

ADEQ

ARKANSAS
Department of Environmental Quality

AUG 21 2014

Rita Byram
595 Connelly Road
Pearcy, AR 71964

RE: Response to Re-opening C&H Hog Farms, Inc.
AFIN: 51-00164; Permit No.: ARG590001

Dear Ms. Byram:

Director Marks forwarded your letter to me to reply to you, and I apologize for my delay in responding to your request to re-open the comment period on the C & H Hog Farm. Please be advised that the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality ("ADEQ" or "Department") takes the responsibility to protect the environment of the State of Arkansas very seriously. Our concerns encompass all waters of the State, including the Buffalo River. The Department is closely monitoring the operations at C&H Hog Farms, Inc. ("C&H Hog Farms"). It is not the intent of the Department at this time to reopen the C&H Hog Farms' permit to accept public comments. However, ADEQ will continue to review the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations ("CAFO") general permit and the Annual Reports submitted by C&H Hog Farms as well as perform regular inspections to ensure continued compliance with applicable law and regulations.

Additionally, the CAFO general permit will be open for renewal prior to its expiration date of October 31, 2016. As part of the permit reissuance process, the public will have an opportunity to comment on the general permit. Also, once the general permit is reissued, operators covered under the permit must reapply for coverage to comply with conditions of the new permit. Upon receipt of a Notice of Intent (NOI) and a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) and determination that these documents are complete, a 30-day public review and comment period for any permittee seeking coverage will be made available in accordance with CAFO general permit ARG590000 Part 5.

Regarding the elevated levels of E. coli, the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Big Creek Research Extension Team is currently conducting a study on Big Creek. A review of the analysis shows it is difficult at this time to pinpoint an exact source of E. coli as elevated levels were detected both downstream and upstream of C&H Hog Farms. The most recent report can be found at the following website:

http://arkansasagnews.uark.edu/CH_Quarterly_Report_Jan-March_2014.pdf

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If there are any questions concerning this submittal, please contact John Bailey, Permits Branch Manager in the Water Division, at (501) 682-0629 or by email at bailey@adeq.state.ar.us.

Sincerely,



Ellen Carpenter
Chief, Water Division

EC:cv

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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