

Box ■
Claresholm, Alberta T0L 0T0
June 30th, 2020

Dear Natural Resources Conservation Board,

Re: Application LA20014
Hutterian Brethren Church of Granum
SW 25-11-28 W4

The following statement has been prepared to show how the surrounding community will be negatively impacted by the proposed poultry barn and why the application should be turned down.

In my opinion, there are many reasons why the fly infested, ammonia reeking fly infested, ammonia reeking chicken barn proposal should be turned down. While they are explained in more detail on the following pages, here is a brief overview as to why the location is not suitable:

- a. Discrepancies between the previous owner's memory to other neighbors of flooding,
- b. Located too close to Meadow Creek
- c. Manure collection and storage is problematic,
- d. Manure disposal.
- e. Inability to check cattle from air,
- f. Reduced quality of life,
- g. Devalues property and limits subdivisions,
- h. Adverse impact on the current infrastructure,
- i. Likelihood of wells in the area being affected,
- j. Not full disclosure, 20,000 plus
- k. Closing statement.

As you can see there are several reasons why this proposal should not be granted approval. In the event you have any questions, please feel free to contact me accordingly (■■■■■■■■■■).

Submission by,
Don R. Chatterton, B. Sc. Ag Econ.
NW 4 12 27 W4 and SE 36 11 28 W4

A. Neighbour's Recollections of Flooding

In the proposal it states the former landowner had indicated the flood waters had never flooded over the creek into the yard site, in sixty years, and the bank has flooded 700m north of the site. Although the flooded creek may not have reached the yard, it came close to coming over the bank to the yard site.

Unlike Willow Creek, which has both Chain Lakes and Pine Coulee to help control some of its flood waters, Meadow Creek does not have anything to prevent flash floods. The PFRA built a dam approximately 400 yards north of the proposed site, in the 1940's, to help control the flooding, but was it washed out the year later. The area continues to have flooding.

Sixty years ago the land owner of this property was Robby Vance, who had it for several years. Most old established yard sites were put on high ground, Robby Vance sold the place to Walter Uhl, who sold it to Arnold Wilson. Mr. Wilson rented it to Gary Allison before selling it to the previous landowner. The old house on the property was taken down and the current house was built by Walter Uhl. The current house is fifty years old, not sixty. Walter has passed away but his son recalls when he was about eleven years old in 1966 or 1967, there was so much snow that he didn't have to go to school for several days. That spring when the snow melted the creek flooded so much it went over the banks to the north and was close to coming over the south to the yard site.

When Mr. Wilson moved back to Calgary and had an auction on March 17, 1978, the same day Pat McIntyre was drowned upstream on Range Road 282A and Meadow Creek. People who attended the sale recall seeing lots of water to the north, west and sound of the yard site. When Meadow Creek floods the whole meadow becomes the creek. The previous landowner bought the property about forty years ago.

Regardless of the memory of the various landowners, even if floodwaters do not reach the actual barn itself, getting access to the barns will be problematic. In summary, if the proposed poultry barn had been in operation back during 1954, 1963, 1966 or 1967, 1978, 1995, 2005, 2013, and 2014, the chickens would not have been fed for several days. There is also a high probability someone could lose their life trying to get to the poultry barn by venturing on through swelled lowlands.

Although that area is a picturesque location, the feasibility of a poultry barn, or any other kind of livestock enterprise for that matter, would not be a good idea due to the frequent flooding of Meadow Creek.

B. Too Close to Meadow Creek

The proposed fly infested, ammonia reeking chicken barn will be built on the flood plain of Meadow Creek and within 100 meters from the creek.

C. Manure Collection and Storage

As in other operations, are the old hens going to be killed and then put in with the manure to be spread? How will the old hens be killed? If the hens are to be gassed, which they usually are, where are the gases being put, into the atmosphere? How is the manure going to be loaded, into the spreaders from the storage facility? What is going to ensure that no manure will be spilled in the process of loading, as there is a gentle slope to the ditch that runs into Meadow Creek? I have asked these questions of the consultant, but they have not been answered.

D. Manure Disposal Locations

Irrigated Land	
<i>Location</i>	<i>Concerns</i>
SE 32 11 27 W4 160 acres	This is directly along Willow Creek and most of this is underwater, when it floods. It slopes to Willow Creek. There are not 160 acres of irrigated land, as there is only ¼ section pivot with no corner arm on it. They also have problems with the end gun so it is closer to 130 acres of irrigated land. On the north end of the quarter there is a drainage ditch that flows directly to Willow Creek. On the northeast end there is a culvert under RR 274 that drains 200 yards to the creek. On the southeast side is another ditch across RR274 that also drains to the creek.

As is indicated, there is not enough land to spread manure.

