

#1 - REQUEST FOR REVIEW: LA20014A / Hutterian Brethren Church of Granum

Filed By:

**Concerned Neighbours of Meadow  
Creek**

Deadline for RFRs:

November 9, 2020

Date RFR received:

November 9, 2020

Status of party as per Decision Summary:

Directly Affected (#2, #4, #8, #9, #11)  
Not Directly Affected (#1, #3, #5, #6,  
#7, #10, #12, #13, #14)

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Claresholm, Alberta T0L 0T0  
November 9, 2020

Dear Natural Resources Conservation Board:

**Re: Application LA20014A**  
Hutterian Brethren Church of Granum  
SW 25-11-28 W4

This submission is to once again state we have concerns with Application LA 20014, now LA20014A. We, the undersigned, have sent in submissions before stating our concerns. Since those concerns were not validated, by either the approval officer or the review board, sending in other submissions seems pointless.

As this second review, however, is to ensure the dates are correct we are sending a counter statement to the rebuttal Stacey Russell sent for the Board Review to ensure the truth is really told. As you will see, her comments were misleading and in some cases outright lies.

What we find very discouraging from this process is how the agent for the applicant was given a voice, yet we were not even given the same courtesy by the approval officer. We, who actually know the area, who have the most to lose and who have to live with the outcome of the decision for decades to come, were not heard.

Sincerely,

The Concerned Neighbours of Meadow Creek

*The scanned attachment to the email also provides the list of concerned Neighbours of Meadow Creek*

Number	Print Name	Signature
1	Hope Jensen	Hope Jensen
2	Byron Westwell	Byron Westwell
3	ROONEY JENSEN	Rooney Jensen
4	Allan Minor	Allan Minor
5	Vonda Chatterton	Vonda Chatterton
6	Wain Lotter	Wain Lotter
7	Benny + Casey Armstrong	Benny + Casey Armstrong
8	KEN/DEB LOFFLER	Ken + Deb Loffler
9	Dean Dunand	Dean Dunand
10	MARLON THOMPSON	Marlon Thompson
11	Don R Chatterton	Don R Chatterton
12	EDDIE JENSEN	Eddie Jensen
13	NATALIE JENSEN	Natalie Jensen
14	Una Joy Chatterton	Joy Chatterton

Submitted by:  
Vonda Chatterton,  
██████████

The following is a copy of the agent's rebuttal regarding the request for the Board Review. The highlighted sections are either outright lies or bent truth. The boxed text are our comments.

September 23, 2020

Wood File: BX10684

Natural Resources Conservation Board  
100, 5401 – 1st Avenue South  
Lethbridge AB, T1J 4V6

Attention: Ms. Carina Weisbach

**Re: NRCB Application No. LA20014**  
**Rebuttal: Proposed Layer Barn on SE¼ 25-011-28 W4M**  
**Hutterian Brethren Church of Granum**

This letter has been prepared in response to the *Notice of Filed Request for Board Review and Rebuttal Opportunity* letter dated September 18, 2020.

### Information Session

Granum Colony and a number of community members attended a council meeting September 9, 2020. At this meeting, the Granum Colony informed Council of their intent to construct a new Colony (including the Layer Barn in discussion) on S½ 25-11-28 W4M. There were **extensive** [see insert A] discussions held during the meeting, and then between Colony and community members in the parking lot following the meeting. Subsequent to the meeting, the Granum Colony also arranged for a tour of the layer facility at the Greenwood Colony, and this tour occurred on September 22, 2020, and included Allan & Judy Minor and Byron Westwell. It was **understood that these three community members were representing the complainants** [see insert B]. Granum Colony extends this offer to the remaining neighbours to tour a constructed Layer Barn showcasing the new technologies and the **general** [see insert C] absence of smell.

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| <p><b>A.</b> Interesting word choice. Those, other than Stacey, would probably have used heated, perhaps argumentative, as voices were raised. In fact, Stacey was asked to get her boys out of there before a fight ensued.</p>  |
| <p><b>B.</b> Who understood it? Those three were the only one invited to have a tour nor did they know they went as representatives. The other neighbours were not given the invitation nor provided feedback as to the "general absence of smell".</p>   |
| <p><b>C.</b> Another interesting word choice. Had we had a hearing or if our concerns were actually heard, we would have been able to share what we learned about the Parkland Colony chicken barns. "General absence of smell" would not be the description their neighbours would use. It is more like "a permanent repulsive smell".</p> |

### Environmental Concerns

A Wetland Assessment and Wildlife / Historical Resources Review were completed prior to the Part 2 application to the NRCB. **Application was made to the Water Act July 20, 2020 and is pending review** [see insert D]. No construction will occur until final approval is received.

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| <p><b>D.</b> Where actually was the application listed? In the Ft. McLeod Gazette? The only water licenses that have been announced in the Claresholm Press have been for irrigation. (The LA20004 Application was put in the McLeod Gazette. Only after a letter to the editor informing the community which would be</p> |
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most impacted by the feedlot, then followed by several calls to the approval officer was the application printed in the Claresholm Local Press.)

