

June 6th, 2008

John Therriault, Assistant Clerk
Illinois Pollution Control Board
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 11-500
Chicago, Illinois 60601

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STATE OF ILLINOIS
Pollution Control Board

PC 48

RE: Rule Making R08-009

Dear Illinois Pollution Control Board:

I am writing to express my support for the recommended water quality standard improvements proposed by the Illinois EPA for the Chicago Area Waterways (CAWS) and Lower Des Plaines River as rule making R08-009.

These changes are long overdue and recommended only after five years of study on the CAWS and seven years on the Lower Des Plaines. We should all support the Illinois EPA's effort and approve the changes.

As a resident of Chicago and frequent paddler of the Chicago and Des Plaines rivers, I think it is critical that:

- The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District disinfect sewage treatment plant effluent to kill bacteria and protect public health and
- Temperature and dissolved oxygen standards be implemented to protect fish and help them flourish.

Over the years, the entire CAWS system has changed dramatically. The water, once full of raw sewage and industrial filth, has vastly improved through the leadership of agencies like the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District and its Tunnel and Reservoir Plan. Public access has increased considerably as local governments incorporated these rivers into their master planning. The City of Chicago, the Chicago Park District, and suburbs like Blue Island and Skokie have poured millions into river access for paddling, fishing, and crew. And so much work has been done to improve habitat and control pollution that in the Chicago River system, species of fish have climbed from under 10 to nearly 70, including game fish favorites like large-mouth bass and bluegill and yellow perch.

Because a review like this only comes along every 20 years, right now we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to continue our momentum by supporting the Illinois EPA recommendations so we can make the next quantum leap forward in water quality.

Many citizens such as myself demand that the Chicago River continue to improve and serve our communities as a recreational, natural and economic resource. If the representatives of the MWRD fail to support these improvements, I can assure you that they will be replaced in the next election cycle with representatives that do support these needed measures.

Thank you,



Nicholas Bianchi
2239 W. Superior
Chicago IL 60612