

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Draft Guidance Manual and Example NPDES Permit for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Michael B. Cook, Director
Office of Wastewater Management

I am pleased to provide you with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) draft *Guidance Manual and Example NPDES Permit for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOS)*. This draft guidance manual is a key action item in the recently released USDA-EPA *Unified National Strategy for Animal Feeding Operations*, and is being made available to the public for written comments for a sixty-day period.

The USDA-EPA *Unified National Strategy for Animal Feeding Operations*, which is a major component of the President's Clean Water Action Plan, was announced by the Vice President on March 9, 1999. The *Strategy* sets forth a range of flexible, common-sense actions that USDA and EPA plan to take over a multi-year period to promote proper management of animal manure and wastewater in order to minimize the water quality and public health impacts of animal feeding operations. In the short-term, EPA is focused on improving implementation of the NPDES permitting program consistent with the existing regulations, including publication of this draft guidance manual. Over the long-term, EPA will revise its regulations to reflect substantial changes in the animal production industry over the past several decades. Throughout this multi-year process, we will provide opportunities for you and other interested parties to offer comments on our draft guidance documents and proposed regulations.

A key objective of both the *Unified National Strategy* and this draft guidance is to accelerate issuance of sound, legally defensible NPDES permits for large CAFOs (e.g. operations with greater than 1,000 animal units) by January of 2000. The attached draft guidance is intended to aid EPA and State permitting authorities in meeting this goal. Reviewers of this draft EPA guidance document should keep in mind that, consistent with the *Unified National Strategy*, USDA is currently in the process of developing an important companion document that will provide guidance on how to develop sound comprehensive nutrient management plans (CNMPs).

USDA's draft guidance is expected to be available for public review and comment later this summer.

Thank you in advance for your interested and input on EPA's draft guidance. Both the draft guidance and additional information are available on the Internet at <http://www.epa.gov/owm>. You may also contact Gregory Beatty, 401 M Street, S.W., Mail Code 4203, Washington, D.C. 20460, or by e-mail at: beatty.gregory@epa.gov. Please submit your written comments on this draft guidance manual by October 6, 1999, to Gregory Beatty at either of the above addresses.

Attachment