

Prairie River Notes

A publication of Prairie Rivers Network

Volume 10, Issue 2

The Illinois Affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation

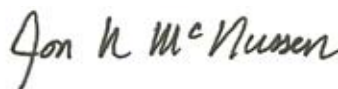
Summer 2008

Prairie Rivers Network Leadership Transitions

In the last issue of Prairie Rivers Notes the Board announced the arrival of a new Executive Director of Prairie Rivers Network, Stephen Davis. Unfortunately, Steve decided that the position was not a good fit for him, in part because of a long commute from near Springfield. His tentative plan is to return to environmental consulting. We thank Steve for his time with us, and we wish him well.

It is my pleasure to announce that the Board, unanimously and with enthusiasm, has invited Glynnis Collins to become the new Executive Director. She has agreed to serve, and has already begun. A three year staff member

and former interim Executive Director, Glynnis begins her tenure with an intimate knowledge of PRN's programs and aspirations. If you have a chance, stop by the office to congratulate Glynnis. The staff and board look forward to new leadership in our efforts to protect, conserve, and restore Illinois rivers and streams.



Jon McNussen, President
PRN Board of Directors

Greetings from the New Executive Director



Greetings! I am delighted and honored to be stepping into the Executive Director position here at Prairie Rivers Network. With our skilled staff and committed Board, we are in a position to continue and expand our clean

water work and organizational development. We are in the process of reviewing our current program work and deciding how we might expand our efforts in areas such

as habitat conservation; I look forward to sharing new developments with you in future newsletters.

In the coming months I look forward to getting better acquainted with you. I hope I will have that opportunity at some of our upcoming events like the Rolling on the River Ride (see page 3!) and our Annual Dinner on November 21st (details to come in our next newsletter).



Glynnis Collins
Executive Director

Send PRN Your E-mail Address

Prairie Rivers Network is in the process of updating and expanding the following electronic mailing lists so that we can reduce our printing costs and paper consumption:

RiverWeb - receive via e-mail action alerts on important upcoming activities affecting your local river or stream and receive our monthly electronic newsletter (E-newz) about volunteer opportunities, clean water issues, and river conservation news within our state.

Newsletter - receive this quarterly newsletter via e-mail.

We also periodically send e-mails to members in specific geographical areas when we need your help in protecting your local river or stream.

We are asking all of our members with e-mail addresses to please send an e-mail to vnudelman@prairierivers.org and indicate which e-mail list (or both) that you would like to join.

In This Issue

2008 Farm Bill	2
Snakes, Turtles, & Frogs.....	2
www.TheWaterYouDrink.org ...	3
Rolling on the River.....	3
Sally Paxton	3
PRN 2007 Annual Report	4-5
Boneyard Creek Clean-Up.....	6
Michael Scully	6
River Defense/ IGA Renewal....	7

A Brief Look at the 2008 Farm Bill

On May 22nd the United States Congress passed the 2008 Farm Bill. The new bill strongly supports nutrition programs but does not significantly increase the amount of funding for conservation programs for 2008-2012. Despite some increases in the Farm and Ranchland Protection, Environmental Quality Incentives, and Conservation Stewardship programs, other provisions that support environmental stewardship did not make it into the final bill. These include the nationwide SodSaver provision that protects the Prairie Pothole National Priority Area, and in 2010, the eligible acreage caps in the Conservation Reserve Program will be reduced from 39.2 million to 32 million acres. The new bill also shifts \$3 billion from programs that support fish and wildlife habitat to agriculture lands and other programs that impact wildlife in less direct ways.

So what does this mean for wildlife habitat and soil and water conservation in Illinois?

While the new Farm Bill contains some needed provisions, it also presents us with a greater challenge to restore and protect our already severely threatened wildlife habitat and drinking water resources. As the costs of fuel, land, and other commodities we depend upon continue to rise, it will be up to the citizens of Illinois to work together, to think creatively with the goal of becoming better stewards of the land.

For a more in-depth look at the Farm Bill, please visit www.agriculture.house.gov/inside/FarmBill.html. If you would like more information on working with landowners in your watershed to help improve water quality and wildlife habitat, contact Kim at kerndt@prairierivers.org.

