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Factory farms create a lot of waste. That's why it's so important that our Department of Ecology protects our public health, water, wildlife, and environment from the tens of billions of pounds of waste that factory farms expel in Washington each year when issuing permits for factory farms. Instead, this permit allows factory farms to dump toxic cow manure on land beyond what plants actually need, which will send untreated waste into our rivers and groundwater. Even worse: the proposed permit obscures the factory farm's data from the public eye, leaving us in the dark about how much waste is being dumped onto our lands and into our waters.

This new permit is completely inadequate to prevent further pollution of our increasingly scarce water. The draft permit doesn't even require basic technology that will prevent pollution from reaching our waters or sufficient monitoring to actually determine whether operations are polluting. It doesn't acknowledge the science showing decades of damage to our waterways or even require factory farms to report on all the waste they're creating! The Department of Ecology's own reports on impaired waterways note decades-long damage to Washington watersheds, yet the draft CAFO general permit listed many unknowns, when the information is known by the Department of Ecology.

We need a permit that can protect us through the next five years of our climate crisis. We cannot suffer another five years of this industry's unchecked pollution, especially those Washingtonians who live in the Yakima Valley whose drinking water is already dangerously contaminated

I expect the Department of Ecology to follow the court order and uphold its obligations to rural communities, tribes, and all of us that depend on clean water and a stable climate.

I appreciate this opportunity to comment on both the draft CAFO general permit AND the associated SEPA DNS.