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# Proposed water sale not in public interest

As an avid kayaker, I have watched the proceedings about the coal company coming into Vermilion and Champaign Counties and asking for 500,000 gallons of water from the Salt Fork River.

When kayaking the Salt Fork, I can see families of geese along the shore. There is a blue heron rookery on one stretch of the river. On hot summer days, I can find people just sitting in lawn chairs in the middle of the river while their kids play along the shore. This can only happen when there is good water. A lot of this could disappear if the coal mine consumes more and more water.

When the subject of selling water to the coal mine came up, Champaign County residents were the only ones who could vote on it, even though it could affect Vermilion County and others downstream.

My home of Oakwood can hardly keep within the environmental standards for drinking water. How will it be able to remove all the other contaminants?

Will we have to wait until there are health issues before this is looked into? Do we trust our representatives in Springfield to protect us? These are the same people who bankrupted Illinois.

Vermilion County is no stranger to coal mines. It is still doing land reclamation from existing mines from 20 years ago, and we all know who is footing that bill — the taxpayers.

If readers agree with me, they should tell the trustees of the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District they oppose selling water to Sunrise Coal/Hallador Energy because the Salt Fork River is a vital source of drinking water, habitat and recreation.

TIM CUNNINGHAM

Oakwood

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