

A photograph of a river with white water rapids, showing turbulent water flowing over rocks. The water is a mix of white and blue, with some green vegetation visible in the background.

*TOOLS FOR  
PROTECTING YOUR RIVER*



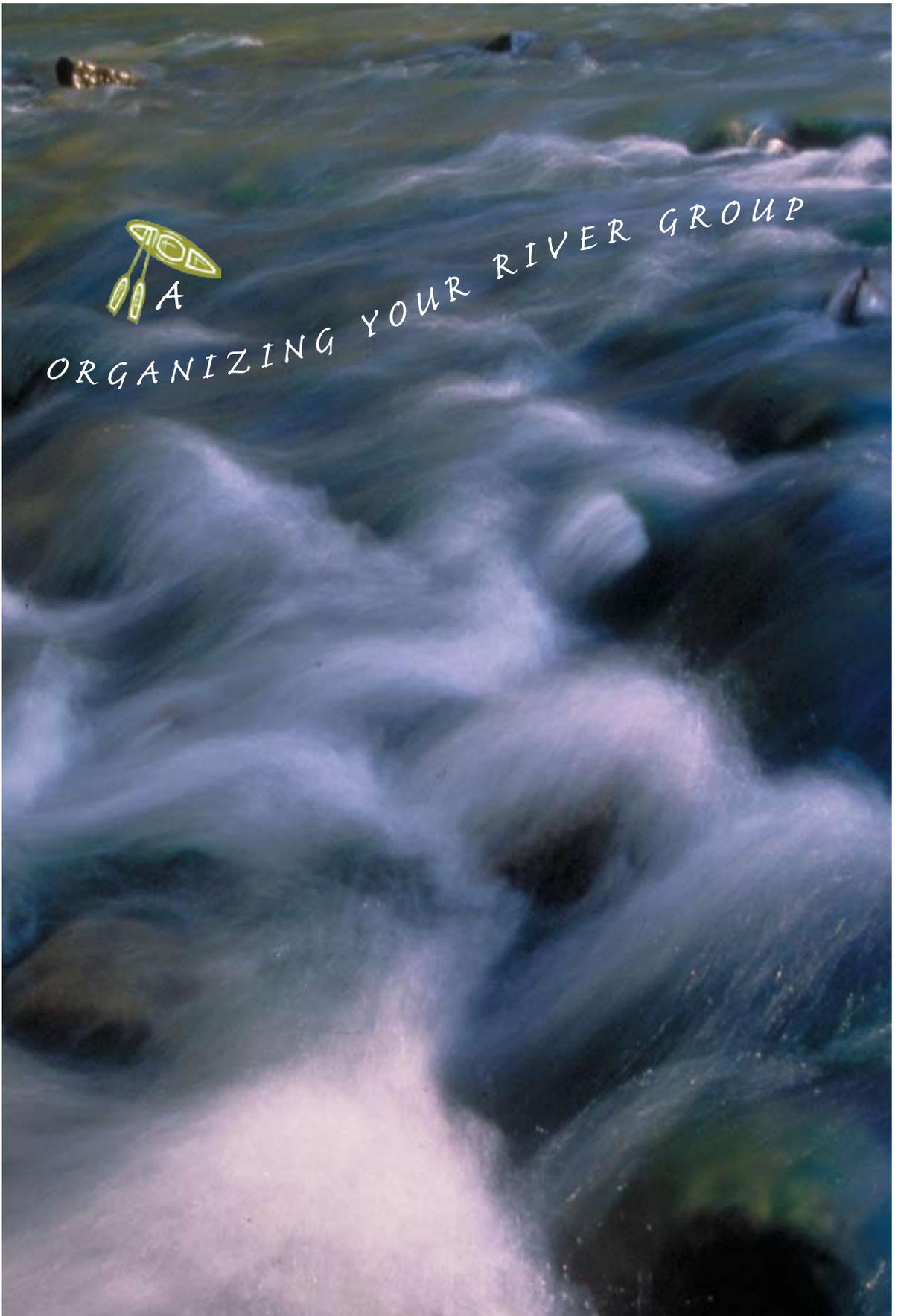
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A ORGANIZING YOUR RIVER GROUP



## A1 Why Organize a River Group?

There are many reasons to organize a river group. Some citizens organize to protect their stream from an imminent threat—a dam, dredging, or clear-cutting of trees along its corridor, for example. Others organize because they perceive a future threat to their stream or the creatures who make their homes in it. Perhaps they know that in the next few years a municipality, to accommodate growing subdivisions, will need to increase the amount of waste water it dumps into the stream. Still others organize because they recognize that the stream and the lands through which it flows should be cleaned up and made safer and more appealing for community members to visit. Others organize to remove an unneeded or unsafe dam, to provide more public access for fisherman or boaters, or to ensure the safety of drinking water drawn from the stream.



Whatever their reasons, citizens who organize on behalf their hometown stream—or its entire watershed—take on important, rewarding work that will impact the stream and their community for years to come.

We congratulate you for beginning this important work. We hope this handbook will help you meet the challenge.

### How Do We Begin?

It doesn't take a large group to form a river conservation organization. Contact a few friends, neighbors, or co-workers who share your interest in or concerns about the river and its future. Set a time to meet and discuss those issues. Decide on a few outcomes for the meeting.

1. Define the issue(s) that you want to focus on
2. State goals you'd like to meet in relation to the issue(s)
3. Begin discussing steps that might lead you to that goal
4. Ask one or two of the people present to act as temporary leaders of the group
5. Discuss a strategy for involving more people
6. Set a date for your next meeting



## A2 *What Makes Meetings Work?*

Ask yourself these questions:

1. Did you join a river conservation group so that you can go to meetings?
2. Are there other demands that are competing for your volunteer time?

Can you see where this is going? Holding non-productive meetings is a momentum killer. You can lose a lot of good volunteers if you hold a series of poorly run meetings.

### **Look for ways to build momentum**

Your organization always should be building momentum. In the early life of the group, or for a specific campaign, this is an especially critical commodity. In the words of organizing sage Saul Alinsky, “Organizations need action as an individual needs oxygen.”

Leaders need to do their homework prior to a meeting to make sure they don’t suck the oxygen out of the organization!

You should have an agenda prepared before the meeting, so that the group can see the progression of the meeting, and help keep the meeting on task and germane to the topic being discussed.

As part of the preparation, think about your objectives for the meeting: what do you want to accomplish and how long will it take to meet these objectives. Note the amount of time allotted to each topic and appoint someone to be keep time and gently, but firmly, remind the leader to move things along. If your meetings are large affairs involving a number of people, you may want to follow Robert’s



Rules of Order to keep agenda items moving along. Be sure that everyone involved in the meeting is aware of the ground rules and has access to information relevant before your meetings.

Remember what your volunteer members are giving up to be at the meeting. Try to accomplish meaningful tasks so members will feel fulfilled and want to continue to be involved in work of the organization. It is helpful to have concrete actions for members to take, such as signing postcards or writing letters to the editor as the last item of a meeting's agenda.

### Having Fun

From what we have mentioned so far, it may seem like fun is out of the question at meetings. Not so! Protecting your river should be fun. To have fun at meetings, be focused, accomplish some meaningful business, so that you have time for an activity. Also plan events, outings, get-togethers that are fun, and don't need an agenda. Cookouts, canoe trips, other outings can help build organizations. One watershed group had the excellent idea of having an educational and fun outing every couple of months in place of their monthly meeting.

If you're able to master creating an agenda and facilitating a meeting that is meaningful, short, and fun, you will have no problem building momentum and will be on your way to building a successful organization.





Most river conservation groups are volunteer organizations with no paid staff to do the work of the organization. While a lucky few progress to hiring staff, none can exist or accomplish goals without dedicated volunteers.

Designing a good volunteer program is critical to realizing the vision of your river conservation organization. The volunteer program is also a tool for identifying future leaders for the organization, including committee chairs and board members. Volunteers are also most likely to donate money, and they should be cultivated, as circumstances permit, as potential donors.

### **The Answer To Your Problems: Find Good Volunteers**

Many in watershed groups begin to feel “burnout” or question their effectiveness. Potential burnout victims may repeatedly say, “If I don’t get it done, who will?” The solution is to recruit volunteers to help do the work of the organization. To bring strength to your organizations and the river conservation movement, you need more PEOPLE—in other words, you need to go out and ask for help!

### **Why Do People Volunteer?**

There are as many answers to that question as there are people, but generally volunteers want to feel needed and that their work is important. Self-interest also motivates volunteers—they are altruistic for sure, but they also are interested in fulfilling personal goals or working on problems in places where they have a personal connection (for example, anglers or paddlers who will work for their favorite streams).

Prairie Rivers surveys its volunteers as they begin volunteering as a way to open discussion of their expectations and the expectations of staff. Volunteers are asked to rank in priority eleven value statements about why they volunteer. The statements most frequently in the top five are, in order of occurrence:

1. An opportunity for personal and professional growth
2. Involvement in an issue important to me
3. Development of new skills
4. A chance to make decisions about factors that affect me and the environment
5. A challenging task

Other statements on the survey include values that portray needs of community, personal relationships, recognition, compassionate supervision, and working con-

ditions. Understanding your volunteers' needs will help develop a long term relationship that will benefit everyone and help further the goal of river conservation.

To develop a long-term relationship with your volunteers, you will need to help them grow into their job with your organization. The Institute for Conservation Leadership has developed a "Leadership Mountain" model for volunteer recruitment. Starting at the bottom, members and public are asked merely to get involved. Then they are asked to increase their participation, their responsibility, their commitment. Each step up the mountain provides opportunity for their personal growth and new service and leadership within the organization.



As a leader in your organization, you should help people climb this mountain—to go from by-standers to strong advocates for rivers and streams. This should involve a conscious effort to incrementally increase up the involvement of those with interest and talent, but more on that later.

### **Ask? Not Yet! You Need To Prepare Before You Ask!**

Before you ask anyone to help by being a volunteer, you need to design activities for one-time volunteers and entry level volunteers. These activities should be short-term and well defined. Write task descriptions that include a program-related goal that is interesting, can be repeated frequently, and will not cause enormous headaches if the volunteer fails to show up on a given day. For example, Prairie Rivers Network has an entry level position for media research volunteers. They come in for an hour or two a week to search the web for news reports involving rivers or streams, but it's not a problem if someone misses a week.

Decide who trains and supervises the volunteer. Be prepared to discuss any barriers to their volunteering, such as transportation, child care, and daily work schedules.

For more advanced volunteers, you should design activities that involve longer-term commitments and are program related. These will require some basic training, supervision, and feedback from leadership or staff. Activities should be interesting, rewarding, and utilize the skills and interests of the volunteers. As you match advanced volunteers to jobs, you should also continue to assess entry-level volunteers and encourage their growth so that they will continue to come back. Your ultimate goal is to encourage the development of group leaders and/or board members that take on much more responsibility and have a commitment to the organization's goals.

*Have an entry level program for new people. Do not recruit volunteers to attend meetings. Get them involved in activities!*

### **Some Other Things To Think About**

How do we inform volunteers about potential involvement in our organization?

Prairie Rivers Network has developed a volunteer task form that includes the following information to help volunteers do their assigned tasks:

- 💧 Task title
- 💧 Deadline
- 💧 Leader requesting work/person who can help with questions
- 💧 Background or big picture as to why the task is important to the organization
- 💧 Explain record-keeping requirements for telephone calls, postage usage, etc.
- 💧 Provide directions, usually in a step by step manner, clearly written.
- 💧 Provide an example if applicable to the task.

### **Asking People for Help**

Asking for new volunteers or members should be a measurable goal in everything your organization does. *So if your group decides to take on an issue, part of your strategy should include asking for new volunteers.* If you are not consciously thinking of how to expand your volunteer base, you are missing an important opportunity to grow your organization.

The outreach element in an organization's plan or a separate campaign should create activities that capture the new or potential volunteers' attention, their contact information, and introduce them to fulfilling volunteer work for rivers and streams.

Credibility and personal relationships are important as you ask for help: it's best to have someone you know and trust ask you for help—but even if people don't have much of a personal relationship with you, they will appreciate being asked for help. With a cold ask you will need to work on building that relationship and credibility, and you may find a new star performer for the group.

### **The Asking Cycle: Ask, Inform, Involve, Thank, and Ask Again**

How do we turn by-standers into river advocates? You use a cycle of repetition. *Ask, inform, involve, thank, and ask again.*

Of course, the goal is to complete the work at hand, however, creating river conservation leaders for tomorrow and building effective, sustainable organizations should be an ever-present part of your goal, as mentioned above in the section on developing a long term relationship. Leaders must be created—forged by fire—by stepping them up from their first “ask.”



*"If you want to move people, it has to be toward a vision that's positive for them, that taps important values, that gets them something they desire, and it has to be presented in a compelling way that they feel inspired to follow."*

*—Martin Luther King*

*How do you effectively ask someone for help?*

A simple formula will help design your asking message:

- 💧 Personal introduction
- 💧 Problem introduction
- 💧 Stating the solution
- 💧 The request for help

You should prepare before the ask by writing down and perhaps practicing what you will say. The problem introduction should be addressed in an engaging way that will encompass the potential volunteer's self interest. How you define the problem is sometimes referred to as “cutting the issue.” The solution too, will need to be well thought out. *What action are you asking them to help with? Will it make a difference?* Then, finally, get a firm commitment from the potential volunteer, by asking, “Will you help? Can I see you there?” “Would you like to come out and help? We'd love to have your help and we always have fun.”

Be enthusiastic! It's contagious, and you shouldn't feel ashamed about the great work you are doing for your river.

Frame a problem statement in a way that appeals to the greatest number of people. This will help you gain volunteers, other supporters, and favorable public opinion. For example, if you are working to remove a low-head dam on a river, you should frame the issue broadly by saying that the removal will improve water quality (drinking water preferably if it's relevant) and fishing and other recreational opportunities. If you framed the issue as one that impacts endangered species in that reach of stream you would not engage as many people however noble the issue.

### Keeping Track of Volunteers

The key to building good volunteer programs is to keep records on each potential volunteer, their interests and contact information, what you have asked them to do, what they have delivered on, and so on. Develop a database for your volunteer program, track volunteers' involvement and development, and use this information to develop your volunteers into conservation leaders. There are many ways to track volunteers, but pick one and stick to it. The payoff will be scores of people working together in your organization, furthering the mission of river conservation.

### Things To Avoid

Here are some of the don'ts to volunteer management:

- 💧 Don't give open ended assignments—define the beginning and end of the task or responsibility.
- 💧 Don't skimp on information—volunteers need to know how their donation of time and effort will help.
- 💧 Don't forget to define the task well—if there is a misunderstanding you may lose the volunteer if they didn't feel their time was spent on something valuable.
- 💧 In the beginning, don't overwhelm the volunteer or take them outside their comfort zone. They will grow from repeated asks.
- 💧 Don't rush the relationship building and throw them immediately into the task—Some volunteers are looking for social interaction. Listen to the volunteer's goals and needs, and make them feel welcome in your organization.
- 💧 Don't forget to give the volunteer authentic, honest, and constructive feedback.

### Where Do You Find Them?

You can find volunteers in many places, and you should try many, if not all of these:

- 💧 Have a booth at fairs or other public events;
- 💧 E-mail requests for help, listserv calls to action, and forum message boards (sometimes from other affiliated organizations);
- 💧 Public service announcements or media interviews (what's going on in the community segments);
- 💧 Newsletters, brochures, leaflets, church bulletins, and other printed materials;
- 💧 Organizations such as volunteer centers, schools, community service programs, civic and service organizations, college departments, fraternities and sororities, etc.;
- 💧 Website announcements, job descriptions, and upcoming events; and,
- 💧 By word of mouth.

