



Shawnee Trails



<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/Shawnee/>

Sierra Club – Shawnee Group

March – May 2014 QUARTERLY

In This Issue:

50 Years of the Wilderness Act Pg 1
Spring Programs & Socials Pg 2
Spring Outings Pg 3
Shawnee Volunteer Corps Pg 4
Alert, Fracking Update Pg 4
IDNR Letter Writing Party, Example Pg 5-7
Alert, Rocky Branch Mine Pg 8
Alert, Coal Ash Pg 9-10
Native Plants and Plant Sale Pg 11-12

Shawnee Group Contact Information:

Shawnee Group Sierra Club
PO Box 117, Carbondale, IL 62903-0117

Website:

<http://www.illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee>
or <http://shawneegroup.blogspot.com>

Chair: Barb McKasson (618) 529-4824
babitaji@aol.com

Vice Chair: Dorcy Prosser (618) 457-6535
dorcyprosser2001@yahoo.com

Secretary: Ruth Kelley (618) 684-2196
rth_kelley@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Patty Weyhrich
pweyhrich711@hotmail.com

Conservation Chair: Barb McKasson

Legislative/political/lobbying Chair: Jean Seller, biojean@peoplepc.com

Membership Co-Chair: Dorcy Prosser
(618) 457-6535
dorcyprosser2001@yahoo.com

Membership Co-Chair: John Cox, 618-713-2840

Program and Publicity Chair: Ruth Kelley
(618) 684-2196 rth_kelley@yahoo.com

Hospitality: JoAnne Nelson (618) 529-1884

Outings Leader: Christine Crites,
ccrites@siu.edu

Chapter Delegate: Barb McKasson

Conservation Co-Chair/Alternate Chapter Delegate: Anton Kvernes (618) 457-5570

Newsletter Editor: Sabrina Hardenbergh
sabrina@midwest.net

Webmaster: Christina Cannova
simoncini2@yahoo.com

Sierra Club is Celebrating 50 Years of The Wilderness Act!

The **Wilderness Act** of 1964 (Pub.L. 88-577) was written by Howard Zahniser of The Wilderness Society. It created the legal definition of wilderness in the United States, and protected 9.1 million acres (36,000 km²) of federal land. The Sierra Club was part of this effort. The result of a long effort to protect federal wilderness and to create a formal mechanism for designating wilderness, the Wilderness Act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 3, 1964 after over sixty drafts and eight years of work. When Johnson signed the act, he made the following statement: "If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it."

The Wilderness Act is well known for its succinct and poetic definition of wilderness:

"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

The Act also created the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). The current amount of areas designated by the NWPS as wilderness totals 757 areas encompassing 109.5 million acres of federally owned land in 44 states and Puerto Rico (5% of the land in the United States).¹

The seven wilderness areas in Shawnee National Forest were designated by an act of Congress in 1990. Shawnee Group Sierra Club was a driving force in the effort. There are three additional areas in Shawnee Forest that we wanted to have included in the Illinois Wilderness Act, and for which we are still seeking stronger protection - Camp Hutchins, Ripple Hollow and Burke Branch.

¹Source: Wikipedia; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilderness_Act

IDNR Fracking Letter Writing Party !!!

Thursday, March 6th, 4:00 – 8:00 pm

Carbondale Township meeting room, 217 E Main St.

HELP US put legislators and the Governor on notice that we are watching, and still vitally concerned about the fracking rules. For more info, contact Jean Seller, biojean@peoplepc.com
Pizza served during dinner hours!

2014 SPRING PROGRAMS NOTE: Start time at 7 PM!

Location: Rear of 217 East Main, across from Rock Hill Baptist Church. Enter in rear, through green door. The front door is locked!

