



PDC Technical Services, Inc.

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August 31, 2018

To: Mahomet Aquifer Task Force Members

Re: Public Comments - Protections to the Mahomet Aquifer

INTRODUCTION

PDC Technical Services, Inc. (PDC-TSI) is an environmental engineering and consulting firm based in Peoria, Illinois. PDC-TSI is a subsidiary of Coulter Companies, which also owns Tazewell County Landfill, Inc. (d/b/a Indian Creek Landfill), Clinton Landfill, Inc., Area Disposal Service, Inc., Peoria Disposal Company, and other environmental services companies throughout central Illinois and Missouri. Coulter Companies employs more than 600 employees, most of whom are based in central Illinois.

PDC-TSI has been in business since 1987, and provides its services to our affiliated companies, as well as to a broad range of commercial, industrial and municipal clients. We have conducted dozens of geo-environmental investigations and/or cleanups over or near the Mahomet Aquifer. We also have particular expertise in designing, permitting, and monitoring landfills.

PUBLIC COMMENT

PDC-TSI is supportive of the work being performed by the Mahomet Aquifer Task Force, and believe that there are many good ideas that have been brought forward. In particular, we support the need for additional research into the physical extent and properties of the aquifer and the aquitard that fortunately overlies much of the aquifer. We also support identifying and properly sealing unused and/or improperly constructed water wells which could serve as an artificial conduit for surface water into the aquifer. Communication, education and stakeholder involvement are also very important.

However, there are a few issues that concern us, and we are providing this public comment to ensure that the Task Force is aware of our concerns. Most notable is what appears to be a minority opinion that all landfills pose significant risk to the Mahomet Aquifer, and that additional landfill restrictions are necessary to protect groundwater. It is our opinion that Federal and Illinois landfill regulations provide sufficient and robust protections to the Mahomet Aquifer, and that further expansion of those regulations are not required for the following reasons:

- All new or expanded landfills must obtain local siting approval pursuant to 415 Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS) 5/39.2. This public process requires the local unit of government with jurisdiction over the property (e.g. county or municipality) certify that the proposed new or expanded landfill meets numerous criteria, which includes protection of groundwater resources (part of criterion 2) and that the facility meets all applicable requirements related to regulated recharge areas (criterion 9).
- The Illinois EPA has been a leader in enforcing groundwater protections at landfills since at least the mid-1980s by requiring ongoing and extensive groundwater monitoring at landfills. The groundwater monitoring program was further toughened following the promulgation of the Illinois Groundwater Protection Act in 1987, and the extension of the post-closure care period which required groundwater monitoring to continue at least 15 years after the landfill closed and until such time that the Illinois EPA determines that the landfill no longer poses a threat to the environment. A flowchart prepared by the Illinois EPA, summarizing the groundwater monitoring requirements at municipal solid waste landfills, is attached.

- Promulgation of the RCRA Subtitle D requirements in 1994 imposed significant additional requirements, particularly with respect to landfill location criteria, design features, and extensive hydrogeological investigations and modeling to provide further assurances that groundwater is protected. The landfill post-closure monitoring period was also extended to 30 years following landfill closure. I am not aware of any known instances of groundwater contamination resulting from a landfill that meets the current Illinois EPA landfill design standards.
- 35 Illinois Administrative Code 617 provides requirements for the establishment of Regulated Recharge Areas, and for facilities located within a Regulated Recharge Area. Under certain conditions, these regulations already ban new municipal solid waste landfills and other facilities within a Regulated Recharge Area. Additional requirements or expansion of these regulations with respect to landfills are not necessary or warranted.
- Storm water run-off from operating landfills are subject to the National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) permitting requirements. This includes storm water run-off sampling and analysis to demonstrate that operating landfills do not contribute to storm water pollution.

We have also seen public comment that the Mahomet Aquifer Task Force should develop a funding mechanism to include imposing “user fees” “on entities which dispose of wastes within the aquifer area.” PDC-TSI opposes this concept. Landfills already pay substantial amounts to the Illinois EPA and, in many cases, to the unit of local government each year. These fees are intended to help fund regulatory inspections and oversight to ensure that landfills are properly operated, as well as to fund other programs, such as household hazardous waste collections, environmental cleanups, etc. For instance, Clinton Landfill, Inc. paid \$719,779 in fees to the Illinois EPA and \$804,475 to DeWitt County, whereas Tazewell County Landfill, Inc. (i.e. Indian Creek Landfill) paid \$715,498 to the Illinois EPA, \$409,316 to the Tazewell County Health Department (which serves as Illinois EPA delegated authority for landfill inspections), \$541,813 to the Tazewell County General Fund, and \$33,555 to Hopedale Township for wastes received in 2017.

SUMMARY

In summary, PDC-TSI is supportive of the work being performed by the Mahomet Aquifer Task Force, and believe that there are many good ideas that have been brought forward. However, we believe that additional requirements for landfills are not needed. Rather, it is our contention that the focus should be on activities that are not already highly regulated.

We thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

PDC Technical Services, Inc.

Illinois Licensed Professional Design Firm 184.001145-0002

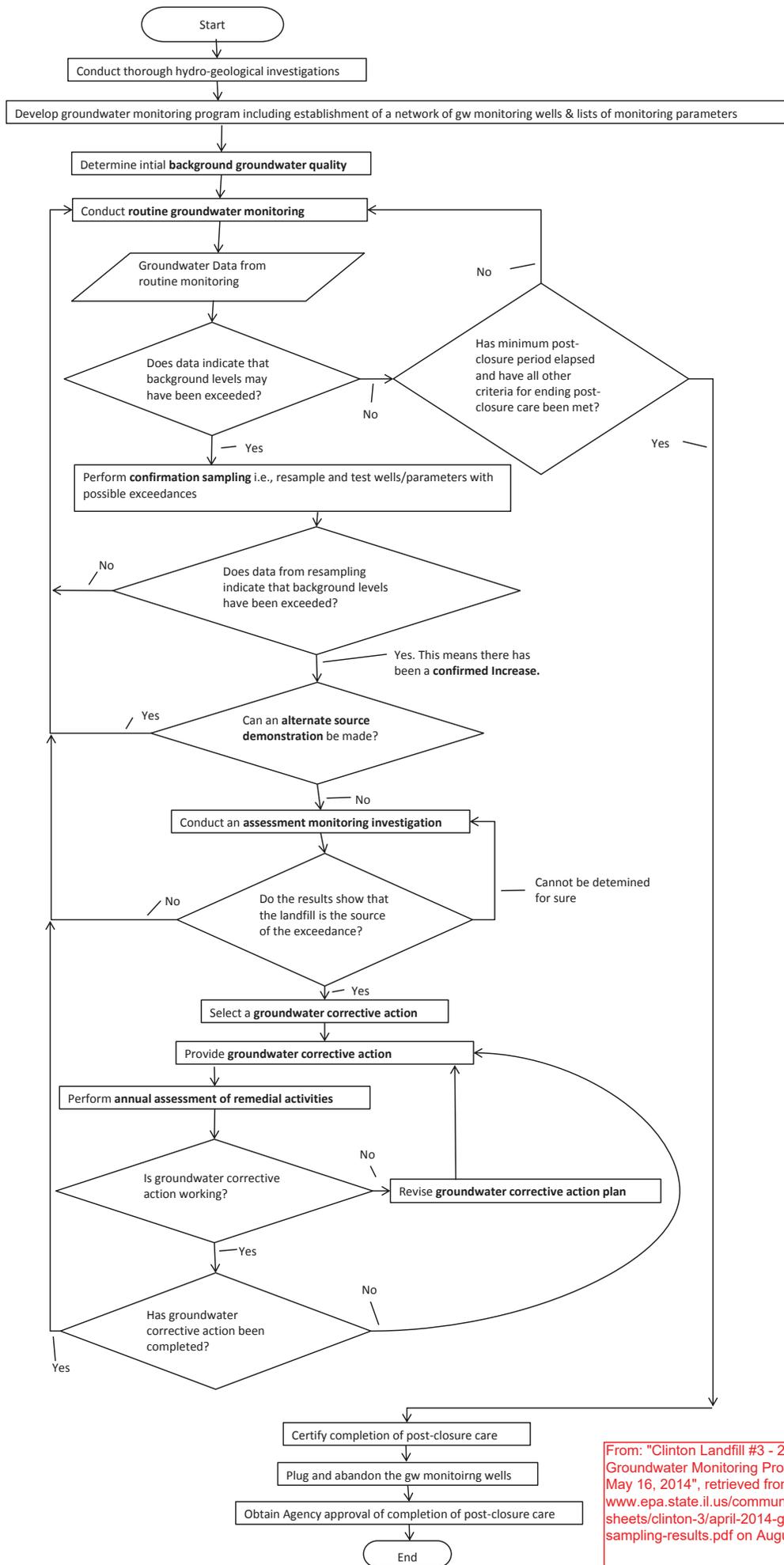
George L. Armstrong, P.E.
Vice President – Engineering and Consulting Services
309-495-1566

Attachment

ATTACHMENT

Simplified Flowchart of Groundwater Monitoring at Non-Hazardous Waste Landfills (Illinois
Environmental Protection Agency, May 2014)

SIMPLIFIED FLOWCHART OF GROUNDWATER MONITORING AT NON-HAZARDOUS WASTE LANDFILLS



From: "Clinton Landfill #3 - 2013 Groundwater Monitoring Program Overview: May 16, 2014", retrieved from <http://www.epa.state.il.us/community-relations/fact-sheets/clinton-3/april-2014-groundwater-split-sampling-results.pdf> on August 30, 2018.