

**From:** [Kevin Sterk](#)  
**To:** [Jennings, Jonathan \(ECY\)](#)  
**Subject:** CAFO Draft permit  
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Hello, just wanted to weigh in on this CAFO draft permit. A few points I'd like to make: 1. It assumes that all lagoons are leaking into ground water, this is completely false and is not proven. Dairy farmers have done an admirable job in improving water quality and in following the nutrient management program. 2. It labels any farmer with a lagoon a CAFO. This label has become a stigma for "those huge dairies that have way too many cows and are this big corporate farm". So now all farmers (most of them family farms) are thrown in the same boat. 3. Preventing us from spreading within 35 feet of any waterway at any time would significantly reduce the amount of land that we use to apply as land under the number of acres in our nutrient management plan. so if I'm currently within the number of acres per animal unit and some of those acres are taken away I would have to sell cows or buy more land to meet the nutrient management plan. 4. Requiring farmers to soil test up to 3 feet deep and after every cutting would increase my costs between \$300 to \$500 per field. Take that times 17 fields= \$6800 roughly. 5. If these new liners are going to be required in all lagoons it would cost between \$600 and \$900 per cow/ heifer to install. On the low end that's \$500,000 and that's \$500,000 that I don't have and would have to borrow. I'm sorry but that is a deal breaker for this dairy and would decide that it isn't worth it anymore. I'm not the only 1 that would say this either. In the end I wonder if this state wants dairy or agriculture? Are you trying to force us all out? There used to be over 1000 dairies in Whatcom county 50 years ago, now there's only 100 left and that is a shame. Thanks for your time, Kevin Sterk. Sterk Dairy of Whatcom County Inc.