### Additional Resources

Organizing for Social Change, Midwest Academy Manual for Activists:  
[www.midwestacademy.com](http://www.midwestacademy.com)

Grassroots Organizing Training Manual, Sierra Club:  
[www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)

Institute for Conservation Leadership:  
[www.icl.org](http://www.icl.org)





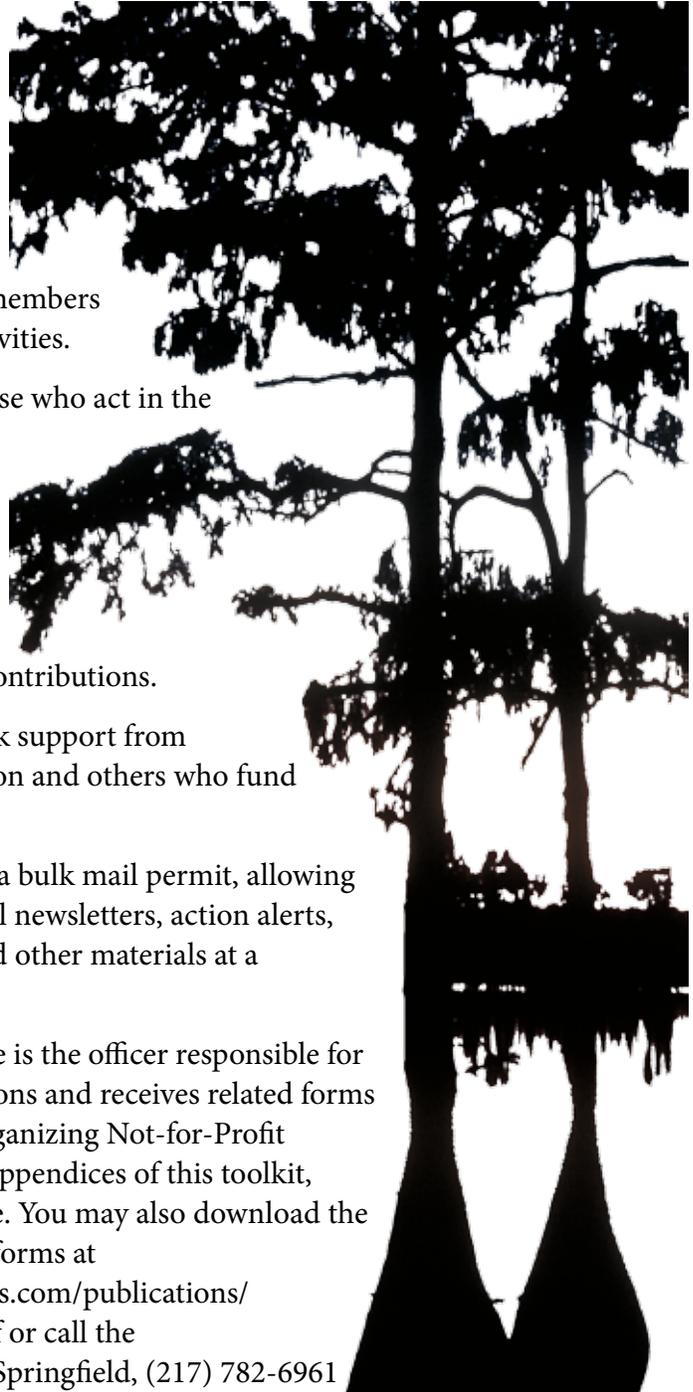
## A4 *Should We Incorporate and Apply for Tax Exempt Status?*

Although your river group can exist and accomplish a great deal without incorporating or gaining not-for-profit, tax exempt status, securing these designations offers certain advantages and protections. Your organization must be incorporated before you can apply for tax exempt status.

### **Advantages of becoming a Not for Profit:**

- Incorporating your organization gives it “official” status.
- Your name is registered with the state and that fact gives credibility to your group as you seek members and undertake other activities.
- Limits the liability of those who act in the name of your group.
- Frees your organization from paying taxes.
- Enables those who donate to you to claim a tax deduction for their contributions.
- Increase eligibility to seek support from philanthropic organization and others who fund not-for-profit groups.
- Enables you to apply for a bulk mail permit, allowing your organization to mail newsletters, action alerts, membership appeals, and other materials at a discounted rate.

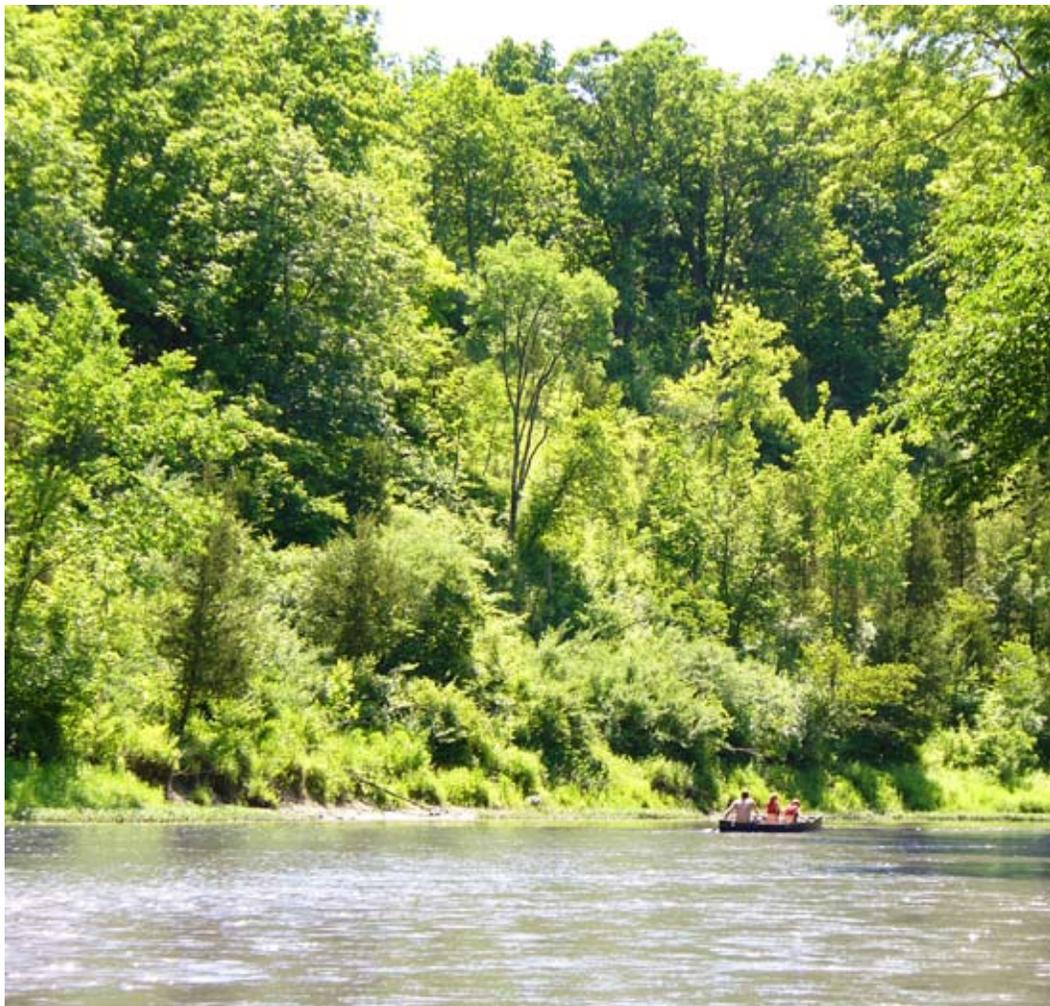
The Illinois Secretary of State is the officer responsible for registering Illinois corporations and receives related forms and reports. A Guide for Organizing Not-for-Profit Corporations, found in the appendices of this toolkit, describes how to incorporate. You may also download the publication and application forms at [http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf\\_publications/c16524.pdf](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/c16524.pdf) or call the Illinois Secretary of State in Springfield, (217) 782-6961

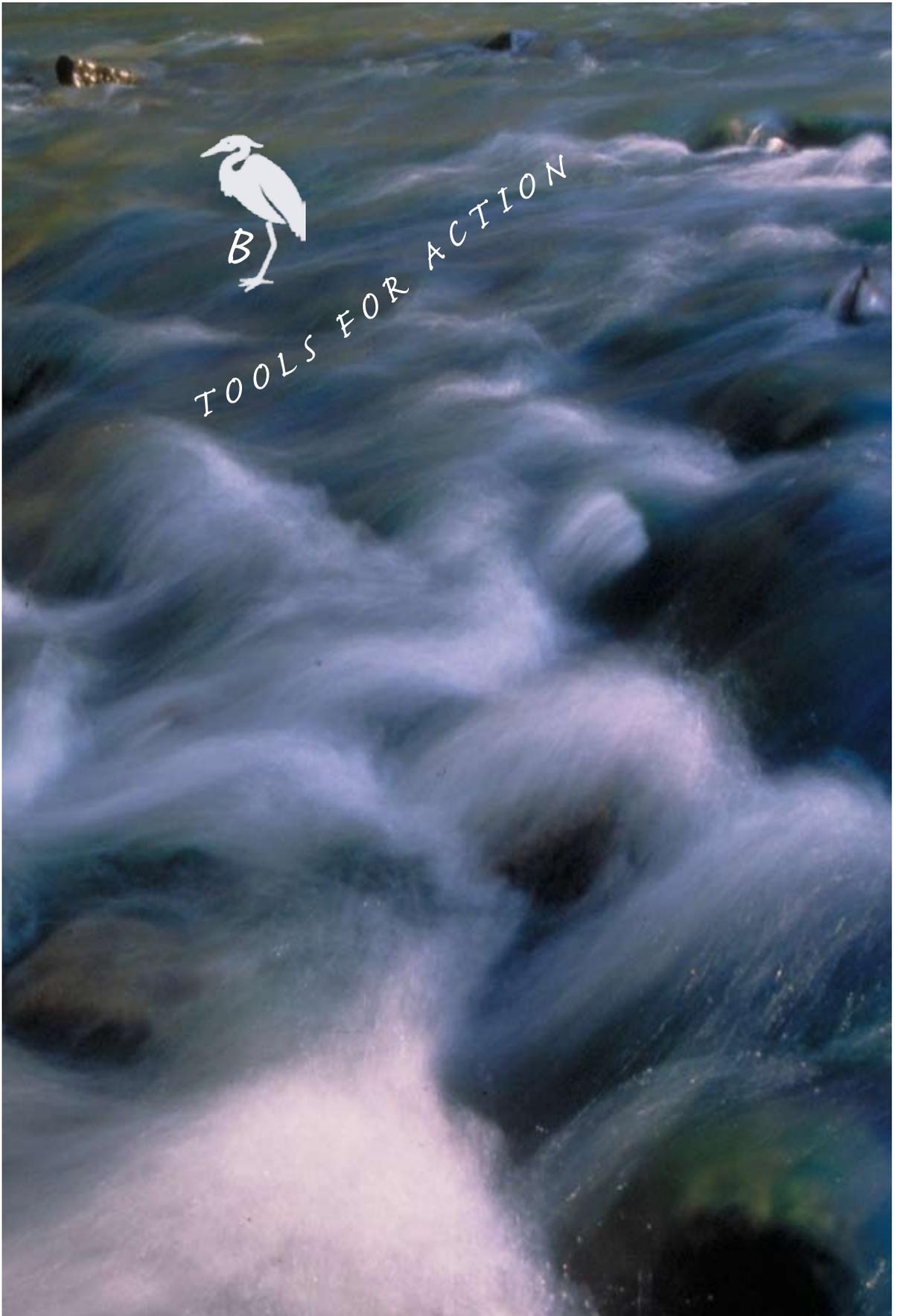


in Chicago (312) 793-3380 for information. Internal Revenue Service Publication 557, Tax Exempt Status for Your Organization, available at [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p557.pdf) provides information on requirements and procedures for newly-forming tax-exempt groups. Other very useful information concerning exemption requirements is available at [www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=96099,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0,,id=96099,00.html).

As you decide whether to incorporate and secure tax exempt status, keep in mind that doing so will involve some costs and obligate you to comply with certain regulations, including adopting a statement of purpose and By-law; forming a board of directors; keeping financial records; and filing various reports on an annual basis. In addition, any change to the name of your group or change in purpose will require that your Articles of Incorporation be amended and the name change reported to the IRS. These and other requirements are described in the Guide and IRS publications listed above.

If you choose to incorporate and seek tax exempt status, we recommend that you consult a qualified, local attorney for advice and assistance.







## *Develop and Share Your Stream's Story*

Congratulations! You have organized a group interested in protecting your local river or stream. This is a big accomplishment. Now you are eager to share your passions for and concerns about your local stream with others, but how do you do it?

One of the biggest obstacles to river conservation in Illinois, is that few people have a personal connection to their local streams or know first-hand of their beauty and value. By sharing your stream's story with people in your community you can help build that public awareness and encourage people to learn more.

### **Step 1. Develop Your Story**

The goal of your story is to demonstrate the value of your stream in your community. The most compelling story will be one that draws the connections between a clean and healthy stream and issues that the people care about like drinking water, recreational uses such as fishing, and wildlife habitat. A 2003 poll conducted by the Illinois Natural History Survey found that water quality is a very important issue among Illinois residents; rated as the issue of highest importance out of a list of ten community issues by almost 60% of the citizens polled. 66% also agreed that more protection should be given to wildlife habitat along streams. With that in mind, your well presented story can motivate people and influence local opinions and decisions that might affect the health of your stream, water quality, and the fish and wildlife that live there.

#### Things Your Story Could Include

- ◆ Location of your stream
- ◆ Its unique features and natural resources
- ◆ Benefits it provides to your community (i.e., recreation, drinking water, wildlife habitat)
- ◆ Known threats to your streams
- ◆ What people can do to help protect it
- ◆ Other important information you wish to share

Much of this information will already be available if you have conducted a watershed assessment (page B2.1). If you have not done an assessment, you can still develop the information you need to tell your story. Check the list of helpful

websites found in the watershed assessment section of the manual to develop this information.

## Step 2. Forums for Sharing Your Story

Now that you have identified the important information about your stream, you are ready to share it with others. How do you do it?

Your next step should be identifying different interest groups who might share your interests such as fishermen, bird watchers, boaters, or even homeowners who live near your stream. Once you have brainstormed such a list, think about different public gatherings where you might be able to meet these people. Finally, think about other strategies for reaching your audience. You can consider whether slide shows to other groups in the community will work, or should you canvass nearby neighborhoods with brochures and educational leaflets, knocking on doors and talking to residents.

### Possible Strategies for Sharing Your Story

- Have a table at local community fairs or festivals to distribute information.
- Ask if you can attend meetings of local groups or clubs and give a presentation.
- Write letters to the editor of your local paper or Opinion Editorials when decisions that could benefit or impact your local stream are in the news (see the Resources section of this manual for samples of both). Maintain a list of reporters and other media people that you talk with over time.
- Hold a press conference or distribute a press release if something very important and newsworthy is happening that could benefit or impact your stream.

For more information on using the media to tell your story, see "Making the News: A Guide for Nonprofits and Activists," by Jason Salzman

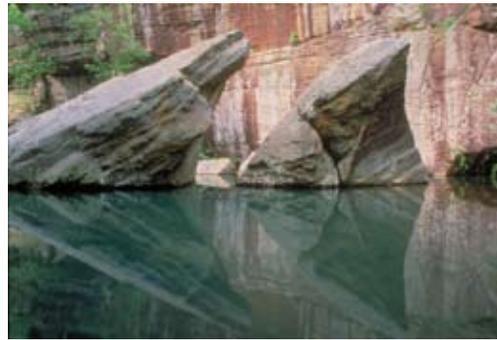
## Step 3. Tools for Sharing Your Story

There are many possible tools you may want to employ to share your story. These are just a few you may want to consider.

### *Slide Shows or Powerpoint presentations – Providing a visual connection to your stream*

Slide shows or powerpoint presentations are excellent tools for increasing awareness about your local stream and a great way to get volunteers involved in the organization. Beautiful photos, pictures of wildlife, and explanations about the

connections between people, wildlife, and river health will go a long way. Ask your friends, photographers, and volunteers to spend time throughout the seasons of the year snapping photos of your watershed, stream, and wildlife.



The story you have developed in Step 1 can be enhanced and brought alive with the use of visual images in a slide show.

An upbeat, positive messages about the values of your stream can excite your audience and encourage them to want to know more. A discussion of threats should always be accompanied by specific steps individuals can take to address those threats, thereby providing a positive opportunity for further involvement.

Once you have an outline, you can create a script that accompanies the slides. If you have a number of volunteers who might be giving the presentation, it helps to have a consistent script.

Try to be an energetic educator and an entertainer, and practice, practice, practice! With practice you will be able to project expertise, professionalism, credibility, and warmth.

#### *Brochures – Information about your stream and your organization*

Brochures can be a simple and inexpensive way to introduce people to your stream and your organization. There are many computer programs available that will enable you to develop a simple brochure with photos and text, and its more than likely someone in your organization or that you know will have access to such a program. If you are really fortunate you may have a volunteer who is a graphic design professional who can develop professional looking materials.

Once you have developed your brochure, you may want to approach a local print shop and ask them to add your job to the end one of their paid print runs. If they can put you at the end of a run with leftover inks, paper, or work you into the margins of the paper for free it may take a while to get your order, but you will save on the cost of good looking, professionally produced materials. As an alternative, consider having your brochure copied initially for a very inexpensive presentation.

In addition to brochures, you may want to consider developing a newsletter, displays, and fact sheets on specific topics. For a more detailed discussion on the development of such materials, visit River Network's online resource library at [www.rivernet.org](http://www.rivernet.org).



