



April 6, 2015

Dave Siebert, Director
Bureau of Energy, Transportation and Environmental Analysis
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 Webster St.
Madison, WI 53703

Sent by email to david.siebert@wisconsin.gov

Dear Mr. Siebert:

We are writing to urge you to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed hog facility in Bayfield County, proposed by Riecks View Farms of Iowa.

In the course of our work, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters works with tens of thousands of individuals and dozens of organizations across Wisconsin. These voters bridge the political spectrum and range from hunters and trappers to concerned moms.

We know Wisconsinites in Bayfield County and all across the state care deeply about the safety of their drinking water and the preservation of the Lake Superior Watershed. To understand the level of concern among Wisconsinites for the protection of Lake Superior, it's instructive to look at how citizens engaged when the legislature worked to weaken the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' ability to review necessary documentation and evaluate the threats that metallic mining may have on this watershed. Throughout the two year process, from Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters' membership alone, we saw citizens submit 24,508 letters to legislators, 830 citizens attending public hearings, and 2,126 citizens contacting their legislators by phone to express opposition to the weakening of water quality protections in the Lake Superior Watershed.

While the threats from a proposed hog facility are different from the proposed iron mine, they have one significant similarity – they pose a threat to Lake Superior and numerous inland lakes, rivers, and wetlands and drinking water sources.

Wisconsin has very little history or established science to understand the many effects of a large hog CAFO for the topography, hydrology and soils of this area, and the facility's proximity to Lake Superior deserves to have the careful scrutiny that an EIS could provide. Conducting an EIS brings a more transparent public process that will give the public a fuller understanding of the nature of this project and its potential impacts.

In addition, this hog operation could have large impacts on Bayfield County's vibrant tourism industry. The renowned Apostle Islands Natural Lakeshore, Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, and North Country National Scenic Trail bring in hundreds of thousands of visitors every year, fueling the local economy. Degradation of Lake Superior and inland lakes and rivers pose an enormous threat to that economy.

Because WDNR must ensure that it uses its federal authority to protect our waters and communities, we respectfully ask that you support the submitted request to undertake an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed hog facility in Bayfield, Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kerry Schumann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Kerry Schumann
Executive Director