

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



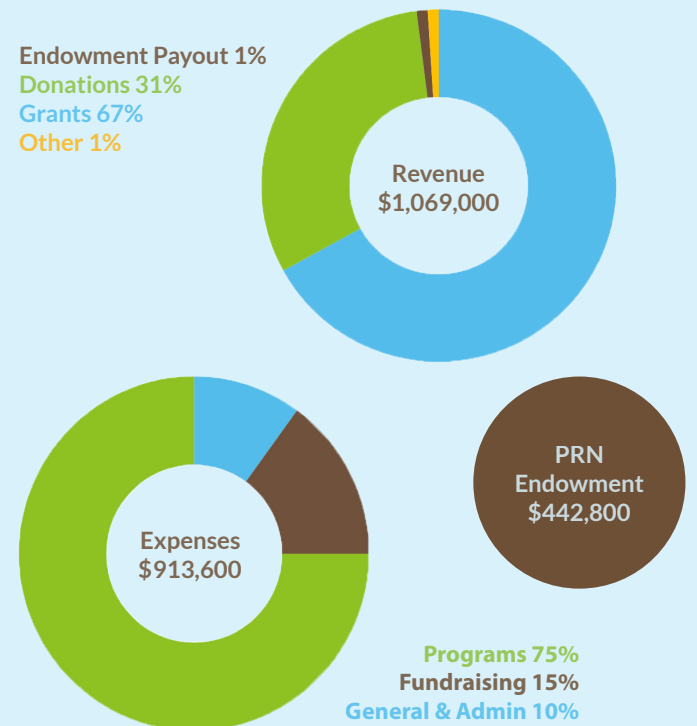
## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE MAGGIE BRUNS

Just as our rivers connect communities across Illinois and beyond, Prairie Rivers Network works to connect and activate people to protect water, heal land, and inspire change. Our power is in our rich network of engaged members, scientists, farmers, landowners, small business owners, community leaders and policy makers. As a trusted voice throughout the state and

with your support, we work to engage a diverse cross section of communities – including those who have historically been left out of the process – to ensure everyone has access to the tools needed to make lasting change. From our fight against pesticides to the struggle of keeping pollution from entering our rivers, every bit of the work we do would be less successful if not for your support, actions, and inspiration.

Looking to the future, our network will work to build power and understanding of nature-based solutions, encourage landowners and farmers to improve the environmental health of their lands, and push the needle wherever possible in the fight for a healthy, livable Illinois. There's no doubt about it, Illinois' rivers, wildlife, and communities are better off because of you. As the new Executive Director, I have the privilege of showcasing our incredible staff's accomplishments over the last year and presenting a vision of our future work together. I'm honored to join forces with members like you, along with Prairie Rivers Network's dedicated staff and Board of Directors to make lasting change in communities across Illinois. Thank you for investing your time, resources, and trust in Prairie Rivers Network.

## 2022 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT



This financial snapshot shows our 2022 operating revenue and expenses plus the current value of our endowment at the end of 2022. Our financial statements are audited each year by an independent certified accountant and are available along with our Federal 990 at [prairierivers.org](http://prairierivers.org).

## 2022: A YEAR OF OPPORTUNITY

2022 gave us the chance to reflect on our work and how we can best affect change in Illinois. It opened opportunities for staff to get their hands dirty, helping shape policy that will steer the future of Illinois for years to come. From the implementation of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) to the Illinois State Water Plan and beyond, what we accomplished in 2022 was a result of you, our members. Thanks to your actions, donations, and support, we accomplished so much! Thank you!



### SAVING ILLINOIS' WILD AND CULTIVATED LANDSCAPES

Trees are critical in the fight against climate change. They provide wildlife habitat, shade to cool our communities, and help clean and filter water. But herbicide drift is damaging trees and the livelihoods of specialty growers all across Illinois. We understand this threat and have been sounding the alarm, which is why PRN has emerged as a state and national leader in the effort to prevent injuries to trees, plants, and specialty crops from drifting herbicides.

Through our Tree and Plant Health Monitoring Program, we have recorded the devastating effects of herbicide drift, and your support has allowed us to expand the program to include more of Illinois. We cannot thank all of our dedicated volunteers enough for their countless hours of painstakingly sampling and documenting the extent of the problem and providing the much needed evidence to successfully convince policy makers to take action before it is too late. Together, we can grow this program and strengthen the laws that govern pesticides and pass strong regulations on the use of volatile herbicides.

