

From: Carol Bitting [mailto:lcbitting@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2014 11:46 AM
To: Szenher, Doug
Subject: Reg 5 & 6 Comments

Mr. Doug
Szenher,

6-26-2014

I am writing in support of the proposed changes to amend Regulation 5, Confined Animal Feeding Operations and Regulation 6, Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations eliminating future permitting of medium and large swine CAFO's in the Buffalo River watershed.

The Buffalo National River was established by an Act of Congress on March 1, 1972. The National River designation protects natural rivers from industrial uses, impoundments and other obstructions that may change the natural character of the river or disrupt the natural habitat for the flora and fauna that live in or near the river.

The Buffalo National River is preserved for possessing outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, and or other similar values. Rivers, or sections of rivers, so designated are preserved in their free-flowing condition and are not dammed or otherwise impeded. National wild and scenic designation essentially vetoes the licensing of new hydropower projects on or directly affecting the river. It also provides very strong protection against bank and channel alterations that adversely affect river values, protects riverfront public lands from oil, gas and mineral development, and creates a federal reserved water right to protect flow-dependent values.

There is a lot of speculation that this proposal removing the authority of the ADEQ director from permitting medium and large swine confined animal feeding operations or CAFO's will affect the rural or historic farmer. This rule-making only affects the CAFO Industry who are using the term "FARM" as their ally. They aren't farms and need to own the term of factory or industrial institution.

Livestock production has become increasingly dominated by CAFOs in the United States and other parts of the world. Cattle and pork originated in CAFOs by the 1970s and 80s. CAFOs now dominate livestock and poultry production in U.S. and the scope of their market share is steadily increasing.

CAFO's help to put the local or rural farmer out of business (USDA Statistics 2013). A CAFO is totally dependent and the animals are owned by corporations. The animals are raised inside buildings in confined spaces and their waste is owned by the CAFO owner. The feed is hauled in by large trucks and CAFO's are totally dependent on the grid. The animals cannot survive in their pens or crates without utilities such as propane or electricity. In the event of a disaster there is another possibility of yet another disaster of dealing with the deaths of thousands or tens of 1,000's of animals.

The word farmer or farm has always conjured an image in my mind of my parents who raised cattle on 150 acres. They owned their animals, raised their own hay, and sold cattle at local sale barns. The number of cattle they raised was determined by the amount of hay the land produced. There are many different types of farmers, but the term “farm or farmer” basically pertains to ones growing crops or raising animals on a farm, usually owning the animals and land.

Putting America’s dependence on CAFO’s puts American’s at risk to being dependent on large industrial institutions, government programs and other countries who own CAFO’s in the USA. We as American’s are independent in our thinking process. We want to have our farms and enjoy the way of life our parents and grandparents enjoyed. CAFO’s are not historical farming, they are not farms. To feed myself and my family is still something I can do locally. To think that I have to rely on a CAFO for my food source puts me and my family into a dependent situation and the event of disaster or economic hardship would put me into a position of depending on government programs to provide for me and them.

Millions of people enjoy and depend on the Buffalo National River. All communities have restrictions. There isn’t always a law for community values and this battle to “Save the Buffalo River Again” has changed my life. It has made me see the side of industry and a selfish few who have restricted values in family, community and preservation of natural resource. It has made me realize there are agencies that loose their purpose and “we the people” need to stay more actively involved with oversight of these agencies that “we the people” have allowed to run amuck for industrial bucks by our absence to voice.

Arkansan’s have a responsibility to the nation to protect the Buffalo National River. We cannot continue to wear blinders or ignore science that Arkansas and the rest of the nation has published because industry wants to promote CAFO’s, confined or concentrated animal feeding operations, in our state. Science has proven CAFO’s are major pollution contributors to our environment. Not only to our water quality but to the green house gas emissions and health of the communities surrounding the CAFO industry.

Life cannot exist without water. It is time “we the people” speak for our basic values, to take into account our neighbors and work together to keep Arkansas the “Natural State”. Support our local farmers markets and buy Arkansas owned and raised products. It is time to step up and preserve our natural environment as Arkansan’s and American’s.

I don’t consider myself a “radical environmentalist”. I am a living being that uses local resources to survive. I enjoy the flavor of grass fed free range beef, pork, and chicken. I enjoy the freshness and nutritional values associated with homegrown vegetables. The cost may seem more expensive but the flavor and nutrition outweigh the cost in the amount needed to reach satisfaction, health and therefore offsets the cost.

I support the Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission in their proposal to protect the Buffalo National River watershed. To amend Regulation 5 and 6 to prevent this potentially environmentally placed disaster from ever happening again in the Buffalo River watershed.

Sincerely,

Carol Bitting

HC 73 Box 182 A

Marble Falls, Ar 72648