Snakes, Turtles and Frogs, Oh-my!!!

What do *Bufo americanus*, *Chelydra serpentina*, and *Carphophis amoenus* have in common? If you guessed they were among the species encountered during an Illinois Wilds Institute for Nature (IWIN) Corps of Discovery's program trip to the Cache River Natural Area, you would be correct! One of our dedicated members and supporter Dr. Bruce Semans of Rochester, Illinois, attended the April IWIN program, which focused on the habitat and vast wildlife diversity of the Cache River System. Learning to identify species such as the American Toad, Common Snapping Turtle and Worm Snake was just one of the activities enjoyed by Bruce and the other participants.

The IWIN program was developed by the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS), Office of Education and Outreach, to train interested, dedicated citizens in the skills of nature photography, descriptive writing, and sketch journaling in order to aesthetically document a landscape. They put these skills into direct practice by adopting a particular

site and recording the changes they observe over time to its habitats and wildlife.

Hands-on experiences are key to these courses, and with the help of INHS scientists such as Dr. Chris Phillips, Michael Jeffords, and Susan Post, there was plenty of opportunity for participants to experience southern Illinois wetland ecosystems up close and personal.

Thank you Bruce for your long-standing support for PRN!



Bruce Semans holding salamander egg mass



... strives to protect the rivers and streams of Illinois and to promote the lasting health and beauty of watershed communities.

By providing information, sound science, and hands-on assistance, PRN helps individuals and community groups become effective river conservation leaders.

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Stacy James - Water Resources Scientist

Vickie Nudelman - Office Manager

Cecily Smith - Policy and Outreach Specialist

Brad Walker - Mississippi River Restoration Coordinator

Steph Adams - Support Staff

TheWaterYouDrink.org

PRN is getting the word out in Chicagoland about the importance of protecting our drinking water from pollution! Through a generous grant from the Grand Victoria Foundation and *pro bono* assistance from Royse Wagner, Inc., we are increasing awareness of PRN in the Chicago area with billboards (shown to the right) and radio public service announcements. We hope to gain new members in the region and let people know what they can do to protect clean water.



Rolling on the River

With the third annual Rolling on the River ride (RRR) less than two month's away, now is the time to join Prairie River Networks' RRR team, the Road Toads, or form your own with family, friends, and co-workers. Team captains and members save \$10 off the registration fee. This year your donation dollars will go even farther thanks to several challenge grants; all you have to do is select PRN as your charity when registering. Need more reasons to ride? Prizes for fundraising range from commuter and trail bikes to Patagonia cycling accessories and a weekend stay in a lakeshore Chicago condo.

Consider staying for the weekend – the ride itself is only part of the fun. Nearby Dickson Valley Retreat is providing

camping for RRR riders as well as activities including swimming, canoeing, rock climbing, and archery. At RRR headquarters we'll have live music, children's activities,

solar gazing (thanks to the Naperville Astronomical Society), and environmental roundtables – which participants can enjoy after filling up on the free lunch sponsored in part by Chipotle.

We also need volunteers; benefits for volunteering at least eight hours include free camping, free lunch, and access to all of the activities at

Dickson Valley. For information on volunteering contact Cindy Deadrick at cyndcreate@aol.com. For more details on Rolling on the River visit the event website at www.RollingRiverRide.org.



Remembering Sally Paxton

The friends, staff, and Board of PRN are remembering and honoring the life of Sally Paxton, who passed away in California on July 7th. Major donors and charter members of PRN, Sally and her husband Jack Paxton spent decades supporting the environmental movement in East-Central Illinois, and across the nation.

In the early 1970s, with her two children in tow, Sally helped the Committee on Allerton Park (now Prairie Rivers Network) circulate a petition to save Allerton Park from being flooded by an unnecessary dam. For years, she faithfully volunteered at Salt Fork River clean-ups.

As a mother and educator, Sally shared her love for the environment with her own children and all others she met, particularly those who attended the pre-school she operated for many years from her home in Urbana. She exposed these young students to nature and expanded their experiences with the wonders that surround us every day.