## Assess Your Watershed

One of the most critical steps in protecting your stream is finding out what is happening in the watershed. Conducting a watershed assessment will help you identify existing problems in your stream, anticipate future threats, and create opportunities to promote the value of your local stream. It also can be a fun and rewarding activity for the members of your organization. Exhaustive research may not be necessary or feasible for your organization, so do not be overwhelmed by the numerous possibilities identified here. Start collecting information now and consider watershed assessment an ongoing process that grows with your organization.

### Set Goals for Your Assessment

As with most activities, it is useful to spend time thinking about why you want to do it before starting. A little planning will ensure that you focus on collecting the information you need and that your participants are satisfied that the efforts are serving a purpose. Each organization will likely choose some different goals for its watershed assessment, and you are encouraged to be creative and develop your own. A few examples are provided here to get you started.

#### Possible Goals for a Watershed Assessment

1. To understand and document the ecological state of streams and other natural resources of the watershed. (In other words, which areas of the watershed are healthy? Which are polluted? Which areas should be priorities for additional protection?)
2. To identify potential causes of pollution, including very localized impacts.
3. To prepare for effective participation in Clean Water Act programs and other programs designed to protect and restore the watershed.
4. To identify priority areas for a river clean up.
5. To identify the most critical areas for restoration efforts.
6. To identify recreational needs and promote recreational resources of the watershed.
7. To raise local awareness for protecting local streams.
8. To build and strengthen commitment of our organization's membership through an important, fun, eye-opening, and rewarding activity.

## Get Started! Gather Available Information

Just as goals will vary among watershed groups, each organization will include different information in its assessment, based on different interests of the participants. This section offers ideas that you may choose from and add to as you study your watershed. Because there is a lot of information out there and you'll want to involve several members in this activity, you may want to divide these tasks among several teams.



**Get a good topographic map of the watershed.** The *Illinois Atlas & Gazetteer* (DeLorme) is a great starting place for locating the boundaries of your watershed, and it is likely that at least one of your members has a copy in her car. If you'd like more detail, you can buy USGS maps at various scales. These can be found in good map stores, or can be ordered from the USGS online store (<http://rockys25.cr.usgs.gov/>).

**Draw the watershed boundary on the map.** By connecting all of the highest elevations around the streams of your watershed, you can identify all of the land area and potential pollution sources that drain into the streams in your watershed.

**Identify unique natural resources in your watershed.** Several Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources documents, such as Critical Trends Assessment Program (CTAP) reports (<http://www.dnr.state.il.us/orep/ctap2/toc1.htm>), are useful in identifying healthy waters and lands. You can also search the Illinois Natural History Survey collections and databases to find plants and animals that have been collected in your watershed, dating back to the 1800s (<http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cbd/collections/index.html>). The fish, crustacean, insect, and mussel collection databases will allow search queries by stream, and these are extremely useful tools. Talk to local conservationists to learn about other areas of local ecological interest.

**Collect available water quality data.** USEPA's STORET system (online at <http://www.epa.gov/storet/>) is a repository for water quality data. Additional volunteer monitoring data may have been collected through Illinois RiverWatch program. Check the RiverWatch website ([http://www.ngrrec.org/river\\_watch.htm](http://www.ngrrec.org/river_watch.htm)) to find out if volunteer data is available in your watershed.

*Illinois EPA defines "impaired waters" as those waters that do not support healthy fish and macroinvertebrate populations.*

**Identify the impaired waters in your watershed.** Using the state's 303(d) list (online at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/tmdl/303d-list.html>) identify which streams in your watershed have been identified by Illinois EPA as impaired (note causes of impairment and sources). Note that less than 20% of the state's streams are assessed for the purposes of this report. Therefore, it is not a comprehensive list of impairments, but it is a good starting point. Contact Illinois EPA to find out if these streams are scheduled to have "TMDLs" (water quality restoration plans) developed.

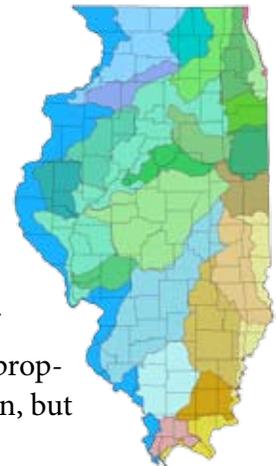
**Identify regulated pollution sources.** Using the permit compliance system (online at [http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/pccs/pccs\\_query.html](http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/pccs/pccs_query.html)), locate all point source discharges. Illinois EPA's Water Quality Mapping Tool (online at <http://maps.epa.state.il.us/website/wqinfo/>) also contains information on pollution sources and identifies the location on a map. Note the type of facility, the pollutants discharged in your watershed, and the amount of pollution discharged. Find out when these permits are due to expire. Review other items in this toolkit to prepare to participate in the permit renewal process.

**Identify towns and counties that are wholly or partially within the watershed.** Note whether these towns are expected to grow significantly in coming years. Find out what local protections these local governments have adopted such as watershed protection ordinances. These could include stream buffer ordinances, erosion and sediment control ordinances, etc.

**Identify pollution violators.** Illinois EPA keeps track of polluters that are violating their permits. [www.epa.gov/region5/water/weca/gncrs.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region5/water/weca/gncrs.htm).

## Explore Your Watershed

In getting to know your watershed, there is no substitute for muddy boots. A lot of information about the health of the streams is not yet documented anywhere except on the land and waters themselves. Bring your watershed map, a notebook, and a camera for a drive/walk/canoe around the watershed. If you have a GPS, bring it along to note precise locations associated with your observations. Be respectful of property owners; obtain permission before crossing private property. Most participants won't need to be reminded to have fun, but encourage them to bring along binoculars, fishing rods, etc.



**Note the physical characteristics of the streams where you can get to them.** Is there a vegetated buffer on either side of the stream? Are the banks eroding? Are there deeper pool areas and shallow riffle areas? Is there a lot of trash? Is the water clear, brown, green? Take photographs of both the good and the bad conditions that you find. These photographs may also be useful in outreach and education efforts, most importantly, slide shows for public audiences.

*Note the adjacent land uses.* What areas of the watershed are urban or suburban? Which areas are agricultural? Are there pasture lands? If so, is there evidence of livestock entering the creeks? Are there a number of landowners planting row crops to the edges of the stream? Do nearby lands have gullies or other evidence of severe erosion? Are there any adjacent industrial or mining developments?

*Identify public areas along streams* (state parks, local parks, forest preserve). Note good wildlife watching areas, fishing spots, canoe launches, and hiking opportunities.

*Begin collecting your own water quality data around the watershed.* Check the RiverWatch website to find out when the macroinvertebrate monitoring training sessions are offered. Contact Prairie Rivers Network if you are interested in collecting water chemistry information through the Illinois Stream Team. See the Illinois Stream Team section of this toolkit for more information about this program.

Review your goals to identify what other information you need to find in order to achieve your mission of protecting your streams. Contact Prairie Rivers Network for assistance or to share suggestions for future watershed assessments.

*Examples of helpful websites:*

IEPA Online Mapping Tool

<http://maps.epa.state.il.us/website/wqinfo/>

USGS online store (maps)

<http://rockys25.cr.usgs.gov/>

CTAP reports

<http://www.dnr.state.il.us/orep/ctap2/toc1.htm>

INHS Collections

<http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cbd/collections/index.html>

STORET system

<http://www.epa.gov/storet/>

RiverWatch - National Great Rivers Research and Education Center

[http://www.ngrrrec.org/river\\_watch/htm](http://www.ngrrrec.org/river_watch/htm)

Illinois 303(d) list

<http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/tmdl/303d-list.html>

Permit Compliance System

[http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/pcs/pcs\\_query.html](http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/pcs/pcs_query.html)





## Organize a River Clean-up

Planning and hosting a local river clean-up is easy when it's done in an organized, timely fashion. Remember that any clean-up is a successful clean-up: if your organization is small, start with a small stretch of the river or a tributary. It may also be easier to start by focusing on a stretch of the river that is in public land, such as a forest preserve or park district. This eliminates the need to get permission from private landowners and allows for possible co-ordination with the public entity. As the clean-up is publicized year after year, the resources and volunteers will grow, allowing you to expand the area.



### Getting Started and Planning

The key to getting started is to plan as far in advance as possible.

*Choose the date:* advanced planning allows for the coordination of services, especially if facilities need to be rented. (9–12 months in advance)

*Meet with co-hosts* (other river groups, civic organization, park district, etc.) if applicable. Delegate responsibilities or establish committees using the categories below. (4–5 months in advance)

*Choose the location and obtain permission* to access the property from the appropriate landowners. (3–4 months in advance) If you are unsure where your efforts are needed, you can inventory the watershed (see section B2) to determine stream segments and property owners who need your help.

*Solicit monetary donations* to support the costs of the clean-up if necessary. (3 months in advance)

### Publicity and Volunteer Recruitment

Volunteer recruitment and publicity are interrelated and a committee or group should be charged with these two tasks. Publicity advertises the event to potential volunteers around the community; promotes community awareness of natural resource issues; and potentially promotes your organization as well.

*Contact volunteer groups in your community.* Examples include local high school key clubs, honor societies, scouting groups, conservation organizations, or church organizations. Ask them not only to be involved in your event, but also to advertise it through their websites and meetings. (2–3 months in advance)

*Create public service announcements* (PSAs) about the event that can be submitted to radio and television stations. Note: Many of these need to be submitted up to 3 months in advance, so prepare announcements early (especially in the Chicagoland area). Each station may have a different policy for submitting a PSA, so be sure to check on each station's requirements. Many are available on the station website, which saves numerous phone calls. *(1-3 months in advance)*

*Create a flyer advertising the event.* Canvass neighborhood businesses asking to post the flyer in windows or on community bulletin boards. *(2 months in advance)*

*Send out announcements* to local scout troops, church youth groups, local paddling clubs, wildlife organizations, etc., to ask them to participate in the clean-up. *(1-2 months in advance)*

*Post the date, time, and location on local community calendars* in newspapers and on TV and radio stations. Many of these are also found on the respective websites. *(1-2 months in advance)*

*Some local media will conduct a short interview* with a representative sponsor of the event. Ask if this is possible when initially contacting them. *(1 month in advance)*

*Create a Media Release* and fax to all local newspapers. Include the day, time, location, sponsors, and perhaps some general information on the river segment selected. Be sure to include your contact information. *(3 weeks in advance)*

## **Sites and Logistics**

Once you have picked a site or a stretch of the river, take steps to ensure that things go smoothly on cleanup day. A committee or group of people delegated to this task will be critical to your success.

### **Land sites along the river**

*Access:* Be sure you have permission from landowners for any private land sites you wish to access with volunteers. Will there be parking at the site for volunteers, or will you need to transport them to and from the site?

*Directions:* Be sure to have signs marking the location of land sites for people who are travelling to the site in their own cars. Directional signs from the check-in point to the various land sites are particularly helpful. (Each volunteer should also be given a map with directions to their site when they check in.)

*Trash disposal:* You will need to arrange for a dumpster on-site or for pick up of trash at the site.

*Supervision:* Each land site should have a group leader who is a member of the host group or committee.



### **River sites on the water**

*Access:* If you are planning to have people in boats collecting trash, you will need to space them along the river at appropriate spots. You will also need to ensure they have access points to put their in and take out their boats. Transportation from these points will need to be coordinated.

*Directions:* Be sure to have directions to put in and take out sites.

*Trash disposal:* In many cases, boaters will simply carry the trash they collect in their boat. Some may wish to tow a john boat or skiff behind their canoe to barge bigger items down the river.

*Supervision:* Each river site should also have a group leader who is a member of the host group. Each group leader should have a way to contact the organizer and first aid in case of an emergency.

### **Necessary Gear**

All volunteers should be advised to wear sturdy shoes and clothes that can get muddy. Other crucial equipment can in many cases be donated or borrowed from local businesses/organizations. *A committee should be in charge with soliciting donations no less than 30 days in advance.*

*Gloves:* Work gloves are a must! Besides trash, shards of glass and other dangerous objects may be encountered, and gloves help protect volunteers. Solicit hardware stores or farm supply stores to donate work gloves for all volunteers.

*Buckets and/or bags for the trash:* Buckets are a more environmentally-friendly and sturdy alternative to plastic garbage bags, although depending on the volume of trash bags may be needed as well. Five gallon buckets with sturdy handles may be available free or at a small charge from paint supply stores or construction companies, as well as from donut shops, fast food chains, and restaurants. Again, request donations before buying them.

*Dumpsters:* All of the trash should be hauled to a central locations, no matter how large the clean-up site. Dumpsters can be rented, dropped off, and picked up at a specific locations by the local waste disposal company. Check for local prices and restrictions, and don't forget to ask the disposal company if the dumpsters can be donated for free. Have one dumpster available for recyclable metals.

*Tires:* Ask a tire store to accept all tires pulled from the stream to ensure they are properly recycled. Arrange for volunteers to deliver the tires to the store.

*Water/refreshments:* Advise volunteers to bring water in reusable containers (disposable plastic bottles are one of the biggest things the volunteers will be picking out of the river). Depending on the time of year, you may also want to provide hot beverages. You may also choose to provide other refreshments at the end of the clean-up.

### **Soliciting Refreshments and Raffle Prizes**

Refreshments, “souvenirs” such as hats or t-shirts, and door prizes or raffle items are ways to bring attention to the event and help draw more volunteers. A large number of local businesses can be solicited for donations. **A committee should solicit for donations no less than 30 days in advance.**

*Many supermarkets and natural food stores have donation request forms* you can fill out requesting specific items for refreshments, or even a gift certificate you can spend on refreshments.

*Be sure to have a range of refreshment items,* especially beverages that are appropriate for the time of year.

*Local specialty stores are good to solicit for donated items* (book stores, outdoor stores, gift certificates from coffee shops, etc.) to be used as door prizes or raffle prizes. They may or may not have donation request forms.

*If a business doesn't have donation request forms,* write a letter to them explaining your event, its value to the community; and the fact that it will involve community volunteers. Explain what you will do with their donation. For many businesses, donations are tax-deductible.

*Arrange to pick up items:* refreshments should be picked up as close to the day of the event as possible. Provide each donor a receipt and keep a copy for your records.

## Safety

*Create a waiver form* that releases all organizing parties from liability for accidents that may occur. On the day of the clean-up, have each participant print their name and address, and sign and date the form. A parent/legal guardian or supervisor must sign for those under the age of 18. An example of a draft liability waiver can be found in the appendices of this tool kit.

*If the clean-up involves canoe/rowboat rentals* from a park district or similar body, make sure the participants adhere to all rules and regulations of the rental organization.

*If volunteers are bringing their own canoes*, make sure they are properly registered to be on Illinois waters.

*All volunteers in boats should wear life jackets!* In most instances, it is advisable not to allow children in canoes. Young volunteers can participate in the bank clean-up and trails along the river.

**REVIEW SAFETY RULES WITH VOLUNTEERS!** Illinois Paddling Council has an extensive safety list for canoes <http://www.illinoispaddling.org//safety.html>.

*All volunteers must be advised not to walk on log jams or other woody debris*, as it is not always stable. A person falling through a log jams is in risk of entrapment and drowning.

## On Clean Up Day

### Coordinating Volunteers

*Have volunteers check in at the start of the event and sign a liability waiver.* Point out your first aid station and review safety precautions.

*Coordinate volunteers in groups and assign them to the specific sites* along the stream that you have identified and mapped out in advance. Estimate the number of people needed at each site.

*Each site should have one “leader” from your host group*, so plan accordingly. The leaders may also be in charge of running garbage back and forth to the dumpster site, if necessary.

*Designate* a specific time the groups should meet back at headquarters.

*Collect buckets, gloves, or any other gear* that was provided by the host groups.

*Celebrate everyone’s accomplishments!* Reward volunteers with donated prizes, souvenirs, and refreshments.

## Follow Up

Though the event is over, a few more tasks should be completed to keep good relations with donors and volunteers for next year's clean-up. These follow-up tasks also will help keep the process running smoothly and help organize your next clean-up.

*Issue a press release* that includes the number of volunteers, the amount and kinds of trash collected, and the miles of river cleaned.

*Write thank you letters* to businesses who donated items or money.

*Write thank you letters to the volunteers!* Names and addresses can be easily compiled from the waiver forms they signed on the day of the event.

*Have a follow-up meeting* with the other organizers, landowners, and anyone else involved in the production side of the clean-up. Decide what went well, and what should be changed for next year. Keep careful notes of the discussion to use in refining your event, making it more successful each year!

### Additional Resources

*Organizing a Successful River Cleanup*, booklet and video from America Outdoors. Visit [www.americaoutdoors.org](http://www.americaoutdoors.org), or call (423) 558-3595.

