



June 6, 2013

Dear Members and Friends of the Ozark Society,

As many of you know, a key part of our mission is to continue to protect the Buffalo River, the nation's first national river, from threats to its water quality, its wildlife, and its scenic and historic values. Recently a 6,500 CAFO (concentrated animal feed operation) for raising hogs was permitted by the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and it has begun operation. This CAFO, known as C&H Hog Farms is located in Mt. Judea, along the banks of Big Creek, a major Buffalo River tributary, 5.7 stream-miles from the Buffalo. C&H washes out hog manure and other waste from their barns, collects it in clay-lined ponds, and then sprays it on fields, many of which are adjacent to Big Creek. The farms and the fields are sited above a layer of Boone limestone that is almost certainly highly fractured and porous (called karst). Even during normal operation, the geologists tell us that it is highly likely that the waste, through leakage from the ponds and infiltration into the ground water from the fields, will reach Big Creek and then the Buffalo. Heavy rainfall, floods, or accidents on the farm will cause even greater contamination. The contamination will not just be due to nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous that are not removed by the field grasses but will include much more worrisome compounds such as fecal coliform, the cysts—cryptosporidium and giardia, feed additives such as metals and hormones, and disease-causing pathogens. The Buffalo below Carver, where Big Creek enters, could become severely impaired and closed to swimming and even canoeing and kayaking. All fish, shellfish, and wildlife are at risk.

Many of you have heard about or have participated in the activities of concerned citizens who are trying to end this threat. There have been informational meetings, editorials, protests, op-eds, letters to the editor, as well as phone calls and e-mails to public officials and to Cargill, the company that is buying the hogs. On May 6, 2013 the Ozark Society, along with the National Parks Conservation Association, and the Buffalo River Watershed Alliance with legal help from Earthjustice, Earthrise, and Hank Bates, a Little Rock attorney, filed a Notice of Intent (NOI) to sue the Farm Service Agency (FSA) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for violation of the Endangered Species Act in connection with loan guarantees they had made so that C&H could secure a construction loan. Recently, we are fortunate in that the Arkansas Canoe Club joined with us and the other organizations mentioned above to help with the continuing fight. They will be part of pending actions.

Without a positive response from FSA, a lawsuit will almost certainly be filed, not only under the Endangered Species Act but due to a woefully inadequate

Environmental Assessment carried out before the loan was granted. Various actions involving the ADEQ are also being considered if they do not withdraw the permit. We are also working on longer-term protection of the Buffalo through modification of regulations to prohibit CAFO's and point source pollution activities in the Buffalo River watershed.

As concerned citizens and members of the Ozark Society, we are requesting donations to assist us with legal fees and other associated costs (noted below) needed to fight this threat to the Buffalo River.

- Equipment, labor, and analyses for water and air quality testing
- Fees for consultants for expert opinions
- Advertisements in newspapers, magazines, TV, and radio
- Promotional materials such as decals and handouts
- Travel expenses and other expenses associated with lobbying (but not to exceed the maximum allowed by our 501(c)(3) status).

Please make your donation using the "Donate Now" button on our website, www.ozarksociety.net or send us a check to Ozark Society, c/o Bob Ritchie, 707 Pleasant Valley Dr. #10, Little Rock, AR 72227 with a note that it's for the "Legal Fund". Your donations are fully tax deductible.

Please help us by telling your friends and neighbors about this donation opportunity. Several fund-raising activities are being planned for this summer and fall. We will keep you informed of these events and continue to provide you with information on the latest protests and other ways in which you can help. Our friends at the Buffalo River Watershed Alliance (www.buffaloriveralliance.org) have posted many documents relevant to the problems of the C&H Hog Farms operation. Please check this site and signup on BraveOzarks on Facebook to stay informed on the latest information.

Sincerely,

The Ozark Society and Many Other Concerned Citizens