



Protecting Illinois' Rivers for People, Fish, and Wildlife

SUPPORT CLEAN WATER

TELL U.S. EPA YOU SUPPORT THE "WATERS OF THE U.S. RULE"

There's a new rule that's good for clean water and it's under attack.

Federal agencies want to do the right thing and confirm Clean Water Act protections for some of our smallest yet most important streams and wetlands. These waters are at risk of pollution and destruction, and they need legal protection.

Streams and wetlands filter pollution and reduce flooding. They provide drinking water for millions of people and habitat for fish and wildlife.

Opponents of the rule want to roll back 40 years of clean water law. They are spreading fear in the business community with outlandish lies about the rule.

Regretfully many polluters have the ears of Congress and are working hard to defeat the rule.

Let's stop them.

Go to PrairieRivers.org/WOTUS to tell U.S. EPA you support the Waters of the U.S. Rule.

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This new rule will reduce confusion about Clean Water Act protection and clarify types of water covered under the law, thus helping Illinois better protect our waters. Your help is needed. Thanks for taking action and making a difference. //

Go to PrairieRivers.org/WOTUS to help protect our water!



GREETINGS FROM GLYNNIS

I believe the children are our future...

I had the pleasure of visiting Jordan Creek with some kids and dogs a couple of weeks ago. If you need a

respite from the noise and hassle of your day to day, I can recommend nothing more rewarding than bringing kids down to



some water where they can play safely. Just sit back and watch the magic happen. If you can add dogs to the mix, the joy factor goes off the charts.

Jordan Creek is in East-Central Illinois. It is tributary to the Salt Fork of the Vermilion River. Despite its location in the heart of prime Illinois corn and bean production, the creek is beautiful and healthy -- a great example of how working lands and clean water can co-exist!

A few of us from the office were out with our own and borrowed kids to shoot some footage of them playing



in water. We'll be using the footage in some videos to support new U.S. EPA rules (see front page) that are good for places like Jordan Creek. We figure

that our best approach to counter aggressive, misleading campaigns against the rules by outfits like the Farm Bureau and

homebuilders associations is to focus on what really matters about this issue. These kids are a proxy for us all, and for those to come. This, and all of Prairie Rivers Network's work is about their (our) welfare in the face of a system that tends to favor narrow and short-term economic interests.

Protecting the interests of today's and tomorrow's young people will be a theme at our Annual Dinner on October 10th (see pg 5 and mark your calendar!). We're delighted that Mary Wood will be joining us to share her novel approach to win accountability from governments on the most pressing pollution issues of our time.

Finally, thank you and congratulations to those who are leading the charge to protect Central Illinois' Mahomet Aquifer from toxic waste. July's victory means a safer future for these kids, and for all of us!

With warmest wishes,

prairieriversnetwork

Prairie Rivers Network champions clean, healthy rivers and lakes and safe drinking water to benefit the people and wildlife of Illinois.

Drawing upon sound science and working cooperatively with others, we advocate public policies and cultural values that sustain the ecological health and biological diversity of water resources and aquatic ecosystems.

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SUNRISE COAL - NOT BUYING IT

BY TYLER ROTCHE

Over the past five years, residents in Champaign and Vermilion counties have been told that the proposed “Bulldog” coal mine—slated for prime farmland in East Central Illinois—was a done deal. Indiana-based Sunrise Coal LLC began contacting landowners about leasing their mineral rights in 2009, urging farmers and community members to surrender the standards they had maintained for their land for generations. According to Sunrise, it was time to make way for a mine that would break ground as soon as it received its permit in “early 2013” ... “the first half of 2013” ... “first quarter of 2014” ... “fourth quarter of 2014”...

As it stands, Sunrise Coal still lacks multiple state permits required to mine. Nor does the company have enough mineral leases to mine effectively, infrastructure to bring water on-site, or a rail spur to ship the coal off-site.