*The Water Action Volunteers Activity Packet*, information on organizing cleanups. Visit <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav> or call (608) 264-8948.

*Prairie Rivers Network* will advertise your cleanup on our volunteer opportunities calendar. Send your information to [info@prairierivers.org](mailto:info@prairierivers.org) or call (217) 344-2371.





## Hold a BioBlitz

### What is a BioBlitz?

A BioBlitz is a 24-hour rapid assessment of a selected area. It is a race against time; a snapshot of the organisms inhabiting an area. The public is invited to observe and assist scientists in collecting and categorizing specimens.

### Why hold a BioBlitz?

Do you want to obtain a better idea of what types of organisms inhabit your local park? Do you want to introduce the public to a new natural area or promote an established one? Holding a BioBlitz is a great way to get a glimpse of the flora and fauna that inhabit an area, but keep in mind that this is just a “snapshot” of which organisms are in the area. Most people hold BioBlitzes to educate others about the wealth of biodiversity that can be found in their region. They are fun and informative for all ages. They are also a great way to gain a better understanding of how to manage an area.



### What Types Of Events Usually Take Place During a BioBlitz?

The typical BioBlitz features data collection (or events) in the following areas:

1. **Birds:** Have a featured time for bird walks, bird counts as well as bird netting, and tagging. This gives people the chance to learn a lot about birds from experienced birders and ornithologists. Few people rarely have the opportunity to see birds up close.
2. **Herp Assessments:** Collect, count and catalogue, salamanders, turtles, frogs, snakes, ect.
3. **Fish Community Assessments:** Have an experienced biologist electroshock fish for species identification. The fish can be transported to shore in a bucket where volunteers can aide in the identification and species counts.
4. **Aquatic Macroinvertebrate Community Assessments:** Volunteers can sample and identify aquatic macroinvertebrates with professionals. Much of the diversity you will find will be invertebrates, the more trained professionals you have to assist in the identification of specimens the higher your overall BioBlitz species count will be.
5. **Terrestrial Insect Community Assessments:** Volunteers can net, collect and identify insects with professional entomologists. Again, more

- invertebrates! You will want as many pros as possible to assist volunteers in the identification.
6. ***Tree Species Diversity:*** Take a walk in the woods with foresters or ecologists. Identify and record the different species of trees, measure their diameter at breast height (DBH) and note their ecological significance to the area.
  7. ***Water Quality Testing (pH, DO, Temperature, Turbidity, etc.):*** This is a great way to help people understand these often-daunting aspects of the quality of the water in their local stream. You could also use the professionals to demonstrate and promote methods of water quality monitoring that volunteers can do on their own in their favorite stream.
  8. ***Bat Trapping:*** Learn about these vital species. A great nighttime event for kids of all ages. Bats are cool, mysterious, surrounded by myth and folklore and are vital parts of an ecosystem.
  9. ***Owl Prowls:*** Another great nighttime event. Have an ornithologist lead walks in search for owls, perform species counts and trap & release if possible.
  10. ***Mammal Trappings:*** Have mammalogists set up live traps for small mammals. This will assist in the quest for these often quick and elusive animals.

## Now What? How Do I Start Planning My BioBlitz?

### *Location*

One of the first things you will need to do is find a location you want to “Blitz”. City or state parks and local natural areas are common locations for a BioBlitz. They are visible and easily accessible to the general public. Keep in mind that the area should be large enough to hold a public event of this size. (Expect a couple hundred people throughout the 24-hour period.) It should have the appropriate types of habitat required for the events that you want to hold. (e.g. wooded areas, meadows, ponds, streams, etc.) It should have an area large enough to hold your “base camp” where specimens will be identified, snacks and beverages will be housed and people can sign up for events.

### *Scientists*

Next you will want to recruit your scientists. This will go hand in hand with deciding WHAT species you want to try and find. The more scientists you can recruit, the broader range of expertise you will have on hand and the more species you are likely to document. Local city and state park districts, Illinois Department of Natural Resources and local Universities are just a few places that you may find willing professionals to help with an event.



### *Team Leaders*

Team leaders should be one or two scientists for each taxon (e.g. botanists for plants, entomologists for insects, etc). Each team leader works with the BioBlitz organizer as well as oversees those taxa, and decides who goes where to collect, schedules shifts and decides the method used for recording data.

### *Base Camp*

Choose where you want to set up your base camp. The base camp is a place for scientist to sign in, get food, and obtain information about where they can sleep. It is also a place for visitors and other volunteers to go for information about events, obtain maps and schedules, observe or participate in specimen counts and purchase T-shirts or souvenirs.

### *Education*

The bulk of the education typically comes from enthusiasm and passion of the team leaders and other scientists working with the volunteers and other participants in the Blitz. However, it is always a good idea to solicit the assistance of other local organizations and passionate individuals (local birders, naturalists and nature enthusiasts) to assist in the Blitz activities.

### *Expenses*

These events can be fairly inexpensive. With a little bit of effort you may find that most things can be borrowed or donated for the event.

Here is a list of things you will need and may be a potential cost:

- 💧 Food
- 💧 Beverages

- 💧 T-shirts
- 💧 Tents (sleeping quarters, home base, first aide, etc.)
- 💧 Tables and chairs
- 💧 Porta Potties or other facilities
- 💧 Permits (collection permits, etc.)
- 💧 Liability Insurance
- 💧 Signs
- 💧 Maps

#### *Other Items You Will Need*

- 💧 First Aid: It's always a good idea to have first aid kits and access to medical treatment should it be needed
- 💧 Garbage disposal and recycling: Volunteers and participants will need several places to toss empty containers and other waste
- 💧 Flyers, site and activity markers, nametags
- 💧 Data sheets
- 💧 Events brochure

#### *Media*

Be sure to send out a press release to your local print, television and radio media outlets. BioBlitzes are great ways to draw attention to the wealth of biodiversity that is right in your backyard.

#### *A Note of Thanks*

Be sure to send a note of thanks to all people and organizations that contributed to the effort! A little recognition goes a long way.

#### **Additional Resources**

<http://www.nrel.colostate.edu/projects/iboy/biomonth/holdevent.html>

This site has many resources that can be used to plan an event. You can also register your event on this website and get some advertising materials.

<http://web.uconn.edu/mnh/bioblitz/>

This site has a BioBlitz guide and other valuable resources to get started.



## Learn To Use the Clean Water Act

The Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) is perhaps the strongest, most effective federal law available to ensure that streams, wetlands, and lakes are protected and restored. One of the important recurring themes throughout the CWA is the importance of meaningful participation on the part of people who know and value local waters. However, the CWA and the regulations adopted to implement it constitute a complicated body of law that can be daunting to most people.



There are many publications that will make the CWA and its programs more accessible to you. Two of them are – *The Clean Water Act: An Owner's Manual* and *Permitting an End to Pollution*.

### The Clean Water Act: An Owner's Manual

This manual, produced by River Network, presents an excellent overview of the CWA and several of its key programs. It can quickly provide you the background information (and vocabulary) to:

- participate in the **water pollution control permits**, or “NPDES,” program to minimize pollution from industries, sewage treatment plants, mining activities, stormwater, etc.;
- understand the **water quality standards**, which set limits on how much pollution a river, lake, or stream can take;
- use the **watershed restoration planning** or “TMDL” program to restore polluted waters in your watershed to fishable and swimmable goals;
- use the **dredge and fill permits**, or “404 permit,” program to ensure that wetlands and streams are not unavoidably destroyed; and,
- access funds for projects to control pollution.

The book also provides several examples of how the CWA can be and has been successfully used by people to solve specific problems. Finally, it provides a brief summary of other laws that may be useful in your quest to protect your streams. To order this book, visit [www.rivernetwork.org](http://www.rivernetwork.org).

### Permitting an End to Pollution

The handbook, produced by Prairie Rivers Network, River Network, and Clean Water Network, offers much more detail on effective participation in the water

pollution control permit (NPDES) program. NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permits are required of almost anyone who would like to dump pollution into any water in the country. There are likely several such “dischargers” in your watershed, who must get an NPDES permit and must renew that permit at least every five years.

There are excellent regulations requiring that NPDES permits only allow minimal pollution that does not make the streams harmful or unattractive for the people, fish, and wildlife that use the stream. However, your participation will be instrumental in ensuring that these regulations achieve their purposes.

To make the best use of this handbook, you will want to begin by:

- 💧 finding out what dischargers are currently under an NPDES permit in your watershed (see the Watershed Assessment guidance in this toolkit),
- 💧 determining potential problems associated with these discharges,
- 💧 finding out when those permits are due to expire, and
- 💧 watching for notices that any new or renewed permit is available for public comment.

The handbook will then offer excellent instruction on how to use applicable regulations to ensure that the new or renewed permit guarantees that the streams of your watershed are protected. To download this handbook, go to <http://www.prairierivers.org/Projects/CleanWater/Permits.html>

For assistance using either of these publications, or tracking down additional information, contact Prairie Rivers Network at (217) 344-2371 or [info@prairierivers.org](mailto:info@prairierivers.org).





## Report Water Pollution

If you happen to be out walking, driving, canoeing, or fishing and you see what may be a case of illegal dumping or an unlawful discharge of water pollution, you should immediately report the incident.

**What do you report?** Fish kills, discoloration in the water or an oily sheen on the water, illegal dumping in our waterways, unusually high water temperatures, sediment carried off a construction site without controls, or effluent coming from a pipe that smells or look strange.

**When?** Right away, but if you continue to observe the problem on an ongoing basis be sure to keep a record of the dates and time. If the problem goes unreported, it may never be solved.

**Who do you call?** Call the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for any water quality violation, and make an additional call to the Department of Natural Resources in case of a fish kill. It may be prudent to contact your local police department or 9-1-1, in the case where a chemical spill could pose a threat to human health.

### Be Safe!

Some spills can pose an immediate threat to human health. Keep in mind that some chemicals have properties that concentrate vapors in low points in the terrain, such as streams, and may overwhelm you causing unconsciousness, lasting, or permanent consequences. Use all necessary caution in identifying the problem, as it is more important to become a wise, old, river conservation advocate than a martyr!

For those interested in the properties of pollutants, facilities are required to keep information concerning on-site chemicals, called Material Safety Data Sheets or MSDS. A good database exists to search and view MSDS at Cornell University (facility-specific information is not available): <http://msds.ehs.cornell.edu/msdssrch.asp>.



*How?* When reporting the incident, try to do the following:

- 1) Identify the source of pollution.
- 2) Get a picture of the source as well as a picture of any impact you notice in the stream such as a fish kill or water condition. Even if you cannot identify the source, it is still important to photograph any impacts you see in the stream.
- 3) Note the date, time, and location. If you observe the incident more than once, note all dates and times.
- 4) Get names and numbers of anyone else who observed the incident.

Who To Contact:

- 💧 Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Emergency Response at 1-800-782-7860 or 217-782-3637, or you can fill out a Citizen Complaint Report at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/pollution-complaint/form-online.html>.
- 💧 Department of Natural Resources Office of Law Enforcement (for conservation offenses such as a fish kill) at the toll-free telephone number, 1-877-2DNRLAW (1-877-236-7529).
- 💧 Prairie Rivers Network at 217-344-2371 (for further information and assistance).
- 💧 Local reporters or news outlets.



if you spot problems talk to the developer. If problems persist contact:

*Illinois EPA Field Offices*

Report pollution violations to the office nearest you or online at their website at [www.epa.state.il.us/pollution-complaint/form-online.html](http://www.epa.state.il.us/pollution-complaint/form-online.html)

**Field Offices**

Champaign	217-278-5800
Collinsville	618-346-5120
Des Plaines	847-294-4000
Marion	618-993-7200
Peoria	309-693-5463
Rockford	815-987-7760
Springfield	217-786-6892

For emergencies or when field offices are closed, call 800-782-7860.

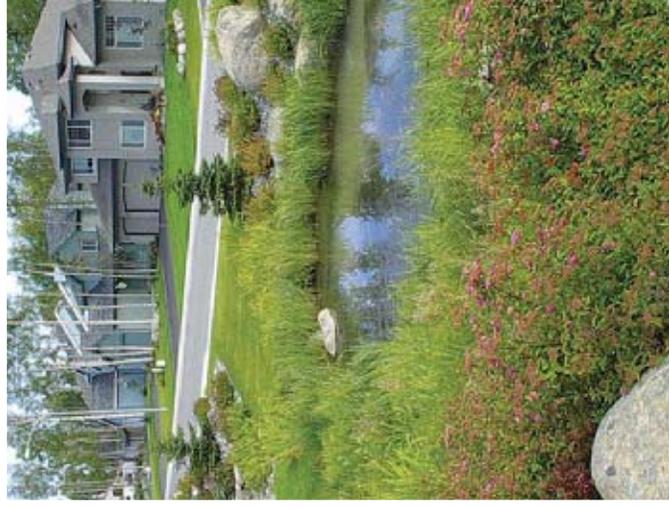
For questions or assistance contact Prairie Rivers Network at 217-344-2371

This brochure can be copied and folded in thirds for distribution.



*Monitor Pollution from Construction Sites*

Pollution from construction sites can harm rivers. You can help prevent it!



**Prairie Rivers Network**

809 S. Fifth Street  
Champaign, IL 61801

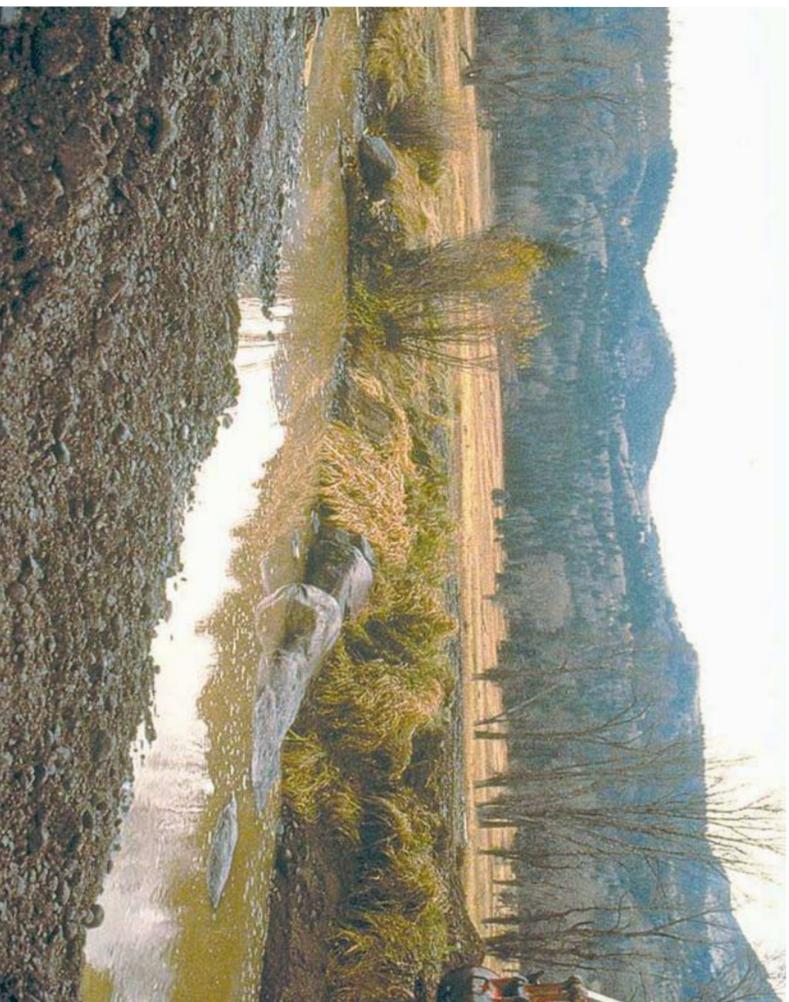
217-344-2371

[www.prairierivers.org](http://www.prairierivers.org)

**Y**ou may have seen construction projects underway in your neighborhood and noticed a lot of soil coming off the site. This is bad for rivers and wildlife. Soil tracked into roads or washed off the construction site ends up in our streams, smothering streambeds, destroying habitat, and muddying the water, making it difficult for fish to see their prey. Even soil that is washed down storm drain ends up directly in our rivers with the same harmful impacts.

Existing law requires that soil be contained on site to the extent possible and that construction sites may not harm streams. To comply with the law, each construction site greater than one acre must develop and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that describes the steps the contractor will use to prevent soil from leaving the site. Unfortunately, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) does not review these plans or monitor sites frequently to ensure that plans are followed. Therefore, it is up to local citizens to ensure that these laws are enforced.

If you are concerned about runoff from a construction site request a copy of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan from the developer. These documents must be made available to citizens, and unless you request it, there is no guarantee that one has been developed. You can also conduct your own spot inspections of the site. When driving past, pull safely to the side of the road, and check each of the questions found on the attached list. Keep it in the glove box of your car. Do not trespass and please ensure your safety first.



