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Fulton County Concerned Citizens Discover More Errors in Flawed Livestock Permit for Proposed Factory Farm Near Lewistown

New findings show permit for planned swine operation violates existing setback distance requirements from City of Lewistown

LEWISTOWN, IL—MARCH 22, 2016—The citizens group Fulton County Concerned Citizens (FCCC) has issued a renewed demand that the construction permit for a new industrial-scale swine operation be revoked permanently. FCCC and its partner organizations [Illinois Citizens for Clean Air and Water \(ICCAW\)](#) and the national nonprofit [Socially Responsible Agricultural Project \(SRAP\)](#) assert that the planned Bear Creek 4 swine confinement project will be sited too close to the existing Milton Loop Trail System recreational area. New information also shows that the massive swine operation will be in violation of the legal setback distance requirements from the nearby City of Lewistown.

"Not only is this livestock factory plan located within our popular Fulton County Loop trail system, a place of common gathering, we just discovered it is located much closer to our community of Lewiston than allowable by Illinois law," said Cindy Arnett, spokesperson for FCCC. "Our city limit is actually only 2,440 from this industrial swine facility. The livestock facility law states that an operation of this size must be set back a half-mile from a populated area."

The violation was discovered after City of Lewistown officials physically measured the distance.

The Bear Creek 4 swine confinement project plan was recently granted an approval for construction by the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA), despite setback measurement errors that would allow the large-scale operation to be sited too close to the city limits of Lewistown. The Illinois Livestock Management Facilities Act mandates specific buffer zones between large livestock operations and areas such as homes and common places of gathering. FCCC asserts the IDOA-approved measurements are illegal and the group is demanding that the permit be voided.

"We have learned that there are often serious errors like this on the building application. If Illinois residents don't fact check application data, these types of errors can errors go unnoticed," said FCCC's Arnett.

The group forwarded the setback violation discovery to IDOA, the Governor's Office and local elected officials.

"The citizens of Fulton County are simply requesting that the current livestock law in Illinois be adhered to," said Karen Hudson of SRAP and ICCAW. "It's a shame people must police the applications and the construction process, and then monitor the pollution that eventually follows when livestock factories are built in Illinois. The IDOA must follow the law. There's no question about it."