NEFERTITI'S TOMB FOUND?



THURSDAY August 13, 2015

Starribune







during surgery. A4

Now, refugees swamp Greece

to employers

Judge orders



First Av. ceiling collapses

See **COLLAPSE** on A9 ►

Hog-lot fight looms along Lake Superior

Foes rally against plan to build in Bayfield County.

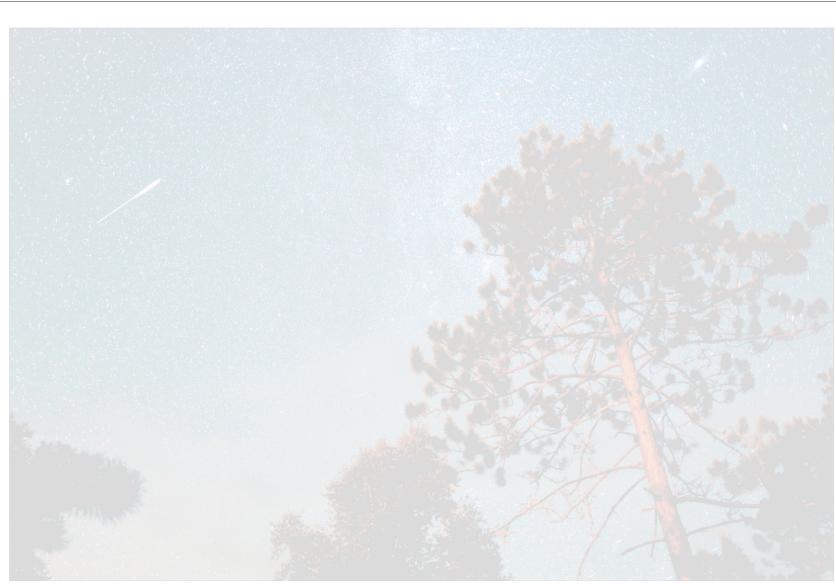
By JOSEPHINE MARCOTTY josephine.marcotty@startribune.com

BAYFIELD, WIS. - The vivid blue expanse of Lake Superior and the national lakeshore near Madeline Island here in northern Wisconsin have always been largely immune to environmental threats from

factory farms — until now.

A proposal to build the first large-scale livestock facility in the Lake Superior watershed has triggered fierce reaction in the tiny towns along its southwest shore, where residents depend on the lake for drinking water and the annual flow of tourism dollars, a third of which comes from Minnesota.

> County boards have passed See **SUPERIOR** on A6 ►



DANCING WITH THE STARS

Courtroom camera rules are relaxed

See **CAMERAS** on A8 ►

Deadly blasts rock Chinese port



See **EXPLOSIONS** on A6 >

Prosecutor: Zumberge a calm killer

See **ZUMBERGE** on A8 ►



Foes rally against proposed hog farm

SUPERIOR from Al

feedlot moratoriums, thousands have signed petitions, and local Indian tribes have persuaded the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to weigh in on the state's review. And last week, an Ashland City Council member led a "stink-in" with buckets of pig manure that gave a whiff of what could be in store.

The community uprising is all the more notable given Wisconsin's farming history, cuts to environmental protections by the Republican Legislature and the anti-regulatory drumbeat coming from Gov. Scott Walker's presidential campaign.

"This is a real uphill battle for us," said Bill Bussey, a board supervisor in Bayfield County, where the swine operation would be built. "But I think we need to undertake it."

Officials with Reicks View Farms, an Iowa operation that wants to build the 26,000-head hog operation, said they were taken aback by the intensity of local opposition. They said the feedlot will abide by all state clean-water rules, and they even welcomed the state's decision last month to conduct a major environmental impact statement on the proposal, an unusual step for a feedlot.

Reicks View runs several businesses, including 40 swine facilities, in northeast Iowa. It chose northern Wisconsin for a new sow-breeding operation largely to escape the infectious diseases that have devastated the pork industry in recent

"We've been looking north for a more isolated area for a long time," said Gene Noem, head of swine operations for Reicks View. "We intend to run an operation that follows all the laws and operates in an environmentally friendly way."