Furthermore, the land selected should not be used at all for spreading manure, as it will jeopardize the water quality of Willow Creek and the surrounding ground waters.

Having chicken carcasses and manure spread there is not a good idea. The aerial photos submitted in the application show white spots in them. This indicates standing water or drowned out areas.

POOR LOCATION!



E. Limited Options Due to Air Regulations

The current aviation regulations state that airplanes need to fly at least 2000 feet above barns with laying chickens. If a poultry barn were allowed to be built in the proposed site that would reduce the accessibility of at least two of their neighbours from being able to check cattle by air. The ability to use a plane has been very convenient, especially when roads have been impassable or to not rut the pastures after heavy rains. It also limits the air spraying of crops and pastures. In the 1940's the Claresholm airport was used for training WWII pilots and in the 1950's NATO also trained pilots who flew over this area. The airport has been here long before the fly infested, ammonia reeking chicken barn was proposed.

F. Quality of Life

The quality of life has been negatively affected already and will get worse if the poultry barn proposal is granted. First off, the air quality will be greatly impacted. We won't be able to enjoy the smell of the wildflowers due to the stench of the fly infested, ammonia reeking chicken barn wafting over the fence; and it is well-known that the odour of chickens are worse than cattle. Gone will be the days of our family enjoying the beauty of the prairieland and the natural wildflowers, like crocuses, shooting stars, brown-eyed Susan's, and buffalo beans to name a few, because of their proximity to a poultry barn. Furthermore, with the proposed poultry barn being located southwest of Claresholm it will mean the residents within the town and surrounding area will be getting the smell of the poultry barn due to the prevailing southwest winds we have for about two-thirds of the year.

There are many aspects to operating a farm and mishaps do happen. Once can be understandable, but when there is flagrant disregard for others, it gets aggravating. We have had our cut hay irrigated, travellers would need to stop their vehicles, bikes, or walk interrupted until the end gun moved so they could proceed without either getting themselves or what they were hauling wet because these brethren didn't turn off their end gun. The real sad thing is that they knew there was a problem. One of their solutions was to stop the pivot until we went to bed, then start it again during the night, leaving the hay saturated.

Incidents, like this that have been mentioned, not only decreased our quality of life but leave me wondering what other rules they are liable to disregard, with operating the proposed poultry barn.

G. Subdivision of SE 36 11 28 W4 and N 1/2 25-11 28 W4

We have five grandsons and would like to subdivide parts of NE 25 11 28 W4, NW 25 11 28 W4 and SE 36 11 28 W4 for them. Back in the fall of 2019 I went to the M. D. of Willow Creek office to pick up an application to subdivide. To get a development permit it had to be done within the year so we are waiting until needed. However, if a fly infested, ammonia reeking chicken barn is permitted, the land value will depreciate, nor will it be conducive to live next to a smelly, noisy, fly infested poultry barn.

H. Impact on Infrastructure

The roads to and from the poultry barn were built with a D6 cat and an elevating grader and have extremely soft shoulders. An elevating grader takes the top soil and subsoil out of the ditch and puts it on top making a poor base and not safe for heavy trucks that would be used going to and from the poultry barn. These trucks would have to stay a safe distance from the shoulder of the road, especially in the spring when the shoulders are still soft, as the frost is leaving. This makes it unsafe for oncoming traffic.

The bridges surrounding the proposed site are not built to sustain the heavy loads. Weight restrictions are placed on all the bridges in the area, which will impact load size, not to mention the deterioration of the bridges with the frequent use by such traffic.

I. High Probability of the Surrounding Wells Affected

There is a high probability the surrounding wells in the area will be adversely impacted if there is a change in the current draw from that area of the Carmangay Channel. The water table in that area has fluctuated. It has dropped and our springs and artsean well were affected. The neighbours in the vicinity have also had problems with their wells not providing adequate water for their domestic use, let alone a poultry barn with 20,000 plus chickens drawing from the same water source.