The members of Stand Up to Coal, a grassroots association of farmers, landowners, and villagers in the area, have been working to inform their

neighbors about the impacts of the proposed mine – compromising the clean drinking water supplies of surrounding towns, taking prime farmland out of production forever, and disrupting communities with health-threatening coal dust and the constant roar of coal trucks.

“We believe that thermal coal’s current position atop the fuel mix for global power generation will be gradually eroded ... most thermal coal growth projects will struggle to earn a positive return.”

- Goldman Sachs Commodities Research

Now, Prairie Rivers Network and Stand Up to Coal are reaching out to a more distant, but keenly interested group: Sunrise Coal’s investors. A recently dispatched letter provides investors with a picture of the mine on the ground, describing the hurdles that Sunrise Coal still faces and the mood of a community that wants jobs that will sustain and support that community, not dismantle its foundations.

The letter also questions whether it is time to give up on coal stocks in gen-

eral. Investors are becoming increasingly concerned that strict carbon regulations and increasingly attractive alternative energy solutions point to “structural decline” in coal’s demand growth and the possibility of diminishing shareholder value.

The future of coal does not appear to hold much potential for innovation. Yet, a bleak outlook for investment is not synonymous with significant energy transition in the short term. At the global level, renewables are supplying more energy, but so are fossil fuels. The ratio of fossil fuel use (87 percent) to other energy sources (13 percent) was the same in 2013 as it was in 1997.

The Illinois Coal Basin is the only basin in the country where coal production is increasing – and producers are looking to export. The push for a responsible, long-term economic transition starts with members like you and groups like Stand Up to Coal. But it also requires investors to understand that they are implicated in the impacts of coal extraction as much as the coal companies they are supporting. //

RUN FOR YOUR RIVERS A BIG SUCCESS - THANK YOU!

A BIG THANKS to our Run for Your Rivers & Walk for Your Streams fundraising team and sponsors (at right) that raised over \$8,000 at the 2014 Illinois Marathon. Visit PrairieRivers.org/run for a list of our running and walking stars. Top fundraisers were the First Presbyterian Church of Urbana Earth Care team, Lady River Walkers, Rob Kanter, Dave Delaney, and the UIUC Hydrologists in Action student team. Thank you so much! //

UpClose
MARKETING & PRINTING

ctc
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First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust

MARCO
TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION, INC.

COMMON GROUND
food co-operative

MCKENZIE WAGNER INC

A RURAL PARADISE LOST

BY ROBERT HIRSCHFELD

David Leifheit once lived on “a little slice of heaven” in Ogle County, about halfway between the churning metropolis of Chicago and the muddy waters of the Mississippi River, Illinois’ western border. He proudly maintained the home he built himself on his mother’s ancestral land - land homesteaded by his great-great-grandparents over 150 years ago. The house sat at the edge of an old and rich forest, overlooking a prairie which boasted two ponds and a sparkling stream running through it. From his porch, David kept vigil over more than 1,000 family monuments—trees his father had planted when young, now reaching high up into the pristine skies of rural Illinois. When David speaks of his former home, his voice takes on the unmistakable timbre of a man in love. And in mourning.



David Leifheit

David still lives on this property, but it is no longer the same place. In 2006 trouble found its way into heaven.

That summer, David received notice that a neighbor would be building a 4,800-head hog confinement a quarter of a mile from his home. David’s life has not been the same since.

In rural Illinois it is easy to find stories similar to David’s. Stories of people who lived to be outdoors now retreating inside, shut off from the world of fresh air and open spaces that once defined and drove them. Stories of a farming paradise swept under by an unrelenting tide of factory farm stench and pollution. Stories of lives lived in confinement.

Like David, Nancy Spratt treasured her summers outdoors on her family farm, with children splashing in the pool and ducks swimming in the pond. But also like David, Nancy’s

world has been remade by the presence of a nearby hog confinement and the shifting winds that now determine whether she can open her windows or even walk outside without retching.

“It’s been horrible in recent weeks. If it’s not at our house, it’s in town. It’s an everyday smell now. Twenty-four years ago, I could walk outside, breathe my fresh country air. And I think I have a right to do that. Since the hog facility came, we can’t open up our house. Should we have to live like that? We shouldn’t.”



