

Submitter: Alderin Ordell
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB80

I am writing to you today in support of SB 80. We must halt the expansion of factory farming, defined by the Oregon Department of Agriculture as large CAFOs, in our state's groundwater management areas until the contamination is brought down to safe levels.

As reported by local news station KGW8, Pat Suter, a resident of Umatilla County, has well water that tests at 37 parts per million, four times what the EPA considers dangerous. Suter's previous wife died of cancer, and he noted that she drank coffee brewed using the well water daily. He said he's also lost a total of 16 dogs to cancer over the years.

Unfortunately, Suter is not alone. At least 40% of wells tested in Eastern Oregon had unsafe nitrate levels, and there is a strong correlation between drinking water high in nitrates and developing cancer, thyroid problems, blue baby syndrome, and other adverse health conditions. The problem is that there are massive factory farms in Eastern Oregon, like ThreeMile Canyon, which alone houses 70,000 cows and uses 39,000 acres of crops to feed them. Since the cows drink water and eat feed full of nitrates, and these factory farms spray cow waste on their crops, the nitrates seep into the groundwater supply. These factory farms are also notoriously bad at managing animal waste, often creating "lagoons" that leak waste into the groundwater supply.

We need mandatory pollution reductions to prevent new sources of pollution, including factory farms, from being built in groundwater management areas. It makes sense to impose a CAFO moratorium so that regulators, legislators, and factory farm operators can all collaborate to create a reasonable contamination management plan. I urge you to vote for SB 80 to protect our precious water resources and public health!

Sincerely, Alderin Ordell
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