Green Bay pollution

The proposal for the feedlot, to be called Badgerwood, first surfaced in January. Reicks View asked the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for a permit for a facility that would house 26,000 swine, mostly piglets, and produce 9 to 10 million gallons of manure a year. The manure would be spread across 1,380 agricultural acres, some owned by the company and some by neighboring farmers.

Large animal operations are consin DNR to act, a case that basis," he said.



DEB PASTNER • dpastner@startribune.com

 $Opponents\ of\ a\ proposed\ large-scale\ hog\ facility\ in\ the\ Lake\ Superior\ watershed\ are\ worried\ about\ possible\ pollution\ runoff.$

nothing new to Wisconsin the state is home to some 272 Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) of 1,000 animals or more, mostly dairy and beef, and many more smaller ones.

Nor is agriculture new to the area around Bayfield, Ashland and the shores of Lake Superior. Fruit orchards dot the hills of the mainland above the Apostle Islands. The townships south of Ashland, where the CAFO would be built, depend on cows and crops the site itself is a former dairy farm. And, as Noem pointed out, the fields they would use to spread manure are already fertilized regularly.

But the number of big feedlots in Wisconsin has been growing steadily since 2000, and they are increasingly controversial — especially near Green Bay. There, runoff from manure and other fertilizers has contributed to a major dead zone in the bay and contaminated some local wells.

An administrative law judge said last year that a "massive regulatory failure" had led to groundwater contamination in the area and ordered the Wishas convinced many communities around Lake Superior that the state is not going to protect their bay.

Noem said he hopes that those in the community will judge Reicks View on its own record and not on the industry in general.

Local residents also fear their countryside is not suitable for intensive farming.

"I can't imagine a more inappropriate place" for a large livestock operation, said Gordon Stevenson, who ran the Wisconsin DNR's agricultural runoff program before his retirement. He is now an outspoken critic of his former employer and the state's environmental policies.

That area of Lake Superior is also home to two Indian tribes that are aligned with the anti-CAFO group and are increasingly outspoken to the federal government about the cumulative environmental problems throughout the region, said Jim Zorn, executive administrator of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

"You have to start looking at this on a comprehensive

The area around the Apostle Islands is granted extra federal and state protections because it is considered a largely pristine and outstanding resource, said Bob Krumenaker, superintendent of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. That means the state has an extra responsibility to ensure it stays that way, he wrote in a letter to the DNR urging a comprehensive environmental review.

"This park is something that is precious," he said.

Blue turns red

Opponents are mostly worried that pollutants will run into a trout stream and Fish Creek, which empties into Chequamegon Bay close to the intake pipe for Ashland's drinking water. Fish Creek already has excessive levels of phosphorus, a nutrient that causes algal blooms and E. coli, said Randy Lehr, an environmental scientist at Northland College in Ashland.

The big storms expected to become more common with climate change would aggravate the risks. In 2012, Chequamegon Bay and the Apostle Islands experienced their first economy, he said, one reason Josephine Marcotty • 612-673-7394

algal bloom, following the massive rainstorm that flooded towns from Duluth to Ashland and turned the blue Lake Superior water red with clay.

"That was big news for us,"

It's not clear at this point what impact 10 million gallons of manure would have in the watershed, Lehr said. A lot depends on how much of a nutrient load is in the system already and how much makes its way to the lake.

Lehr's research shows that phosphorus levels in the bay are hovering around the maximum allowed by state and federal law, but an EPA study found that in 2008 they were much higher.

Noem and other agriculture experts say that with careful management and soil studies, manure applications can be precisely calibrated to what the crops need in order to prevent runoff and groundwater contamination.

"Manure as a fertilizer is valuable to us," Noem said. "We will figure out ways not to waste it."

