

April 4, 2017

RE: C & H Hog Farm Regulation 5 Permit

Honorable Governor Asa Hutchinson
Governor's Office
500 Woodlane Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

Honorable Director Becky Keogh
Attn: Katherine McWilliams
Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
Office of Water Quality
5301 Northshore Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118-5317

Dear Governor Hutchinson and Director Keogh

I right this letter with deepest concern the great state of Arkansas, "The Natural State" and the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, ADEQ has lost their moral and scientific compass when it granted C&H Hog Farm (CAFO) its initial permit and will make an even more devastating mistake if the CAFO is granted the Regulation 5 permit.

There is significant reliable scientific data to show the CAFO is currently polluting the ground water, Big Creek and the Buffalo River. This information should be enough to justify denying the permit which I sincerely hope and pray you will do.

However, I am concerned you are being pressured by special interests to approve the permits. I would like to share with you two historically significant examples of how bowing to special interests which ran counter to professional and scientific information and the public's interest had and continue to have devastating consequences.

I am a retired CPA and remember the unbelievable consequences of Arthur Anderson, perhaps the most respected international accounting firm in the world

at the time, disgraced and forced out of business because it succumbed to pressure from its client Enron to act against its professional, legal and public responsibilities. The malfeasance and illegal actions of a small percentage of its professional staff resulted in the entire Arthur Anderson international organization decimated with tens of thousands of employees losing their jobs and their families suffering significant financial and emotional damage. Although I was not directly impacted by this event the CPA profession in general suffered a significant blemish to its reputation with a number of laws, rules and regulations enacted to prevent similar events from happening again.

Perhaps an even more relevant and timely example of a public entity losing its moral and scientific compass is playing out currently in Flint Michigan with lead leaching into the public drinking water of Flint residents. I know you are familiar with the details of this and public records indicate the problem was caused by the water department of Flint failing to stand by its scientists but instead bowing to pressure from city administrators to take a different course to save money. This resulted in tens of thousands of Flint residents being exposed to significant levels of lead which pose serious health risks to all the residents and especially to children. Michigan's governor Rick Snyder has just announced \$100 million for addressing the problem, however the impact on the health of Flint citizens may never be known. What is the cost of thousands of children whose health and learning abilities impacted for their entire lives? It has also resulted in some city officials being criminally charged for their actions or inactions in the decision to disregard the advice of their scientists.

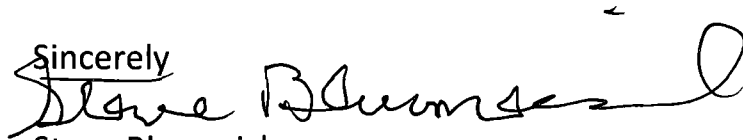
Now we come to the Great State of Arkansas, "The Natural State", ADEQ and the CAFO. There is significant reliable scientific data to show pollution is occurring currently from run off and seepage into ground water caused by spraying approximately 2.6 million gallons, according to the CAFO's annual report to ADEQ, of untreated liquid hog waste on 500 to 600 acres of local pasture land. Much of this untreated liquid hog waste will flow through the thin layer of top soil into the karst topography below and then rapidly into the ground water contaminating wells, Big Creek and the Buffalo River. The CAFO's lagoons with millions of gallons of liquid and solid hog waste may also be leaking into the ground water because the lagoons have only a clay liner and no impermeable liner. I realize a bore hole was drilled under one lagoon to test for leaks but am concerned one test hole was insufficient to test for leakage. It doesn't take a scientist to understand if you

spray millions of gallons of liquid hog waste on fields year after year or have lagoons with millions of gallons of hog waste leaching into the ground that ground water contamination will occur.

Director Keogh, I can't imagine the stress this CAFO is causing within ADEQ, with the knowledge that ground water contamination from the CAFO is occurring and contaminating wells, Big Creek and the Buffalo River. I sincerely believe you are in a position similar to those officials within Arthur Anderson and Flint Michigan. Will you allow your agency to grant this permit against scientific evidence which shows leakage and contamination is already occurring? Will you risk the Natural State losing significant financial revenues when more and more visitors turn away from the Buffalo River because of hog waste contamination? Will you expose your staff to perhaps criminal prosecution if people get sick from the contamination and you and your staff failed to protect its citizens?

Why would you risk all of this for one hog CAFO? A CAFO that provides very little economic benefit to Newton County and Mt. Judea compared to the harm it is doing.

I believe the heart and soul, the moral and scientific compass of ADEQ are in your hands. The health of a community in and around Mt. Judea and a significant Natural State resource are in your hands and I sincerely and strongly urge you to make the right decision to deny the Regulation 5 permit for this CAFO.

Sincerely


Steve Blumreich

PO Box 2244

Mountain Home, AR 72654

Sblum1326@gmail.com

P.S. Your Legacy:

Hopefully when your grand children visit the Buffalo River they can say. My grandfather the Governor or grandmother the Director of ADEQ had the strength and foresight to stand up and protect this beautiful river. The water is clean enough for us to swim in without fear of dangerous pathogens or the stench of massive algae blooms.

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