Thursday, March 13, 2014: Spring Wildflowers of Southern Illinois

Speaker: John Schwegman

Dinner: Longbranch Café, 100 East Jackson, Carbondale 529-4488

Thursday, April 10, 2014: Fish Communities of the Cache River Basin

Speaker: Kristen Bouska, Environmental Resources and Policy Program, SIUC

Dinner: Reema's Indian Cuisine, 709 S. Illinois Ave., Carbondale 457-6666

Thursday, May 8, 2014: Home Landscaping with Native Wildflowers

Speaker: TBA

Dinner: Garfields, University Mall, Carbondale 549-2191

Thursday, July 10, 2014: Trail of Tears State Forest

Speaker: Tracey Boutelle Fidler

Dinner: TBA

Meet Fellow Shawnee Group Members for Dinner before the Monthly Meeting!

The Shawnee Group meets at a local restaurant before each monthly meeting for an hour of sociability and relaxation. New faces are most welcome and we would love to have you join us at any time! Our upcoming dinners will be at:

Thurs, Mar.13, 2014, 5 pm:

Longbranch Café,

100 East Jackson, Carbondale 529-4488

Thurs, Apr.10, 2014, 5 pm:

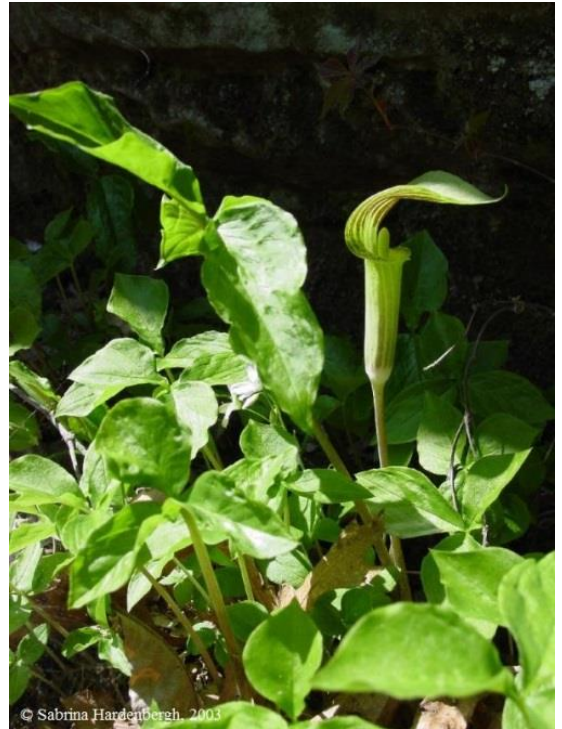
Reema's Indian Cuisine,

709 South Illinois Ave, Carbondale 457-6666

Thurs, May 8, 2014, 5 pm:

Garfields,

University Mall, Carbondale 549-2191



Jack-in-the-Pulpit



Showy Orchis

Shawnee Area Wilderness Hikes Planned for 2014

In Celebration of the Wilderness Act, several local groups of the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club collaborated to plan an outing to every wilderness area in the state. Seven of the eight federally designated wilderness areas in Illinois are located in the only National Forest in the state – the Shawnee National Forest. The eighth is in Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, which is next door to the Shawnee NF. Six different outings are planned that will explore all eight wilderness areas. We are in the process of arranging area experts for each outing. Although not a part of the outing itself, Sierrans will be camping for the weekend at nearby campgrounds. We face a unique outings challenge in that Wilderness areas are restricted to groups of ten or less. We may need to form multiple groups if the numbers exceed ten. All of the Outings are currently listed in OARS.

March 29, 2014, Saturday, Wilderness Act Celebration Burden Falls and Bay Creek Moderate Level Hike This first adventure takes us to the Burden Falls Wilderness Area and to the Bay Creek Wilderness area. Meet at the Burden Falls Parking lot at 10:00AM. Wear weather appropriate clothing and pack a lunch. Camping is not part of the outing; however, Sierrans will be camping for the weekend in nearby Bell Smith Springs Redbud Campground. Presented by: Piasa Palisades Group Leader: Carol Klinger, 618-288-5506, ciklinger@yahoo.com. Registration Required before March 24, 2014 12:00 AM Location: Meet at 10:00 AM at Burden Falls Parking Lot <http://tioga.sierraclub.org/oars-activity/pages/activity.jsf?activity=50541>

