



Association of
Metropolitan
Sewerage Agencies

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July 30, 2001

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation Proposed Rule
Office of Water
Engineering and Analysis Division (4303)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20460

RE: Proposed National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit
Regulation and Effluent Limitations Guidelines and Standards for
Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations Rule (40 CFR Parts 122 and 412,
January 12, 2001, 66 Fed. Reg. 2960)

Dear Sir/Madam:

The Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies (AMSA) is pleased to provide comments on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Regulation and Effluent Limitations Guidelines and Standards for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations Rule (January 12, 2001, 66 Fed. Reg. 2960). Founded in 1970, AMSA represents the interests of over 260 of the nation's publicly owned wastewater utilities (POTWs). AMSA members serve the majority of the sewered population in the United States and collectively treat and reclaim over 18 billion gallons of wastewater everyday. AMSA's member agencies have worked closely with EPA for over two decades on the implementation and objectives of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and its resulting programs.

AMSA applauds the Agency's efforts to evaluate and update the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) Rule. Runoff from livestock operations and over application of manure are some of the leading contributors to waterbody impairment in the United States. While we agree that for more than 20 years Clean Water Act NPDES permits and effluent guidelines (ELGs) for CAFOs have helped to improve the quality of

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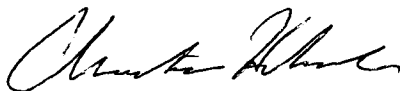
our nation's waters, much has changed in the livestock industry since the CAFO Rule was enacted. The need for regulatory revision is highlighted by many factors, including: the continued trend toward fewer but larger operations; greater emphasis on more intensive production methods; specialization further concentrating manure and other animal waste constituents within some geographic areas; reports of manure runoff and livestock operation waste discharges and inconsistent interpretation of the current regulations by state and federal personnel. AMSA is confident that revisions to the current CAFO standards will strengthen enforcement of the NPDES and ELG programs for large animal feeding operations (AFOs) and ultimately result in a net improvement in water quality. This effort will have an overall benefit for all entities striving to improve water quality across the nation, including POTWs who bear the ultimate responsibility to treat and reclaim much of the nation's water.

AMSA supports EPA's efforts to reevaluate current manure management methods. Although these methods were appropriate when AFOs were more common than CAFOs, many harmful discharges have resulted from these methods as CAFOs have become prevalent in the livestock industry. AMSA also supports EPA's effort to revise the definitions of CAFO and AFO as a result of industry change.

AMSA supports EPA's proposed controls for the land application of CAFO manure. Land application using proper agricultural controls can be an effective means of managing nutrient rich wastes. For example, EPA's regulations for the land application of biosolids from wastewater treatment have demonstrated that proper controls such as agronomic rates maximize nutrient usage while eliminating nutrient impairment concerns for surrounding waterbodies.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Regulation and Effluent Limitations Guidelines and Standards for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations. If you have any questions, please contact me at 202/833-9106 or chornback@amsa-cleanwater.org

Sincerely,



Christopher Hornback
Manager, Government Affairs