Badgerwood would also create jobs and boost the local

Minn. 61 Apostle Islands Lake 26,000-head Wis. hog operation Great Lakes watershed Source: ESRI, GLIN

RAY GRUMNEY • Star Tribune

why it's supported by some current and former farmers in the area.

"This is the modern agriculture that we have progressed to," said Clay Burditt, who farms near Ashland. Opposition to it, he said, "is an attack on our way of life."

Local strategy

In fact, the local communities may not have the legal power to stop it. Wisconsin passed a law in 2006 that sets basic standards for CAFOS and neutralized local zoning laws. If an applicant can meet them and provide necessary information in the permit, then the DNR must approve it.

Those opposing the project, led by a group called Farms Not Factories, are now trying to persuade the Bayfield County Board of Supervisors to consider a strategy that local communities have used to control frac sand mines in the state — operational zoning laws. In essence, they would require Badgerwood to prove that it won't pollute the water, spread disease or cause noxious smells, said Glenn Stoddard, an attorney with Farms Not Factories.

Going up against powerful political and agricultural interests in the state will require enormous fortitude from local elected officials, said Mary Dougherty, a Bayfield resident and founder of Farms Not Factories. And that means citizens have to be engaged about taking control of where they live,

"We are, in a crazy way, fortunate that this showed up because we can figure what we want for the community," she said. "The water unites every single person up here."

"We intend to run an operation that follows all the laws and operates in an environmentally friendly way." Gene Noem, head of swine operations for Reicks View Farms

Powerful blasts rock Chinese port, leaving at least 17 people dead

▼EXPLOSIONS from Al

Unanswered questions

Apartments a total loss





August 13, 2015



Hog-lot fight looms along Lake Superior

By JOSEPHINE MARCOTTY

BAYFIELD, WIS. – The vivid blue expanse of Lake Superior and the national lakeshore near Madeline Island here in northern Wisconsin have always been largely immune to environmental threats from factory farms — until now.

A proposal to build the first large-scale livestock facility in the Lake Superior watershed has triggered fierce reaction in the tiny towns along its southwest shore, where residents depend on the lake for drinking water and the annual flow of tourism dollars, a third of which comes from Minnesota.

County boards have passed feedlot moratoriums, thousands have signed petitions, and local Indian tribes have persuaded the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to weigh in on the state's review. And last week, an Ashland City Council member led a "stink-in" with buckets of pig manure that gave a whiff of what could be in store.

The community uprising is all the more notable given Wisconsin's farming history, cuts to environmental protections by the Republican Legislature and the anti-regulatory drumbeat coming from Gov. Scott Walker's presidential campaign.

"This is a real uphill battle for us," said Bill Bussey, a board supervisor in Bayfield County, where the swine operation would be built. "But I think we need to undertake it."

Officials with Reicks View Farms, an Iowa operation that wants to build the 26,000-head hog operation, said they were taken aback by the intensity of local opposition. They said the feedlot will abide by all state cleanwater rules, and they even welcomed the state's decision last month to conduct a major environmental impact statement on the proposal, an unusual step for a feedlot.

Reicks View runs several businesses, including 40 swine facilities, in northeast Iowa. It chose northern Wisconsin for a new sow-breeding operation largely to escape the infectious diseases that have devastated the pork industry in recent years.

"We've been looking north for a more isolated area for a long time," said Gene Noem, head of swine operations for Reicks View. "We intend to run an operation that follows all the laws and operates in an environmentally friendly way."

Green Bay pollution

The proposal for the feedlot, to be called Badgerwood, first surfaced in January. Reicks View asked the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for a permit for a facility that would house 26,000 swine, mostly piglets, and produce 9 to 10 million gallons of manure a year. The manure would be spread across 1,380 agricultural acres, some owned by the company and some by neighboring farmers.

Large animal operations are nothing new to Wisconsin — the state is home to some 272 Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) of 1,000 animals or more, mostly dairy and beef, and many more smaller ones.

