



## 2014 Accomplishments



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



## PEOPLE

Helping people protect clean water and healthy rivers.

### TAKING ACTION

Our new River Action Team (affectionately known as the RATs) is ready to take action with phone calls, visits to policy makers and letters to the editor when those voices can really make a difference. This year they cut their teeth calling for protection of the Mahomet Aquifer. They are currently mobilizing to support U.S. EPA's clean water rule.



### TELLING STORIES

With new video production capabilities, we are bringing important clean water issues to more people than ever. We created a mini-documentary on factory farms and a series of videos in support of U.S. EPA's clean water rule. Visit our YouTube channel to watch the stories of real people affected by and fighting against pollution:

[youtube.com/PrairieRivers](http://youtube.com/PrairieRivers)

### GATHERING SUPPORT

With support from Prairie Rivers Network, an unprecedented variety of Vermilion County leaders have joined the call of residents for a responsible closure plan for the coal ash dumps at the retired Dynegy Vermilion power plant. These dumps threaten both groundwater and the Middle Fork River.

## Partners

Much of our work is carried out in partnership with other groups and organizations. Through our effective working relationships, we punch above our weight in protecting clean water and healthy rivers in Illinois. We owe special thanks to all of our partners.



Stacy James working with the Save our Sandy grassroots organization to fight a factory farm that could pollute their local stream.

## Awards

We are very proud and honored to be named the National Wildlife Federation's Affiliate of the Year for 2014. Each year, the award recognizes one of NWF's 49 state affiliates for conservation accomplishments.



Robert Hirschfeld, Glynis Collins, and board member Clark Bullard receiving our NWF Affiliate of the Year Award.



## PLACES

### ILLINOIS RIVER

We initiated the Middle Illinois River Conservation Partnership to restore and connect habitat along the River, **pursuing a vision for a healthy Illinois River system** that supports people and wildlife.

We continue our efforts to protect Starved Rock State Park from a frac sand mine that would welcome the park's 2 million annual visitors with dust and blasting noise. We also worked with LaSalle County to improve its Comprehensive Land Use Plan to

**Protecting special Illinois places, for today and the future.**

**protect valuable habitat and water resources along the Illinois River near the park from the frac sand rush** now underway there.

### VERMILION RIVER

The City of Danville voted to **remove two obsolete dams on the Vermilion River**, one of which has been respon-

sible for several deaths. Over the years, Prairie Rivers Network has assisted with the effort to deal with these dams, sharing resources on the benefits of dam removal, and helping to secure the state funds that will pay for the removal.

### FOX RIVER

We negotiated stricter limits on phosphorus pollution for several sewage treatment plants in northeast Illinois. This is the same pollution that shut down Toledo's water supply for several days this summer. **Stricter pollution limits will mean a cleaner, healthier Fox River.**

### CHICAGO RIVER

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 solutions that will help revitalize the Chicago River** – reducing pollution and improving flood control, habitat, and recreational access.



## POLICIES

**Improving policies to promote lasting change.**

### BETTER COAL ASH RULES

Our work over several years demanding accountability for coal ash pollution emboldened the Illinois EPA to propose **new rules for closure of coal ash dumps at power plants**. During the rulemaking process, we provided

testimony in support of stronger provisions in the rule, while acknowledging what an important step the Agency's action was. We expect to see the rule finalized early next year.

### IMPROVING COAL OVERSIGHT

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources answered our call for greater oversight of coal ash dumps and improved transparency and public participation in the permitting process for coal mines. **The Department**

**commenced inspections of all coal ash dumps in the state for stability hazards.**

### REDUCING LIVESTOCK POLLUTION

**Illinois adopted a new rule requiring factory farm operators to manage waste more responsibly than ever.** By presenting evidence of water pollution problems this waste has caused, and countering industry claims, Prairie Rivers Network staff were integral to getting this new rule.

### FIGHTING BAD RIVER MANAGEMENT

Prairie Rivers Network joined a lawsuit against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, **challenging a costly and destructive approach to management of the Upper Mississippi River**. If successful, this challenge will have far-reaching implications for the Mississippi and other rivers.

Prairie Rivers Network  
1902 Fox Drive, Suite G  
Champaign, IL 61820  
prairierivers.org | 217.344.2371