



# 2013 ANNUAL REPORT



Prairie Rivers Network is Illinois' advocate for clean water and healthy rivers.

We champion clean, healthy rivers and lakes and safe drinking water to benefit the people and wildlife of Illinois.



## 2013 Annual Report

Thanks to our members, supporters, staff and board of directors, Prairie Rivers Network continued its trajectory of growth in 2013. Our programs are strengthened by a growing network of people and organizations that allow us to have more influence in pursuit of clean water and healthy rivers in Illinois. I am so pleased to be able to share with you the evidence, in both progress and financial stability, of another strong year for Prairie Rivers Network. - Glynnis Collins, Executive Director

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*We mourn the passing of long-time Board member Charles Goodall in 2013.*

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Water Resources Specialist

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## IMPROVING POLICIES

### U.S. EPA ordered to set rules for safe disposal of toxic coal ash.

Coal ash is the second largest industrial waste stream in Illinois. Until we get new rules, it will continue to be handled with little oversight, endangering water and public health.

Prairie Rivers Network has been working with a national coalition to get these much-needed regulations. In 2013, a federal court ruled in our favor, ordering the U.S. EPA to develop new coal ash disposal rules.



PRN-founded Heartland Coalfield Alliance holds a "coal camp" training retreat to lead the charge against dirty coal.

### Illinois proposed new comprehensive rules for the closure of coal ash dumps at coal-fired power plants.

Pollution from coal ash has been found in the groundwater at every power plant examined in Illinois. For several years, Prairie Rivers Network has been investigating and highlighting pollution from coal ash dumps, leading to the development of critical new rules by the Illinois EPA that will help protect our water resources.

### Exposing coal's drain on the Illinois economy.

Prairie Rivers Network commissioned a report documenting state revenue related to the coal industry in Illinois, along with expenses and foregone revenue (through subsidies and tax breaks). The net impact for 2011 was a drain of \$20 million on the state budget.



*Traci Barkley speaks to the press about coal ash pollution.*

## Growing support for addressing invasive species in our rivers.

The man-made canal system in Chicago connects the Great Lakes with the Mississippi River basin, leaving both systems vulnerable to devastation from invasive fish, plants, and disease.

Prairie Rivers Network has been working with a coalition of Illinois and Great Lakes organizations to promote major rehabilitation of Chicago's waterways to restore the natural separation between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins.

In June 2013, Governor Quinn publicly supported the idea, saying, "Ultimately, I think we have to separate the basins. I really feel that is the ultimate solution."

Plans for near-term structural improvements are underway. They will address the Asian carp threat while improving water quality and paving the way for full separation.



*Robert Hirschfeld gathering stories and pictures along the Illinois river to highlight the impact of invasive species.*

## Ruling means more accountability for U.S. EPA on nutrient pollution.

Nutrient pollution from sewage treatment plants, farms, and city streets is fouling Illinois waters, killing aquatic life and causing the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

The U.S. EPA has waffled for over a decade on setting legal limits for this pollution. In 2013, a federal court ruled in our favor, requiring the agency to make a decision. This gives us leverage as we keep the pressure on EPA to use all their available tools to reduce nutrient pollution.



*PRN continues to educate farmers on conservation practices like these "Women Caring for the Land" workshop participants.*

## Moratorium on new sand mines in LaSalle County provides time to improve mining operations affecting the Illinois River.

The Illinois River has seen a boom in sand mining because it is one of the few places in the U.S. with sand that is the right texture for use in hydraulic fracturing (fracking) operations.

Unfortunately, the moratorium came after the LaSalle County Board approved a controversial new mining operation adjacent to Starved Rock State Park; Prairie Rivers Network and our partners continue to fight that project.

Now we are working with other groups, citizen activists, and governments to craft improved planning for sand mining and the protection of natural corridors along the Illinois River.

## PROTECTING LAND AND WATER

### Illinois and Mississippi Rivers

Chicago's Stickney sewage treatment plant (the largest in the nation) will finally start removing phosphorus and nitrogen pollution from its wastewater thanks in part to years of pressure and a federal lawsuit by Prairie Rivers Network and our partners.

The Stickney plant is a major source of nutrient pollution in the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, and ultimately to the Gulf of Mexico Dead Zone.



*The Dixon Waterfowl Refuge is a piece of paradise hidden away. A showpiece of what Illinois once looked like. And could again.*

### Vermilion County and the Salt Fork River

The proposed Bulldog coal mine in East-Central Illinois would have taken water from the Salt Fork River to wash coal and then discharged polluted water back to the river.

We worked with residents and advocates to slow the development of the coal mine: the Village of Homer will not sell water from the Salt Fork River, a proposed railroad spur needed for transporting coal was blocked, and leasing of mineral rights has slowed.



*Spotted salamander at the Middle Fork Woods Nature Preserve.*

*Photo - Rob Kanter*



*River otters enjoy a day on the river.*

*Photo - Harold Hopkins via Vermilion County Conservation District*

### Big Bureau Creek

More farmers in the Big Bureau Creek watershed north of Peoria have incorporated cover crops and grassed waterways into their farms thanks to our outreach efforts. These practices decrease soil erosion and nutrient pollution.

Perhaps more importantly, these "early adopters" serve as examples to their neighbors, helping spread the use of these practices in the community.



*Member support makes river protection possible. Thank you.*

*Photo - Chris Young*

### Chicago and Calumet Rivers

In fall 2013, Chicago's Metropolitan Water Reclamation District broke ground on new sewage disinfection facilities at two of its plants that discharge to the Chicago and Calumet Rivers. As a result of pressure by a large coalition that included Prairie Rivers Network, these plants will pollute less, making the rivers much safer for recreation.

## STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK OF RIVER ADVOCATES

### Heartland Coalfield Alliance

Founded by Prairie Rivers Network in 2010, the Heartland Coalfield Alliance continues to grow. The Alliance works to “reduce impacts from dirty coal mining, coal burning and coal waste disposal while promoting cleaner, more sustainable and affordable energy solutions.”

In June, we welcomed over 75 people from eight states to a retreat in Southern Illinois. Leaders from across the nation worked with attendees to build skills, networks, and campaigns to ensure that the true costs of coal are borne by the industry as we work to create a cleaner energy future.

### River Bend Wildland Trust

Over the past two years, Prairie Rivers Network convened habitat conservation groups working along the Mississippi

River in Illinois to foster better identification of needs and coordination of activities. An early outcome of the work was the formation of a new land trust targeting important river bottomland habitat in the Quad Cities area.

### Sharing Compelling River Stories

In June 2013, staff members Elliot Brinkman and Robert Hirschfeld paddled stretches of the Illinois River from Chicago to St. Louis as part of a new storytelling and media initiative. Carrying cameras and microphones, they met with members of our network throughout the state, capturing interviews, videos, and photos of those who work, live, and play along the river. Using new communications media will help us reach bigger and broader audiences.

## Statement of Activities

### for the year ended December 31, 2013

#### Revenue and Support

Donations	\$166,896
Grants	\$453,454
Investment Income	\$481
In-Kind Donations & Reimbursements	\$16,302
Sales & Miscellaneous Revenue	\$9,150
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$646,283</b>

#### Expenses

Programs Salaries	\$305,907
Programs Taxes & Benefits	\$48,230
Direct Programs Costs	\$286,918
Fundraising (including salaries & taxes/benefits)	\$92,271
Management/General (including salaries & taxes/benefits)	\$41,665
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$774,991</b>

#### Net Assets\*

Beginning of year	\$539,157
End of year	\$410,449

#### Membership and Fiscal Management

Prairie Rivers Network’s revenue comes mainly from private foundation grants (70% of 2013 revenue, some of which is earmarked for 2014 spending) and member donations (25% of 2013 revenue). Over 80% of 2013 expenditures were in pursuit of our clean water and healthy river programs. Fundraising and administrative operations combined accounted for 17% of spending.

Over the past ten years, the organization has experienced a compounded annual growth rate of over 10%.

\*Net assets at the beginning of the year include grant funds received in previous years earmarked for work in 2013. Similarly, net assets at the end of the year include grant funds earmarked for 2014 work.

Our finances are audited each year by an independent certified accountant and are available upon request. Our Federal 990 tax forms are also available upon request or through [guidestar.org](http://guidestar.org).

# Thank You Members and Supporters!

We are grateful to our donors and funders, especially those who have been with us for many years. Your support ensures that the fight for clean and healthy rivers is carried on, and that the voices of the people make it to Springfield and Washington D.C. to combat the special interests that would avoid accountability for polluting and degrading natural resources.

If you are just getting to know Prairie Rivers Network, we invite you to visit our website at [prairierivers.org](http://prairierivers.org) and follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)).

[www.prairierivers.org](http://www.prairierivers.org) or Twitter (@[PrairieRivers](https://twitter.com/PrairieRivers)). These are also great places to connect with others who share your interest in clean water, wildlife, and river recreation.



If you have any questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to get in touch!



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Beverly and Thomas Rauchfuss  
Bruce Semans  
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Cecily Smith and David Delaney  
Bill Van Hagey  
Sherry Weaver  
Sherrill and Richard Worthen

*The Bruce Hannon Friends of Illinois Rivers recognizes those members who have pledged an annual gift of \$1,000 or more to sustain the work of Prairie Rivers Network into the future.*

## Community Partners

A special thank you to our community partners. We encourage you to support and thank those businesses and organizations that protect our rivers and streams.

### Businesses

#### Platinum \$5,000 and above

McKenzie Wagner, Inc.\*

#### Gold \$1,000–\$4,999

Fox Development Corporation \*  
The Highdive  
Marco Technical Documentation  
Patagonia-Enviro Department  
UpClose Marketing and Printing \*

#### Silver \$500–\$999

Blue Moon Farm  
Common Ground Food Co-op  
First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust  
Paul's Machine & Welding Corporation

#### Bronze \$250–\$499

Anderson Farms  
Champaign Surplus \*  
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#### Members \$50–\$249

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Busey Bank Investment Group  
CDC Paper & Janitor Supply  
Country Road Greenhouse  
Creative Water Gardens  
International Galleries \*  
Simplified Computers \*  
The Chicago Community Trust

### Groups/Public Entities

Bangs Lake Advisory Committee  
Champaign County Audubon Society  
Ezra Levin Foundation  
First Presbyterian Church of Urbana +  
Laborers Local Union #393  
Middlefork Audubon Society  
National Wildlife Federation  
Northwest Illinois Audubon Society  
Robeson Family Benefit Fund  
Salt Fork River Partners  
Sierra Club, Prairie Group  
UIUC Hydrologists in Action +  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Urbana-  
Champaign  
Vermilion County Conservation District

### Grantors

Alliance for the Great Lakes  
The Educational Foundation of America  
The Energy Foundation  
Grand Victoria Foundation  
The Lumpkin Family Foundation  
The McKnight Foundation  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Ohio Citizen Action Education Fund  
Rockefeller Family Fund  
Women, Food, and Agriculture Network

**Headwaters Circle**  
**\$5,000 and above**

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Chris and David Main  
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**\$1,000–\$2,499**

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Jim Heins  
Susan and Lewis Hopkins  
Dixie and Gary Jackson +  
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Annice Moses and  
Michael Rosenthal  
Trent Shepard  
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