



Local sports roundup, Page A6

## Permit approved for 12,500-head cattle farm

### Department of Environmental Quality answers over 100 public comments for Riverview Farms' Abercrombie location



BY JOHN ANDERSON  
Reporter

The concerns were many. The changes were few.

A 12,500-head dairy cattle operation by Riverview Farms has been approved in Abercrombie after a permit was granted by the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality.

The full 325-page decision was posted at [deq.nd.gov](http://deq.nd.gov) and copies can also be obtained by calling 701-328-5210.

The final report said "a set of the documents, cover letter, permit, and fact sheet, will also be provided to the city of Abercrombie's government office and the Richland County Auditor's Office."

The final 209 pages of the report are the public comments submitted during the 47-day window for correspondances.

The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality final permit decision did answer some of the concerns and complaints.

The department said they



FILE PHOTOS

ABOVE: Taylor Evink of Riverview Dairy discusses the dairy operation planned in Traill County, North Dakota. Riverview held a information session in Halstad, Minn., on July 9, 2024. There were no meetings held in Abercrombie. TOP: Damon Knobloch of Riverview Dairy, left, speaks with Jim Murphy of Traill County Economic Development on in July during a Riverview information session in Halstad, Minn. There were no meetings held in Abercrombie by Riverview Dairy.

updated the record for monitoring wells.

"The Department has updated the record to require one upstream and two downstream monitoring wells to be placed by the wastewater storage ponds. Riverview ND, LLP, is located at T134N R48W Section

27, west half. This site places the facility over the Wahpeton Buried Valley aquifer. This aquifer is rated through the North Dakota Geographic Targeting system which is composed of three scores averaged for Monitoring Priority."

The report says the Wah-

peton Buried Valley aquifer is rated as High Sensitivity and High-Risk Rating and Low Vulnerability Rating averaged for a Moderate Monitoring Priority.

"Based on sensitivity and risk analysis of the Wahpeton Buried Valley aquifer,

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## 'Wait until they learn about Julie Fedorchak'

BY JOHN ANDERSON  
Reporter

When Congresswoman Julie Fedorchak (R-ND) took the oath of office Friday, not only did she become the only North Dakota's representative in the U.S. House of Representa-

tives, she made history.

Rep. Fedorchak becomes the first freshman member in Congress to serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee in 14 years. And she earned it.

She spent the last 12 years as a utility regulator on the Public Service Commission.

In a ceremony held in the U.S. Capitol, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-LA) administered the oath alongside Rep. Fedorchak's family.

"I am deeply honored

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SUBMITTED

Congresswoman Julie Fedorchak (R-ND) took the oath of office Friday in a ceremony held in the U.S. Capitol. Speaker of the House Mike Johnson administered the oath alongside Rep. Fedorchak's family.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Seeking to heal the country, Jimmy Carter pardoned men who evaded the Vietnam War draft. Carter issued Proclamation 4483 on his first full day in office, less than two years after the end of what was then America's longest war.

### NATIONWIDE

French fries are originally from Belgium.

## Top five thing facing North Dakota officials

FROM STAFF REPORTS

North Dakota will ring in the new year with a lot of unfinished business from 2024.

Many of the state's biggest stories from last year — including the Summit Carbon Solutions pipeline — could reignite public discussion of these issues as early as the 69th legislative session, which starts Tuesday.

Here are five state government stories to watch this year:

### Property taxes

The ballot measure to eliminate property taxes based on assessed value put a spotlight on the property tax issue in 2024. Although it failed in the statewide vote, Measure 4 got the attention of legislators.

Expect several bill drafts related to property taxes in the 2025 legislative session that starts Tuesday. In November, Legislative Council reported it had already received dozens of requests to prepare bill drafts related to property taxes. Gov. Kelly Armstrong has also repeatedly said that property tax reform will be one of his administration's top priorities.

The state is already taking applications for the second year of the primary residence property tax credit even though a bill authorizing the credit will need to be passed by the Legislature. The program, created by the Legislature in 2023, allowed most North Dakota homeowners to apply for \$500 off their 2024 property tax bill.

### Abortion

A judge last year struck down North Dakota's law banning most abortions, declaring it unconstitutional.

In a September order, South Central Judicial District Court Judge Bruce Romanick found that women in North Dakota have a right to seek abortions until the point of fetal viability.

State Sen. Janne Myrdal, R-Edinburg, who sponsored the 2023 bill that created the ban, said after Romanick's order that the focus should be on defending the law that the judge said was too vague.

The ban made abortion illegal in all cases except rape or incest if the mother has been pregnant for less than six weeks, or when the pregnancy poses a serious physical health threat.

Rep. Eric Murphy, R-Grand Forks, has said he plans to bring a bill this session to allow women to receive abortions for any reason through week 15 of

pregnancy in North Dakota. The bill would place restrictions on requests for later-term abortions, including review from committees of doctors.

The state is appealing Romanick's decision to the North Dakota Supreme Court. The high court has yet to make a final decision on the case.

### Summit pipeline

In 2024, Summit Carbon Solutions successfully obtained permits for the portion of its carbon dioxide pipeline and storage area planned for North Dakota. But the Iowa-based company still faces appeals from two North Dakota counties and a group of landowners.

The state's rules governing underground storage areas, also known as pore space, also are being challenged.

Summit has also received pipeline route permits in Iowa and for a small section in Minnesota, but was denied a permit from South Dakota where the main trunk of the 2,500-mile pipeline network is planned to run. Summit is trying again for a permit in South Dakota, so pipeline opponents and supporters will be watching the state closely this year. If built, the pipeline would connect 57 ethanol plants in five states to the underground storage area in western North Dakota.

Summit calls the nearly \$9 billion pipeline the world's largest carbon capture and storage projects.

Supporters say it will benefit the ethanol industry and the farmers who sell corn to the ethanol plants. Some opponents call it a taxpayer-funded climate change boondoggle and some landowner see it as an assault on property rights.

A portion of property owners along the path of the proposed pipeline oppose the project, and refuse to provide easements to Summit. If Summit and the property owners are unable to reach an agreement, Summit may take the matter to court to seek eminent domain.

### Higher education

Bismarck State College, Dickinson State University and Lake Region State College will all be looking for new presidents in 2025, and the North Dakota University System also will be looking for a new leader.

Chancellor Mark Hagerott, who oversees the 11 colleges and their presidents, is stepping down at the end of 2025.

Bismarck State's Doug Jensen is done Thursday;

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### SUBSCRIBER OF THE DAY

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**LEREY AND JULIE SETHRE** of Fergus Falls, Minn.