PRN will remember Sally and the Paxton family as we visit natural areas that she treasured and helped protect: the Middle Fork River, the Salt Fork River, and Allerton Park. A memorial service will be held on Aug. 24th at Community UCC Church in Champaign.

Prairie Rivers Network 2007 Annual Report

As PRN celebrated our 40th Anniversary of protecting healthy rivers and healthy communities, we would like to thank our members and supporters for making our accomplishments possible. PRN made Illinois water cleaner by contributing to an overhaul of the Disinfection Exemption Program for wastewater treatment plants at the IEPA resulting in IEPA reviewing 20 years of exemptions and applying a more stringent and judicious process for new exemptions. We partnered with other not-for-profits to begin

an education campaign to discourage the improper disposal of unwanted and unused medications as well as helping to organize river clean-ups and habitat restoration days along the Salt Fork River, the La Moine River, and the Boneyard Creek. And PRN worked on cleaning up and restoring the water quality, wetlands, side channels, and wildlife habitat along the Mississippi River as well as helped develop an education program to introduce future generations to the importance of the Mississippi River.

We Are Honored to Recognize the Following Groups, Businesses, and Individuals for Their Generous Support of Our Work in 2007

Grantors

Community Foundation of
East Central Illinois
Gaylord & Dorothy
Donnelley Foundation
Grand Victoria Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Inc.
The Lumpkin Family Foundation
The McKnight Foundation

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Earth Share of Illinois
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Gorilla Polymedia
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Michael Scully
Bruce Semans

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Every effort has been made to ensure that our recognition of supporters is correct. We apologize for any errors or omissions and urge you to notify us of any mistakes.

2007 Financial Statement

Revenue

Donations	\$ 122,154
Grants	\$ 247,200
Investment Income	\$ 3,398
In-Kind Donations	\$ 9,337
Sales & Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 20,679
Total Revenue	\$ 402,768

Expenses

Salaries	\$ 190,200
Payroll Taxes & Employee Benefits	\$36,702
Program Costs	\$41,158
Fundraising (including salaries)	\$ 42,726
Management and General	\$ 47,532
Total Expenses	\$ 358,318

PRN's financial statements were prepared by Bray, Drake, Liles, & Richardson, LLP, of Urbana, Illinois, on an accrual basis.

Thank You to the 2008 Boneyard Creek Community Day Volunteers

Even with cooler temperatures and drizzling conditions, close to 400 volunteers gathered in Champaign's Scott Park on April 19th for the third annual Boneyard Creek Community Day (BCCD). After checking in, volunteers fanned out to sites in Champaign and Urbana to clean up Boneyard creek, Kauffman and Heritage lakes, and to remove invasive plant species along the creek's banks. On the University of Illinois campus, other volunteer teams attached medallions to stormdrains; the medallions remind people "no dumping – drains to rivers."



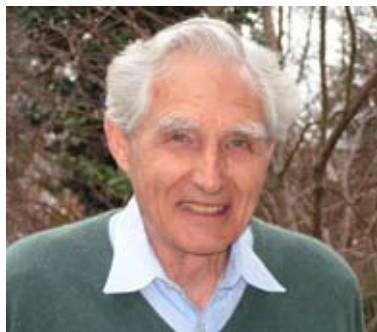
After their hard work, volunteers were rewarded with free lunch and snacks provided by Foudini's, Garcia's Pizza, Great Harvest Bread Co., Strawberry Fields, and Ward &

Associates Realtors. Next Generation School teacher Chad Dunn's students did double duty for the day, first cleaning up the creek and then entertaining the crowd (as Recycled Rhythms) by playing on a variety of instruments made from recycled materials.



The BCCD has become a mainstay community event; it continues to serve an important role in raising awareness about the importance of protecting urban creeks and rivers and instilling appreciation of the amenities they provide for the people and wildlife living in developed areas. However, the BCCD would not be possible without the generous support of event sponsors and the time and resources contributed by the event organizing partners. For more information on sponsors and organizing partners, as well as event photos, visit www.boneyardcreek.org.

PRN Says Goodbye to Conservationist Michael Scully



Recently, we at Prairie Rivers Network lost a good friend who was committed to the environment of Illinois, Michael Scully. Michael had been an active conservationist since the 1950s when he became an early practitioner and

proponent of organic farming on his 600 acre farm outside of Springfield.