Nancy Spratt

Nancy is quick to point out that she is under no illusion of what it is to live on and around farms.

“We are farmers,” declares Nancy. “We have cattle, chickens and ducks. We take pride in our farm. We love our livestock, but I’m not an animal rights person. We raise cattle and we raise them to be butchered.”

Nancy is emphatic that these factory farms are, in fact, heavy industry, and nothing like farms at all.

“How is such a horrible smell created? How many hogs have to die to create this? It makes me question whether they are running it properly, and it makes me wonder what the long-term health effects are of breathing this in everyday.”

“And you have to wonder about the runoff. Salt Creek runs right behind us. What is it doing to the soil? What are they pumping into the soil?”

//continued on page 6//

PRAIRIE RIVERS NETWORK ANNUAL DINNER - OCTOBER 10

We are excited about the upcoming Prairie Rivers Network Annual Dinner on October 10! Please make plans to join Prairie Rivers Network's staff, board members, and your fellow river enthusiasts for conversation, good food, and fun as we celebrate the rivers of Illinois. Our keynote speaker will be Dr. Mary Christina Wood, environmental law professor at the University of Oregon.

Professor Wood is the Founding Director of the University of Oregon's nationally acclaimed Environmental and Natural Resources Law Program. She is a frequent and highly sought speaker on our environmental challenges and how we might deal with them. She has received particular national and international attention in recent years for her provocative, novel approach to global climate policy and for her pointed criticisms of business-as-usual permit-granting by environmental protection agencies. Co-author of several law textbooks, she has published extensively on the climate crisis, natural resources, and native American law issues.

Professor Wood is best known today for developing a promising avenue for people to press governments to act more forcefully to protect public resources like air and water. It has long been accepted in the United States and other countries that government holds waterways, beaches, and wildlife in trust for present and future generations. In her recent book, *Nature's Trust: Environmental Law*

for a New Ecological Age, she argues that these public trust duties should extend to the atmosphere and other parts of nature that are also shared by all and also essential to our long-term flourishing. Working with various conservation interests across the country she has spearheaded litigation—brought



Mary Christina Wood

on behalf of children and teens, representing future generations—challenging the failures of public bodies to take responsible action to address the dangers of climate change. More than 50 lawsuits have been initiated across the nation, highlighting specific dangers, drawing vast publicity, and putting pressure on slow-moving governments and other actors. By bringing young people into the arena, Wood and her colleagues have helped shift attention to the future and brought real, compelling human faces to the problem.

We look forward to spending an inspiring evening with you. See more at PrairieRivers.org/dinner. Look for your invitation in early September. //

WHO IS YOUR RIVER SUPERHERO?

Who is your River Superhero? Nominate him or her for Prairie Rivers Network's River Steward Award! Nominations are due by August 29, 2014. The award will be presented at the Annual Dinner.

Please e-mail Sarah Scott at sscott@prairierivers.org the following information for consideration:

- Nominee's contact information
- Your contact information
- Summary of nominee's river conservation efforts, general background information concerning the river/watershed of interest, and the specific work for which the nominee deserves recognition.



For a \$10 donation, you can get your very own *I Love Clean Water* t-shirt. They will be available at the dinner or go to PrairieRivers.org/shirt.

A RURAL PARADISE LOST continued from page 4

Sometimes the stench will even invade Nancy's home.

"I wish the owners had to smell that. I would like to bottle that for them. But you can't bottle and replay a smell, a smell that's in your home, in your house. I just don't understand how they can get away with this."

Factory farms get away with it because Illinois' laws are inadequate for preventing and addressing the multiple, critical threats posed by these facilities. And factory farms have faced few hurdles in establishing their dominance over the Illinois livestock industry.

David Leifheit began experiencing similar horrors immediately after the nearby hog confinement was built. Some days it was so bad it would burn his eyes and lungs, forcing him inside, walled off from the joy his farm once gave him.



