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NEWS RELEASE

STATE FILES ENVIRONMENTAL LAWSUIT IN ST. CROIX COUNTY

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MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Justice has filed an environmental lawsuit against a St. Croix County dairy operation for violations of state water pollution control laws.

The state's lawsuit is against Jon De Farm, Inc., Baldwin, for allegedly violating its Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit by allowing manure to be discharged into an unnamed tributary to the Rush River on several occasions in the past two years.

According to the Department of Justice's complaint, Jon De Farm owns and operates a concentrated animal feeding operation near Baldwin. The complaint alleges that on November 10, 2000, January 9 and 10, 2001, March 15, 2001, and April 11 and 12, 2002, Jon De Farm violated the terms of its permit by allowing manure or manure contaminated leachate or washwater to flow into an unnamed intermittent tributary that travels across the Jon De Farm property, through a wetland and into the Rush River. In addition, on April 17, 2002, the dairy operation allegedly allowed manure it was spreading on a field to run off the field into a ditch, a short distance from a dry run of the Rush River.

The complaint also alleges that sometime between July and September of 2001, John De Farm constructed a bridge across the Rush River tributary that runs through its property, without the required permit from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

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The state's lawsuit seeks penalties for the alleged violations. The state also seeks a court order requiring Jon De Farm to comply with the terms and conditions of its permit pertaining to manure management at its facility and to apply to the DNR for a permit for the bridge that was constructed in the tributary.

The Department of Justice filed the lawsuit at the request of the DNR in St. Croix County Circuit Court. The case has been assigned to St. Croix County Circuit Court Judge Scott Needham.

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