April 26, 2014 Wilderness Act Celebration Bald Knob Wilderness Area – Moderate This second adventure takes us to Bald Knob Wilderness area. Meet at (location tbd). Wear weather appropriate clothing and pack a lunch. Camping is not part of the outing; however, Sierrans will be camping for the weekend in nearby Pine Hills Campground. Registration required before April 21, 12:00 AM. Contact Carol Klinger, 618-288-5506, ciklinger@yahoo.com. <http://tioga.sierraclub.org/oars-activity/pages/activity.jsf?activity=50558>

May 17, 2014, Saturday, Wilderness Act Celebration : Clear Springs - Moderate Level Hike: In celebration of the Wilderness Act, we will explore all of the Wilderness Areas in Illinois. This third adventure takes us to the Clear Springs Wilderness area. Meet at **10:00 AM** (location tbd). Wear weather appropriate clothing and pack a lunch. Camping is not part of the outing; however, Sierrans will be camping for the weekend in a reserved campsite in nearby Trail of Tears Campground. Contact Carol Klinger, 618-288-5506, ciklinger@yahoo.com. Registration required before May 12, 2014, 12:00AM. <http://tioga.sierraclub.org/oars-activity/pages/activity.jsf?activity=50559>

Shawnee Group Hike with New Leader, Christine Crites

The Marshall Ridge trail (2.8 miles - Beginner) with the option to continue on to Heron Pond. Meet at 12:30 at the big sign at the Murdale Shopping Center. Could stop along the way to pick up anyone further south.

Wear sturdy shoes, bring water and a snack. Hike will take place on a Saturday or Sunday in the spring - Date TBA. Contact Christine Crites at ccrites@siu.edu for further information and updates.

Piasa Palisades Group Outings Chair:
Carol Klinger, 618-288-5506,
ciklinger@yahoo.com
<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/PiasaPalisades>

Eastern Missouri Group Outings Chair:
Bob Gestel 636-296-8975,
rgestel@sbcglobal.net
<http://missouri.sierraclub.org/emg/outings.aspx>

Shawnee Volunteer Corps Announces Spring 2014 Work Days

Join the Shawnee Volunteer Corps to assist Shawnee National Forest employees with upcoming trail work days at several locations (below) on the Hidden Springs and Mississippi Bluff Ranger Districts. Contact Kelly Pearson, Volunteer Coordinator, at the Shawnee Volunteer Corps, at 618-833-8576 (ext. 103) or e-mail: kdpearson@fs.fed.us to pre-register for a workday and/or for more information. Volunteers should wear long pants, sturdy shoes, and bring a lunch and water bottle for each workday.

Panther Den on:

Saturday, February 22, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 23, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 2, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 16, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 30, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 6, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 13, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 19, 2013 – 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Indian Point Trail at Garden of the Gods on:

Saturday, March 1, 2014 – 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 9, 2014 – 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 15, 2014 – 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 5, 2013 – 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Fracking Update

Since Illinois Department of Natural Resource's November 15th announcement of its proposed Rules for high-volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing, five public hearings were well attended by over 1000 people, predominantly speaking out against horizontal hydraulic fracturing. Over 30,000 written public comments were received by the January 3rd deadline. Presently, IDNR is still reviewing the public comments, and the Joint Commission on Administrative Rules must then evaluate IDNR's work, the results of which are anticipated this spring. Meanwhile, various environmental groups, including the Illinois Chapter and Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club, are strategizing further lobbying, direct action and legal recourse.



Ina IDNR hearing, December 3, 2013.

Greenpeace filmmaker, Mitch Wenkus, who has been following coal and gas issues along aside Sierrans and other southern Illinois environmentalists, recently released [Fracking in the Land of Lincoln](#). He encourages his video to be shared widely to help inform people about the issue.

