

March 17, 2017

Warren Goetsch & Doug Owens  
Illinois Department of Agriculture  
P.O. Box 19281  
Springfield, IL 62794-9281

Dear Mr. Goetsch and Mr. Owens:

It has been brought to my attention that an environmentally unfriendly hog confinement, Memory Lane, LLC, has been proposed along a trail system that has been a work in progress for nearly four years.

I am the Scoutmaster of Lewistown BSA Troop 132. My scouts are very involved in hiking, backpacking and canoeing. There are only two locations in the entire state where an individual is able to participate in a long trek. Those are either in Shawnee National Forest or the Hennepin Canal. Other than those two sites, you would have to go out of the state to enjoy the ability to go on a miles long journey through the wilderness.

When I became a Merit Badge Counselor for Hiking, Backpacking, Canoeing and Kayaking (the thing that makes Boy Scouts, Boy Scouts), it was extremely difficult to find local areas to participate in these activities. This is a poor community. Many of our constituents can ill afford a trip for their children to go out of the area.

The Spoon River Trail System is approximately 35 miles of trails and over 15 miles of canoeing. I spent over three years, working with local land owners, obtaining permission for hiking and camping on their properties, in order to secure the rights to use this trail system.

The Scouts of this community love the outdoors! Each year, they participate in the Lincoln Pilgrimage, a 20 mile route from Lincoln's New Salem to the outskirts of Springfield.

I am deeply concerned of the potential hazardous threats this poses on not only the environment, but on the Boy Scouting program in the local area.

Attached you will find a map of the established Spoon River Trail System, camping locations, canoe entry and exit points and hiking trail.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Greg Juergens  
Scoutmaster, BSA Troop 132  
Lewistown, Illinois