



*Advocating for Wisconsin's Large Environmental Permitted Operations
Who Comply with a Zero Discharge Standard*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Additional DNR Positions Will Not Solve Permit Backlog

All dairies, regardless of size, have been in a severe depression for the past 5 years. We have not only lost small farms; we have lost large farms. Wisconsin's largest economy - is not growing. Wisconsin's Dairy industry is struggling to survive, and is losing ground every day.

We commend the GOP members of Joint Finance for rejecting fee increases on a small segment of Wisconsin's dairy farms.

We believe the Finance Committee missed an opportunity to review the internal processes at the DNR as it relates to CAFO permits. We believe a thorough review of DNR internal processes would have shown that more staff is unnecessary. Better management of existing resources would help reduce the permit backlog.

There are 1,300,000 cows in the state and only 300,000 of them are on CAFOs. There are 7,800 farms and only 305 are CAFO's. DNR's CAFO division has 14 Field Reps each accountable for 21,428 cows, and now 12 office staff each accountable for only 5 permit renewals per year of the expected 60, one every 2-1/2 months.

Rather than adding positions to speed up the permit process, the WDA suggests the following:

- 1) Utilize the information provided by a licensed engineer, reported according to DNR specifications. Accept the paperwork portion of the renewal as complete. Licensed engineers are liable for their work and certainly are going to not submit work below DNR standards risking their future.
- 2) Reinstate the General Permit

If there was a concern about water quality for “delayed” permitted Dairies, understand all CAFO’s are required to continue to work under their existing permit conditions, even if the DNR has not gotten around to renewing them.

CAFOs have zero discharge permits at their production site and they are all required to have Nutrient Management Plans which contain strict guidelines on spreading. They are regulated, fined and they can be referred to the department of justice for prosecution if they are out of compliance.

They are the *ONLY* dairies treated in this manner.

There has been a strong focus on blaming well contamination solely on CAFO’s. WDA believes to solve contamination of groundwater; all aspects of contamination need to be reviewed.

Not just Bovine, not just CAFO’s.

Well structure, septic systems, the use of nitrates going back to the 1940’s that today continue to remain in the soil, municipalities, homeowners, large and small farms, crop growers - ALL polluters.

The WDA stands by their belief we need to have all potential dischargers on a path to zero discharge.

About Wisconsin Dairy Alliance

WDA represents modern regulated dairy farms in Wisconsin and works diligently to preserve Wisconsin’s heritage as the Dairy State. Our non-profit organization advocates for the truth by contesting unnecessary regulations that do not protect natural resources. The WDA believes in parity for all dischargers and works to operate under the uniform “zero-discharge” standard applied to WDA members.