Reported to the Attorney General's office, the IEPA and IDNR, a January 27th oil rig explosion near Fairfield, IL highlights the fracking industry's loophole circumventing the supposedly "strongest regulations" in the country. The [Illinois Hydraulic Fracturing Regulatory Act](#) and IDNR's proposed [Rules](#) regulate only high-volume water fracking methods, and not "dry fracking" with various chemicals (e.g., nitrogen, CO₂, propane) and less water. The dry fracking oil and gas drilling operations generally do not use more than 80,000 gallons of base fluid in any stage, or more than 300,000 gallons total, which are the quantities that trigger the definition of "high-volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing" under HFRA. Companies like Vincennes, IN and Lawrenceville, IL based [Franklin Well Services](#), or global drilling company [Nabors](#), already are supplying a variety of drilling fluids, acids, nitrogen tank trucks, and other equipment for fracking in the New Albany Shale region. Both these companies' trucks were at the Fairfield well blowout site. Such developments have prompted environmental groups to reframe their educational and lobbying messages.

Illinois Chapter Sierra Club Fracking Issues Committee
Letter Writing Format on Strengthening IDNR “Fracking” Rules:

IDNR Letter Writing Party !!!

Carbondale Township meeting room
Thursday, March 6th, 4:00 – 8:00 pm

For more info, contact Jean Seller,
biojean@peoplepc.com.

Pizza served during dinner hours!

Directions: Your letter needs the official’s address (see page 6), and your name, address and phone or Email. Start with a reminder that the purpose of the [Hydraulic Fracturing Regulatory Act \(HFRA\)](#) that the Legislature and Governor passed last year was to provide protective laws for Illinois on high-volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing and update the very minimal 1940’s oil drilling rules. Then point out that since the IDNR’s first release proposed rules fall far short of the requirements in the approved HFRA, you are pleased to see the Governor’s pledge in Chicago January 19th at the Martin Luther King public event at St. Michael Church, to direct the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to strengthen its proposed rules regulating high volume horizontal fracturing. Be sure to include some of the concerns expressed below or your own concerns about the proposed rules. Conclude with “the ask” (See Part D below)!

Part A - Opening (examples)

1. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) first release of proposed rules fall far short of the [Hydraulic Fracturing Regulatory Act \(HFRA\)](#) requirements. In fact, their first proposed rules do not follow the law. I am very concerned that IDNR will not make the many changes needed to bring their proposed rules into compliance with the law passed last year and if IDNR does not do so their rules should be rejected by JCAR.
2. I am appalled by the IDNR first release of proposed rules on the [Hydraulic Fracturing Regulatory Act \(HFRA\)](#) requirements. To me, this is an indication that the Office of Oil and Gas wants weak enforcement of the law. This calls for remedy and oversight from the legislature to make sure the next revision by IDNR truly protects the environment and public health.

Part B - Reasons for Concern (examples)

1. Scientific Studies have shown that significant health effects occur within a mile or more of a fracked well. The Act setbacks are a compromise and are far short of what is needed to protect public health and must not be weakened.
2. Enforcement is key to public protection. By introducing rules that would weaken enforcement of the law, IDNR is sending the wrong message to the industry. Fines must be enforced and not reduced.

Part C - Examples of How IDNR Rules Need to be Strengthened to adhere to HFRA

1. Conversion Factor ignored for alternative fracking methods - Using nitrogen gas or foam, propane or other fracking fluids uses less water, but can cause just as much harm as high volume water method. IDNR must evaluate these methods and develop a conversion factor to make sure these methods are covered by the rules.
2. Illinois shale has very high radioactivity, with “hotspots” that are extremely high. Produced water must be tested at various time intervals in order to determine radioactivity and to comply with the Illinois Low Level Radioactive Waste Management Act.

(Continued on next page)

(Letter Writing, Continued from Page 5):

