Message

From: Holtz, Bradley P - DNR [Bradley.Holtz@wisconsin.gov]
Sent: 1/15/2016 9:10:43 PM
To: Burdett, Cheryl [burdett.cheryl@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: governor says we are unveiling a comprehensive plan next week to EPA

FYI.

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From: Stoll, Richard C - DNR
Sent: Friday, January 15, 2016 2:07 PM
To: Block, Danielle L - DNR; Gruen, Andrea M - DNR; Hanson, Erin E - DNR; Holtz, Bradley P - DNR; Jones, Casey L - DNR; Stoll, Richard C - DNR; Uvaas, Benjamin J - DNR
Subject: FW: governor says we are unveiling a comprehensive plan next week to EPA

FYI

Walker promises 'science-based' groundwater solutions

Karen Ebert Yancey, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin *12:34 p.m. CST January 14, 2016*

Gov. Scott Walker arrives at the Kewaunee County Administration building for a town hall meeting Thursday, Jan. 14.(Photo: Karen Ebert Yancey/Kewaunee County Star-News)

In an interview before an invite-only "town hall" meeting at the Kewaunee County Administration building Thursday, Gov. Scott Walker promised "science-based" solutions to the county's water pollution problems.

He said that now that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) had concluded its workgroups this month in the county to address groundwater issues, the DNR would be meeting with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at the end of next week to "put forth a comprehensive plan and make sure it is based on science."

He said that the studies currently being done by the DNR and county would determine whether most of the contamination was being caused by agricultural runoff or other pollutants and if different well depths were part of the problem.

"We want to make sure that people have clean, safe water," Walker said.

The governor noted that the DNR had first met with farmers in March and that later that spring had met with the EPA and environmental groups. He said that the DNR was working with both the EPA in Kewaunee County as well as officials in Door County where similar groundwater problems existed.

In response to an emergency petition from environmental groups to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency last year asking the agency to use its "emergency powers" to address alleged violations of the nation's Safe Drinking Water Act, the EPA has been working with the DNR to address groundwater and surface water contamination in Kewaunee County where all three rivers are on the EPA's impaired list and 34 percent of wells in a recent DNR study were determined to be contaminated, allegedly from runoff of cow manure and other pollutants.

Walker said the dairy industry was an important economic driver for the state and that the federal and state governments were all working in Kewaunee County to come up with "how to deal with water quality issues here."

The governor also addressed the issues of wind farms proposed for Kewaunee County. He said that early in his first term he had sponsored wind farm legislation. He said that the legislation – which addressed property value concerns as well as the distance turbines could be placed from residences – had not made it through the state Legislature, but that he could look at reintroducing a bill with state Sen. Frank Lasee to protect property owners in the state, including Kewaunee County.

He said he was unaware of the deterioration of the East Twin River from a Class I Trout Stream to a river on the EPA's Impaired List over the last decade due to alleged pollution from industry and CAFOs in the area, but asked to have his external relations representative Alexander Fhlug provide a DNR contact on the issue. He agreed that clean water was important to increasing tourism in the county, which is one of the major goals for Kewaunee County officials this year.

Approximately 30 Kewaunee County residents were invited to the "town hall" meeting with the governor.

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