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Ohio Pork Leads Coalition Against Lake Erie Activist Claims

Today's filing creates Motion to Intervene

NEW ALBANY, OHIO – In a move designed to protect Ohio farmers from non-science-based environmental restrictions, the Ohio Pork Council has led a group of 11 agricultural groups from across the state to seek a legal intervention to a lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that was filed by the Chicago-based Environmental Law and Policy Center (ELPC) on May 1, 2024.

Without evidence, the activist group alleges that the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of nutrients such a phosphorous into the Western Lake Erie Basin (known as the Maumee Watershed Nutrient TMDL) is insufficient to meet both Ohio and federal water quality standards. At its core, the lawsuit pushes for the need for additional limits and restrictions in the amount of phosphorus that both livestock and row crop farmers can use and that may, ultimately, enter the Maumee River and the Western Lake Erie Basin.

In light of this action, which is the third time ELPC has sued EPA over the status of western Lake Erie, the agricultural groups are rising to the defense of the EPA, which has also come under fire by Lucas County, Ohio, officials as well.

“Today as unified group of farmer-based organizations in Ohio, we’re saying that it’s time for these unscientific and baseless lawsuits to come to a halt,” said Cheryl Day, Executive Vice President of the Ohio Pork Council. “Our family farmers work hard every day to ensure that they are implementing best nutrient management practices and adhering to regulations that protect the water quality in the Western Lake Erie Basin and across the state. Let’s agree to move forward with facts and science, as the federal and state regulators have been doing, and stop wasting everyone’s time and resources on needless lawsuits.”

On July 29, the federal government filed an answer to the litigation. On September 20, the Ohio Pork Council, the rest of the Ohio agricultural coalition, along with help from the National Pork Producers Council and the American Farm Bureau Federation, responded by filing a Motion to Intervene.

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