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**State Assembly Passes Bill to Promote Siting of Livestock Factories
While DNR Investigates Water Pollution at Two Livestock Factories**

Madison, WI – Assembly legislators voted to pass a bill on March 2 that would limit local government authority over siting the largest livestock factories in Wisconsin, even as the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”) is currently investigating two recent manure spills from livestock factories in Jackson County and Kewaunee County.

AB 868, or the Livestock Siting Bill, would restrict the instances in which a local government could deny a local permit for a livestock factory that wanted to confine hundreds or even thousands of dairy cattle or other livestock in crowded barns. The purpose of the Livestock Siting Bill is to make room for larger livestock factories in Wisconsin.

Meanwhile, the DNR recently initiated investigations into two major manure spills from livestock factories in opposite sides of the state in Jackson County and Kewaunee County.

In Kewaunee County, neighbors claim that cow manure began showing up in their tap water shortly after Stahl Farms, a 900 cow livestock factory, began spreading manure across the road from their homes.

“My well contamination started when Stahl Farms started applying liquid manure to fields across the road from me,” said Scott Treml of Luxemburg in Kewaunee County. “There are laws that prevent water pollution from factory farms already on the books, but they are not being enforced because the DNR claims it is understaffed. So, why would our elected representatives pass a law that would make it easier for livestock factories to set up operations?”

In Jackson County, the DNR is investigating an incident where Sedelbauer Farms, a 1,300 dairy heifer operation in the Town of Hixton, spread solid dairy manure on frozen and snow-covered ground that had apparently run off the field and towards a tributary of a trout stream.

“We tried to tell the DNR that this would happen – that Sedelbauer’s animal waste would runoff the spreading fields during a spring snow melt and increase the risk of water pollution,” said Mike Helstad, of the Concerned Neighbors and Farmers of the Town Hixton, who had opposed the DNR’s issuance of a permit that allows Sedelbauer to expand. “And I think the worst is yet to come.”