

Peterson Stands Up to EPA on Green House Gas Regulation

U.S. House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson joined with House Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton, both senior democrats, to sponsor a bill that would block the EPA from regulating greenhouse gases. The EPA at the direction of the administration is now taking steps to regulate greenhouse gases. That action began shortly after the administration's Cap and Trade Bill ran into trouble and now looks unlikely to pass the U.S. Congress anytime soon.

"I have no confidence that the EPA can regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act without doing serious damage to our economy," Peterson said in a prepared statement. "Americans know we're way too dependent on foreign oil and fossil fuels in this country — and I've worked hard to develop practical solutions to that problem — but Congress should be making these types of decisions, not un-elected bureaucrats at the EPA."

There is a similar effort lead by Senator's Murkowski & Lincoln in the U.S. Senate. That effort has 40 co-sponsors including the Chairman of Senate Ag Committee Blanche Lincoln. Despite the huge stakes for Minnesota's agriculture industry neither of Minnesota's Senator's, Klobuchar or Franken have joined their fellow Democrat Senator Lincoln, Chair of the Senate Ag Committee or Rep. Peterson, Chair of the House Ag Committee in opposing the administration on this issue.

Senator Klobuchar's phone number is (202) 224-3244 and Senator Franken's (202) 224-5641.

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Today, about 3,000 - 3,500 timber wolves exist in Minnesota, with about 1,000 more in Wisconsin and Michigan. Lueck views the current situation as huge distraction for the USFWS. He said, "The wolf is recovered, we need to give the USFWS Agency credit for a job well done and move on."

The expected time line for the lawsuit is on or about March 16th Lueck and Tyler will have to file a detailed complaint in federal court. Summons are then issued to the agencies involved. The detailed complaint is based on the 9 page letter of notification of intent to sue that has already been provided to the agencies.

The agencies will have to answer the complaint within 60 days of the March filing date. What happens at that point depends on the content of the government's response to Lueck and Tyler's complaint. The wolf has recovered in the Midwest and in fact the current population far exceeds the wolf recovery plan goals. However, despite the obvious task forcing the federal government to obey the law and delist the wolves is no simple task.

Lueck & Tyler by taking on the Department of Interior and US Fish & Wildlife Service are in a legal struggle pitting two citizens against a the world's largest and most powerful law firm, the U.S. Justice Department and the general counsels of the federal agencies involved. To prevail this effort will need the help of everyone in the Midwest. Lueck and Tyler they can be contacted at (218) 927-2495 or at dklueck@embarqmail.com.

Colleen Zenk Joins Beef Council Staff

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Colleen was raised on a farm near Waldorf, Minnesota, Zenk holds a Bachelor's Degree from Mankato State University and a Masters Degree from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point. She also holds a Dietary Manager's Certificate from the University of North Dakota.

Since 1996, Zenk has worked in the private sector for Sysco Minnesota as a Healthcare Sales Executive and Healthcare Supervisor. At Sysco, she was responsible for developing and executing sales and marketing plans.

She is a Certified Trainer for ServSafe, the Sanitation & Food Safety Training and Certification Program. She served as Dietary Managers Association, National Chair from 2002-2003. She is currently a member of DMA's Certifying Board. Zenk is the author of numerous articles published in Dietary Manager's Magazine and Today's Dietitian.

Beef Council Executive Director Ron Eustice said, "Colleen Zenk will continue the strong working relationship with health professionals, retailers and food service establishments. We are very fortunate to have hired such an outstanding professional."

**Green Acres Program
 May 1, 2010 Deadline**

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Under the 2009 legislative changes county assessors are required to classify what was once generally known as agricultural land as either class 2a or class 2b. Class 2a is land that is used to produce an agricultural product. The Class 2b land is rural vacant land that does not qualify as land used for agricultural purposes.


Last year green acre program participants received letters from their county assessors outlining the 2009 changes to the program and general information on a new program, the Rural Preserve Property Tax (RPPT) program.

