Message

From: Starfield, Lawrence [Starfield.Lawrence@epa.gov]
Sent: 2/27/2020 2:12:03 PM
To: Pollins, Mark [Pollins.Mark@epa.gov]
CC: Rausch, Heidi [Rausch.Heidi@epa.gov]; Wilson, Dane [Wilson.Dane@epa.gov]; King, Carol [King.Carol@epa.gov]; Kelley, Rosemarie [Kelley.Rosemarie@epa.gov]; Koslow, Karin [Koslow.Karin@epa.gov]; Denton, Loren [Denton.Loren@epa.gov]; Theis, Joseph [Theis.Joseph@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: Petition for SDWA 1431 for Nitrate Contamination in Lower Umatilla Basin in Oregon

Mark,

Thanks for that helpful summary. I've also heard from Ed Kowalski about Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP) Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP) I appreciate that you and your folks are monitoring the situation.

Larry

From: Pollins, Mark <Pollins.Mark@epa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2020 2:47 PM
To: Starfield, Lawrence <Starfield.Lawrence@epa.gov>
Cc: Rausch, Heidi <Rausch.Heidi@epa.gov>; Wilson, Dane <Wilson.Dane@epa.gov>; King, Carol <King.Carol@epa.gov>; Kelley, Rosemarie <Kelley.Rosemarie@epa.gov>; Koslow, Karin <Koslow.Karin@epa.gov>; Denton, Loren <Denton.Loren@epa.gov>; Theis, Joseph <Theis.Joseph@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Petition for SDWA 1431 for Nitrate Contamination in Lower Umatilla Basin in Oregon

Larry,

This note addresses a few questions that you had regarding the Lower Umatilla groundwater management area (GWMA) in Oregon. Region 10, OGC and WED are still reviewing the January 16 petition for SDWA Section 1431 action. For now, we have some preliminary feedback in response to the questions you raised earlier this month. First, yes there is a significant amount of data spanning three decades that indicates the groundwater in the area has elevated levels of nitrates; these elevated levels are due to a combination of commercial farming practices and other additional sources of nitrates. While the regulated public water systems within the GWMA appear to have taken actions to address the contamination or are currently working with the state to lower nitrate levels in the water they provide, the private wells are a continuing concern. Region 10 has engaged the multiple state agencies involved and, according to the Region, the state acknowledges it has blind spots when it comes to data for the private wells in the Lower Umatilla Basin. The information that is available regarding the underground source of drinking water supplying private wells suggests there are public health impacts -- a significant percentage of those wells that have been tested were above the maximum contaminant level for nitrates.

Second, regarding whether WED thinks EPA should Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

WED continues to monitor this situation closely and is assisting in any way possible.

Thanks,

Mark

Mark Pollins, Director
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