Granum Colony holds a large land base for spreading manure. **Manure will not be spread on SE¼ 32-11-27 W4M or any land base that is experiencing flooding conditions** [see insert E]. All regulations outlined in sections 24 and 25 SAR, Agricultural Operation Practices Act will be followed.

**E.** So, where actually will the manure be spread? All the land near the chicken barn has experienced flooding conditions. Does she mean "any land that is experiencing flooding conditions" at that time? If so, will heavy machinery, used to haul manure, use the already fragile infrastructure? In fairness to the M. D. of Willow Creek and their rate payers, there needs to be at least some land designated from Granum Colony's "large land base" which does not require them to cross over the Webber Bridge. After all, one of the requirements for the application is to designate where the manure will be spread. Simply saying "Granum Colony holds a large land base" does not meet the application requirements.

A number of surveys and maps were provided to the review officer for her review showing the elevations along Meadow Creek. This survey was completed by a surveyor registered with the Alberta Society of Surveying and Mapping using Alberta Survey Control Markers (ASCM). ASCM 22822 was utilized in this survey and has an elevation of 992.777 referencing the Canadian Geodetic Vertical Datum 1928.

**Comments from a complainant saying the elevations are not "real elevations" are unfounded** [see insert F].

**F.** Had Stacey read the complainant's comments in context and not trying to marginalize or discredit those who were opposed to her clients, she would have learned that his reference to the elevation had nothing to do with her comments, but was indicating that the GPS that was used to site the elevation for the springs and dugout on their property was off, because those elevations were lower than that of the airport (32250). Water does not run uphill.

The previous owner of the land had a house and numerous buildings in the same area as the Layer Barn. **This owner reported never having flooding issues** [see insert G], and Wood's historical air photo review supports this. The red "X" on the following air photo shows the appropriate location of the proposed Layer Barn.

**G.** Glad to see she removed the "previous owner of sixty years"; (although the NRCB Board Review obviously did not read the comments made from the complainants, as the board decision attested.) It has been learned that the previous owners of fifty plus years ago recall having the flood waters in the yard itself; in the flood of either 1966 or 1967.



## Neighbours

A least three of thirteen complaints own or are involved directly with a CFO located between the Layer Barn Location and the Town of Claresholm. MD of Willow Creek advertises itself as "Choice Farming and Ranching". It should be expected that agricultural use continues to occur within the area.

It is noted that one complainant says he / she live within 0.5 miles of the Layer Barn. His / her house is located more than a mile away [see insert H].

H. It needs to be noted that this complainant lives closer to the half mile than a mile. Clearly Stacey's "more than a mile away" is incorrect.

## Water Supply

The layer barn Granum Colony is constructing will require 401,500 gallons per year. A water study has been completed, and all landowners with a water well registered within 1.6km of the Layer Barn received a letter mailed August 17, 2020. An adamant and repeated response of "it is none of your business" was received from a member of the community [see insert I] who filed a request for board review with the NRCB. This member of the community also provided the information that several people who received this letter spoke with him directly, and they all felt the same way. No other responses were received. Granum Colony currently holds an unused License No. 1315 for 50 acre feet [see insert J] (13,566,403 imperial gallons) to withdraw water from Meadow Creek.

I. For the record, when the neighbours received this request, a member of the community contacted the approval officer to inquire about the "water study". The approval officer asked for a copy of the study sent by the Wood's group, so a copy was sent. The approval officer did indicate we did not need to send the agent a reply, as she could find out the information from other sources. Some of the information that was being asked was confidential information and none of the agent's business.

J. Meadow Creek is a seasonal creek. Being able to draw water from the creek is conditional; it can only be accessed if there is enough water flow. That is why the previous landowners downstream did not pursue irrigating from Meadow Creek. Furthermore, having an irrigation license is not the same as a domestic license, nor can it be used for section 25.

A new licence is not required for the Layer Barn [see insert K]; however, after approval is received from the NRCB Granum Colony may decide to apply for groundwater rights. Discussions June 15, 2020 with a Hydrogeologist with Alberta Environment and Parks has confirmed that groundwater rights are available in the Oldman River Basin pending the review of completed water study.

K. There is only one registered well on S1/2 of 25. That will not be enough water for a chicken barn. That leaves the questions, where is the water coming from and who monitors the correct licenses are in place?

## Conclusion

Granum Colony appreciates the NRCB's engagement in this project. Should you have any questions, please contact the undersigned at your convenience.

Yours truly,

## Wood Environment and Infrastructure Solutions, A Division of Wood Canada Limited

*An electronic signature was included on the original*

Stacey Russell SR/WA.  
Geomatics Technician (Eng)  
Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions

Reviewed by:  
John Lobbezoo, P.Eng.  
Lethbridge-Medicine Hat Lead