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first to factories, to utility plants, to commercial sites, distribution sites, to all of those places in our state that have been the source of pollution from a particular designated point. And now, with the experience in North Carolina and other states relating to the mega-hog operations, the attention of the federal government and of the nation, generally, has turned towards nonpoint source solution (sic)...pollution. And you're going to see and you are seeing now the development of regulations that require and will require greater management of all of our sources of pollution. Recently, last year with 1209, we came down with additional laws that provided essentially a regulatory thrust with regard to large confinement operations. And, frankly, as part of that, the NRDs probably didn't have as large a role as they should have had, in my opinion, because they were reluctant to take on specific responsibilities, for fear the funding would not be there to adequately compensate them for the time necessary in the process, to be spent in the process. The principle way that large confinement operations deal with waste is to spread the waste over large areas of land. The process involves the potential of groundwater pollution and the potential of surface water pollution. The NRDs have a particular expertise in the area of groundwater pollution. They have now...

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...been monitoring and working with those situations for a considerable period of time. A number of the NRDs have developed some fairly systematic monitoring systems and some very real expertise. And yet we have not engaged that expertise as we should have, in my opinion, on the matter of checking out these plans that various hog operations might have for spreading manure on the land. That's a critical question, long term it is probably the most critical question, because whether that's done properly or improperly will result, in the end, or will decide in the end the question of whether our groundwater is protected or it is not protected. So...

SENATOR CROSBY: Time. Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Wickersham.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Madam President, I rise to oppose Senator