



Protecting Illinois' Rivers for People, Fish, and Wildlife



Leave a Legacy
of
Clean Water
and
Healthy Rivers

PRAIRIE RIVERS NETWORK ENDOWMENT

An investment in Illinois' future

The rivers and streams of Illinois are ribbons of life, home to amazing species. Majestic bald eagles soaring over the Mississippi, river otters frolicking in the Illinois, fish spawning and rearing their young, and our own children fishing, splashing, and smiling, these are the true treasures found in our rivers.

Since our founding in 1967, Prairie Rivers Network has protected many of the state's most important natural areas. These are the places you may have visited as a child and the places you, your children and your grandchildren visit today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

We are very proud to introduce the Prairie Rivers Network Endowment. Our Endowment funds offer you an opportunity to safeguard our rivers and streams for generations to come:

- **Permanent Fund for Rivers** – true endowment with gifts and assets to be held permanently; earnings are used to support operations.
- **Board Designated Fund** – quasi-endowment to support long-term operations; board reserves power to draw upon the principal under certain narrow circumstances.
- **Named Endowment funds** – Permanent or quasi-endowment fund created in honor or memory of a person.

Take your place in the Prairie Rivers Network Legacy Society by contributing or pledging your gift to the Prairie Rivers Network Endowment. It's a powerful way to ensure your love for Illinois' rivers and wildlife has a lasting legacy, or to honor the legacy of another water lover.

//continued on page 3//

CAROL'S CURRENTS

With my first six months behind me, I'm taking a few minutes at the close of our year to reflect on my journey so far and chart the course ahead. I have learned that while Prairie Rivers has a full plate of challenging issues, our talented staff deftly tackles them year in and year out, and we can count on our dedicated members to help us.

As the well-worn adage goes, the efforts of a small, committed group to affect change are not to be underestimated. The stalwart band who established Prairie Rivers so many years ago knew it would continue to take a committed network of members and partners to protect our land and water. So, over the last few months, I have been excited to meet our network of many long-standing allies, volunteers and members.

In addition to my immersion in strategies to address the greatest threats to Illinois' waters, I've been renewing, expanding and strengthening our network, seeking common cause with others across the state and the nation who value clean water. I believe in the power of creatively connecting people with a common thread; the thread that connects us all is the need for clean water.

As I reach out to many partners and make new connections, I find abundant opportunities for Illinoisans

to unite in a common vision for clean water that will ensure thriving, sustainable communities across our state. We are living out our vision for healthy land and rivers through the network we forge together. This will continue to be job one for me as we seek to expand our membership and allies across the state.

Of the many relationships I've developed thus far, one that has provided particularly keen insight about our work is with a man I will never meet. Charles Goodall, long time Prairie Rivers Board member, passed away in 2013. But through the recollections of those who benefited from his wisdom—including staff, board, family and friends—I have come to know and value his legacy.

Charles understood the importance of empowering communities to find and use their voice to demand protections for their land and water. He mobilized community members to stand up to Sunrise Coal as they attempted to buy up rights to prime farmland. The vigilance and resolve Charles brought to the coalition lives on today as we all continue the fight to keep the mine from opening. Charles' message is one that we must heed everyday: People, united by just cause, will stand up for what is important to them.

Happy New Year!

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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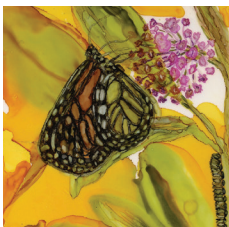
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Be a part of our team and help raise money for critical wildlife habitat.

Walk or Run. It's easy. It's fun. It's important!

PrairieRivers.org/Run

PRAIRIE RIVERS NETWORK ENDOWMENT continued from page 1

Leading the way, past and present PRN Board members and dedicated members have already committed \$200,000 to the Endowment. We are particularly honored to announce the creation of two named funds within the Endowment:

The Charles Goodall Fund

Honoring the legacy and memory of long-time PRN Board member, Charles Goodall.

