

Luke . . .

I just wanted to comment on the CAFO regulation revisions. It looks like it is a done deal so rather than comment on the specifics I would like to make a few comments about the process. I only attended parts of two meetings, but based on those meetings I do have a couple of comments.

- Maybe you provided it at the end and I missed it, but it would have been nice to have let the public have a say on each section of the regulations. A couple of CAFO owners were asked for their opinion, but it did not appear that anyone on the conservation side was asked for their opinion.
- I don't know if it is a conflict of interest situation or not (probably is not). But it was frustrating watching the board members that I think are farmers steer each provision in a farmer friendly direction. For example, I think the number first proposed for requiring a manure management plan was 300, and farmer board members quickly raised it to 800. Someone from the public submitted the suggestion of requiring covers for manure lagoons and again the farmer members shot it down. The time period for correcting a manure pile was recommended at two days and the farmer members quickly made it fourteen days. These are only a couple of items, but there were definitely more instances.
- It seems like in many cases you are going to rely on the DENR to enforce the laws (and make the laws). That would be nice, but many of us would question whether or not the DENR is willing or able to enforce the environmental laws. You can also see Brad Johnson's (the chairman of the SD Conservancy District) past comments on the DENR's enforcement track record. I agree the County Commissioners and Board members are not experts, but on the other hand you could at least take a more active role in at least pointing out the violations to the DENR and following up to see if any action is taken.