## Construction Site River Protection Checklist

- Is the construction site exit covered with coarse gravel to prevent dirt from entering the street?
- Are there silt fences (usually black fabric fences) installed around the site?
- Do these silt fences appear to be capturing all of the soil?
- Are there ponds on the site to capture water and settle the soil before water runs off the site?
- If there are storm drains near the site, are there filter material or barriers around them to prevent sediment from entering?
- Has some vegetation been left on the construction site?
- Is bare soil on the site covered with straw, mulch, or fabric?
- If there is a stream nearby, is the water downstream of the site as clear as the water upstream?

If you answered “no” to any of these questions then the site may not be stabilizing soil and preventing runoff. Talk to the developer and if problems persist report it to the IEPA field office near you..



## *Monitor the Quality of Local Streams*

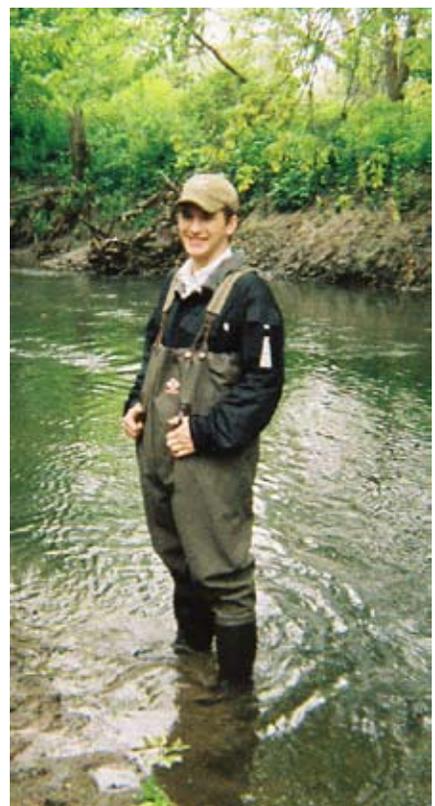
Monitoring the quality of your stream using simple tests can be a great way to learn more about it, engage your members in a rewarding activity, and provide information about your stream to decision-makers.

Although a few state and federal agencies collect water quality data around Illinois, limited funding does not allow them to monitor each of the state's 87,000 river miles. There are many streams for which no or very little information is available. Volunteer monitoring helps fill those gaps, providing information that is useful in the conservation of local rivers.

Volunteer monitoring also provides an opportunity for you and your watershed group to become involved in an activity that will increase your own awareness about threats to your stream. Your members who become involved in this manner may be more likely to take action with respect to these threats if they build a connection to their stream through the monitoring program.

### **The Illinois Stream Team Program**

Illinois Stream Team is a volunteer monitoring program developed by Prairie Rivers Network that allows trained participants to investigate a few of the chemical and physical aspects of water quality. Through this program, you can design your own goals for monitoring, design and implement a monitoring plan that would best achieve those goals, and share the information you collect with others around



The participants' test kits contain chemicals and equipment necessary to measure dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, nitrate, orthophosphate, alkalinity, flow, and turbidity. Monitoring these parameters can help you identify places with relatively good water quality as well as places where water quality is poor and may be causing problems for fish and other aquatic life. The data can also help you and decision-makers determine causes of and solutions to pollution problems.

Prairie Rivers continues to develop protocols that will allow participants to demonstrate that the data they collect is accurate. Establishing and following these protocols will allow more people and government agencies to use the data as they make decisions that may affect the streams.

### **Data Sharing**

Prairie Rivers Network is working with the UIUC College of Library and Information Sciences and The National Great Rivers Research and Education Center to develop an online database, particularly for use by volunteers who collect water quality data. Everybody who collects such data in the state will be welcome and encouraged to enter data into system. This data can then be retrieved and analyzed by anybody.

### **Join the Stream Team!**

The Stream Team program is available to anyone who attends our training program and commits to follow proper protocols and collect data at least four times each year. Check Prairie Rivers Network's website for announcements about upcoming training programs and contact Prairie Rivers staff to let us know that you are interested in attending.

There are a few volunteer monitoring programs in Illinois, including RiverWatch, Sierra Club's Water Sentinels, and Prairie Rivers Network's Illinois Stream Team. Contact Prairie Rivers to learn more about these different programs and to find out which one or ones might best suit your needs.





## *Protect Your Streams and Wetlands from Dredging and Filling*

Filling wetlands or streams to convert them to housing developments or a few extra acres of agricultural land causes an obvious loss of important habitat for birds, fish, and other wildlife. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires that such destruction be minimized and mitigated, and as with many programs of the Act, your participation and vigilance is critical to its success.

### **Background**

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires that anyone who proposes to dredge or discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands and streams, must get a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) before doing so. This includes situations where an individual seeks to “straighten” a stream. Before the Corps can issue the permit, the applicant must demonstrate that (1) there are no practical alternatives, (2) the project will not cause significant degradation, (3) all negative impacts on the wetland and/or streams are mitigated, and (4) Illinois EPA certifies that the project will not violate water quality requirements. Mitigation can include creation of a new wetland or stream habitat to replace the one that is lost, restoration of a degraded stream or wetland, enhancement of an existing resource and/or preservation of an existing high quality resource. If the applicant does not satisfy these requirements, the Corps must deny the permit.



## **Your Role**

Keep your eyes and ears open for unpermitted destruction.

Neither Illinois EPA nor the Corps has staff available to patrol watersheds to ensure that nobody dredges or fills wetland or stream habitats without a permit. Therefore the responsibility of looking for and reporting unpermitted activities falls on you, your neighbors, and your watershed organization. If you don't do this, nobody will.

Such monitoring does not require special skills or knowledge. Simply pay attention as you are driving through your watershed. Bulldozers are large and relatively easy to spot. If you see one near a wetland or stream, inquire locally about the activity. If it appears that dirt is being pushed into or dug out of a wetland or stream, contact your Corps of Engineers District office immediately (see below) to report the activity and find out if they have a permit.

### *Participate in permitting decisions*

The Clean Water Act emphasizes the importance of public participation in decisions that affect your streams and wetlands. You are encouraged to review and comment on proposals for 404 permits. The notices of applications for these permits are posted periodically on the Corps District websites (see below).

When reviewing and commenting on permit applications, keep in mind the legal requirements mentioned above and described in the regulations. Ensure that alternatives that would not affect the wetlands and streams are fully considered. If significant degradation would occur, describe the degradation and request that the Corps deny the permit. If the mitigation proposed would not fully replace the lost resource, or if no mitigation is proposed, request that the Corps deny the permit. A sample of a letter to the Corps is attached to help you get started (see Resources section). The mailing address for the correct Corps District office is included on the notice. As described in the notices, comments may also be submitted by email.

Send a copy of your comments to IEPA, and if water quality will be impacted by the project, ask IEPA to deny certification of the permit under section 401 of the Clean Water Act. These letters should be sent to: Illinois EPA, Bureau of Water, Watershed Management Section, P. O. Box 19276, Springfield, IL 62794-9276.

## **Contacting the Right Office of the Corps**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has district offices located throughout the country. Almost all of Illinois is covered by four districts. These districts and their contact info are summarized below. For a more detailed map showing the boundaries of these districts see the online map at <http://www.usace.army.mil/divdist-map.html>.

**Chicago District** – Lake, McHenry, Cook, Kane, DuPage, and Will Counties

Phone: 312-846-5530

Online permit notices: <http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil/co-r/currpn.htm>

**Rock Island District** – Northern half of Illinois, except counties in Chicago District

Phone: 309-794-5351

Online permit notices: <http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Regulatory/RegulatoryDivisionHomePage.htm>

**Louisville District** – Southeast portion of the state, specifically the Wabash River basin

Phone: 502-315-6766 or 502-315-6769

Online permit notices: <http://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/orf/listnotices.asp?state=IL>

**St. Louis District** – Southwest portion of the state

Phone: 314-331-8574

Online permit notices: <http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/permits/pn.htm>

### **For More Information**

Regulations: <http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/cecwo/reg/40cfr230.htm>

Because the summary presented here is necessarily simplified, we encourage you to learn more about the regulations that apply to dredge and fill projects. It is also useful to quote regulations directly in your comment letter.

Mitigation guidelines: [http://epa.gov/owow/wetlands/pdf/RGL\\_02-2.pdf](http://epa.gov/owow/wetlands/pdf/RGL_02-2.pdf)

Because mitigation is such an important part of most permits, it is useful to understand the guidelines the Corps uses in determining whether proposed mitigation is acceptable. In addition to the Federal Regulatory Guidance Letter (found at the web address above), each District should also have specific guidelines that incorporate the federal guidance.

Prairie Rivers Network Drainage Handbook: <http://www.prairierivers.org/Projects/AgDrainage/DrainageHandbook.pdf>





## Storm Drain Stenciling

DUMP NO  
WASTE



DRAINS TO  
STREAM

### What Is It?

Storm Drain Stenciling is an event where community groups, scouts, neighborhood organizations, and watershed groups stencil the message “DUMP NO WASTE—DRAINS TO RIVERS” on the storm drains in their neighborhood. Other team members deliver door hangers or flyers that inform neighborhood residents of the stenciling project and pick up trash and debris that could eventually find its way down the storm drain to the river. Stenciling is a fun and easy way to educate people about the fate of stormwater runoff, a major source of water pollution.

Stormwater runoff collects many contaminants as it travels across streets, driveways, yards, or parking lots before entering a drain. In most communities, storm drains lead directly to local rivers and streams, not to treatment facilities, carrying the untreated and polluted storm water. Consequently, the cumulative effects of polluted stormwater runoff can be devastating to the health and vitality of Illinois’ rivers, lakes, and streams.

### Why Stencil Our Storm Drains?

1. ***You’re getting to the root of the problem.*** Most people still believe that industry is the greatest source of pollution, but it’s not. Non-point source pollution, or “pointless pollution”, originates from not one source, but from many miscellaneous and unrelated sources. Pointless pollution is the largest source of pollution in our rivers and streams and much of it gets there when it washes down the storm drains. By Storm Drain Stenciling, you are educating others about the affect their every day actions can have on water quality.
2. ***We need to address the problem of dirty storm water.*** Dirty storm water is a serious problem and has serious consequences for human health. According to the EPA, most of our surface water pollution comes from storm water. However, 60% of Americans depend upon surface water for their drinking water. This means that keeping storm water clean helps not only overall water health, but the health of a majority of Americans.
3. ***It’s easy.*** Little time is required to stencil storm drains, and it does not require specific skills. Plus, Prairie Rivers Network makes Storm drain stenciling extremely easy by loaning storm drain stenciling kits free of charge. We want to help as many groups throughout our state develop their own Storm Drain Stenciling Adventure. The kits have a majority of the necessary equipment for stenciling drains. We provide as much assistance as needed to help interested groups hold an event. What could be easier?



4. *It's effective.* Studies have validated the effectiveness of storm drain stenciling. People around stenciled neighborhoods were more aware of the fate of storm water than those without the stenciled storm drains. Recent studies in Wisconsin and Washington show that over 75% of people who had seen the stenciled drains knew where their water went, compared to about a third of those who had not seen a stenciled drain.
5. *It teaches people to appreciate their interconnectedness to water.* By stenciling, you are educating people about their impacts on others who live further down the river. They begin to see that something that starts at home has bigger consequences for surrounding communities.

### Commonly Asked Questions

#### *How long does it take?*

The actual event takes between 2-4 hours. You should begin the planning process a minimum of four weeks in advance. This will give you the time required to get permission from your village or city to stencil drains, create publicity, and to recruit volunteers. This can be a great opportunity to recruit new members to your watershed group.

#### *What does Prairie Rivers provide?*

- 💧 **Kits.** You want no more than 50 people at once for each event, but you can have as few as 5. We have 10 kits, and recommend recruiting 5 people per kit.
- 💧 **Technical assistance.** We provide assistance as needed to help your group hold its own stenciling event.
- 💧 **Instructions, sample waivers, safety information, and sample door hangers** (see additional materials in this section).

# Storm Drain Stencil Adventure Kit

Prairie Rivers Network

## Instructions

The stencil that you are going to spray-paint on your neighborhood's storm drains will caution people who are just about to pour or sweep something down the drain that their action could be harmful to your local rivers. This project will *also* help your neighbors realize that cleaning up after their dog, minimizing the fertilizers they put on their yard, and proper disposal of their yard waste can help protect their rivers. This kit includes instructions for painting and information for your neighbors explaining why you are doing this, and supplies for cleaning up the streets around the storm drains you will stencil. These instructions will tell you how to safely accomplish each goal of this project.

Safety—Everyone on your team must read the enclosed safety instructions and wear an orange safety vest.

**STREETS...** it's always nice to pick up litter, and after yourself

### Supplies in the kit:

- 💧 vinyl gloves
- 💧 trash bags

One or two people in your team can be official litter picker-uppers. This is an important job because any litter you see or leave in the street will eventually end up in the rivers that we are trying to protect. If they take a trash bag in one hand, and wear a glove on the other, it will be easy to follow the rest of your team and pick up any trash or yard waste that may already be in the street. Empty spray paint cans, paint chips, and used gloves should also go into these trash bags. Remember that glass and metal trash might be sharp and could poke a hole in your glove or finger, so please be careful!

**DOOR HANGERS...** a message to the neighborhood

### Supplies in the kit:

- 💧 clip board
- 💧 door hangers

Distribute door hangers to all the houses in the neighborhoods where you stencil. They will explain all about the many, simple choices people can make at their home that will help protect your local rivers and point out their newly stenciled storm drains.

Please keep track of the [house numbers on both sides of the street on blocks where you stencil a storm drain](#). There is a tally sheet on the clipboard in your kit where you can record all the house numbers and the number of door hangers distributed.

**STENCILING...** finally, the painting!

**Supplies in the kit:**

- 💧 **wire brush**
- 💧 **whisk broom**
- 💧 **safety goggles**
- 💧 **stencil**
- 💧 **spray paint**
- 💧 **vinyl gloves**
- 💧 **orange traffic cone**

The paint you are using will not wash off your clothes and it is also painful and harmful to breathe its fumes. Wear old clothes, therefore, and try not to breathe the paint fumes. You can also wear a vinyl glove on the hand you use to hold the paint can to keep your hands clean.

To paint the storm drains; first you have to find them. In some cases, the kits will have maps with all the storm drain locations marked. Otherwise, look for drains in the middle of long blocks, or a street corners. Set up a traffic cone in the street wherever you stop to work. Use the broom and wire brush to clean off a flat, dry spot without cracks on the drain casting itself or the adjacent curb. This is where the stencil will go. Lay the stencil down with the letters so that you can read them. Put on the safety goggles before you start painting, and shake up the can of paint. Spray just one coat evenly over the stencil holding the can about one foot away from the stencil. Be careful when you lift the stencil off the pavement for it will still be wet with paint.

Please keep track of where and how many drains you stencil. This information can go on the same clipboard used to record the house numbers where you stenciled.

Be *cheerful* and *safe*, answer questions that your neighbors may ask, and be *proud* that you are helping to protect our rivers!

**Questions? Contact** Prairie Rivers Network at (217) 344-2371.

# *Sample Safety Guidelines*

[Your Organization Name]

## Storm Drain Stenciling Safety Guidelines

1. Always wear your safety vest.
2. Always wear gloves, mask and safety goggles when spraying a stencil.
3. Stick with your stenciling team and be sure that the team does not move onto the next stencil before gathering the entire group back together. Leave no participant behind!!!!
4. Be aware of your surroundings. Stenciling is performed in often-busy streets where traffic can be heavy at times so designate two team members as traffic watchers. ALWAYS be on the lookout for oncoming traffic!!!!
5. Never walk outside of the safety cones, into the street during the stenciling activity unless you have carefully checked for oncoming traffic.
6. Be aware of neighborhood pets when delivering door hangers and flyers to homes. Never enter a yard when there is a loose animal on the property.
7. Wash your hands after you have completed stenciling. You do not want to rub your eyes, nose or mouth, or eat anything before cleaning your hands. Remember you are working in areas where run off occurs. There may be harmful chemicals, dust, glass and debris that could be harmful to your health.
8. MOST IMPORTANTLY NEVER EVER FORGET TO HAVE FUN!!!!

Disclaimer: These are safety recommendations to be considered by volunteers during the storm drain stenciling activities. However, [your organization name] makes no representations that these recommendations will protect individuals from injury or harm to property. Participation in this storm drain stenciling program is voluntary, and [your organization name] makes no representations that any of its employees or agents will be present to monitor the manner in which the work is performed. [your organization name] has no knowledge of the training or experience of persons who may be participants in this program or the types of condition, which may be encountered by participants.