Eric T. Freyfogle Fund

Honoring Eric's leadership and commitment to the protection of Illinois' rivers and lands as a lasting treasure for future generations.

We hope that these funds will serve as opportunities to honor the legacy of water protection leadership that Charles and Eric have given through their years of dedicated service to Prairie Rivers Network, and to honor others like them who love Illinois' waters.

In addition to protecting our precious water resources, a charitable gift upon retirement can provide you substantial tax savings during your lifetime, while a gift by living will or trust can provide estate tax benefits to your heirs.

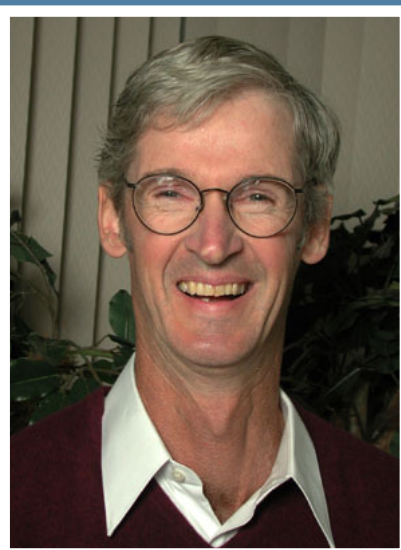
To learn more about how you can become a member of the Prairie Rivers Network Legacy Society through your planned gift to one of our Endowment Funds, please contact Executive Director, Carol Hays at chays@prairierivers.org or (217) 344-2371 x 201. //



THE CHARLES GOODALL FUND MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND ESTABLISHED

Members of the Charles Goodall family have established a fund in his memory within the Prairie Rivers Network Endowment. Charles, a fifth generation farmer from Sidell, IL, was a member of the Prairie Rivers Network Board of Directors for 13 years until his death in 2013. He was a stalwart steward of the East Central Illinois farmland and rivers that he loved so dearly.

An innovative problem solver, Charles envisioned and worked for ways to farm in Illinois while leaving a legacy of healthy land and water, thriving wildlife, and strong people and communities. Honoring his vision for sustainable agriculture practices that protect land, water and people, the Charles



Goodall Fund will support Prairie Rivers Network as it champions agriculture that protects and restores soil health and water quality across our state.

Charles' wife Nancy Goodall has made a generous gift establishing the Charles Goodall Fund, and his sister Carol Goodall Wock has made a generous gift of half of her certified organic farmland, establishing the Charles Goodall Permanent Endowment Fund and naming Prairie Rivers Network among her inheritors. The Goodall family encourages those who wish to honor Charles' vision of farming in concert with nature to join them with a legacy gift in his memory.



Illinois' Advocate for Clean Water and Healthy Rivers

2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



SAVING WETLANDS

We are **co-leading a campaign to stop a highly destructive Army Corps project** that would devastate fish and wildlife on the Middle Mississippi River and put Illinois river towns at great risk of flooding. The New Madrid levee would destroy more than 50,000 acres of wetlands that provide vital spawning and breeding habitat for fish and wildlife. The **campaign has gained support of key leaders** like Senator Dick Durbin, and state floodplain experts.

REDUCING THE THREAT OF INVASIVE SPECIES

As part of an advisory group to Congress on Asian carp and other invasive species moving between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River, **we are advocating for revitalization of the Chicago River** as a necessary component of any invasive species solutions. We developed consensus recommendations for Congress to fund robust and aggressive programs to protect against Asian carp now, while we work on long-term solutions for dozens of other invasive species.

PROTECTING WILDLIFE HABITAT

We successfully coordinated the Middle Illinois River Conservation Collaborative — bringing together conservation entities to acquire, restore, and protect floodplain habitats along the Illinois River. This effort led to the **addition of 283 acres to The Wetlands Initiative's Dixon Waterfowl Refuge**, an acquisition that will restore upland habitats, protect a rare seep, and reduce agricultural pollution on the site.



