksgiving

CASPER (WNE) — The Wyoming National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery Forward had a special guest for Thanksgiving dinner.

U.S. Sen. John Barrasso traveled out of the country to celebrate Thanksgiving with the first full battalion deployment in over 70 years to conduct a field artillery mission in the Middle East, sharing a meal on Thursday with troops serving in the United Arab Emirates and in Kuwait.

“Hundreds of Wyoming’s finest soldiers are bravely serving in the United Arab Emirates and in Kuwait in one of the largest overseas deployments of Wyoming service members,” Barrasso said in a news release. “These soldiers are a long way from home defending our nation and our freedoms. Each of them makes Wyoming proud, and I made sure to let them know how grateful folks back home are for their service. It was an honor and privilege to vis-

it with and share stories of their families and our great state with these brave men and women.”

More than 360 Wyomingites are serving in the Middle East, according to Barrasso’s office, with 23 hometowns represented in the UAE and 40 hometowns represented in Kuwait.

In a YouTube video, Barrasso is shown holding a Wyoming state flag and shouting “Powder River, Let ‘Er Buck!” with soldiers in both countries, talking with soldiers at the dinner table and touring both bases.

Barrasso also held a town hall with troops at both bases and was briefed by military officials on Middle East operations, according to the release.

Salmonella outbreak linked to cucumbers

CASPER (WNE) — A Salmonella outbreak linked to cucumbers has infected 68 people in 19 states, including Wyoming, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Eighteen people have been hospitalized; nobody has died.

Two cases of infection are in Wyoming.

Several surrounding states have been affected to varying degrees, with the largest outbreak in Montana with 16 people.

The cucumbers in question were grown by Agrotato, S.A. de C.V. and sold between Oct. 12 and Nov. 26.

SunFed Produce recalled its cucumbers on Wednesday after it was alerted by the United States Food and Drug Administration that its cucumbers were associated with salmonella illnesses.

“As soon as we learned of this issue, we immediately acted to protect consumers. We are working closely with authorities and the implicated ranch to determine the possible

cause,” SunFed President Craig Slate said in a press release.

The CDC is advising individuals to throw away any produce from SunFed and any unidentifiable cucumbers.

Man who was shot while stalking gets prison time

POWELL (WNE) — Stalking a romantic rival resulted in a Powell man getting shot in June, and it resulted in a prison sentence as well.

At a Tuesday hearing in Park County District Court last week, Jacob P. Ely accepted a two- to four-year prison sentence on a felony count of stalking.

The charge stemmed from a June 23 incident in which Ely — despite having been ordered to stay away from his ex-girlfriend and her new boyfriend — followed the boyfriend to his home in rural Powell. After spotting Ely pursuing him, the man pulled over and a confrontation ensued.

Ely, 41, reportedly tried hitting the man with a baseball bat, and he shot Ely in the right calf. Ely fled, but was eventually taken to a hospital and then to jail, where he’s remained since.

District Court Judge Bill Simpson called it a “terribly unfortunate event.” “[It] could have been worse, and it was bad enough as it was,” he said, calling Ely’s actions “unforgivable and inexcusable.”

The 41-year-old pleaded guilty to the felony stalking charge in exchange for a few other counts being dismissed — including a couple related to allegations that he’d previously stalked his ex and harassed her boyfriend in April.

Charging documents say Ely was suspected to have driven around the woman’s workplace, parked near her home and to have been behind a series of anonymous,

threatening messages sent to the woman, her boyfriend and her friends. “... Wait to see what’s about to blast through your window,” one of the messages said.

The roughly five months Ely has spent in jail will count toward his two to four years of prison time. The conviction is Ely’s second felony, following a 2018 conviction for possessing a controlled substance.

Wyoming Sugar sees record yield in Washakie County

WORLAND (WNE) — The 2024 Wyoming Sugar sugar beet harvest came in breaking records in Washakie County despite weather challenges.

Head Agriculturist Jacob Bullinger reported a yield of about 36 tons per acre, which is what he believes is a record.

The county yield exceeds the company’s overall yield of 33 tons per acre.

The harvest went well despite some delays due to muddy yard conditions as well as wet fields.

In early October, workers at the Wyoming Sugar Factory in Worland experienced elevated temperatures and unanticipated wet weather, which temporarily suspended harvesting operations. Despite these weather fluctuations, the sugar beets remained largely unaffected.

“The sugar content is exceptionally high, averaging around 19.6,” said Bullinger.

While the benefits of a fruitful harvest are evident, increased tonnage also presents challenges.

Due to the overwhelming volume, beets have been piled on the edges of fields, he said. Despite this slight hurdle, processing at the factory is proceeding smoothly, and the processing campaign is expected to be completed by March, he added.

Public notices

Public Notice

Pursuant to the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act and the Wyoming Public Service Commission’s (Commission) Procedural Rules, notice is hereby given of Rocky Mountain Power’s (RMP or the Company) Application to convert the primary fuel source from coal to natural gas for Units 1 and 2 of the Naughton Power Plant located in southwestern Wyoming in Lincoln County about six miles south of Kemmerer.

1. RMP is a division of PacifiCorp, an Oregon corporation, engaged in the business of supplying electric utility service to customers throughout its six-state service territory, including Wyoming. RMP is a public utility subject to the Commission’s jurisdiction. Wyo. Stat. §§ 37-1-101(a)(vi) (C) and 37-2-112.