In response, thirteen neighbors sued the owners of the factory farm, a husband and wife team, who then set about systematically eliminating plaintiffs via legal maneuvering and threats. The wife was the county clerk and neighbors were fearful of reprisals from a politically and economically powerful couple.

After six years of stalled litigation more than half of the plaintiffs had given up. Feeling the cards were stacked against them at every level, and after expending significant money and time, the suit was dropped.

At an Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) hearing for a proposed dairy in a different part of the state, David asked the IDOA representative how many factory farms the Department had denied.

"He told me zero. They had never denied a single factory farm in the state. They are just there to help the CAFO corporations build."

Nancy's brother-in-law is a judge and organized hundreds of thousands of dollars to fight a hog factory farm in Western Illinois. He was easily defeated. When the factory farm near Nancy was proposed, a neighbor looked into what recourse the community might have. According to Nancy, he determined, "It's useless. Nothing can be done."

It is a tragedy that the state would turn its back on rural residents and throw away what makes life in the country so special. That is not lost on Prairie Rivers Network and we have been working for some time to strengthen the laws that govern factory farms. So, while neighbors currently have little recourse, we are fighting to change that, to protect the people living near factory farms, and to protect Illinois' streams and rivers. We have proposed a bill that would do just that, limiting the harms caused by factory farms and giving more control to local communities.

This bill would go a long way to prevent what happened to David and Nancy from happening to people like Mark Durham, who, along with the community group "Save Our Sandy," has been fighting to prevent a new mega hog farm from locating in Marshall County along Sandy Creek. Mark describes Sandy Creek as a bass angler's paradise - rocky in parts, sandy in others, well-shaded and cool because of the dense, native timber it flows through.

"I hate the thought of this thing getting destroyed. I have a 6 year old grandchild that loves to fish. I'm teaching him to fly fish this year. I want him to be able to do the same thing with his children."

As do we.//

You can meet David and Nancy in our short documentary "Living in Confinement" we produced about factory farms in Illinois, at www.youtube.com/user/PrairieRivers.

To sign our petition and help protect the people living next to factory farms, go to PrairieRivers.org/factoryfarmfix.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SUPPORT CLEAN WATER AND HEALTHY RIVERS

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Recruit New Members

Sponsorship Volunteer

prairierivers.org/membership

Events Facebook

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\$25 Student Membership \$50 Basic Membership

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 Other _____

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Thank you for your support!

All members receive our newsletter and action alerts. Your contribution to PRN is tax deductible.

Make checks payable to: Prairie Rivers Network, 1902 Fox Drive, Suite G, Champaign, IL 61820