Prairie Rivers Network is protecting vulnerable habitat and vital waters.

DEFENDING THE CLEAN WATER ACT

The **U.S. EPA finalized the long-awaited Clean Water Rule**, which protects the nation's smallest, most vulnerable streams and wetlands that give life to our larger river systems. We worked with many groups across the country to support EPA's efforts to clarify clean water protections.

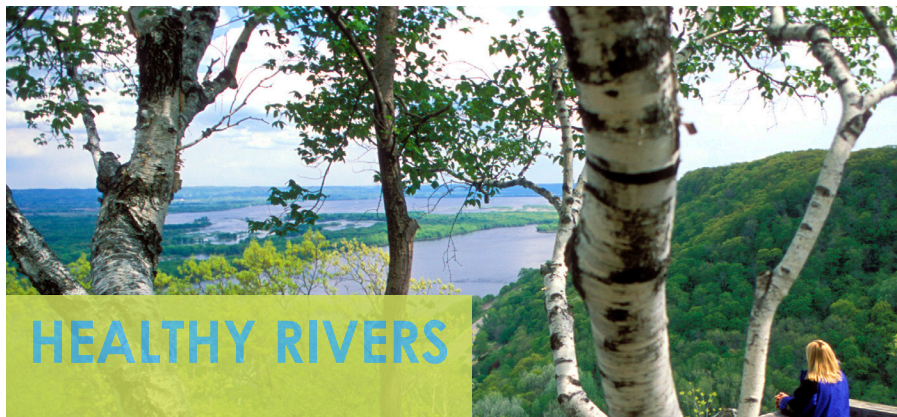
We helped garner and amplify important voices like small businesses and farmers in support of the Clean Water Rule through our widely popular social media campaign: #4cleanwater. Our "Clean Water is Good for Business" video was featured on the U.S. EPA's website, and **we received national recognition for our**

campaign leadership and creative video and social media work.

Because a federal court has placed a temporary hold on the rule, we continue to work hard to see that the rule is upheld.

REDUCING NITROGEN & PHOSPHORUS POLLUTION

Illinois finalized its plan for reducing the nitrogen and phosphorous pollution that clogs our waters with noxious algae, depletes oxygen, and contributes to the Gulf of Mexico dead zone. Prairie Rivers Network sits on the state's policy committee to address nutrients and **will work for aggressive reduction of this harmful pollution.**



HEALTHY RIVERS

Prairie Rivers Network promotes free-flowing, healthy rivers.

FIGHTING BAD RIVER MANAGEMENT

Navigation practices and outdated infrastructure continue to degrade the health of our largest rivers. With a coalition of regional and national partners, we are **advocating for small-scale, non-structural alternatives for navigation** as preferable to new locks and dams.

We object to costly and destructive navigation projects while promoting the importance of wetlands and green infrastructure for environmental protection and flood risk reduction.

Educating our Leaders

We are educating our state's leaders on the many issues facing Illinois' waters. We helped inform key agency personnel and state lawmakers about:

- risks to people, wildlife and the environment from levees;
- inefficiencies of barge transport;
- the need for strong coal ash rules to protect Illinois communities and waters from the state's 80+ coal ash storage pits;
- ecologically harmful lock and dam expansions proposed for the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers; and
- the need for strong nitrogen and phosphorus pollution controls.



ENERGY & WATER

Prairie Rivers Network is reducing the threats from coal mining and coal ash.

ACHIEVING STRONGER FEDERAL REGULATION OF COAL ASH

This April, the U.S. EPA finalized the first-ever regulations for the storage and disposal of toxic coal ash. **Years of advocacy—including testifying, organizing, commenting, and, ultimately, bringing a lawsuit—finally forced the U.S. EPA to regulate coal ash dumping and closure requirements for these dumps.**

WORKING FOR STRONGER IL REGULATIONS OF COAL ASH

We are **working to achieve strong state rules regarding the closure of coal ash dumps in Illinois.** Strong state rules are needed to close several gaps left by the federal coal ash rules, and ensure that responsible clean-up and monitoring is required at all of the state's polluting coal ash dumps.

