

2419 East Reservoir
Peoria, IL 61614-8029
July 13, 2009

Illinois Pollution Control Board
James R. Thompson Center, Suite 11-500
100 West Randolph Street
Chicago, IL 60601

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STATE OF ILLINOIS
Pollution Control Board

PC# 3

Regarding:
Public Comments for Case PCB 2009-038
Ameren Energy Generating Company v. IEPA

To the Members of the Illinois Pollution Control Board:

I urge you to deny the water temperature changes Ameren Energy Generating Company is requesting regarding Coffeen Lake. Ameren should be required to conduct additional studies of the Coffeen Lake watershed and area water resources and uses before any regulatory changes are made for this cooling lake. Allowing Ameren to have relief from their current thermal limits is a band-aid approach on something that indeed is a much greater problem. It would appear likely that if this regulatory relief is approved, Coffeen Lake will become a sacrifice zone for the operation of the Ameren Coffeen Lake Power Plant. Ameren says they will conduct a study, find more heat tolerant fish, and replace fish if there are fish kills, but this will not address the real problems with the situation. If the climate continues to warm, it would appear very likely that Ameren could be back for additional regulatory relief regarding temperature issues at another time in the future. There is a valid question if adequate water resources for the operation of this cooling plant will continue to be available.

I have visited Hillsboro, Illinois, on many occasions and have good and dear friends who live in town and in the countryside outside of Hillsboro toward Coffeen. In my hiking interests as a volunteer and member of Sierra Club, I have done hiking and bird watching in the Coffeen Lake Upland Management Unit and near McDavid Branch Creek and have been at the Coffeen Lake IDNR site, and I have been in Coffeen on several occasions.


At the June 23rd public hearing, Ms. Arlis Bates commented with concerns regarding proposed longwall mining in the watershed above Coffeen Lake. I have been told that McDavid Branch Creek provides a significant amount of water to Coffeen Lake. A section of the creek north of Route 185 above Coffeen Lake will be dropped due to longwall mining subsidence. The mine permit application states the average land sinking will be 5.7 feet. This will be happen over more than 4,000 acres, mostly north of Route 185 which is north of Coffeen Lake and to the west. The mine will drop land from the north to the south, meaning water levels of McDavid Branch Creek could be affected over the course of ten or more years.

If less water is available from McDavid Branch Creek, it would seem the lake would suffer further problems. It could possibly mean that Ameren's plans for adequate water resources for their cooling processes could be seriously impaired.

While Ameren is claiming economic conditions and the cost of possible cooling tower improvements as to why they should be given regulatory relief, public sources show their electric division revenue for 2008 was \$6.37 billion out of total revenue for the company of \$7.84 billion. I think it is valid for citizens to ask, and for agencies to consider why such large companies should not be required to come up with better solutions to problems that what Ameren is requesting in this case. The temperature relief allows Ameren to continue business as usual and the lake and the fish and other things affected by this lake will bear the burden. Yes it is the cooling lake for the power plant, however, the water they are utilizing comes from the area environment and is part of the resources of this state and should be a consideration. I thank the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for opposing this "relief from current thermal limits."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,



Joyce Blumenshine