

2-29-16

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MAR - 2 2016

STATE OF ILLINOIS
Pollution Control Board

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

R14-10
PC# 3922

Dear Mr. Therriault,

The 2011 closure of the Dynegy coal fired generation plant on the Middle Fork River, an upstream tributary of the Big Vermilion River, pose a significant concern to riverine properties downstream. Specifically, Dynegy's poorly secured ash lagoons raise the threat of serious pollution problems should they be breached as they lie in the floodplain adjacent to the Middle Fork. As the owner of a mile of riverfront along the Big Vermilion River downstream from Danville, I am concerned about the possible delay in the rule-making process by the IPCB regarding the handling of coal ash.

The Middle Fork River, itself, is Illinois' only National Scenic River. In addition, the natural hydraulics of the river have scoured the walls of two of the ash pits. Gabions constructed on the river side of the berm are disintegrating and leachate from the ponds is entering the stream. Reinforcement of the walls has repeatedly failed to prevent the erosion and the direct seepage of the coal ash constituents into the river.

I do not wish for a repeat of the massive coal ash washout such as occurred a year or so back in West Virginia. The lack of regulations governing the management and disposal of coal ash and the possibility of a similar happening on the Middle Fork must be addressed now. Recently enacted federal coal ash rules do not apply to facilities such as the Vermilion site. Even at locations where they do apply, the oversight and enforcement provisions are so weak as to be ineffective. For this reason I call on the IPCB to not delay its state rule-making responsibilities as quickly as possible.

Please carry out your mandate and complete the process of adopting strong rules to regulate coal ash.

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