2. On November 6, 2024, RMP submitted its Application requesting the Commission’s approval of its proposed conversion of the fuel source used for Naughton Units 1 and 2 from coal to natural gas. The Company’s proposed conversion of Naughton Units 1 and 2 to natural gas includes: 1) construction of a new natural gas meter station with gas conditioning equipment along with a new natural gas lateral pipeline within the power plant’s property to the supplier’s interconnection point; 2) construction of a new pressure regulator station to control the pressure being introduced into the burners; 3) new natural gas burners and ignitors to allow for natural gas firing and electrical generation to achieve full load of 156 net-megawatt (MWn) on Unit 1 and 201 MWn on Unit 2; and 4) distributed control systems (“DCS”) logic modifications.

3. The Company determined within its 2023 IRP process that natural gas conversion of Naughton Units 1 and 2 was the least-cost, least-risk option for the Company and its customers. The total capital cost of the conversion of Naughton Units 1 and 2 to natural gas is approximately \$12.1 million. The Company states its proposed fuel conversion process is expected to begin in June 2025 with construction of the natural gas lateral supply line into the plant. Both units will cease firing coal on December 31, 2025, and both are expected to return

to service on natural gas by May 1, 2026.

4. This is not a complete description of RMP’s Application. You may review the Application at RMP’s Wyoming offices and at the Commission’s office in Cheyenne, Wyoming, during business hours or online at: <https://dms.wyo.gov/external/publicusers.aspx> (enter Record No. 17717).

5. Anyone desiring to file a statement, intervention petition, protest or request for a public hearing in this matter must do so, in writing, on or before December 20, 2024. Petitions shall set forth the grounds of the proposed intervention or request for hearing as well as the position and the interest of the petitioner in this proceeding. Please mention Docket No. 20000-673-EN-24 in all correspondence with the Commission.

6. If you wish to participate in this matter and you require reasonable accommodation for a disability, please contact the Commission at (307) 777-7427, or write to the Commission at 2515 Warren Avenue, Suite 300, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002, to make arrangements. Communications impaired persons may also contact the Commission by accessing Wyoming Relay at 711.

Dated November 20, 2024.
Pub. Nov. 28 & Dec. 5, 2024 No. 1753

NOTICE

The Hot Springs County Board of Commissioners is asking County Residents to apply to serve on the following Boards:

- Big Horn Basin Nature and Discovery Center Board- HSC/ToT Representative – Three (3) Year Term – 1 member
- Fairboard – Five (5) Year Term – 1 member
- Natural Resource Planning Committee – Three (3) Year Term – 1 Member
- Predatory Animal Control Board (Sportsman) – Three (3) Year Term – 1 Member

Residents of Hot Springs County inter-

ested in applying to serve on these Boards should submit a County Board Application (available on the County website www.hscounty.com or at the County Clerk’s Office) to the Hot Springs County Clerk’s Office no later than 5:00 p.m. Thursday, December 12, 2024. Applications will be considered and appointments made at the Hot Springs County Commissioners meeting December 17th.

Becky Kersten
Hot Springs County Clerk
Pub. Nov. 28 & Dec. 5, 2024 No. 1754

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF HOT SPRINGS COUNTY, WYOMING FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

IN THE MATTER)
OF THE ESTATE) Probate No.
OF) 2024-CV-0032
)
DUANE WATKIN WATKINS)
)
Deceased.)

NOTICE OF PROBATE

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN SAID ESTATE:

You are hereby notified that on the 5th of November 2024, the Estate of Duane Watkin Watkins was admitted to probate by the Probate Court of Hot Springs County, Wyoming as Probate No. 2024-CV-0032 and that Pam Watkins and Vivian Rigby were appointed Co-Personal Representatives thereof. Any action to set aside the Last Will and Testament shall be filed in the Court within three (3) months from the date of the first publication of this Notice, or thereafter be forever barred.

Notice is further given that all persons indebted to the decedent or to decedent’s estate are requested to make immediate payment to the Estate of Duane Watkin Watkins and sent to Fallon Clay, attorney for the estate, c/o Keller Law Firm, P.C., Attorneys at Law, P.O. Box 111, Thermopolis, WY 82443.

Creditors having claims against the decedent or the estate are required to file them in duplicate with the necessary vouchers, in the office of the Clerk of said Court, on or before three months after the date of the first publication of this notice, and if such claims are not so filed, unless otherwise allowed or paid, they will be forever barred.

DATED this 25th day of November 2024.

/s/ Fallon Clay
Fallon Clay, WSB #8-7266
Keller Law Firm, P.C.
P.O. Box 111
Thermopolis, WY 82443-0111
(307) 864-2318
fallon@kellerlawpc.com

Pub. Dec. 5, 12 & 19, 2024 No. 1756

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Bureau of Reclamation intends to execute a water service contract with the Town of Kirby in accordance with Sec. 9(c) of the Act of August 4, 1939 (53 Stat. 1196) and the Act of December 22, 1944 (58 Stat. 887). This contract will furnish up to 30 acre-feet annually of supplemental water need from the Bighorn drainage basin. To provide written comments, to request additional information, or to view a copy of the proposed contract, please contact Cecelia Stuckert at 307-261-5610, or write to: Cecelia Stuckert, Bureau of Reclamation, Wyoming Area Office, P.O. Box 1630, Mills, WY 82644. Written comments will be accepted for a period of 60 days from the initial date of this notice.

Pub. Dec. 5 & 12, 2024 No. 1757

Public Notice

There will be a public hearing on Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 7:00pm. at Town Hall to review the Home Occupation of Sean B. Kaplan, to operate a Buying, Selling and Transfer of Firearms at 414 N 8th St., in the MDR. For further information, please contact Codes Admin. 864-4442.

Pub. Dec. 5, 2024 No. 1758