## Sample Waiver

[Your Organization Name]

### Storm Drain Stenciling Liability Waiver

I, the undersigned, being the volunteer involved in the storm drain stenciling project (hereinafter referred to as the “Project”) or being the parent or legal guardian of such a volunteer in the Project, in consideration of my or another’s participation in the Project, I hereby, for myself and any volunteer for who I am a parent or legal guardian release, discharge, hold harmless, and forever acquit, [**your organization name**], or other local sponsors, and their officers, agents, representatives and employees from any and all actions, causes of action, claims or any liabilities whatsoever, known or unknown now existing or which may arise in the future, on account of or in any way related to or arising out of participation in the Project.

Further, by signing this waiver, I state that I have read and agree to follow the safety guidelines on the back of this sheet.

Further, I assume all liability of any non-participants who accompany me.

Participants name (please print):

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Participant’s signature:

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Participant’s age: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant’s parent or legal guardian:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**YOU MUST SIGN THE LIABILITY WAIVER TO PARTICIPATE!!!!**



## *Tally sheet*

**Thank you for helping us with this project! The spray-painted message you are leaving for the community will help protect your local rivers.**

**It is very important that we keep track of all your hard work! Please help by carefully filling out this sheet.**

**Group name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact person:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of stencil adventure:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Town:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Streets where you stenciled:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Total number of drains you stenciled:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total number of door hangers distributed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wow! What a productive day you had! Thanks for all your help! And don't forget—the kits, leftover supplies, and this tally sheet all get returned to our Champaign office so that others may reuse them and help to continue to spread the word protecting Illinois' Rivers. We'd like you comments and suggestions on how to make this program even better. Tell us how on the other side of this sheet.**

**Comments on your stenciling adventure...**

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**Was stenciling a fun and appropriate activity for your group?**

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**How could the kits or instructions be improved?**

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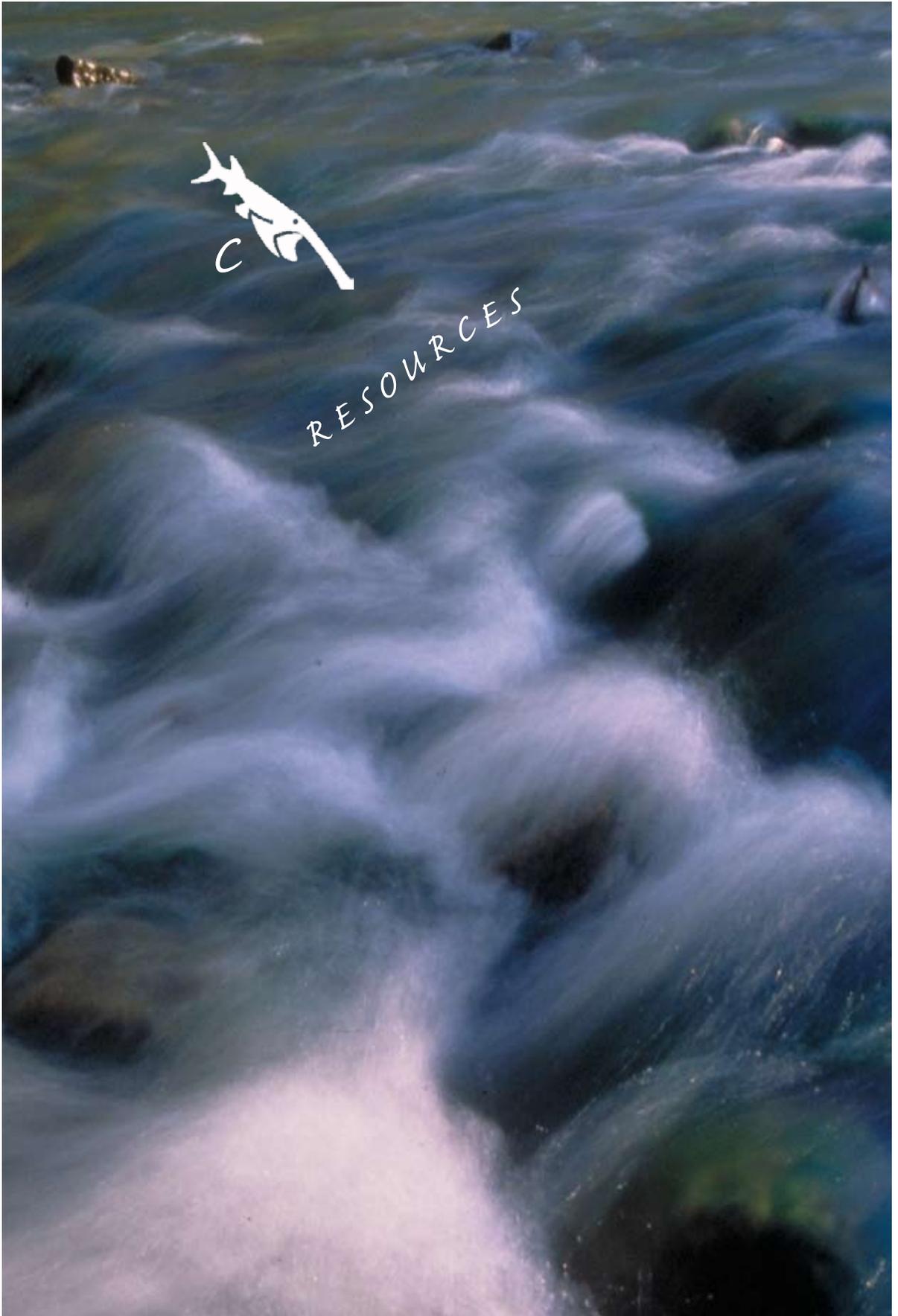
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**Thanks again!**

**Prairie Rivers Network  
809 South Fifth Street  
Champaign, IL 61820  
(217) 344-2371**



RESOURCES



## *Decision Makers Who Impact Our Rivers*

**C1**

Who are the decision makers that affect river health? This is a common question facing watershed groups looking for resources, technical expertise, groups willing to partner with them, or ways to meet river conservation goals. As Illinois' statewide river conservation organization, Prairie Rivers Network can provide expertise and resources, but your organization should be familiar with federal, state, and local entities whose decision affect your river. The following list provides information on agencies, responsibilities, and opportunities for citizens to participate in decision making.



### **Federal Agencies Most Commonly Having Jurisdiction Over Illinois Rivers**

*The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)* is responsible for the Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and other environmental laws, but in most cases, has delegated authority to states for implementation and enforcement. U. S. EPA has oversight of these programs and ensures that federal laws are met by the states. Illinois is within USEPA Region V, which is based in Chicago. [www.epa.gov/region5/](http://www.epa.gov/region5/)

*Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)* is a sub-agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with a state office in Champaign and many regional offices with experts on agricultural conservation. There is one NRCS employee in each county, reporting to two different entities – the state NRCS office and the local county Soil and Water Conservation District Board. NRCS is responsible for implementing agricultural conservation programs authorized under federal law. Its staff determines how millions of federal dollars in funding will be spent in Illinois and the programmatic priorities for the funding. The state NRCS has a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that advises the NRCS administrator on these matters. The TAC consists largely of representatives from the agricultural industry. Watershed groups are encouraged to join the committee to help ensure that conservation programs protect rivers. [www.il.nrcs.usda.gov/](http://www.il.nrcs.usda.gov/)

*Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)* is a program within NRCS, created by the Farm Bill of 1962. The program name sometimes includes “and economic development.” The purpose of the RC&Ds is to promote conserva-

tion, development, and utilization of natural resources, and to improve economic opportunity. They are typically organized by large watersheds or other geographic areas that span several counties. [www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd/)

The Illinois RC&Ds are governed by councils – primarily members of County Boards and Soil and Water Conservation District Boards that created them. For a directory: [www.il.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/directory/rcdcountys.html](http://www.il.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/directory/rcdcountys.html)

*The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)* is a bureau within the Department of the Interior. It is responsible for enforcing federal wildlife laws; protects federally listed endangered species; and manages migratory birds and the National Wildlife Refuge System, national fish hatcheries, fishery resource offices, and field stations. FWS has 15 offices in Illinois: [midwest.fws.gov/maps/illinois.htm](http://midwest.fws.gov/maps/illinois.htm)

*The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE)* is a separate command in the military which reports to the Pentagon. It has more than 35,000 civilian and military personnel with multiple responsibilities and disciplines, including oversight of more than 1,500 water resource and civil works projects. These include more than 500 dams, 11,000 miles of river navigation channels, and 8,500 miles of levees and floodwalls.

The ACE is at a crossroads in its history. Habitat restoration, land acquisition, and easement projects have become an increasing part of its mission, yet maintaining and creating other river-related projects has continued to contribute to loss of habitat and aquatic species. [www.usace.army.mil/](http://www.usace.army.mil/)

## State Agencies

*The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA)* reports to the Governor and is responsible for safeguarding environmental quality and protecting health, welfare, property, and the quality of life of Illinois citizens. The agency is responsible for enforcement of many state and federal laws critical to protecting rivers and streams, including the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972. IEPA has authority, delegated by U.S.EPA, to administer this program, specifically water quality monitoring and reporting, the permitting program which regulates discharge of polluted water into rivers and streams, and funding for nonpoint source grants. For more information on Clean Water Act programs, see the manuals included in this toolkit. Most programs operate from the Bureau of Water: [www.epa.state.il.us/water/](http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/)

*Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)* is a state agency whose mission includes managing public lands and recreational opportunities and providing natural resource related education, science, and assistance. The agency includes the state's scientific surveys – Water, Geology, Natural History Surveys and the Waste Management Research Center – valuable sources of research and reliable information. Their websites provide many great resources for watershed organizations. The Natural History Survey has several species databases where browsers

review records from 145 years of sampling rivers. Other publications and programs are useful in developing conservation messages: the Critical Trends Assessment Project (CTAP), Illinois Natural Areas Inventory, Ecowatch and Riverwatch programs. There is also a quarterly forum for public comments. The Natural Resources Advisory Board meets every three months and offers a comment period during which constituents can bring forward their concerns. [www.dnr.state.il.us/](http://www.dnr.state.il.us/)

*The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDA)* focuses on the agricultural industry, including protecting the health and welfare of livestock animals; horse racing, state and county fairs; regulating seed, feed and fertilizer products; oversight of grain dealers and financial stability of warehouses; and promoting Illinois food and agricultural products. It also includes programs and services to conserve the state's land and water resources. [www.agr.state.il.us/](http://www.agr.state.il.us/)

*University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service (Extension)* provides educational programs and research-based information to citizens. Extension serves many different constituencies, but its core concern is delivering the latest University of Illinois research to agricultural and rural communities. It is structured in four broad areas: 4-H Youth Development; Agriculture & Natural Resources; Community & Economic Development; and Nutrition, Family & Consumer Sciences. There are 79 unit offices located throughout Illinois. [www.extension.uiuc.edu/](http://www.extension.uiuc.edu/)

### **Other State Forums**

*The Illinois River Coordinating Council (IRCC)*, chaired by the current Lieutenant Governor, is a diverse group of citizens, grassroots and not-for-profit organizations, state and federal agencies, and river enthusiasts. IRCC coordinates all private and public funding for river restoration in the Illinois River Watershed. The public comment portion of IRCC quarterly meetings offers opportunity to bring concerns before members. [www.state.il.us/litgov/ircc/cleanwater.htm](http://www.state.il.us/litgov/ircc/cleanwater.htm)

*The State Attorney General (AG)* – a statewide elected constitutional officer – has an Environmental Division with several different functions. You may want to bring certain environmental conditions to the AG's attention. An Environmental Litigation Division, whose mission is to enforce state environmental laws, pursues cases with the goal of forcing polluters, not taxpayers, to pay the cost of cleanups. An Environmental Crimes Bureau and Environmental Investigator's Network designate and train local law enforcement officers to identify and investigate polluters. [www.ag.state.il.us/](http://www.ag.state.il.us/)

### **Local Entities**

*County Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD)* were formed during the Dust Bowl years under President Franklin Roosevelt to conserve soil and water resources. They were originally conceived to encompass entire watersheds, but

political forces intervened and the districts were formed on a county level. Today, SWCDs are public bodies that administer Federal Farm Bill conservation programs and prioritize natural resource concerns. It is important to have a working relationship with SWCDs, as a great deal of program funding goes through their county offices. SWCDs are governed by a five-member board, with most, if not all, seats filled by farmers. Watershed activists should consider attending monthly SWCD board meetings and running for positions on the SWCD board. [www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater/](http://www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater/)

*Ecosystem Partnerships (Ecopartnerships)* are stakeholder groups based on watershed boundaries, They were created by IDNR to disseminate funding for Conservation 2000 grants. Although some ecopartnerships have exclusive guidelines for membership, anyone with an interest should be able to attend, participate, and vote. Watershed groups are encouraged to work with their local partnership. To find the Ecopartnership for your watershed <http://dnr.state.il.us/orep/c2000/ecosystem/partnerships/>

*Drainage Districts* are small units of government created by an 1879 law to drain wetlands so that the land can be farmed. Each district is governed by a three panel board, usually of farmers, that are either appointed or elected. Districts help control stormwater, but many of their maintenance methods are outdated and can cause great damage to water quality and wildlife habitat. They remove shade-giving trees along rivers and streams, increasing water temperatures; dredge stream beds and destroy aquatic habitat, impacting fish and other species; and increase habitat fragmentation by disconnecting streamside forested corridors. For more information, visit Prairie Rivers' website project page on Agricultural Drainage: [www.prairierivers.org](http://www.prairierivers.org)

### **Who Makes Your Local Decisions?**

This worksheet will help you determine who makes local decisions, and locate the necessary contacts for your watershed work.

*Who are your county board members and county board chair?*

You can either call the county board administrative office in your county, using a phonebook, or use a search engine to see if your county board has a web presence.



*Is your county part of a regional planning commission?* Who is the head of that commission? Staff on the commission will be a useful contacts that can help you with the lay of the land and other important questions.

*Are there county-wide zoning ordinances?* If so, who develops ordinances and handles appeals, i.e. zoning commission? Who appoints or hires these people?

*If you live in an incorporated municipality, who is your mayor?*

*Is there an city agency responsible for environmental regulations, protection, and enforcement?*

*Do you have agricultural land in your county?* If so, you are likely to have drainage districts. Contact your County Clerk to ask for a list of drainage districts (and perhaps a map as well) and the commissioners on these boards. The County Clerk will also help you determine whether these commissioners are elected or appointed.

*Where is your local Soil and Water Conservation District office and who is running the show?* Download a statewide directory of SWCDs at: [www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater/swcddirectory.pdf](http://www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater/swcddirectory.pdf)

*What Ecosystem Partnership are you in?* Look at a map at DNR's website to find the appropriate partnership for your watershed: <http://dnr.state.il.us/orep/c2000/ecosystem/partnerships/>

*For wetlands permits you will need to determine what Army Corps of Engineers District you reside in.* Illinois is divided into five ACE districts (Chicago; St. Louis; Rock Island; Louisville; Memphis). Search each of district websites to see what district you fall into.





## *Additional Websites of Value to Watershed Groups*

Below is a list of helpful websites. They can help provide answers to questions you may have, such as:

- 💧 Are there organizations that can act as models for our organization or that can provide assistance?
- 💧 Are there books that can help me?
- 💧 Are there training modules or other educational resources?
- 💧 Where can I find funds to help our organization?
- 💧 Where can I get facts, maps, research papers, or other information?



### **Watershed Conservation Organizations**

Are there organizations that can act as models for our organization or that can provide assistance?

<http://www.rivernetwork.org/>

River Network is a national non-profit organization offering information about rivers as well as support and training for local river and watershed groups. It has good resources for watershed organizations

<http://www.americanrivers.org/>

Since 1973, American Rivers has been dedicated to protecting and restoring

healthy, natural rivers and the variety of life they sustain for people, fish, and wildlife. They are one of the national leaders of river conservation.

<http://ilrdss.sws.uiuc.edu/default.asp>

Illinois Rivers Decision and Support System (ILRDSS) provides information related to the Illinois River Basin and assists decision-makers with issues related to habitat conservation, restoration, and management. It also has GIS visualizations and videos that decision-makers can use to manage Illinois' natural resources and minimize impacts to the environment.

<http://www.mississippi-river.com/umrcc/>

The Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee's objectives are to: (1) promote the preservation and wise utilization of the natural and recreational resources of the Upper Mississippi River, (2) formulate policies, plans, and programs for carrying on cooperative surveys and studies, (3) keep necessary records, publish, and distribute reports, and (4) make recommendations to the governing State bodies in the furtherance of the objectives of the UMRCC.

