

Rylee Erickson

I am submitting this comment in strong support of the West River Dairy expansion and the issuance of the NPDES Individual Feedlot Permit for this Project.

I have been around Riverview for 7+ years — from participating in their dairy heifer leasing program for 4-H, to benefiting from Riverview's Scholarship program and internship program, to now being a full-time employee. Through all of it, I have had nothing but full faith that Riverview is bettering agriculture and helping the communities where their sites are located. I have also lived in Swift County for 20+ years, where three of Riverview's sites operate. I have seen firsthand how this company conducts itself as a neighbor and as an employer, and that experience matters to me when I say: this is a company that does things the right way.

The permitting process in Minnesota is extremely rigorous, and the submittal for this Project reflects that. The EAW and its attachments represent over 500 pages of research, analysis, and documentation — including not just internal work, but findings from independent third-party firms such as Barr Engineering for air quality modeling, American Engineering Testing for soil borings and groundwater analysis, Moore Engineering for a historic river flow study, and Agassiz Archaeology for a Phase I archaeological assessment. This is not a rubber-stamp process. It is a thorough, multi-agency review that involves the MPCA, the DNR, the Minnesota Department of Health, the State Historic Preservation Office, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Stevens County — all of whom have been engaged throughout this process.

The facts documented in the EAW show a company that consistently goes beyond what is required. Manure storage capacity is designed at 14 months — more than 50% above the 9-month state minimum. The clay liners for the liquid manure storage areas will be 60 inches thick, triple the standard requirement. Stormwater basins are sized more than 20% larger than the minimum required for a 25-year storm event. Independent air quality modeling confirms that odor at nearby residences will remain below the threshold for even faint odors 100% of the time. And post-construction, the Project will actually reduce stormwater sediment discharge from 0.41 tons per acre per year to just 0.05 — leaving the watershed in better condition than it is today.

More than 16,500 acres of cropland have been identified for manure application — over 3,000 acres more than needed annually — providing a buffer that protects neighboring landowners and water resources. Every one of those acres was reviewed using DNR ecological databases, SHPO archaeological records, and state soil and water quality standards before being included.

I encourage all reviewers to take the time to carefully read what has been submitted for public notice. The depth and quality of this submittal speaks for itself.

I respectfully urge the MPCA to issue the West River Dairy expansion permit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rylee Erickson

Morris, Minnesota