We are writing this letter of support on behalf of Washington Beef for a number of reasons. First and foremost they are an exemplary corporate citizen. This is evident in their positive interaction with other companies, government agencies, and individuals. They have a close working relationship with the local community that is based on mutual respect and a common desire to improve the lives of residents. This is accomplished by providing safe, well paying jobs. Washington Beef also offers steady employment to a diverse group of employees in Yakima County, generating millions of dollars in wages, benefits, and economic activity for our area. Washington Beef also makes significant contributions to the various food banks and other outreach services that are so vital to the well-being of those less fortunate in our area. They also support other local activities that are of benefit to the residents of the Yakima valley.

With over a thousand employees Washington Beef is an outsized driver of the local economy and a significant contributor to the state and local tax base. While a large company by our local standards, they are not immune to the constant economic pressure of competing with the large national food processors. By operating on an Indian reservation Washington Beef is in the unique situation of not only complying with state and federal regulations, but also with the Yakama Nation's requirements. The Yakama tribe is very active in promoting good environmental practices and Washington Beef has been right beside them in achieving these goals.

By circumventing the standard procedures and protocols put in place when making adjustments to policy the EPA is putting Washington Beef in an unfair position. If the current direction is maintained the EPA's policy would have an immediate negative effect not only on Washington Beef's business model and future plans, but would dramatically effect the local economy and our population. We strongly support Washington Beef's position that the EPA should take a step back and return to the proper process so that the EPA can consider other data points before imposing their stringent water quality standards.

At the end of the day the people that work at Washington Beef also live here.