

Proposed Wetlands Amendments Will Make Farming More Difficult

Article By:

Matthew D. Zimmerman

Farmers and DEQ continue to fight over farming activities that are exempt from the state's wetland protection statutes.

On June 8, the Ottawa County Farm Bureau invited both sides to a meeting at Woodland Enterprise Blueberry Farms in Ottawa County to discuss the issue. Neither party appeared to back off its position. In fact, the DEQ reported that it hoped to have amendments to the wetland protection statutes introduced in the legislature this fall that would essentially eliminate the farming exceptions.

Attendees of the June meeting - including about 30 farmers and representatives from the Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - had hoped to reconcile Gov. Rick Snyder's challenge to Michigan farmers to increase farm revenues, exports and employment, with the complicated array of state and federal wetland programs.

At the meeting, MDEQ representatives emphasized their goal of making the Michigan wetland program consistent with the federal Clean Water Act wetland program. One method for accomplishing this goal is the MDEQ's wetland reform package. It includes proposed amendments to Michigan's wetland statute which would greatly restrict the current farming exemptions as well as modifying wetlands mitigation requirements for farming activities that maintain important wetland functions.

© 2025 Varum LLP

National Law Review, Volume II, Number 247

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/proposed-wetlands-amendments-will-make-farming-more-difficult>