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Legislators Call on DNR to Reduce the “Harm” from Well Pumping that UW Study Shows, Environmental Impact Report Needed—

Proposed Richfield Livestock Factory Further Threatens Drinking Water, Lakes and Streams

Madison, WI— Three Assembly Representatives today asked DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp to consider the “harm” to drinking water wells, rivers and streams that a new University of Wisconsin study found from well pumping in Adams and Waushara Counties. The report found well pumping now threatens drinking water wells, and reduced lake and stream flows. A proposed 6,200 animal unit livestock factory would make it worse according to the UW analysis.

The October 7, 2011 document to the DNR from UW-Stevens Point Professor George Kraft, Director of the Center for Watershed Science and Education, found: “The analyses described here indicate substantial water table drawdown and streamflow diversions already exist in the vicinity of the proposed Richfield wells. Within the context of how WDNR sets allowable amounts of surface water withdrawals from lakes and streams, these **groundwater pumping drawdowns and diversions seem in excess of what constitutes a “harm.” The proposed Richfield wells will exacerbate the drawdowns and diversions.**” (Emphasis added).

“When one of Wisconsin's most respected hydrologists offers a state-of-the-art science-based analysis that suggests we have a problem, we should listen. Clearly the DNR should consider Dr. Kraft’s report and the more accurate predictions that are possible because of his years of water studies and data collection in this region. To ignore the conclusion that this project could lead to further drawdown of wells, streams and lakes would be foolish”, said Rep. Fred Clark (D-Baraboo), a member of the Natural Resources Committee.

“The DNR should protect our drinking water wells, streams, and Pleasant Lake from ‘harm,’ which has already seen a 18” drawdown from well pumping,” said Rep. Brett Hulsey, (D-Madison), a member of the Natural Resources Committee. “At the least, we request that the DNR conduct further environmental impact assessment to better consider the available evidence, including seeking an environmental impact report.” The DNR is considering the permit for the 6,200 animal unit Richfield livestock factory in the coming weeks.

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