

Prominent Geologist Will Present an Earth Day Talk in Eureka Springs

Dr. John Van Brahana, Professor Emeritus with the University of Arkansas Dept. of Geosciences, as well as a renowned hydrogeologist and an expert in Arkansas karst geology, will give a free presentation called "CAFOs in Paradise" at 6:00 pm on Tues, April 22nd at the UU Church in Eureka Springs.

This hour-long program, sponsored by the Buffalo River Watershed Alliance. (buffaloriveralliance.org) will include an update on the on-going water testing being conducted independently on the Buffalo River both above and below the confluence with Big Creek. Last summer, a concentrated feeding operation received a permit to raise up to 6500 hogs on land that abuts Big Creek in Mount Judea, an area already documented to rest upon terrain made up of extremely porous, fractured limestone geology known as 'karst.'

Dr. Brahana will give a power point presentation that details the clear hazards of applying untreated liquid waste on pasture land that has high concentrations of agricultural nutrients to begin with. and that is subject to both flooding and heavy run off. He will also explain the methodology for planned dye testing that the state has belatedly given him permission to conduct. Since a large part of the Ozarks is composed of karst, this information applies to more than just the Buffalo River. All Ozark streams, creeks and waterways are vulnerable to degradation due to current lax laws and poor enforcement.

In addition, Dr. Brahana will touch on issues of environmental justice and the growing power of a handful of international corporations who are using their various resources to influence lawmakers, and to misrepresent the safety and sustainability of their business model. Cargill is among the entities that raise thousands of hogs through a system that contracts farmers who do not actually own the animals, pay for the feed, nor have any control over what they are fed, but who are solely responsible for handling the massive amounts of waste those animals produce, using methods that have already been shown to cause extreme damage to watersheds and the fragile ecosystems that depend on them.

"We are not against farmers," Dr. Brahana insists, "but we are now seeing the alarming results of expecting factory farms to be able to safely dispose

of the waste equal to that produced by a city of 30,000 to 35,000 people, using primitive technology that has a staggering record of failure." The recreational and economic value of clean water is something that every Arkansan needs to understand. There will be a Q & A session and refreshments following the presentation. The address for this free program is: 17 Elk St Eureka Springs, AR