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E-News for July 19, 2013

TAKE ACTION: Protect our water from power plant pollution!

The 1972 Clean Water Act set a national goal to eliminate all water pollution by 1985. We're 28 years past Congress' deadline and it is time to end the power plant industry's unlimited permit to pollute. Power plants are the biggest sources of water pollution in the country.

Every year, power plants dump billions of pounds of toxic metals and other harmful chemicals into lakes, rivers, and streams. Despite the extent of this pollution problem, the majority of coal plants currently have NO LIMITS on the amount of toxic metals they are allowed to dump in our water.

You can help protect our water in **two ways**:

1) The EPA is seeking public comments on **new power plant water pollution standards**. Please **demand the strongest possible rule to protect our water** before the comment deadline of August 6, 2013.

****[Click here to send your comments directly to the EPA!](#)****

2) There are three public hearings where you can speak out for our rivers and streams. Click on the links for more details about each hearing.

- [Midwest Generation Waukegan Generation Station](#) (pollutes Lake Michigan) on **July 31, 2013 at 6:30 pm, Waukegan, IL**
- [Dynergy Midwest Generation Vermilion Power Station](#) (pollutes the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River) on **August 6, 2013 at 6pm, Oakwood, IL**
- [Ameren ED-Edwards Power Station](#) (pollutes the Illinois River) on **August 7, 2013 at 6pm, Pekin, IL**

Pink Heelsplitter, Mapleleaf, Scaleshell--OH MY!

Good news for the Illinois River—a recent unusual survey of mussels found 23 different species, including a rare, federally-endangered species—the [scaleshell](#). Just 50 years ago, this part of the river was a complete dead zone—no mussels at all. Mussels are one indicator that water quality of a river is improving. View a wide variety of [beautiful Illinois mussels](#) from the Illinois State Museum collection. Read more about the survey and findings in the [Environmental Almanac](#) by Prairie Rivers Network member Rob Kanter.

Call for Nominations—2013 River Steward Award

Do you know a volunteer who is working hard to protect the state's rivers and streams? [Please nominate them](#) for Prairie Rivers Network's River Steward Award! Nominations are due by August 26, 2013. The winner will be announced at our Annual Dinner on October 11th in Champaign. Save the Date!

Gulf Dead Zone predicted to be largest ever

Scientists predict the [Gulf of Mexico Dead Zone might be as large as New Jersey](#) this year. This oxygen-deprived zone happens because of eutrophication, which is caused by too many nutrients from fertilizer and waste (human & livestock) in the water.

Click on the video to learn more about eutrophication. Prairie Rivers Network and partners are working to reduce the Gulf Dead Zone by creating policies that require better fertilizer and waste management.



Rantoul Foods Sludge Update

In a [June webpost](#), we reported our concerns about a hog slaughterhouse, Rantoul Foods, that has been stockpiling sludge in nearby agricultural fields. Neighbors concerned about odor and water pollution alerted us to this issue. Since our webpost, we have learned that Illinois EPA is modifying Rantoul Foods' permit to land apply sludge. We will keep you informed as we learn more.

PRN in the News

- [Georgetown OKs water sale to coal mine quickly](#) (News Gazette, June 19, 2013)
- [Subsidizing coal costs Illinois budget \\$20 million](#) (Illinois Times, July 3, 2013)**

****[Read the full report on the impact of coal on the Illinois state budget here](#)****

**SAVE THE DATE:
Prairie Rivers Network Annual Dinner
Oct. 11, 2013**

Other upcoming river events:

- [Clean Lakes Festival](#) in Madison, WI on July 27, 2013
- [Sojourn in Nature--A Women's Retreat](#) (sponsored by IL Audubon Society) July 30-31
- [RiverNetwork National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration](#) July 29-August 2
- [Original Asian Carp Redneck Fishing Tournament](#) August 2-3

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