

Message

From: Bennett, Tate [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=1FA92542F7CA4D01973B18B2F11B9141-BENNETT, EL]
Sent: 6/15/2018 1:01:09 AM
To: Rachel Jones [rjones@nam.org]
Subject: Fwd: Administrator Pruitt Visits with Farmers and Local Leaders in Nebraska

Begin forwarded message:

From: "EPA Press Office" <press@epa.gov>
Date: June 14, 2018 at 8:19:08 PM EDT
To: "Bennett.Tate@epa.gov" <Bennett.Tate@epa.gov>
Subject: Administrator Pruitt Visits with Farmers and Local Leaders in Nebraska
Reply-To: press@epa.gov



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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Administrator Pruitt Visits with Farmers and Local Leaders in Nebraska

Talks WOTUS, Water Infrastructure, and Superfund Program

Omaha, NE (June 14, 2018) - Today, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt visited Omaha's Missouri River Wastewater Treatment Plant and met with state and local leaders to see first-hand how Omaha is working to overcome water infrastructure challenges. He also announced the partial deletion of an additional 101 properties from the Omaha Lead Superfund Site and met with farmers to announce the Agency's next step on the "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) rule.

"Coming to Nebraska and hearing directly from the voices that have been forgotten for so long is critical to how we make decisions at the Agency," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. **"From making progress with respect to Superfund sites to directly engaging stakeholders on the Renewable Fuel Standard, we are working tirelessly to provide the regulatory clarity that President Trump promised and the American people deserve."**

Administrator Pruitt attended a roundtable with the Mayor of Omaha Jean Stothert, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) Director Jim Macy, city council

members, and other local and state officials, including EPA Region 7 Administrator Jim Gulliford. The discussion was largely focused on the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) and the upcoming loan approval that the City of Omaha will be receiving from EPA. Administrator Pruitt had the opportunity to tour the Missouri River Wastewater Treatment Plant prior to his discussion.

In addition to the water discussions, Administrator Pruitt announced the partial deletion of an additional 101 properties from the Omaha Lead Superfund Site. The city, working with EPA and NDEQ, has reduced childhood blood lead levels from 25% of those tested in 1998 to less than 1% of those tested in 2017. To date, EPA has cleaned up more than 13,000 properties. The city recently signed an agreement with EPA to manage the cleanup of the remaining 900 properties.

"We work cooperatively with the EPA on many important projects. Today, I shared our plans for the Omaha Riverfront Revitalization project, which includes Lewis and Clark Landing, a former Superfund site," said Mayor of Omaha Jean Stothert. **"The work we are doing can be shared with other cities to redevelop these sites for new public use."**

"This is the first time I've been able to pick up the phone and call EPA staff directly and elevate issues that need resolving. We thank Administrator Pruitt and his team for the cooperation as we work to achieve positive environmental outcomes for Nebraska," said NDEQ Director Jim Macy.

Administrator Pruitt also visited Green Plains Inc. and spoke with 150 employees about the importance of cooperative federalism, especially regarding the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). He met with Todd Becker, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and other members of Green Plains' leadership team, where they had a constructive dialogue to discuss potential solutions and a path forward.

"We appreciate Administrator Pruitt taking the time to visit and learn more about the challenges facing the ethanol industry and the broader agriculture community. We will continue to work toward solutions that allow for greater ethanol market access in line with the President's commitment to rural America," said Green Plains Inc. CEO Todd Becker.

Finally, Administrator Pruitt joined Governor Pete Ricketts (R-NE) and members of the Common Sense Nebraska Coalition to announce an update on WOTUS, RFS, and other issues that EPA can help to provide regulatory certainty for farmers and ranchers across Nebraska and the country. In their effort to provide certainty to farmers and landowners, tomorrow EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be announcing the next step on the WOTUS rulemaking.

"Thank you to President Trump and Administrator Pruitt for delivering on your promise to roll back the job-killing WOTUS regulation," said Governor

Ricketts. **“Today’s announcement is the next step toward returning common sense to federal oversight of intra-state waterways. Removing this threat to our state’s top job creators gives Nebraska the freedom to grow more opportunities for the next generation in the areas of agriculture and manufacturing.”**

Background on WIFIA Loan:

The City of Omaha applied for a \$55 million loan from the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act to help fund a \$113 million project to relieve water quality concerns in the Papillion Creek and Missouri River. The project will halt the discharge of up to 1.2 billion gallons of combined sewer water flowing into the Little Papillion Creek each year. Omaha has undertaken more than 60 projects to address combined sewer overflows during the past decade. This project will also remove floatables and other solids from combined sewer overflows. It will be located just south of UNO’s Baxter Arena.

The Saddle Creek project is only one of over 60 projects that the City has undertaken to address Combined Sewer Overflows associated with combined sewers throughout the City over the past decade. This includes ongoing upgrades at Omaha’s largest wastewater treatment plant along the Missouri River, sewer separations throughout the City, and improvements to parks to reduce the volume of water that reaches sewers.

Background on Omaha Lead Superfund Site:

EPA Region 7 completed the EPA-lead portion of the remedial action on December 29, 2015. The City of Omaha and the Douglas County Health Department will be performing the remaining field work. As of December 29, 2015, EPA collected soil samples from 42,047 properties. Based on the soil sampling results, 14,019 properties were eligible for soil remediation. The EPA remediated lead contaminated soil at 13,090 properties (93 percent) of the properties that were eligible for remediation.

EPA completed Cooperative Agreements with the City of Omaha and the Douglas County Health Department that provide funds to allow these local government agencies to continue efforts to obtain access to the remaining properties and conduct sampling and remediation activities at those properties where they obtain access. In accordance with EPA’s closeout procedures for National Priorities List sites, the current partial will partially delete 101 properties from this site.



Green Plains CEO Todd Becker introduces EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt to employees.

Administrator Pruitt addresses Green Plains employees in Omaha.



Administrator Pruitt holds a dialogue with Green Plains' leadership team.

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