### BUILDING ILLINOIS' JUST ENERGY FUTURE

There's no way of hiding it, Illinois remains one of the biggest coal producers in the country. And even as Illinois moves away from dirty energy sources like coal and gas, PRN knows that we cannot leave the communities that historically relied on fossil fuel production for jobs and tax revenues behind as we transition to cleaner sources of energy to curb the impacts of a warming climate. Coal communities in Illinois deserve to thrive in the new clean energy economy that we are building together. The historic Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) and federal laws like the bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act have ushered in the resources needed for these communities to transition away from the reliance on fossil fuels. Your actions to pass this critical legislation and generous contributions has helped us turn this page.



U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland with PRN's Amanda Pankau

Prairie Rivers Network has invested years of deep organizing – building our network in rural coal communities across Illinois – for this very moment. As trusted voices and leaders, our team is working hand-in-hand with community leaders and mayors to ensure coal communities are not left behind and making sure their visions for the future are realized through the historic funding opportunities to revitalize and repower these communities in the clean energy economy.



### PROTECTING RIVERS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

We love our rivers and all the organisms and wildlife that rely on them. Coal mining, abandoned mine lands, and misuse of hazardous chemicals can devastate our waterways. That's why we work to stop polluters at the source, hold them accountable, and push for policy change to bring more safeguards to our water and our communities.

In 2022, we joined a lawsuit against Sugar Camp Energy, LLC for violating the Clean Water Act when they dumped 46,000 gallons of firefighting foam, including at least 660 gallons of concentrated PFAS or "forever chemicals," deep into an underground coal mine. When we caught wind of Pond Creek mine's plans to dump chloride-laden water into the Big Muddy River, we appealed the Illinois EPA's permitting decision to stop these harmful contaminants from threatening the Big Muddy River. And because of hundreds of PRN members calling on legislators in Washington to pass the STREAM Act, we were able to secure millions of dollars in federal funds for long-term management of acid mine drainage on abandoned mine lands. The public has a right to healthy, undamaged water systems, and your support helps protect communities across Illinois and hold polluters accountable.



PROTECT WATER.  
HEAL LAND.  
INSPIRE CHANGE.





prairieriversnetwork

1605 South State Street, Suite 1  
Champaign, IL 61820-7231

prairierivers.org  
217.344.2371

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Champaign, IL  
Permit No. 858

# TOGETHER AGAIN IN 2022!

In 2022, we had big wins and opportunities to protect water, heal land, and inspire change across Illinois. We are happy you were there with us every step of the way! Thank you for your continued support!



PRN staff from left to right: Kim, Jeff, Andrew, Sarah, Amanda, Vickie, and Robert. (Maggie not pictured.)

## 2023: THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

We recognize that 2022 brought a lot of transition for our organization. We are grateful for your continued support through this period and want to underscore that Prairie Rivers Network is poised for growth. We are determined to meet this moment in a way that both science and justice demand of us all. Never in our 56-year history have we held such an enormous opportunity to make systemic change in our state and to help lead the country forward on this path. We could not do this work without your help.

In 2023 we are going to keep building on these successes even as we expand our existing programs into new communities and develop new programs to address the challenges of tomorrow. With your support, we will demand local leaders incorporate **nature-based solutions** to address the climate crisis. We will **ring the alarm** on the ever growing problem of agricultural and chemical pollution threatening our lands, food systems, and waterways. We will hold Illinois to its promise of implementing the recently revised State Water Plan. We will continue developing relationships with rural coal communities as they seek ways to transition to a renewable future and address land reclamation from shuttered power plants and mines. We will build opportunities for people to enjoy our wild places and push for more corridors for wildlife to migrate north as temperatures continue to rise. We will work to **bring biodiversity back** to Illinois. **And we will always fight to protect our rivers that connect us all together.**

Illinois holds the opportunity to show the country and the world how to move forward. Thank you for being a part of this powerful network. Together, with members like you, we will impact the future for the better.

## WE COULD NOT DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

We were able to accomplish so much in 2022 because of you: our members. Your investment in our organization fuels our work and inspires us every day. You keep us centered on what's important, the rivers that connect our communities and our livelihoods. You put the "network" in Prairie Rivers Network. Together, we can protect water, heal land, and inspire change across Illinois. Thank you for being a member of PRN!



Headwaters  
Circle  
\$5,000+



River  
Champions  
\$2,500-\$4,999



River  
Protectors  
\$1,000-\$2,499



River  
Stewards  
\$500-\$999



River  
Guardians  
\$250-\$499



River  
Defenders  
\$100-\$249



Members  
\$1-\$99

