

Robert & Cynthia Martin

We own a small resort on Bull Shoals Lake. In the 18 years we've been in business we have had guests from every corner of our nation, and odd corners of a few other nations. Often a trip to the Buffalo River is a part of these visitors' vacations. Our pride and joy is a destination that is becoming well known across the U.S., and if someone asks, we always enthusiastically recommend at least a day trip to the Buffalo.

The past two years in late summer the unsightly algae blooms on Big Creek and downstream from its confluence with the Buffalo are the first times we have not referred guests to visit the river. It breaks our hearts. We've heard the blooms have not been conclusively tied to the C & H Hog Farm, in fact have seen blooms in the river before, but never to the recent extent. Even if this is not a result of pollution from the farm, we believe it is a preview of what is possible, and even inevitable, if C&H is permitted to continue.

A large-scale incident of pollution of our beautiful river will forever spoil its reputation. The state of Arkansas will be known as the one whose people failed to protect our nation's first National River. Arkansans already struggle against many misconceptions about our conservation efforts. Let's not provide fodder for more.

We are not vegetarians, and know the pork has to be produced somewhere. But huge operations like C&H must be located in sites carefully chosen to minimize their effects on precious resources -- people, natural features, and businesses nearby. C&H was not. We urge you to reject its permit to operate.