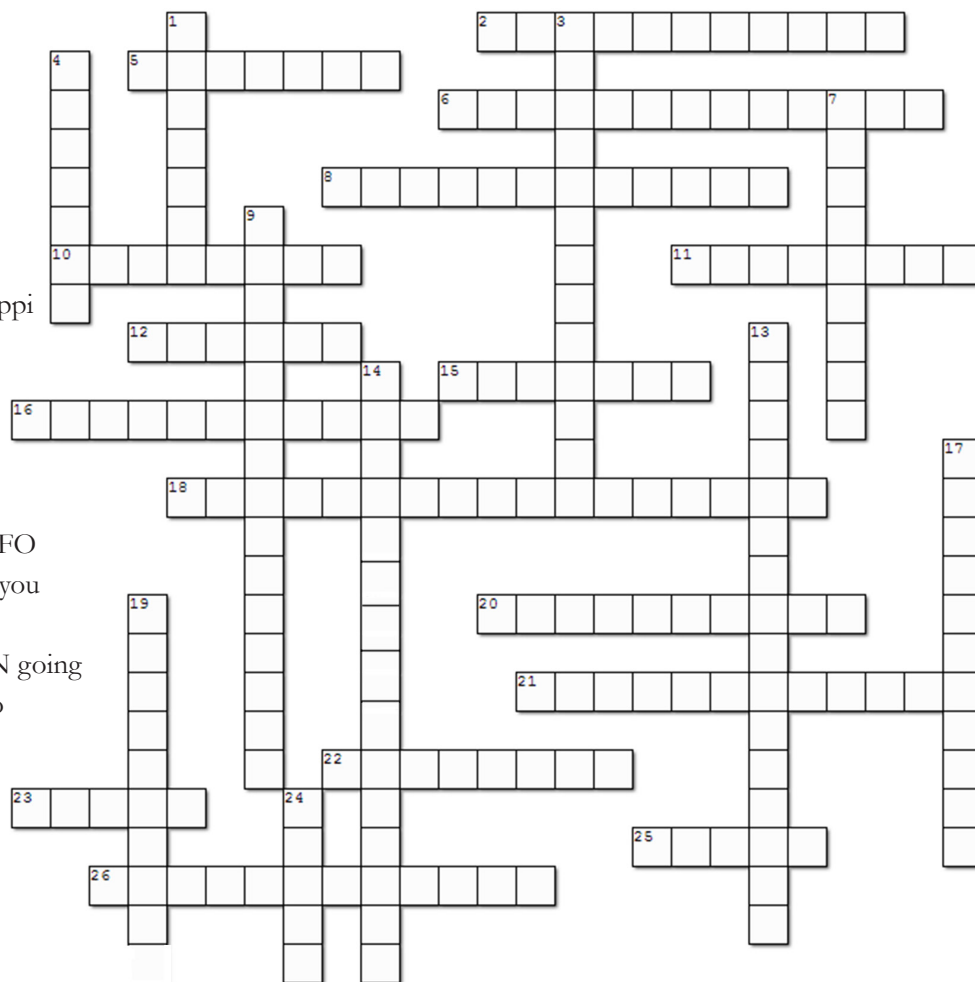
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

2. 4th longest river in the world
5. Found in coal ash
6. 1972 law
8. Oct 10, 2014
10. River Steward Award Winner
11. Principal tributary of Mississippi
12. Coal utility
15. Reversed flow
16. PRN founder
18. Dead Zone cause
20. Illinois' only scenic river
21. Fighting Marshall County CAFO
22. Gratitude from PRN staff to you
23. River float
25. What you give that keeps PRN going
26. What PRN saved 45 years ago

Down

1. The heart of PRN
3. Fighting Sunrise Coal
4. Toxic by-product
7. Invasive species
9. River RATS
13. Spring fundraiser
14. Last year's dinner speaker
17. CAFO
19. Flying over Middle Fork of the Vermilion River
24. Clean



First five people to email correctly completed puzzle to info@prairierivers.org win a PRN "I Heart Clean Water" T-shirt! Email us for the solution.



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Please share this newsletter with a friend when you are done.

UPCOMING EVENTS//



TAKE A CHILD OUTSIDE WEEK
 September 24 - 30

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY
 September 27
www.publiclandsday.org

SALT FORK RIVER ART FESTIVAL
 September 27 - 28
 Sleepy Creek Vineyards • Oakwood, IL

PRAIRIE RIVERS NETWORK
 ANNUAL DINNER
 October 10
 I Hotel and Conference Center
 Champaign, IL

ILLINOIS WATER CONFERENCE
 October 14 - 15
 Illini Union
 University of Illinois @
 Urbana-Champaign

PRAIRIE RIVERS NETWORK
 HAPPY HOUR
 December 5
 Champaign-Urbana TBD

SAVE THE DATE
 RUN FOR YOUR RIVERS &
 WALK FOR YOUR STREAMS
 APRIL 23-25, 2015!



PHOTOS// David Hale - masthead; Jason Lindsey - masthead; PRN - masthead, 1, 2, 4, 6; Mark Durham - 6; Mary Wood - 5



You can earn money for Prairie Rivers Network while shopping - visit prairierivers.org/schnucks for more info.



Prairie Rivers Network is the Illinois Affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation.



If you participate in a workplace giving campaign, look for ESI and designate Prairie Rivers Network to receive your contributions.