

Garrity, Marty

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Sent: Friday, May 01, 2020 2:11 PM
To: BLR Rules
Subject: Proposed Rule 5 and Rule 6 - Against

May 4, 2020

Senate and House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor

Madam Chair, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to the Arkansas Pollution Control & Ecology Rules 5&6 that are before you today. As you are well aware, the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation has been fully engaged in the issues from whence these proposed revisions emerged. This engagement has been based on input from our county Farm Bureau members. Our policy is developed through a very extensive grassroots process with input from our members who represent every county in Arkansas. Our policy fully supports the use of sound science to develop legislative and regulatory policies. However, the proposed revisions to Regulations 5&6 that are before you today are not founded in sound science. The reasons used to justify these changes point directly at one farm as the overwhelming risk to water quality in the Buffalo River. Scientific studies performed in the Buffalo River, such as the one completed by the Big Creek Research and Extension Team, over the past 5-7 years do NOT support these revisions. We ask on behalf of our members to vote against these two proposals (Item "E" and "F" on your agenda)

Counties in this area are some of the poorest in the state with agriculture being the predominant source of household income. These proposed changes would limit the ability of farmers to participate in the pursuit of agriculture at a level that is sustainable and profitable. Since the Buffalo River received its designation as a national River in the early 1970s, tourism has skyrocketed to 1.8 million visitors per year. While over the last fifty years, animal numbers in the Buffalo River watershed have experienced a steady and significant decline. Yet the impact of tourism – humans on the river – is basically absent from this decision. It is for these reasons that the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation cannot support the proposed regulatory changes before you today. We do, however, support the continuation of monitoring and studying water quality in this watershed and hope resources are allocated to continue this effort.

Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation

Sent from my iPad