<http://www2.ctic.purdue.edu/KYW/nwn/nwn.html>

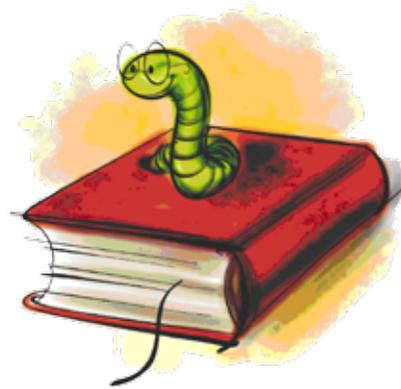
The National Watershed Network is a registry of locally led watershed partnerships working to meet local goals through voluntary actions. It has links to sites for watershed education and instructions for putting together a watershed plan.

### **Resources & Education for Watershed Conservation**

*Are there books that can help me?*

<http://ecoethics.net/bib/tl-096-a.htm>

A list of books on stream conservation, restoration, and management. This list was put together by the Environmental Ethics program at Harvard University.



<http://search.barnesandnoble.com/booksearch/results.asp?WRD=watershed+conservation&userid=SR2OeWGAcO>

An additional listing of books dealing with watershed conservation found on the Barnes and Noble Website.

*Are there training modules or other educational resources?*

<http://www.watershed.uiuc.edu/>

The Illinois Watershed Management Clearinghouse provides assistance both for individuals seeking to form a watershed group (Getting Involved in Watershed Planning) and for more experienced groups that need to research a specific topic in detail (Help For Existing Watershed Groups). The third section (References and Resources) provides links and descriptions to other websites and online tools related to watershed planning.

<http://www.cwp.org/index.html>

The Center for Watershed Protection provides local governments, activists, and watershed organizations with technical tools for protecting streams, lakes, and rivers nationwide. It lists multi-disciplinary strategies for watershed planning, restoration, management, and research.

<http://www.epa.gov/watertrain/#introductory>

Created by the Environmental Protection Agency, this site provides online training in watershed management where citizens and employees can learn the basics of watersheds, their benefits to both people and the environment, tools for addressing natural and anthropological changes, and the rules and regulations regarding watersheds.

### **Financial Resources for Watershed Groups**

Where can I find funds to support our work?



<http://www.watershed.uiuc.edu/>

The Illinois Watershed Management Clearinghouse lists ways to fund projects in addition to giving tips on grant writing.

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/water/surfah.nsf/financial!OpenView&Start=1&Count=30&Collapse=2#2>

A list of Catalogs of Financial Assistance

<http://12.46.245.173/cfda/cfda.html>

The online Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance lists Federal programs that State and local governments can apply to for assistance, along with information about different grants and how to apply for them.

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/fedfund/>

Provided by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Catalog of Federal Funding Sources For Watershed Protection is a searchable database of financial assistance sources such as grants, loans, and cost-sharing that are available for a variety of watershed protection projects.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/#Financial%20Assistance%20Programs>

Lists a few options from the financial assistance program provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service which is part of the United States Department of Agriculture.

<ftp://www.csc.noaa.gov/pub/www/ACICall.pdf>

This document provides information on 21 major sources of monetary and on-site technical assistance offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support local-level watershed management efforts. This catalog describes only those programs that promote environmental improvement and/or protection.

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/initiative/#financial>

Since 1990, this Federal grants program has supported State, Tribal, and local efforts to protect wetlands by providing funds to enhance existing programs or develop new programs.



### Science & Technical Support

Where can I get facts, maps, research papers, or other information?

<http://www.usgs.gov/>

The US Geological Survey (USGS) is an independent fact-finding agency that collects, monitors, analyzes, and provides scientific information about natural resource conditions, issues, and problems.

<http://water.usgs.gov/wsc/>

This contains specific information on watersheds. This information, along with observations and measurements made by watershed groups, provides a database to analyze and maintain the status and health of a watershed.

<http://www.terraserver.com/>

The TerraServer-USA website is one of the world's largest online databases, providing free public access to a vast database of maps and aerial and satellite photographs of the United States. It can be a valuable resource for researchers who want to study geography or environmental issues.

<http://www.epa.gov/bioindicators/>

This site provides information on the importance of observing and using plants and animals living in bodies of water as biological indicators. By assessing the condition and health of the community, problems can be addressed and proper restoration and protection goals can be made.





## C3 *Sample Letter to the Editor*

Letters to the Editor (LTE) of your local paper are a simple way of getting your message out to the general public on an issue of concern. Many papers have word limitations but will generally try to print all letters received, particularly in smaller communities. Here are two sample LTE's that highlight how to convey your message in a quick, concise manner.

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### Other utilities should adopt Ameren plan

August 2006

Congratulations to the Illinois EPA, Gov. Rod Blagojevich and Ameren for their plan to clean up power plants in central Illinois. Ameren, the largest Illinois power company outside Chicago, has agreed to cut air pollution at their coal power plants by up to 73 percent. As noted by the Aug. 6 News-Gazette editorial, the agreement is a winner for Illinoisans.

Power plant emissions have serious health implications for our state. They produce ozone smog and deadly particle pollution, causing thousands of asthma attacks, emergency room visits and hospitalizations as well as hundreds of deaths annually.

Illinois power plants also release thousands of pounds of mercury every year. So much so, that every river and lake is under a fish advisory, warning sensitive populations to limit their consumption of fish species such as bass and walleye.

Fortunately, Ameren has also agreed to reduce their mercury pollution by 90 percent, consistent with a proposal made by the governor earlier this year and now pending before the Illinois Pollution Control Board.

Unfortunately, other power producers in the state have not yet agreed to these critical pollution reductions. Illinois citizens should let the power companies and decision makers know they support the governor's proposal to reduce mercury emissions by 90 percent, as well Ameren's stringent multi-pollutant control strategy. Approval of these measures will protect public health, our rivers and streams and our economy, making Illinois an even better place to live. Who wouldn't support that?

JEAN FLEMMMA  
Prairie Rivers Network  
Champaign

### Boneyard cleanup day was a great event

April 2006

Eight months ago, Champaign resident Joe Petry had an idea — to inspire a sense of community pride in the Boneyard Creek in Champaign-Urbana.

Recently, on Earth Day, his idea became a reality when 275 volunteers turned out for the First Annual Boneyard Creek Community Day. These volunteers fanned out through Champaign and Urbana, cleaning up and beautifying the Boneyard Creek, which runs through our community.

This event would not have been the success that it was without the effort and commitment of many groups and individuals that deserve recognition.

They are the cities of Urbana and Champaign, the Urbana and Champaign Park Districts, the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana area Rotary Clubs, Dean's Superior Blueprint, Joe and Ann Petry, Mike Royse, Robeson's Inc., Royse Wagner Inc., Urbana Middle School, ABC Sanitary and the Champaign County Design and Conservation Foundation.

On behalf of the Prairie Rivers Network, I want to express my appreciations to them as well as the hundreds of volunteers who came out to work on Boneyard Creek Community Day for helping to make Champaign-Urbana a better place to live.

KIM ERNDT  
Prairie Rivers Network  
Champaign



## *Sample Opinion Editorial*

As fishermen in Illinois enjoy a summer of fishing, many are increasingly concerned about mercury contamination and the threat it poses to our fishing opportunities, our fishing experiences, and indeed, our fishing tradition and heritage.

Luckily, fishermen hooked the big one when Governor Blagojevich and the Illinois EPA took a national leadership role in addressing mercury pollution, proposing new rules that require mercury emissions from Illinois's coal-fired power plants to be reduced by 90% by 2009.

Illinois' 33,000 miles of rivers and streams and 309,000 acres of lakes are all contaminated with mercury pollution and so are many of the fish species that live in them. Eating mercury-contaminated fish can developmental delays and other serious health problems. Because contamination is so prevalent, Illinois has a statewide advisory cautioning pregnant women, women who may become pregnant, and children under 15 to avoid eating largemouth, smallmouth, striped, and white bass—along with several other species.

Some fishermen who practice catch and release angling think mercury pollution is not a problem for them because they do not consume the fish they land. They should think again. Mercury isn't just toxic to people who eat contaminated fish, but to fish and wildlife as well.

Studies have demonstrated that exposure to mercury at levels typically found in the aquatic environment can impact the reproduction, growth and survival of many species of fish. The toll of mercury exposure on fish-eating birds, including mallards, red-tailed hawks, and the common loon are also well documented and include eggshell thinning, and increased embryo mortality.

This means that mercury is not only a threat to public health but could also threaten sustainable and healthy populations of fish, birds and other wildlife. This should be of concern for all that enjoy the many recreational activities that fish and wildlife provide.

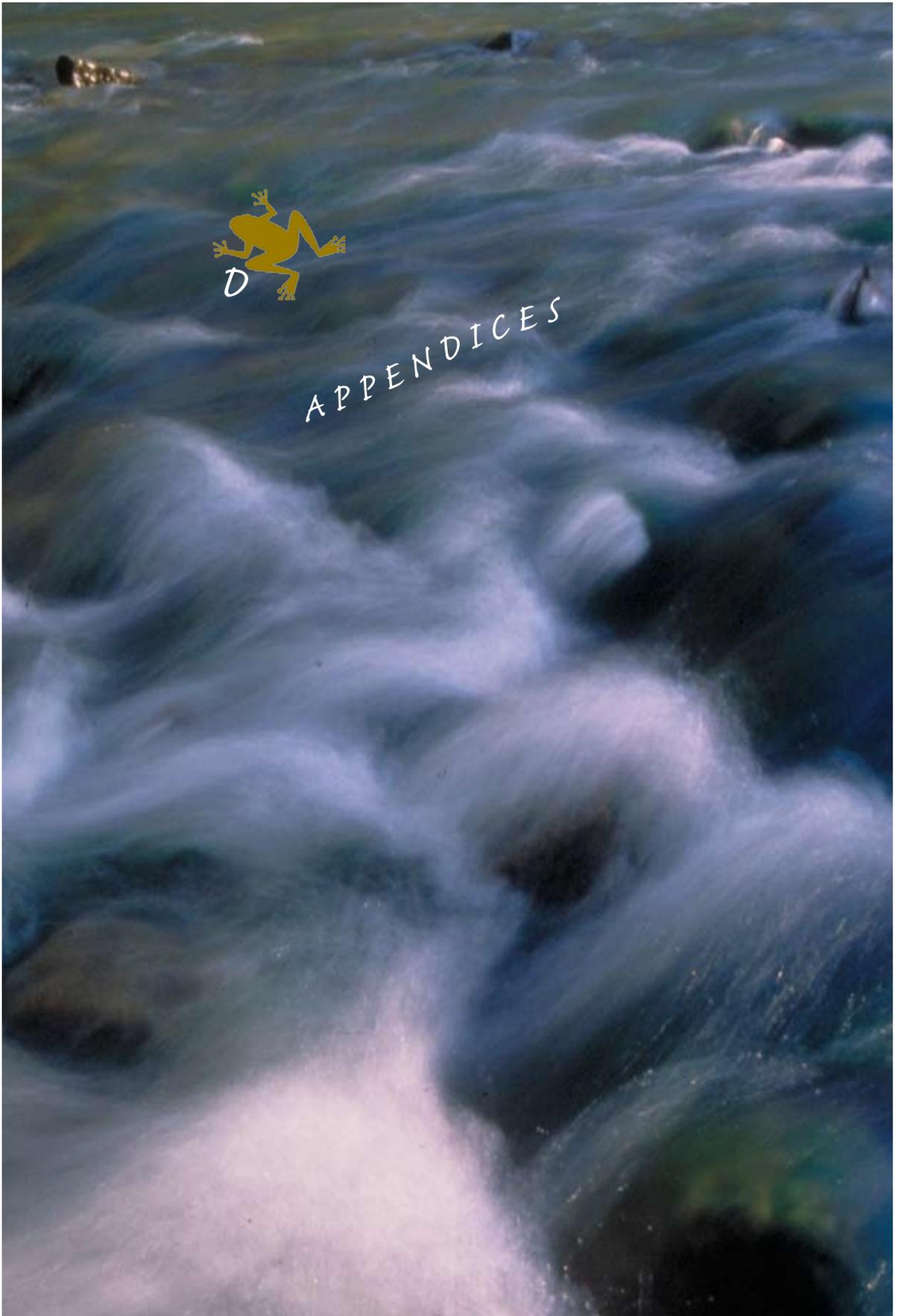
The solution to this problem need not be less fishing, less hunting, or less bird watching. In Illinois, coal-fired power plants release more than 7000 pounds of mercury to the air each year, ranking us 5th in the nation for mercury emissions. Fortunately, the technology exists to eliminate this pollution by as much as 90% right now.

Unfortunately, new federal rules to reduce mercury emissions fall far short of this goal. Instead of reducing emissions by 90%, they require only a 47% reduction by 2010, and maybe a 79% reduction by 2025. Also of concern, the federal rules allowed the trading of mercury pollution, meaning some plants would never have to reduce their emissions and increasing the likelihood of toxic "hotspots".

Their explanation? Contrary to a 2001 EPA report, the Agency said technologies were not available to reduce emissions by 90%. Yet, we know that's not the case. Last year, Dynegy Midwest Generation agreed to install mercury emissions equipment on its Oakwood, Illinois plant that will be up and running by July, 2007. Their stated goal is a 90% reduction in mercury pollution.

Now the Governor and Illinois EPA have used state authority to propose similar reductions for twenty other coal-fired power plants still emitting large amounts of mercury to the Illinois environment. If the proposed rules are adopted, they will provide strong protection for Illinois' children, wildlife, and a sportfishing industry that contributes in excess of \$600 million a year to the Illinois economy. Those benefits clearly outweigh the equipment costs needed to meet the new restrictions.

With this proposal, Illinois will go from being a leading mercury polluter to a nationwide leader in reducing mercury pollution. This is good for public health, our economy, and our environment—and that's no fish tale.



APPENDICES



# IEPA Citizen Pollution Complaint Form



Illinois  
Environmental  
Protection Agency

Office of Community Relations  
1021 North Grand Avenue East  
Springfield, Illinois 62702

March 2004

## ILLINOIS EPA CITIZEN POLLUTION COMPLAINT FORM

**If you are reporting an environmental emergency, please also contact the Illinois Emergency Management Agency at 1-800-782-7860.**

You may submit this form anonymously. However, if you provide us with information on how to reach you, Illinois EPA can keep you updated on the investigation into the complaint. In addition, we may need additional information from you in order to conduct an adequate investigation. You may also submit this form online at: [www.epa.state.il.us](http://www.epa.state.il.us).

Please note that your local/county health department may have ordinances/regulations which address: asbestos, septic tanks, private wells and lead paint.

### Your Contact Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (with area code) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number Type Home  Work  Cell Phone

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Whom do you believe to be responsible for the problem?

Responsible Party/Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City (Nearest city or town if known) \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

I don't know

### Nature of Complaint (Please check all that apply)

**Air** (dust/particles, open burning, and industrial emissions)

**Land** (open dumping, hazardous waste, landfill)

**Water** (stream/lake pollution, illegal discharges into waterways)

**Public Drinking Water** ( issues affecting quality or quantity of drinking water)

**Agricultural Problems** (odors, mismanagement of animal manure, water, ammonia, and pesticides)

Briefly describe the problem. Please provide as much detail as possible regarding the description of the event and its location. Please indicate any evidence or documentation (i.e., photos, logs, etc.) of pollution that you will be able to provide. If you remember the specific times when the problem occurred, please list the time of day and date.

Please use additional sheets of paper as necessary.

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Has the problem affected your health? No  Yes

Have you consulted a doctor? No  Yes

Has the problem damaged your property? No  Yes

Have you ever worked for the suspected source? No  Yes

Have you ever filed a claim against the responsible party? No  Yes

Have you contacted the source and complained? No  Yes

Are you willing to testify under oath at an enforcement hearing? No  Yes

**REQUIRED:**

Unless you consent to its release, Illinois EPA will regard your identity within the complaint form as exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act and regulations. However, your identity may be discovered if there is any lawsuit about the facility that is the subject of your complaint.

Do you consent to Illinois EPA disclosing your identity as a complaining party?  
No  Yes

**Please return this form to the following address:**

Citizen Pollution Complaint  
Illinois EPA  
Office of Community Relations #5  
P.O. Box 19276  
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276  
Fax: 217-785-7725



*State of Illinois' 501(c)(3) Info*

# A Guide For Organizing Not-for-Profit Corporations



**JESSE WHITE**  
SECRETARY OF STATE



My office provides this booklet to assist you in the process of forming your own Not-for-Profit Corporation, a procedure that sometimes can be complicated. The booklet provides detailed guidelines for filing the Articles of Incorporation, as well as information on filing fees, government agencies you must contact, and legal obligations you will assume after incorporation.

Because some of the terminology used in this booklet may be new and confusing, I encourage you to consult with an attorney to learn your exact legal obligations at each stage of the process.

