

Martha Hall

I am a resident of WA State. I have lived in several counties where concentrated farm animals of over 100 mostly dairy cows or livestock raised for meat were kept in small areas. I've seen and read about how this impacts the ground water, wells, and our streams and rivers. There has been a long history of this in WA State. The problems near Yakima are only the latest example. Some dairies moved from western WA to eastern WA hoping to get away with polluting the ground water and streams by moving because maybe people would not be paying attention. I am glad that people are paying attention. The Dept of Ecology is our state agency that should be managing and regulating concentrated animal feeding facilities. It is disappointing that lawsuits must be filed to make this state agency do this. Now there is a new draft and it too fails to address all of the important issues. In fact, the draft fails to even address those highlighted in the court case. What is wrong with our WA Department of Ecology? Will these problems be addressed?

I'll mention just a few of the things that are not adequately addressed in the draft. First, one of the primary tasks for the DOE is to protect our streams and rivers and the draft does not do this. The draft fails to address the all too often leaks from manure storage. It fails to adequately address pollution from manure applied to fields. Why isn't the best science used for establishing riparian buffer where no manure can be added? Why isn't regular water quality monitoring and reporting through an unbiased process required? Too often heavy snowfall and/or rainfall have created unusual run-off that deposits this manure in our streams and rivers. How will DOE make sure that in extreme events this does not happen? Climate change is here and is impacting our state in many ways. Why are these changes not disclosed and addressed? We've seen and heard about manure storage facilities and lagoons leaking.

It doesn't require rocket science to address these problems. Reliable monitoring equipment is available, equipment that monitors and reports data. Why doesn't DOE require use of these? It is also

possible to develop standards that limit the amount of manure that goes on fields so this manure stays on these fields. We know how wide riparian buffers must be to protect riparian areas in extreme weather events. The people of our state count on the Dept of Ecology to know how to regulate dairies, livestock feed lots, and other facilities where livestock are contained.

Why do we still have documentation that proves that excess nitrates, E. coli, and fecal coliform bacteria from concentrated animal feeding operation are still polluting our state's waterways? Why are some communities still being impacted by these? Why isn't DOE requiring the best science and practices that are required by the Clean Water Act? Millions of dollars have been spent in our state to improve our streams and rivers. This is often done to help salmon. Yet DOE refuses to step up the plate and do what it is required to do, protect our streams and rivers from livestock operations? Please do your job. The people of our state highly value our riparian areas, our wetlands, streams and rivers, and the many species of wildlife who need these to be protected in order to survive.

I am personally upset by the lack of standards and requirements for feed-lots and places where large numbers of livestock are confined before being slaughtered in our state. I drive by one outside of George, WA, which should be closed. That any animal is forced to live in a horrible facility like this one until they are slaughtered is horrendous. On very hot day so many animals must be suffering and I'm sure some die. How can our progressive state not care about this?

Thank you for reading these comments,
Martha Hall
Anacortes, WA