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STATE OF ILLINOIS  
Pollution Control Board

Ms. Dorothy Gunn

Clerk of the Board

Illinois Pollution Control Board

100 W. Randolph St., Suite 11-500

Chicago, Illinois 61601

R01-13  
P.C.#47

To the Illinois Pollution Control Board:

We the undersigned organizations urge you to adopt antidegradation rules which accomplish the following:

1. Guarantees the protection of all existing uses of Illinois' waters including swimming, fishing, paddling, drinking water, and the preservation of aquatic species, including threatened or endangered species.
2. Maintains water quality in high quality waters and those waters that are currently better than the minimum water quality standards for the state of Illinois.
3. Provides for a fair process for designating streams of exceptional recreational and ecological significance as "Outstanding Resource Waters."

In order to accomplish these goals we request that the Illinois Pollution Control Board adopt the following principles.

First, we suggest that the Board not adopt a de minimus provision or a significance test as part of Illinois' antidegradation policy. A de minimus provision and a significance test would allow arbitrary levels of pollution to be released to our waters without undergoing an adequate review to determine if existing uses would be harmed or if water quality was unnecessarily degraded.

Second, we urge the board to remove the exception from antidegradation review of activities covered under a General NPDES permit. Just because an activity is covered under a General NPDES permit, rather than a site-specific NPDES permit, does not

mean it will not cause degradation. At a minimum we request that board not allow general permits to be issued in waters that are known to contain rare species or species that are intolerant of pollution.

Third, we ask that the board not adopt any additional exceptions to antidegradation review. The exceptions described in the Agency's original proposal (excluding the one from general permits) are adequate and cover a broad range of activities for which an antidegradation review would be duplicative. Additional exceptions proposed by the regulated community are not consistent with the concept of antidegradation.

Lastly, we request that the Board adopt procedures for the designation of Outstanding Resource Waters that are not overly burdensome. The proposed rules created a process which we believe would exclude any organizations such as ours from ever bringing a petition before the Board. We request that the socioeconomic analysis be much more limited in scope and only require a simple statement on the potential impacts to the local economy. We also request that the list of recipients of the full petition be restricted to the Board, Illinois EPA, and Illinois DNR, with a reasonable notification list possibly included to cover other potentially interested parties.

We applaud the efforts to date of the Board and the Illinois EPA to create the proposal which is now under your consideration. A strong antidegradation policy is an essential piece to Illinois' clean water program and one which has been largely missing for far too long.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the important matter.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Oliver,

President/

Citizens Committee to Save Cache River

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