If you have further questions about organizing your Not-for-Profit Corporation, please contact my office's Department of Business Services, Corporations Division, at 217-782-6961.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jesse White". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

**Jesse White**  
Illinois Secretary of State



# A GUIDE FOR ORGANIZING NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS

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**Illinois General Not-For-Profit Act of 1986,  
Illinois Compiled Statutes, 1992, Chapter 805, Act 105.**

## ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

The Articles of Incorporation is a legal document through which a corporation is formed. This document is sometimes referred to as the "charter." Regardless of your future tax-exempt status, **you must complete and submit two (2) identical copies of the Articles of Incorporation, Form NP-102.10, with at least one copy being the original.** All the interrogatories must be answered. Please type or print all responses.

## TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

**NOT ALL NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATIONS ARE TAX EXEMPT.** Before you take any action, you should decide whether you wish to apply for federal income tax-exempt status (e.g., *501(c) (3) status*). Only certain kinds of charities, schools, churches, research institutes, clubs, etc. fall into that category. The words "athletic," "benevolent," "eleemosynary," and "social" are not acceptable as purposes if a corporation is going to apply for 501(c) (3) status.

To find out if your corporation may qualify for a tax break, obtain and read IRS Publication 557 — How to Apply for and Retain Exempt Status for Your Organization. An organization does not have to be incorporated to apply for exempt status.

Should you decide to apply you will use either Form 1023 or Form 1024. However, you must be incorporated before the IRS will consider your application as a Not-for-Profit Corporation. Incorporation does not guarantee federal tax exemption, but if you wish to apply for that status your Articles of Incorporation may have to be written with the IRS regulations in mind.

## ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION REQUIREMENTS

### Corporate Name

#### (a) Restrictions

- ( 1 ) You may choose any name as long as it is distinguishable from the name of an existing Illinois corporation, a foreign corporation authorized to conduct affairs in Illinois, an existing Illinois Limited Liability Company (LLC) or a foreign LLC registered in Illinois or a name the exclusive right to which is currently reserved.
- (2) No name shall contain the words "*regular democrat*," "*regular democratic*," "*regular republican*," "*democrat*," "*republican*," or the name of any other established political party, unless consent is given by the State Central Committee of such established political party.
- (3) The name must end with the letters NFP if the corporate name contains any word or phrase that indicates or implies that the corporation is organized for any purpose other than a purpose for which corporations may be organized under this Act.

(b) **Name Check**

You may find out if a name is available by writing or calling the Secretary of State's office in Springfield at 217-782-9520. A preliminary check also may be done on the Secretary of State's Web site at [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com). Include a brief description of the corporate purpose and be prepared with alternate choices of names.

(c) **Name Reservation**

You may reserve a name, if available, for a period of 90 days for a \$25 fee. You must make a written request, listing the name and a brief description of the corporate purpose. You may also use Form NFP-104.10. Name reservations are renewable by repeating this procedure.

**Registered Agent and Office**

(a) **Purpose**

The purpose of requiring each corporation to maintain a registered agent and a registered office in Illinois is to provide a public record of the name of a person upon whom service of process against the corporation may be made, and of the place where such person may be found. This person also is the one to whom official correspondence from the Secretary of State is sent.

(b) **Qualifications**

(1) The registered agent must be:

(i) A natural person, resident in Illinois  
OR

(ii) A corporation with a purpose clause that permits it to be the agent for other corporations, with an office in Illinois;

(2) The registered office must be in Illinois and must be a street or road address, not just a P.O. Box number.

(c) **Changes**

Any change in either the agent or the office must be reported as soon as you know of the change. Prompt reporting of changes is important so that correspondence will not be delayed or lost. Form NFP-105.10 is used to report changes.

**Duration**

The duration is the period of time you plan to be incorporated. The duration is perpetual, unless otherwise stated in the Articles of Incorporation.

**Purpose**

(a) **Generally**

The purpose is a statement of the type of function or character for which the corporation is formed. Illinois requires this statement to be a narrow or specific purpose and will not accept a purpose that is too broad, general or vague.

(b) **Allowable Purposes**

Not-for-profit corporations may be organized for any one or more of the following or similar purposes:

- 1) Charitable
- 2) Benevolent
- 3) Eleemosynary
- 4) Educational
- 5) Civic
- 6) Patriotic
- 7) Political
- 8) Religious
- 9) Social
- 10) Literary
- 11) Athletic
- 12) Scientific
- 13) Research
- 14) Agricultural
- 15) Horticultural
- 16) Soil improvement
- 17) Crop improvement
- 18) Livestock or poultry improvement
- 19) Professional, commercial, industrial or trade association
- 20) Promoting the development, establishment or expansion of industries
- 21) Electrification on a cooperative basis
- 22) Telephone service on a mutual or cooperative basis
- 23) Ownership and operation of water supply facilities for drinking and general domestic use on a mutual or cooperative basis
- 24) Ownership or administration of residential property on a cooperative basis
- 25) Administration and operation of property owned on a condominium basis or by a homeowner association
- 26) Administration and operation of an organization on a cooperative basis producing or providing goods, services or facilities primarily for the benefit of members who are consumers of such goods, services or facilities
- 27) Operation of a community mental health board or center organized pursuant to the Community Mental Health Act for the purpose of providing direct patient services
- 28) Provision of debt management services as authorized by the Debt Management Service Act
- 29) Promotion, operation and administration of a ridesharing arrangement as defined in Section 1-176.1 of the *Illinois Vehicle Code*
- 30) Administration and operation of an organization for the purpose of assisting low-income consumers in the acquisition of utility and telephone services
- 31) Any purpose permitted to be exempt from taxation under Section 501(c) or 501(d) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, as now in or hereafter amended
- 32) Any purpose that would qualify for tax-deductible gifts under the Section 170(c) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, as now or hereafter amended (Any such purpose is deemed to be charitable under subsection (a)(1) of this Section.)

(c) **Specifics**

After prefacing or confining the purpose, a more detailed or specific purpose may be listed. Simple, everyday language can be used. For example: "To find homes for stray dogs and cats," "To send needy inner city children to summer camp," or "To form a neighborhood block club." DO NOT use any language that may indicate or imply a business purpose as such is not a proper not-for-profit purpose.

A corporation that is to function as a club, as defined in Section 1-3-24 of the Liquor Control Act of 1934, must insert in its purpose clause the following statement: **the corporation will comply with the state and local laws and ordinances relating to alcoholic liquors**. State whether the corporation is a condominium association as established under the Condominium Property Act, a cooperative housing corporation defined in Section 216 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or a homeowner association, which administers a common-interest community as defined in subsection (c) of Section 9-102 of the Code of Civil Procedures.

(d) **Tax-Exempt Status**

If you intend to apply for federal tax-exempt status, you must elaborate on the purposes set forth in this section under a separate section for Other Provisions.

(e) **Powers**

All Not-for-Profit Corporations are granted many powers by statute. Because these powers are statutory, they do not need to be listed and should not be listed in the purpose clause either as purposes or as powers. Among the granted, statutory powers are the powers to sue and be sued, complain and defend, in the corporate name; to have and affix a corporate seal; to purchase, lease, acquire, hold, use, own, or otherwise deal in and with any real and personal property; to make contracts and incur liabilities; to elect or appoint officers; to make and alter by-laws; to loan money for its corporate purposes; to have and exercise all powers necessary or convenient to effect any or all of the purposes for which the corporation is organized.

**Directors**

There must be at least three (3) directors. They do not have to be Illinois residents or corporation members, but you may require these restrictions or impose any other qualifications you choose. Restrictions and qualifications may be set forth on the Articles of Incorporation under the Other Provisions section, or you may leave restrictions and qualifications to be set forth in the corporate by-laws.

**Incorporators**

One or more incorporators may organize a corporation under this Act. An incorporator may be either a natural person age 18 or older or a corporation, domestic or foreign, whether not-for-profit or otherwise.

### Other Provisions

Below or following the purpose clause, you may list any other provisions regarding the internal affairs of the corporation you wish to have included as part of the Articles of Incorporation. These may include:

(a) **Tax-Exempt Status**

If you intend to apply to the IRS for tax-exempt status and the section of the Internal Revenue Code under which your corporation will fall requires an elaboration of purposes, the means for achieving them, procedures for dissolution, etc., this is the place to make those statements. This section must be written in language and format that conforms to the specifications of the IRS Code. These statements will play a large part in the determination of your tax status by the IRS. *(Note — In certain cases, this information may be included in your by-laws instead of placed in the Articles of Incorporation. Check Publication 557, ask the IRS, or consult an attorney if you are uncertain about this.)*

(b) **Restrictions and Qualifications**

List who can be a member, an officer, or a director and what duties each must perform. This information need not be a part of the Articles of Incorporation, but if it is not, such information should be a part of the by-laws.

(c) **Other Regulations**

List any other regulation for the governing of the internal affairs of the corporation or leave these for the by-laws.

## COST AND EXPEDITED SERVICE

To become a Not-for-Profit Corporation, submit two (2) identical copies of the Articles of Incorporation, with at least one copy being the original, and the \$50 filing fee in the form of a certified check, cashiers check or money order payable to Secretary of State. All Articles of Incorporation, including the filing fee, must be mailed to the Department of Business Services office in Springfield for review.

The department offers the review and, if approved, the filing of Articles of Incorporation on an expedited basis within 24 hours of receipt in either the Springfield or Chicago office. Pursuant to the provisions of the Illinois General Not For Profit Corporation Act, all such requests for expedited service must be made **in person** either in the Springfield or Chicago office and accompanied by a separate expedited service fee of \$25, payable to Secretary of State, in addition to the \$50 filing fee. Any Articles of Incorporation hand-delivered to either the Springfield or Chicago office not requesting expedited service will be reviewed on a routine (non-expedited) basis in the Springfield office.

When approved, the Secretary of State will stamp the date of filing on both copies and return one copy to the incorporators or their representative.

## FILINGS AFTER INCORPORATING

### **Recording**

After receiving the Articles of Incorporation from the Secretary of State, you must file them with the Recorder of Deeds of the county in which the registered office of the corporation is located. This recording must be made within 15 days after the Secretary of State has mailed these items, or as soon as possible thereafter.

### **Federal Income Tax**

Should you decide to apply for federal income tax exemption, you must do so after you have been incorporated and have received the filed Articles of Incorporation from the Secretary of State. Obtain the proper application form from the IRS, and complete and submit the application, along with photocopies of your Articles of Incorporation and your by-laws, to the IRS. The IRS will notify you of their determination, and the annual reports that will be required in the future, after receiving your documents.

If you do not apply for or do not receive a federal tax exemption, you must file federal income tax returns and pay the appropriate tax. Consult the IRS for the time to file and the forms to use.

### **Illinois Income Tax**

If your corporation receives a federal tax exemption, it is exempt from Illinois income tax. No reports need to be filed and no tax is due.

If you do not apply for or do not receive a federal tax exemption, you must file Illinois income tax returns and pay the appropriate tax. Consult the Illinois Department of Revenue, Income Tax Division, for the time to file and forms to use.

### **Illinois Sales Tax**

Some not-for-profit corporations may qualify for an exemption from paying sales tax on goods purchased for the use of the organization if they are formed for exclusively charitable, religious or educational purposes or for senior citizens. To find out if you qualify, write a letter of request to the Illinois Department of Revenue, Sales Tax Division, and enclose photocopies of your Articles of Incorporation, by-laws, constitution, IRS exemption letter, or any other document that may help in determining your status. The Department of Business Services will notify you of your status.

If you qualify for sales tax exemption, you will be issued a letter ruling to that effect. You may not use your not-for-profit registration number or IRS number to claim exemption from Illinois sales tax.

### **Illinois Attorney General Registration**

Certain charitable organizations must register with the Attorney General, Division of Charitable Trust and Solicitations, under either or both the Illinois Charitable Trust Act or the Illinois Solicitation Act. Information and forms may be obtained from the Office of the Illinois Attorney General.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

### **Annual Reports to the Secretary of State**

ALL Not-for-Profit Corporations must file an annual report of officers and directors with the Secretary of State. The due date depends upon when the corporation was formed. The annual report is due before the first day of the corporation's anniversary month each year. The anniversary month is the month in which the corporation was formed. For example, if the date of incorporation was Sept. 15, the anniversary month is September and each annual report is due before the first day of September each year. Forms will be sent to the registered agent approximately 60 days before the due date.

**Failure to file an annual report may result in involuntary dissolution of the corporation.**

### **Annual Reports to Other Government Agencies**

The Internal Revenue Service, the Illinois Department of Revenue and the Illinois Attorney General may require other annual returns. Whether you must file a return and which return you will use depends in part on your status as a tax-exempt or non-tax-exempt corporation. To be sure of your obligations, please consult the proper agency.

### **Other Reports to the Secretary of State**

Any change in the corporate name, duration or purpose will require that the Articles of Incorporation be amended, using the proper form. Also, should the corporation need to report a merger, dissolution or reinstatement, it should use the proper form. All forms for these reports are available from the Secretary of State and should be filed upon the occurrence of the particular event.

The government agencies listed in this guide are not intended to be a complete list, but merely those agencies most frequently required to be consulted. Some local governments also may require filings or reports.

## ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS

### SECRETARY OF STATE

Secretary of State  
Department of Business Services  
Corporations Division  
350 Howlett Building  
Springfield, IL 62756  
217-782-6961

Secretary of State  
Department of Business Services  
Corporations Division  
69 W. Washington, Ste. 1240  
Chicago, IL 60602  
312-793-3380

[www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com)

### DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

Department of Revenue  
Income Tax Division  
101 W. Jefferson  
Springfield, IL 62708  
800-732-8866

Department of Revenue  
Income Tax Division  
100 W. Randolph  
Chicago, IL 60601  
800-732-8866

Department of Revenue  
Sales Tax Division  
101 W. Jefferson  
Springfield, IL 62708  
800-732-8866

Department of Revenue  
Sales Tax Division  
100 W. Randolph  
Chicago, IL 60601  
800-732-8866

[www.revenue.state.il.us/](http://www.revenue.state.il.us/)

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

Illinois Attorney General  
Division of Charitable Trust and Solicitations  
100 W. Randolph  
12th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601  
312-814-2595

### INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (Form pick-up only)

Internal Revenue Service  
320 W. Washington  
Room 611  
Springfield, IL 62703

Internal Revenue Service  
230 S. Dearborn  
Chicago, IL 60609  
Attn: Forms Services  
800-829-3676

All places in Illinois not listed above, call: 800-829-1040

All IRS forms and publications may be obtained from:

Internal Revenue Service  
Forms  
P.O. Box 24672  
Kansas City, MO 64131  
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## **Boneyard Creek Community Day 2006 – Liability Waiver** **Waiver of Liability, Assumption of Risk, and Indemnity Agreement**

Waiver: In consideration of being permitted to participate in any way in the Boneyard Creek Community Day project (hereinafter referred to as the “Project”), I, for myself, my heirs, personal representatives or assigns, **do hereby release, waive, discharge, and covenant not to sue** the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, its officers, employees, agents and assigns; the City of Champaign; the City of Urbana; the Urbana Park District; the Champaign Park District; the Prairie Rivers Network; and all sponsors of the “Project” their officers, employees, agents and assigns from liability from any and all claims including those which result in personal injury, accidents, or illnesses (including death), and property loss arising from, but not limited to, participation in the Project.

**Assumption of Risks:** Participation in the Project carries with it certain inherent risks that cannot be eliminated regardless of the care taken to avoid injuries. The specific tasks vary from one activity to another, but the risks range from 1.) minor injuries such as scratches, bruises, and sprains, to 2.) major injuries such as eye injury or loss of sight and joint or back injuries. Any activities in the water may include the possibility of drowning.

I have read the previous paragraphs and I know, understand, and appreciate these and other risks that are inherent in the Project. I hereby assert that my participation is voluntary and that I knowingly assume all such risks.

**Indemnification and Hold Harmless:** I also agree to INDEMNIFY AND HOLD the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois; the City of Champaign; the City of Urbana; the Urbana Park District; the Champaign Park District; the Prairie Rivers Network, and the sponsors of the “Project” from any and all claims, actions, suits, procedures, costs, expenses, damages and liabilities, including attorney’s fees, brought as a result of my involvement in the Project and to reimburse it for any such expenses incurred.

**Acknowledgement of Understanding:** I have read this waiver of liability, assumption of risk, and indemnity agreement, fully understand its terms, and **understand that I am giving up substantial rights, including my right to sue.** I acknowledge that I am signing the agreement freely and voluntarily, and **intend by my signature to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability** to the greatest extent allowed by law.

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent of Minor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Participant’s Name (Please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant’s Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant’s Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant’s Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**You must sign this liability waiver to participate! Thank You!**