EXPANDING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Responding to calls for fairness and transparency, Illinois DNR is advancing proposed rules that will improve the ability of citizens to participate in coal mining permitting. **Expect improved public access to important permit documents, earlier notice of mining plans, and an end to IDNR's adversarial positions during permit hearings.**

THWARTING THE BULLDOG MINE

The proposed Bulldog coal mine in East-Central Illinois originally planned to begin mining in January 2014. We **worked with residents and advocates to highlight discrepancies and flaws in the mine's permit applications**, which prompted serious review and extensive questioning of the permits. As it stands, the **Bulldog mine has not secured either of the permits it needs to begin mining.**

ANNUAL DINNER ROUND UP

Thank you to all who attended our Annual Dinner in November. You can view all the fun photos from the evening at: www.flickr.com/photos/prairieriversnetwork

Award Winners

Carla Murray and Wes Jarrell

Each year, we celebrate outstanding river conservationists.



Carla Murray of Canton, Illinois received the River Steward award for her leadership with the Canton Area Citizens for Environmental Issues, a grassroots group that successfully prevented a coal strip mine from being

built near Canton Lake, a drinking water supply for over 20,000 citizens of Canton and Fulton County. Throughout a long teaching career, Carla has enthusiastically taught innumerable students the value of healthy water ecosystems.

The Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Wes Jarrell, owner of Prairie Fruits Farm & Creamery in Urbana. Over the last year, Wes has been an important partner and advocate in our campaign to support the Clean Water



Rule. With his background and experience, Wes has been a critical ally, using his voice as a farmer and businessperson to call for stewardship of our land and water.

Restoration Agriculture

Keynote Speaker Mark Shepard

In Illinois, we're intimately familiar with a very particular type of farm and farming. The parcels of land are often very large and they usually produce a single crop. Illinois is dominated by corn and soybeans. These are crops that must be planted every year, and many farmers use prodigious amounts of chemical inputs (in combination with genetically modified seeds) in order to maximize yield

and prevent other species, whether plant or animal, from invading the vast territory claimed by corn and beans. And it is often said that this is the way farming must be done if 1. the world's population is to be fed, and 2. the farmer is to make a profit.

At New Forest Farm in Southwest Wisconsin, Mark Shepard runs a very different type of farm. His 106-acre perennial agricultural savanna is considered by many to be one of the most ambitious sustainable agriculture projects in the United States. And while it took no small effort to restore and recover this land—considered suboptimal for conventional agriculture—now that Mark's farm is up and running, he is no longer solely engaged in the Sisyphean struggle that plagues so many farmers: perpetually remaking the land outside of nature's image.

Mark is practicing something called biomimicry. Which is a fancy-sounding word for planting and harvesting crops that are appropriate for a region, for a landscape, for a particular piece of land, with all its idiosyncrasies of topography, water availability, and soil-type. Mark's way is not to force the land to produce something it otherwise would or could not.

Rather, Mark harnesses nature's patterns, modeling his agriculture after natural, 3-dimensional ecosystems, using oft-neglected vertical space (incorporating shrub, tree, and canopy crops as well as ground crops) to plant and harvest four, five, or six crops on the very same plot of land. And when combined with rotational grazing of livestock, this system operates as a living unit, not only producing high-value commercial products, but allowing the soil to repair and replenish itself for future harvests.

Mark explained why it is imperative that we begin to incorporate these techniques at a larger scale in order to sequester carbon, address climate change, minimize soil erosion, keep our air and water clean, and improve wildlife habitat. And no less important, this form of ecologically sensitive and sustainable agriculture can provide substantial profits to farmers. Mark was not shy about touting his profits, and that is a message that we at Prairie Rivers must magnify. As we promote alternate ways of farming, we must demonstrate that ethical, sustainable farming is not just possible, but will allow family farmers to thrive. //

A JUST TRANSITION: BUILDING A FUTURE FOR FORMER COAL COMMUNITIES

BY TYLER ROTCHE

By most measures, coal companies are in poor financial shape.