3. Provisions to reduce Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) must be included to minimize the escape of VOCs from operations and from emergency overflow pits.
4. Healthcare Provider Access to “trade secrets” must be readily available. In an emergency, medical professionals must be able to find out ASAP what chemicals their patients have been exposed to. The legislation stated that “trade secret” chemicals and their proportions are available 24/7 for each well site and the rules should do the same.
5. Public Hearing Process on Permits must be easily accessed by the people most affected, but the first draft rules don’t require that. To preserve the crucial public participation component of the Act, there must be easy public access to information, and there must be easy public access to the public hearings in the county where the well is located.
6. Local Control - Counties should be given local control on siting of wells, since any rural operations would be under county jurisdiction. Municipal decisions on siting must be followed.
7. Fines - Fines must be substantial to insure companies comply with the rules and do not see violations as just a cost of doing business.
8. Earthquakes from injection wells are a justifiable fear, especially in southern Illinois. The Rules should include strong recommendations drafted by the Geologic Survey to do whatever possible to lessen the likelihood of damage.
9. Overflow Pits must be emptied within the time period spelled out in the Act. The pits must be emptied promptly to avoid overflows caused by miscalculations of flowback or rain events.
10. A precise formula for calculations of anticipated flowback and produced water must be required in order to minimize the usage of overflow pits.
11. Existing Wells that fit the definition of HFRA wells must be regulated under IDNR rules.
12. Public Hearing Purpose and Usefulness must be preserved. The first draft rules change the law by stating that the hearing officer decides whether or not the information at the hearing is sufficient to deny the permit as written. The Act states the hearing is held to provide information for the IDNR to use in their decision making process - not the hearing officer’s decision.
13. The first draft rules do not require the permit company and IDNR regulator to be at the hearing to answer questions, but the Act does require this. Please make sure this is corrected in the rules.

Part D - The “Ask” - Examples

1. The HFRA is considered as a “baseline” minimum regulation to safeguard public health and the environment. The rules should be strengthening rather than weakening the law.

(Continued on next page)

(Letter Writing, Continued from Page 6):

2. There is no proven technology for cleaning up deep well injection pollution and entire areas of underground water resources could be lost for present and future generations. Please make sure the rules are strengthened to protect our precious water resources.
3. These are just a few examples of how the IDNR first release proposed rules would weaken the HRFA that the legislature passed. Please urge your fellow legislators on the JCAR Committee to reject any rules that weaken the HRFA.

Please Mail Your Letter As Soon As Possible

For More information: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/OilandGas/Pages/HydraulicFracturing.aspx>

Addresses and other contact information for your state representative and senator may be found at the Illinois State Board of Elections website: <http://www.elections.il.gov>

- In the left column on the “home page”, click on #4: district/official search
- Enter your zip code (preferably with your 4 digit extension)
- Click on the “details” for your State Representative or State Senator to view all of their contact information. Information is also available at <http://www.ilga.gov/>.

Or Address your letter to your state Representative or Senator (by name) to this address:

Representative _____, 401 S. Spring St., Stratton Office Bldg., Springfield, IL 62706
Senator _____, 301 S. Second St., Statehouse, Springfield, IL 62706

The Illinois Chapter Sierra Club’s Frack Fight Team consists of Terry Treacy (terry.treacy@sierraclub.org) and Jennifer Hensley (jennifer.hensley@sierraclub.org).

To receive periodic updates and communications from local and national Sierra Club, become a member of the Illinois Chapter’s Frack Fight Team:

http://action.sierraclub.org/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=138181

FYI, to receive more timely alerts from the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club, sign up online at their state website:

https://secure.sierraclub.org/site/SPageNavigator/Chapter/il_newsletter_signup.html;jsessionid=84420F4C49A5A8CD264E1E3C3F131E25.app205a

Volunteers Needed to Help Protect Shawnee National Forest

Protecting Shawnee National Forest involves frequent communication with the Forest Service, research on issues, and educating others about those issues. We especially need help in keeping oil and gas wells out of the forest - including fracking wells. Please contact Barb at babitaji@aol.com if you are interested in helping in any way.

Call for articles and photographs for Shawnee Trails! The next issue will be published in June. Please send your Word, PDF or JPG files to sabrina@midwest.net by **May 5th**.

Public Comment Period on Peabody Coal's Proposed Rocky Branch Mine in Saline County

Over the decades southern Illinoisans hear many rallies to either support labor, or alternatively to support environmentalism, in regard to our more than century old legacy with coal mining. However, this does not have to be a divisive issue if we can instead promote more forward thinking on energy production, property use, human and environmental health, and reorientation of labor and investment from coal to newer energy technologies, such as in the promising area of solar, wind, energy efficient design, and such. Lately, between Harrisburg and Eldorado in Saline County, the residents of Cottage Grove are [standing up](#) to Peabody Arclar Mining, L.L.C., and its proposed Rocky Branch Mine, to make claim to their property and health, while [seeking better labor opportunity with less health and environmental impact](#). Many of these residents have worked over their lives in mining, but [they do not want the Rocky Branch Mine](#).