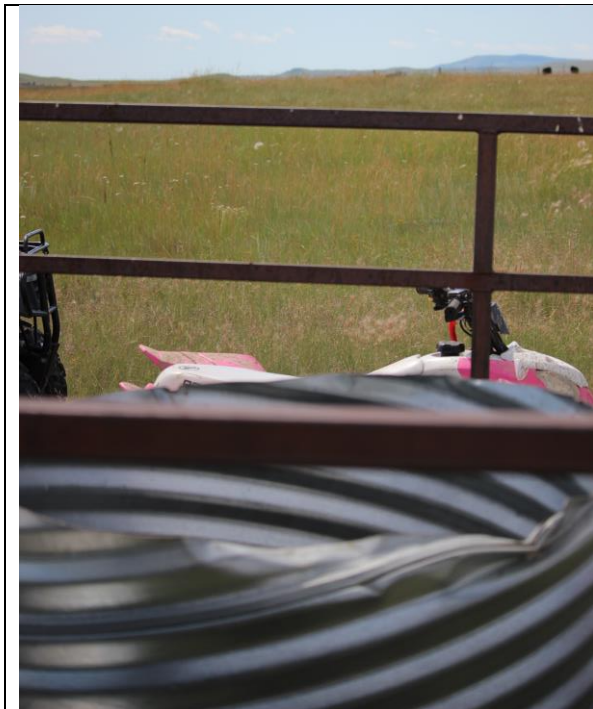


Where the horizontal one inch hose comes out of the casing the elevation is 3293 ft. This is an artsean well, approximately a half a mile straight north of the proposed site. Prior to the well being pulled, this artesian well would water about 130 pair of cattle, but then dropped to a flow of about the size of a quarter inch line filling a toilet. We had to haul water for the next two years to keep up to the demands of water for our cattle, during the summers.

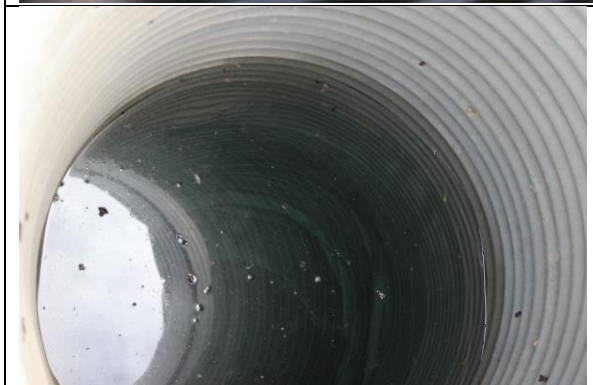
When an oil company was needing water to drill nearby wells the previous owner of SW 25-11-28 W4 allowed them access to his well. I know this because I received a call late one night wanting to access water from our dugout; they had pulled the well from where they were pumping. (When a well is pulled, that means they have taken too much water, too fast, for too long and it pulls sand and other debris into the source slowing down the flow of the water into the well. This was once a flowing well but it no longer is. Since then a new well has been drilled

but is not as productive as the original well.) Hence their frantic call and causing the water level of the surrounding area to be affected. Fortunately, our spring and artesian well have come back, but with the quantity of water needed for the chickens, it will be ongoing so the likelihood of future problems with the wells in the vicinity is great. The water to fill the tires comes from a spring that fills the cribbage sown below. This too was affected after the well was pulled and the recovery rate was a lot slower.

With the variability of the water level and the amount of neighbours already relying on the same water source, having an additional draw to provide water for a poultry barn will certainly add to the situation.



The top of this cribbage is 3350 ft.



The height of the water is 3338 ft.



The height of the water in the tires is 3332 ft.



To the left of this picture, along the bank is where the PFRA dam was built. The right is where the proposed chicken barn is to be built. The dark spot, just to the left of the power poles, is a ditch caused by flood waters.



This is the bottom of the right hand of previous picture. It is where the flood waters came to this year, Spring of 2020. The elevation of the water was 3279 ft. the day this picture was taken (July 6, 2020).

The day the last picture was taken (July 6, 2020) the elevation of the water was 3279. Earlier in the spring the marks on the bank indicate the level was at 3285. The proposed site for the poultry barn is to the top left. The height of where the picture is being taken from is 3319 ft.; the yard site is where the trees are. As indicated when the snow melted in 1966 or 1967 the creek went over the bank, on the opposite side of the yard site.

On page seven of the NRCB technical requirements document, it stated that the elevation of the floor of the lowest proposed manure storage facility is about five meters above the highest known flood level. Given the numbers above, I think this is an incorrect estimation. It is more likely to be under one meter from the highest known flood level.

For a side note, for water quality in the area, the neighbour to the south of the proposed barn use to source their water from a bored well but it is now contaminated with animal feces. The contamination usually comes from a dugout being over top of a spring. The closest dugout over a spring, is in the southwest corner of section 25.

Having a good resource of good quality water is very important. The proposed barn will jeopardize sources of water in the area, as it is listed to draw fourteen gallons of water per minute.

J. Not Full Disclosure

If they have 20,000 layers there need to be pullets and chicks to replace the hens, as they get put into the pit. Therefore, there will need to be more than 20,000.

K. Closing Remark

This is a very sensitive area and when my grandfather bought the land there was some native grass on it. We have seeded the rest of it back to grass to help preserve and protect the land from the floods. Allowing this fly infested, ammonia reeking chicken barn is not good for the environment. It would be in the best interest of the surrounding neighbours to listen to their concerns and not discriminate against us.

Submitted by:

Don R. Chatterton B. S. Ag. Econ.