

**From:** [Carolyn Hendricks](#)  
**To:** [WaterbodyComments](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Arkansas 2018 Draft 303(d) impaired waters list  
**Date:** Sunday, September 9, 2018 9:49:18 PM

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Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Representative,

I could tell you that ADEQ's decision to remove tributaries of the Illinois River from Category 5 is not based on water quality data or sound science; however, you already know that. You also know that, though you may mean well, basing your decision on a watershed management plan or other best management practice is not acting in the best interest of the Illinois River and the life there. Osage Creek and Spring Creek receive large amounts of phosphorus and nitrates in treated sewage from Rogers, Springdale and Bentonville, Arkansas, as well as from other sources of pollution. That means you know Category 5 is the correct category for these tributaries. Further, the watershed management plan for the Illinois River watershed is non-regulatory and is not capable of providing the water quality protection that a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) will provide. More to the point of why I'm writing, it is also not capable of protecting the Illinois River watershed in a timely manner. I'm sure you also already know that. Additionally, Arkansas agreed to abide by the Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Joint Study by Baylor University. Placing Osage Creek, Spring Creek and other Illinois River water bodies in a category other than Category 5 is not in congruence with the study results that Arkansas agreed to abide by.

Under the impression you already knew all of that and have simply chosen to ignore it, I wanted to make sure you know that I knew all of that too. Now that it's clear you have the knowledge and are acting against, not only the best interest of the river, but also the agreement Arkansas made, I'm going to take a minute to tell you about the river itself. Have you spent a weekend at the river? Have you taken a trip with your friends or family and soaked in the nature around you? If not, you should. Because if you have, you would respect the river a lot more than you are. You would see the life in the water and the land surrounding it. You would feel the beauty and the connection to everything around you. The active decision you are making to ignore the science and data will lead to death in our river. Then where will it stop? You may think this is one small area, but there are people all over the world thinking the exact same thing. Take a stand and show them you care about life more than just your own. This river has supported life longer than you have even been alive, and will continue to support life longer than when you're gone - if you protect it. That would be a far greater legacy to leave behind than the one you're on the path to leaving.

Spend a weekend camping and floating on the river. Take it all in. Then imagine how different life would be when you damage our river and kill what depends on it. You can do something about it. Now my only question is - will you?

Sincerely,  
Carolyn Hendricks