

Marshall Hoffman

As a resident of Stevens County, I am very troubled by the possible expansion of the West River Dairy. The sheer enormity of this proposed expansion warrants a full Environmental Impact Statement. The City of Morris is already effected by the smell of the dairy, especially on summer days, and doubling the herd will only make this problem worse. And that's not even touching on the millions of gallons of manure waste that would be generated. I am also against the conglomeration in the ag industry and the squeezing out of smaller family farms, the backbone of rural Minnesota, with anti-competitive practices. The expansion also seeks to use a tremendous amount of the area's water. Riverview already has a track record of questionable ethical practices regarding the use of water and overpumping at their Arizona operation. The amount of pumping they want to do annually in West Central Minnesota would equal about 75% of the amount of water that is pumped for the entire city of Morris. There are also a number of wildlife protection areas nearby the dairy and manure spills -- which Riverview has had in recent years in this area -- would be disastrous for these lovely areas. Our family has taken walks and enjoyed these protected areas over the years and we would not want to see it harmed or damaged. In short, a full Environmental Impact Statement must be required before this proposal by Riverview moves forward.