Peabody's strip mine is proposed for over 1000 acres along Rocky Branch Road, just across the highway from the recent [Wildcat Hills](#) strip pit that already subjects its neighbors to foundation rocking [explosions](#), plus air and water pollution. Although, [logging without a permit was halted this winter](#), Cottage Grove residents point to a 200+ acre old growth hardwood forest that was nevertheless partially cut to clear the land for mining, laying the hillside open with erosion. During public meetings at neighbors' homes or local restaurants, they compare how the coal company and its contractors have intimidated them to sell their property, how access to land not sold will become only accessible by boat when the frequent flooding occurs during storms, how earlier mining has impaired their [respiratory health](#), how Peabody pays significantly less in property taxes while holding the land for mining compared to area landowners who generally allocate it to agriculture or woodlands. The mine would discharge dredge or fill material into the creeks and waterways on a majority of its acreage, and fill many streams, several acres of wetlands, and 6.71 acres of open waters in Saline County. Coal mines have already impacted the [Saline River's water quality](#), an area that is home to the endangered Indiana and grey bats.



Cottage Grove landowners' homes could be strip mined like this mine across the highway.

Cottage Grove residents and supporters will [appear](#) at a 5 pm, February 18th [public hearing](#) to give oral comments to the Illinois EPA pertaining to water quality and the issues with Peabody's proposed strip mine along Rocky Branch Road. The proposed mine area has a number of streams into which mining effluent will be discharged, plus the area is prone to flooding, so one might picture the risks if we compare recent mining disasters in West Virginia or North Carolina, or even the older examples with our own Sugar Creek, or other regions' aquifers. [You, too, can participate via email or mail](#) during the written public comment period that extends to midnight on **March 19th**. Email comments to epapublichearingcom@illinois.gov, and specify [Rocky Branch Mine NPDES](#) or [IL0079936](#) in the subject line of the email. Alternatively, mail written comments, postmarked by March 19th to: **Hearing Officer Dean Studer, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, 1021 N. Grand Ave. East, PO Box 19276, Springfield, IL 62794-9276** (phone: 217-558-8280). The IEPA particularly seeks comments pertaining to water quality, so frame broader health and environmental concerns in this context.

Speak Out for Strong Rules for Coal Ash Pits at Illinois Power Plants

You may recall the infamous 2008 environmental disaster when a dam holding back decades' worth of coal ash failed at a TVA power plant in Tennessee, flooding the surrounding residential area with more than one billion gallons of toxic coal ash. Shortly thereafter, the USEPA came out with proposed rules for dealing with the 140 million tons of coal ash generated in this country every year. Unfortunately, the recent coal ash disaster in North Carolina that continues to spew toxic ash into the Dan River is a frustrating reminder that we are still waiting for the EPA coal ash rules to emerge.

Coal ash, a product of coal combustion, is stored in ash pits or ash ponds, at both operating and shuttered power plants. Many such pits and ponds leach pollutants, toxic heavy metals, including arsenic, lead, and selenium, into our streams, rivers, lakes and groundwater. Throughout Illinois, 24 power plant sites, containing 83 coal ash pits, receive 4.4 million tons of coal ash each year. At all sites tested, groundwater has been contaminated with pollutants including antimony, arsenic, boron, chloride, iron, lead, manganese, mercury, nitrate, pH, selenium, sulfate, thallium, zinc and total dissolved solids. [Coal ash toxins can cause cancer or neurological damage, as well as harm or kill wildlife such as fish.](#)

Illinois EPA isn't waiting for the federal EPA's proposed regulations. Instead IEPA has proposed rules for coal ash pits at power plant sites. The rules establish requirements for site characterization, groundwater monitoring, preventive response and corrective action on groundwater contamination, and pit closure.