Stocks have stumbled during a period of otherwise moderate, sustained economic growth. Shares of Peabody Energy alone have lost more than 90 percent of their value in the last year.

Coal prices have continued to drop through 2014 and 2015, forcing companies to reconcile with tight – or negative – margins. Meanwhile, aging coal plants continue to retire throughout the U.S, while global coal consumption is down in 2015. The near future likely holds a shrinking market for coal, where old corporate mantras of expansion and growth are no longer viable business options.

It would seem that Big Coal is on the ropes, with nowhere to go but down... but what about Illinois?

In the near-term, we seem to face a different story. Nationwide installation of modern pollution controls at power plants has opened a market for Illinois' cheap, high-sulfur coal. Since 2008, production from the Illinois Basin has increased by 17.2 million tons, while Central Appalachia and the Powder River Basin have fallen 49.4 and 31.7 million tons, respectively.

Today, Illinois communities are facing a critical question: Are we willing to bet our economy and its workers on an industry that can't last the long-haul?

Decision-makers looking back to the era when mining provided tens of thousands of jobs for Illinois (circa 1920) might be inclined to answer "Yes!", failing to recognize how the industry has changed in the past 100 years. In reality, miners have been replaced by machines. Illinois now mines half as much coal as a century ago, but with just 4% of the miners. Even a hypothetical "boom" would bring only a marginal increase in jobs.

Decisions-makers looking at the realistic conditions present today, however, would see an industry in structural decline – with over \$129 million worth of reclamation work needed at abandoned mine sites, damaged infrastructure and water resources, and a state budget with tenuous

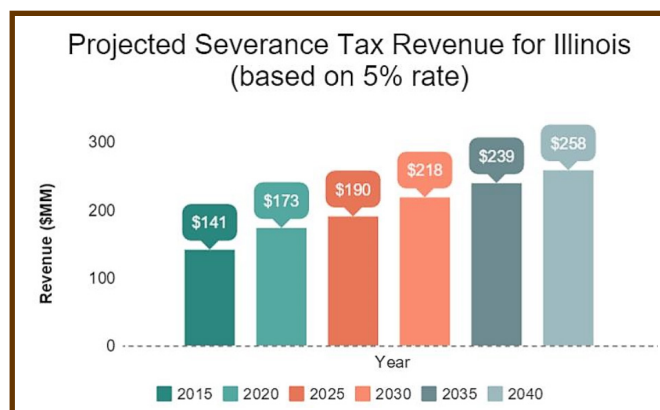
allocations for essential services. They would choose a different prescription: adapting, diversifying, and investing in a resilient community.

For guidance, Illinois can look to almost every other coal-mining state which collects a severance tax on coal extracted and shipped out of communities. This is a small fee supplied by coal companies, potentially at 5% of the gross value of coal mined.

A recent report by Downstream Strategies found that in 2015, an Illinois severance tax could have generated \$141.5 million in annual revenue for state and local governments. By 2040, over \$4.4 billion could be allocated for job-creation efforts, education, healthcare, and environmental clean-up in communities facing industrial decline. Without a plan for economic transition, coal's decline will drag local communities through small booms and busts, pressuring decision-makers to keep all their eggs in the mining basket along the way, and inevitably leaving small towns and families behind – without the resources to clean up the mess.

Across the country, the call is building for a Just Transition: a pathway forward for the workers and communities that would be otherwise left behind with the coal industry's legacy costs. This is a substantial – but absolutely critical – undertaking. A severance tax could provide the dollars to get us started, funded by the coal companies that should be paying for it.

Read the full severance tax benefits report at tinyurl.com/ILreport-coal-severance-tax. Learn more about Reinvesting in the Heartland at reinvestil.org //





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