For the past three years, Michael had been a supporter of PRN donating over \$15,000. His challenge grants helped us raise another \$15,000, enabling us to expand our program work and our organization. In addition to his generous donations, he has also been a major supporter of Rolling

on the River and played a key role in ensuring its early success. Michael was very interested in the issues PRN worked on and saw how clean water and river restoration fit into the bigger picture of conservation in Illinois.

We will miss Michael's presence in many ways, perhaps more than we can articulate here. For certain, we will miss him at our Rolling on the River rides; his beautiful hand written notes and thoughtfully collected news articles, reference material, and literature; and his charming and ever-warm smile at lunch gatherings and meetings.

Our thoughts and wishes of strength go out to Michael's family and friends during this time of loss. May we all remember his spirit and dedication to the conservation of the Illinois landscape at every level and emulate this in our own lives. He truly lived what he believed in, and that is something to aspire to.

Join Prairie Rivers Network!

or Give a Gift Membership!

Looking for the Perfect Gift?

A membership to PRN is the perfect gift for avid hikers, fishermen, paddlers, birders, or anyone who is concerned about the health of Illinois' rivers and streams. A one-year gift membership includes quarterly newsletters, action alerts and the knowledge that you are helping to protect the environment of Illinois. We will send a card announcing your gift. For those giving a gift membership of \$100 or more, we send *Paddling Illinois*, a 153 page book with detailed paddling information for Illinois' rivers and streams.

Yes, I want to help protect our rivers and streams.

- ☐ \$15 Student Membership ☐ \$25 Basic Membership
☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500
☐ Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail (to receive Action Alerts): _____

Thank you for your support!

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

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

Special Donations

St. Matthew Catholic School in Champaign celebrated Earth Day this year with a "Go Green Week" that included environmental projects such as recycling and a paper-free day; environmental educational activities that included guest speakers; and a green shirt day where they collected \$418. Their Service Committee chose Prairie Rivers Network to be the recipient of this money. Thank you and good work!

PRN would also like to thank the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Urbana for donating \$960 from April's Sunday plate collections. The UU Church supports local, national and international organizations working on social justice issues through their Shared Offering Program.

River Defense Fund Appeal

Prairie Rivers Network has established a River Defense Fund to help citizen groups who lack the financial resources needed to protect their local rivers. In a recent case, donations to the River Defense Fund helped landowners pay fees for objecting to the Upper Salt Fork Drainage District's request for increased taxes to perform potentially environmentally destructive drainage maintenance in the Salt Fork River.

If you are interested in making a tax-deductible contribution to help with legal and consulting costs, you can send your donation to Prairie Rivers Network; please include "River Defense Fund" in the memo line.

Time to Re-Enroll at IGA

PRN participates in IGA's Charitable Rebate Program. By shopping at a participating IGA store, your dollars go to support PRN. Fill out the form below and return it to your local IGA store to re-enroll:

IGA HVC Charitable Rebate Member Enrollment

Date: _____ Customer Name: _____

HVC Card Number: 4-100____ - ____ - ____

Organization: Prairie Rivers Network (Champaign, IL) Organization Number: 0550202

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Mark Your Calendar!

Rolling on the River

August 16, 2008

www.RollingRiverRide.org

It's Our River Day

September 20, 2008

www.state.il.us/ltgov/cleanwater/iord.htm

Workshop: "Assessing the Capacity of Illinois' Watersheds"

September 30, 2008

Contact: Kim Erndt at kerndt@prairierivers.org

PRN Annual Dinner

November 21, 2008

PRN Wish List

Now that we are settling into our new offices at 1902 Fox Drive, Suite G, we are in need of office cubicle walls that match our office furniture. For more information or if you would like to donate to our office fund, please contact Vickie at vnudelman@prairierivers.org.

Photo Attributes

Jason Lindsey, www.JasonLindsey.com: pages 1, 7, and border

Prairie Rivers Network: pages 2 and 6

Prairie Rivers Network is a member of Earth Share of Illinois. If you participate in a workplace giving campaign, look for ESI and you can designate PRN to receive your contributions.

