

From: [Katy Starnes](#)
To: [WaterbodyComments](#)
Subject: Save the Buffalo River
Date: Sunday, September 9, 2018 11:52:04 AM

Dear ADEQ,
Please consider designating the Buffalo River and Big Creek a level 5 endangered water source.

I grew up taking canoe trips with my family in Arkansas. My dad sitting at the stern, my brother and I in the middle, and my mom paddling up front. My parents still have our red canoe with hundreds of scratches and scars serving as a historical record of the rapids traversed from the Big Piney to the Spring River.

I am a fifth generation Arkansan. Both of my parents, two grandparents, and three great grandparents were raised in Conway. I am lucky enough to have a very large extended family still residing in Faulkner County, including a ninety-nine year old grandmother. Some of them are farmers who understand the important balance of economic development and preserving natural resources like water.

I hope that my children and future generations will be able to enjoy the same incredible natural beauty and learn about the historical significance of this land like we did. We have so few clean, undeveloped places left. I just spent a weekend swimming in the pristine, cool waters of the upper Buffalo River and enjoying the overhanging bluffs. My spot on the river had no algae, because it was upstream from a hog farm that was developed without the consent of the people of Arkansas. I kept thinking about the people downstream. The folks whose livelihoods depend on a clean river or who have been coming to the same swimming hole for generations and now find it ruined.

This river is ours to enjoy and protect. I have been taking these special places for granted, because I grew up surrounded by their beauty. Not anymore.

I am pledging to start doing my part by making my voice heard, voting wisely, and giving my dollars to those that are working to save the river. I hope you will join me in monitoring those in power by letting them know we will no longer accept them sacrificing the future of our "natural" state for the short monetary gain of the present. Who can quantify the price in dollars of such a national treasure?

Please save the Buffalo River.

Sincerely,
Katy Starnes
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