Nor is agriculture new to the area around Bayfield, Ashland and the shores of Lake Superior. Fruit orchards dot the hills of the mainland above the Apostle Islands. The townships south of Ashland, where the CAFO would be built, depend on cows and crops — the site itself is a former dairy farm. And, as Noem pointed out, the fields they would use to spread manure are already fertilized regularly.

But the number of big feedlots in Wisconsin has been growing steadily since 2000, and they are increasingly controversial — especially near Green Bay. There, runoff from manure and other fertilizers has contributed to a major dead zone in the bay and contaminated some local wells.

An administrative law judge said last year that a "massive regulatory failure" had led to groundwater contamination in the area and ordered the Wisconsin DNR to act, a case that has convinced many communities around Lake Superior that the state is not going to protect their bay.

Noem said he hopes that those in the community will judge Reicks View on its own record and not on the industry in general.

Local residents also fear their countryside is not suitable for intensive farming.

"I can't imagine a more inappropriate place" for a large livestock operation, said Gordon Stevenson, who ran the Wisconsin DNR's agricultural runoff program before his retirement. He is now an outspoken critic of his former employer and the state's environmental policies.

That area of Lake Superior is also home to two Indian tribes that are aligned with the anti-CAFO group and are increasingly outspoken to the federal government about the cumulative environmental problems throughout the region, said Jim Zorn, executive administrator of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission. "You have to start looking at this on a comprehensive basis," he said.

The area around the Apostle Islands is granted extra federal and state protections because it is considered a largely pristine and outstanding resource, said Bob Krumenaker, superintendent of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. That means the state has an extra responsibility to ensure it stays that way, he wrote in a letter to the DNR urging a comprehensive environmental review.

"This park is something that is precious," he said.

Blue turns red

Opponents are mostly worried that pollutants will run into a trout stream and Fish Creek, which empties into Chequamegon Bay close to the intake pipe for Ashland's drinking water. Fish Creek already has excessive levels of phosphorus, a nutrient that causes algal blooms and E. coli, said Randy Lehr, an environmental scientist at Northland College in Ashland.

The big storms expected to become more common with climate change would aggravate the risks. In 2012, Chequamegon Bay and the Apostle Islands experienced their first algal bloom, following the massive rainstorm that flooded towns from Duluth to Ashland and turned the blue Lake Superior water red with clay.

"That was big news for us," Lehr said.

It's not clear at this point what impact 10 million gallons of manure would have in the watershed, Lehr said. A lot depends on how much of a nutrient load is in the system already and how much makes its way to the

Lehr's research shows that phosphorus levels in the bay are hovering around the maximum allowed by state and federal law, but an EPA study found that in 2008 they were much higher.

Noem and other agriculture experts say that with careful management and soil studies, manure applications can be precisely calibrated to what the crops need in order to prevent runoff and groundwater contamination.

"Manure as a fertilizer is valuable to us," Noem said. "We will figure out ways not to waste it." Badgerwood would also create jobs and boost the local economy, he said, one reason why it's supported by some current and former farmers in the area.

"This is the modern agriculture that we have progressed to," said Clay Burditt, who farms near Ashland. Opposition to it, he said, "is an attack on our way of life."

Local strategy

In fact, the local communities may not have the legal power to stop it. Wisconsin passed a law in 2006 that sets basic standards for CAFOS and neutralized local zoning laws. If an applicant can meet them and provide necessary information in the permit, then the DNR must approve it.

Those opposing the project, led by a group called Farms Not Factories, are now trying to persuade the Bayfield County Board of Supervisors to consider a strategy that local communities have used to control frac sand mines in the state — operational zoning laws. In essence, they would require Badgerwood to prove that it won't pollute the water, spread disease or cause noxious smells, said Glenn Stoddard, an attorney with Farms Not Factories.

Going up against powerful political and agricultural interests in the state will require enormous fortitude from local elected officials, said Mary Dougherty, a Bayfield resident and founder of Farms Not Factories. And that means citizens have to be engaged about taking control of where they live, she said.

"We are, in a crazy way, fortunate that this showed up because we can figure what we want for the community," she said. "The water unites every single person up here."