

**Urgent Alert!!!!****Help Save Sugar Creek NOW!****Urgent!!!****Your help needed to save one of Southern Illinois' finest streams from destruction by a dam & reservoir!**

We need your comment letters sent to Illinois EPA - NOW – Comments must be received by **October 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Sugar Creek: A Unique Aquatic Resource:** Sugar Creek, located in Southern Illinois, is the highest quality stream remaining in the Saline River drainage. It is one of only 132 streams in Illinois that has been rated as “biologically significant” by the Illinois Natural History Survey. Sugar Creek is home to the state endangered Indiana crayfish and the state threatened least brook lamprey, and provides habitat for a broad diversity of other plant and animal species.

**Alternatives to Destruction:** For almost 20 years, local land owners and concerned citizens have fought to prevent this beautiful stream from being converted to a reservoir. Even though there is an abundance of manmade lakes in Southern Illinois, Marion officials insist that it must have its own water supply, rather than purchasing water from other available sources in the region.

The Sierra Club and some individuals have sued and won in court twice on the grounds that the economic and environmental analyses for this project have been inadequate. The latest analysis is still inadequate, and biased toward Marion's favored alternative – the Sugar Creek dam and reservoir. Marion officials have skewed the economic analyses by including Lake of Egypt Water District in their project, in defiance of a court order to separate the two water districts. It would take only four miles of pipeline for Marion to connect to the Rend Lake Intercity Water System. Rend Lake has plenty of water to serve Marion's needs – both now and in the future. In addition, the City of Marion has not adequately considered the alternatives using more than one source, such as: the current Marion reservoir and Herrin City reservoir with Rend Lake or Cedar Lake.

**The Current Situation:** The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has issued an “incidental take” permit to the City of Marion to allow the city to destroy habitat and individuals of the two threatened and endangered species in Sugar Creek. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency is now taking comments on the “*Antidegradation*” regulations related to the IEPA issuance of a Clean Water Act 401 Certification. We need **you** to let IEPA know that local citizens oppose the IEPA certification of the “Marion Lake Project.”

**What You Can Do:** Write to IEPA and let them know you are against the degradation of Sugar Creek, one of the highest quality and biologically diverse streams in the state (See sample letter on reverse side). Let IEPA know that you oppose the destruction of one of the few remaining habitats of two state threatened and endangered (T & E) species, especially since there are reasonable alternatives that would not destroy Sugar Creek, the two T & E species, and the diverse plant and animal communities dependent on Sugar Creek.

Illinois has already sacrificed the vast majority of its streams to reservoirs, pollution, and channelization. Using those reservoirs that have already been constructed to their fullest capacity not only spreads the costs of current impoundments among a much larger user base, but also makes it unnecessary to destroy the few remaining high quality streams in the state. Let's make sure IEPA hears LOUD opposition to this project. With your help we will also be sending the message that we do not want to sacrifice any more of our high quality streams for unnecessary water projects.

The Shawnee Group hopes you will write your own letter and include your own reasons for opposing the project. Please consider using the sample letter on the next page. If you use the sample letter as a form letter, remember to print your name and address and date at the top. To be considered, comments must be **received by Monday, 6<sup>th</sup>**.

**Be sure to include the IEPA Log. No. C-1530-00**

Comments can be faxed to: (217) 785-1225

Attention: David Ginder, IEPA Bureau of Water, Phone # (217) 782-3362