

# **Central Illinois Jobs with Justice Champaign-Urbana Illinois**

## **RESOLUTION**

**To address concerns over the threat of coal ash pollution of the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River, the state's only National Scenic River, and its impact on the jobs potential and recreational opportunities afforded by the river to working families of Vermilion County and the City of Danville**

WHEREAS the Vermilion Power station, a coal-fired power plant, was constructed along the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River in 1956, and operated for 55 years, before being closed in 2011 by its current owner Dynegy-Midwest Generation;

WHEREAS coal ash, the material left over after burning coal, was deposited in three coal ash pits along the west bank of the river during the coal plant's operation;

WHEREAS coal ash includes some of the most toxic substances known to humans, such as arsenic, mercury, lead, cadmium, selenium, chromium and more and the Dynegy pits now contain over 3.3 million cubic yards of toxic waste that threaten the river;

WHEREAS all three pits lie in the river's floodplain and two are actively leaking into adjacent surface and groundwater and the third sits over mine voids, raising questions over structural integrity;

WHEREAS the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River has, for decades, moved towards the banks of these three pits, causing significant erosion and raising questions and concerns over a potential breach that could send millions of gallons of coal ash into this National Scenic River;

WHEREAS two such spills have occurred in recent years, including: 1) one in 2008 when over 5.5 million cubic yards of toxic ash spilled into the Clinch and Emory Rivers from a Tennessee Valley Authority coal plant with clean up costs to date exceeding \$1.2 billion and 2) a second spill in 2014 when 46,000 cubic yards of coal ash from a Duke Energy coal plant entered the Dan River in North Carolina, sending coal ash downstream for over 70 miles with associated clean up costs of tens of millions of dollars and mounting;

WHEREAS the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River passes through more than 8,400 acres of scenic park and recreation areas and is one of central Illinois' greatest recreational assets;

WHEREAS the river and adjacent open land supports a great diversity of plants and animals and offers working families many no-cost and low-cost leisure activities like fishing, hunting, paddling, birding, horseback riding and photography;


WHEREAS Vermilion County has put forward a 2025 strategic plan that capitalizes on the economic development and job creation potential afforded by the river and its adjacent open space/recreational corridor;

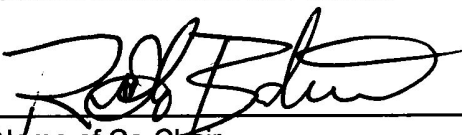
---

WHEREAS the City of Danville, the largest community in Vermilion County, is implementing a riverfront project on the edge of its downtown as a way to draw more tourists, spurring business growth and generating new jobs and as a means to compensate for recent decades in which Danville has experienced de-industrialization, job loss, property tax loss, and one of the highest unemployment rates in Illinois:

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** Central Illinois Jobs for Justice is joining the growing number of organizations asking the Illinois EPA to require Dynegy-Midwest Generation to protect the social, economic, and environmental interests of Vermilion County and the City of Danville by moving the three coal ash pits out of the floodplain of the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River, to a properly-constructed and lined location on its property, away from the river.

**PRESENTED, APPROVED and RESOLVED** by Central Illinois Jobs with Justice on this 17th day of September, 2016.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Co-Chair  
Central Illinois Jobs with Justice

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Co-Chair  
Central Illinois Jobs with Justice