Under the 2009 rules class 2a land can remain in green acres, however, starting in 2013, land classified as 2b can remain in Green Acres. The 2b land may be eligible for entry into the Rural Preserve Property Tax program, which could also provide a property tax deferment. The deadline for making the enrollment decision is May 1, 2010. Failure to make the correct enrollment decision could result in incurring a tax liability for back taxes on land that was previously in green acres, but no longer qualifies.

Current Green Acres enrollees are supposed to be able to transition their qualifying 2b rural vacant lands into the RPPT program without having to pay deferred taxes on those lands. The details of the new RPPT program are not yet fully finalized. However, despite the lack of detail, it is understood that landowners will be required to have an approved conservation management plan and record that plan as a covenant on the property for a least ten years on 2b land in order to move it into the RPPT program. Figuring out how to proceed in view of the lack of details on the RPPT program is a challenge.

Virtually every agriculture group in Minnesota has been working on this issue with legislators with the goal of returning consistency and long term predictability to the green acres program. It is strongly recommended that land owners involved in the green acres meet with their county assessor to determine how much of their land is classified as 2a and 2b. During that discussion the county assessor should be able to provide some idea on what the assessed value of the land in the 2b category land will be. From that information it should be possible to get some insight into how your property taxes going forward will be impacted for land put into the new RPPT program and land not put into that program.

Central Livestock Association



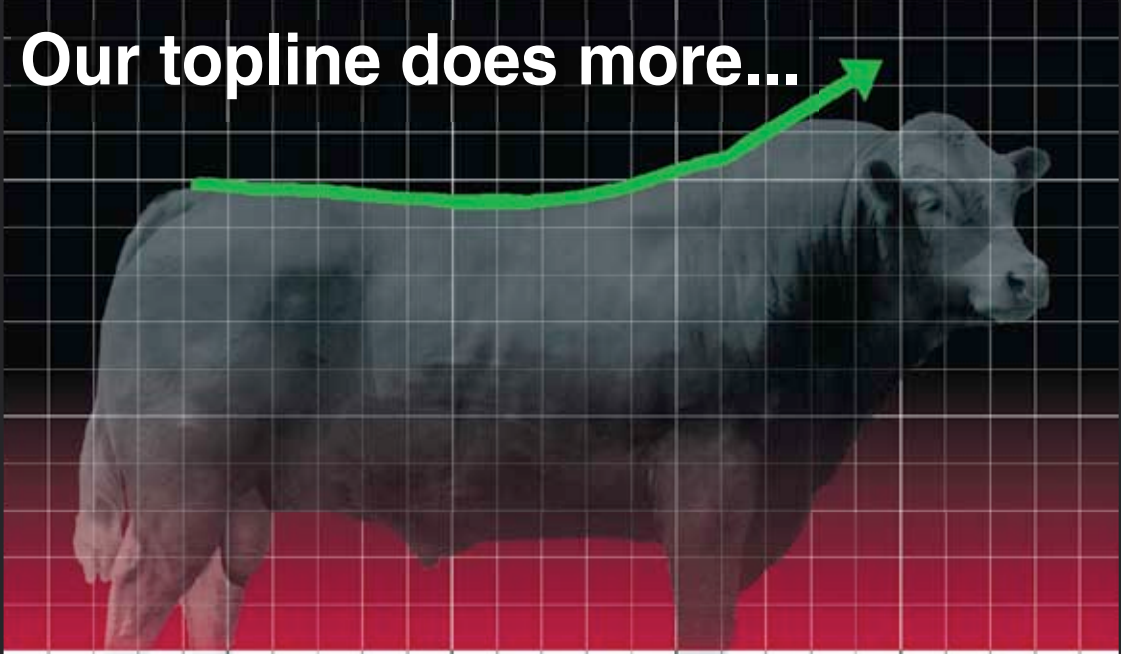
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