Regulation is critically needed; however, [the proposed rules fall short](#) of protecting Illinois communities from the serious harm that coal ash pits pose to our surface waters, groundwater and drinking water supplies. For example, the rules will require a facility to *act* if an impoundment is found to be the source of groundwater contamination, but the rules do not require that the site be closed! If a site is closed, complete waste removal is not required. Since many ash pits in Illinois are located in floodplains or other sensitive areas, allowing toxic ash to remain rather than moving it into lined landfills is not acceptable.

The rules must fully prevent coal ash pits from threatening our communities. The draft rules should also:

- Require power companies to provide financial assurances for coal ash pits at all operating and retired power plants so communities don't have to pick up the tab.
- Require all companies consider first the option to remove coal ash from pits on their sites with final disposal at a high and dry landfill.
- Consider the threats coal ash pits pose to surface waters as well as to groundwater, including an assessment of the potential for breaches and dam failures as have occurred in other states.
- Provide the public 60 days to comment on companies' plans to correct problems and close their pits, and allow the IEPA to hold public meetings when the local public has concerns.

Help strengthen these rules to prevent **coal ash** from contaminating our waterways and drinking water.

- **Demand that IEPA's rules be strengthened** by [submitting comments through the Sierra Club's website](#) or directly to Illinois Pollution Control Board, Office of the Clerk, 100 W. Randolph St. Ste 11-5000. Chicago, IL, 6061, Subject line: Re: R14-10, Coal Combustion Ash Ponds.
- **Speak out at a public hearing on the rules!** The IPCB will host two public hearings: the first on February 26th at 10 AM in Springfield at the IEPA Headquarters, 1021 N. Grand Ave; the second will be May 15th and 16th in Chicago at 100 W. Randolph St. Please sign up to stay informed about schedule changes: <http://bit.ly/coalashsignup>

Coal Power Plants of Concern in the Shawnee

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS POWER CO-OP

Profile

- Owner: Southern Illinois Power Co-op
- Location: Lake of Egypt, Marion, IL
- # of coal ash pits: 7
- Capacity: not specified
- Status: all 7 are active; only 1 is lined; additional ash being dumped off-site at various known and unknown locations in Williamson County.
- # of water wells within 1 mile of Power Plant dump site: 3

Pollutants

2009 data showed high concentrations of the following contaminants in ash pond discharges to Saline Creek:

- Aluminum
- Boron
- Manganese

2010 showed high concentrations of the following contaminants in ash pond discharges to Saline Creek:

- Cadmium (Levels from unlined ponds and a landfill had reached 17.6 times the maximum contaminant level (MCL) and 35 times federal water quality standard for acute toxicity in groundwater discharging to Saline Creek.)
- Iron

Learn more about the threats of coal ash and the proposed rules:

- Illinois Pollution Control Board rulemaking:
<http://www.ipcb.state.il.us/COOL/External/CaseView.aspx?case=14705>
- Illinois EPA:
<http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/ash-impoundment/>
- Illinois at Risk report:
<http://www.environmentalintegrity.org/documents/IllinoisatRisk.pdf>

For more information, contact
colleen.smith@sierraclub.org 312-251-1680 x197
or terri.treacy@sierraclub.org 312-251-1680 x 193.

JOPPA STEAM PLANT

Profile

- Owner: Electric Energy Inc.
- Location: Joppa, IL
- # of coal ash pits: 2
- Capacity: 1.024 billion gallons
- Status: 1 active and both are unlined
- # of water wells within 1 mile: 23

Pollutants

In August 2010 7 wells were sampled

Exceedances for contaminant levels included:

- Lead
- Manganese
- Iron
- Sulfate

Health advisory exceedances included manganese in two wells, sulfate in one well, and boron in two wells.

NEWTON POWER STATION

Profile

- Owner: Dynegy
- Location: Newton, IL
- # of ash pits: 2
- Capacity: 400-acre primary ash pond and 9-acre secondary ash pond both commissioned in 1977. Both hold fly ash and bottom ash
- Status: Active and unlined
- # of water wells within 1 mile: 1

Pollutants

In November 2010 3 wells were sampled.

Exceedances for contaminant levels included:

- Manganese
- Sulfate

-Health advisory exceedances included manganese in one well and sulfate in two wells.

-Groundwater quality exceedances included manganese, pH, sulfate, total dissolved solids, zinc

-Violation notice and Notice of Intent to Pursue Legal Action were issued by IEPA.

-Of note: coal ash pond discharges have contaminated underlying groundwater as well as discharge directly to Newton Lake, a State Fish and Wildlife Area with heavy fishing pressure and listed as impaired and has a fish advisory due to excessive levels of mercury.

Shawnee Group Sierra Club Native Plant Sale

Location: Town Square Pavilion, corner of Main Street and Illinois Ave., Carbondale, IL 62901

Date: 8:00 am - 2:00 pm, Saturday, May 17, 2014

Contact info: Helen Ashraf, 618-713-6401, hlahshraf@siu.edu; Barbara McKasson, 618-529-4824, babitaji@aol.com

Why should you consider using plants native to Illinois in your landscaping?

- Beauty: Many native plants have beautiful flowers, attractive fall and winter colors, or interesting seed heads.
- Toughness: Native plants are tough. Weather? They have survived it all before. Bad soil? They make and amend their own soil. Insects? They have built-in defenses. Drought, hail, heavy rains, flooding, heavy clay, or rocks, or sand – whatever conditions exist, there are native plants which have evolved to cope with them. Don't "fight your site" – choose native plants which are adapted for whatever conditions exist.
- Educational value: Many people are not familiar with the plants which grew naturally in Illinois prior to European settlement. We hope you learn to enjoy and appreciate these plants, whether found in natural areas, along the roadside, or in your yards and fields.
- Ease of care: Natives chosen to match the conditions where they are planted do not need tilling, fertilizer, soil amendments, or insecticide. After the plants are established, no watering is usually necessary. Occasional weeding is all that is required.
- For the Birds: Many birds, especially goldfinches and juncos, relish the seeds of native plants. Downy seeds such as milkweed are also used as nesting material. Native plants also support abundant insects which bird parents need to raise thriving offspring.
- Pollinators: Unlike many cultivars and other domesticated varieties, native plants provide abundant nectar, pollen, and shelter for native pollinators and honeybees.
- Wildlife: Native plants provide food, shelter and protection for wildlife including quail, turkey, and rabbits.
- Wildness! These plants have not been selectively bred. They retain all their genetic diversity and competitiveness.
- Buffer for irreplaceable natural areas. Native plantings are a valuable barrier between parks, preserves and refuges and hostile environments such as highways, farm fields, industries, and developments.
- Seed bank: Established native plants produce seeds, corms, and transplants which can be harvested to establish, maintain, or enrich other areas.

These plants are wild! They have not been selectively bred or cloned to be docile, well-behaved, showy and high-maintenance. They do make superb habitat for all the wild creatures which have co-existed with them for millennia. I hope that you can make room for at least a tiny corner of "wildness" and share your yard, meadow or woods with all the creatures that are being crowded out by uncontrolled development.



Bloodroot.

Websites to Learn More About Landscaping with Native Plants:

Illinois Native Plant Society: <http://www.ill-inps.org/>
Illinois Native Plant Society Southern Chapter:
<https://www.facebook.com/southernillinoisplants>

Eastern Illinois University, Landscaping and Restoration Using Illinois Native Plant Species:
http://castle.eiu.edu/~n_plants/

Illinois Natural History Survey, Links to Using Native Plants in the Landscape:
<http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/~kenr/prairienativelinks.html>

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, University of Texas Austin, Illinois Recommended:
<http://www.wildflower.org/collections/collection.php?collection=IL>

Plant Native, How to Naturescape: http://www.plantnative.org/how_intro.htm

University of Illinois Extension, Wildflowers:
<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/wildflowers/nativeplants.cfm>

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois:
http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/il/plantsanimals/?cid=nrcs141p2_030715

US Dept. of Transportation, State Plant Listings, Illinois:
http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/ecosystems/vegmgmt_rd_il.asp



Dutchman's Breeches, Ferns, Violets



Flowering Dogwood



Redbud