



TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER®

Riverkeeper Report

Brief summaries about recent pollution investigation and Riverkeeper legal actions.

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Recent Supporters

Donna Lisenby, Watauga Riverkeeper, Madison House Inc., The String Cheese Incident.

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Tennessee Riverkeeper

Information about Tennessee Riverkeeper and the group's anti-pollution mission.

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Membership form

One of the best things you can do to help Riverkeeper is join. Become a member today!

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COAL IN THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

There are three active Tennessee Valley Authority coal-fired electricity generating plants along the Tennessee River—the Widows Creek plant in Stephenson, AL, Colbert near Tusculumbia, AL and Johnsonville in New Johnsonville, TN. Each of these plants pours its toxic coal ash sludge into ponds on the banks of the Tennessee where it contaminates ground water and poses a constant threat of a catastrophic collapse like the one at TVA's Kingston plant in 2008. Luckily, there are now two unprecedented opportunities for us to make sure that TVA works to improve the health of the River.

The first development involves TVA retiring the coal plants that create coal ash. In spring 2011, TVA announced that it would retire at least 15% of its coal fleet and would likely announce even more retirements later. Both the Johnsonville plant and a large portion of the Widows Creek plant are included in this initial round of retirements. TVA has no current plans to shut down Colbert but that may change.

The second development arose after the Kingston disaster when TVA realized that the risk of storing coal ash in wet sludge ponds is too high and decided to convert its entire fleet of coal plants from wet coal ash handling to dry storage, a much safer alternative.

Tennessee Riverkeeper and the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE) are working together to make sure that TVA follows through on both of these commitments. We are working to develop community support as well as legal, economic, and environmental arguments for adding Colbert to the retirement list, ending coal ash dumping there entirely.

Whether or not Colbert retires, Tennessee Riverkeeper will keep a close eye on TVA's plans for handling the conversion from wet to dry ash. With the help of expert hydrogeologists, we have studied the Colbert and Johnsonville ash ponds and discovered that TVA constructed them using coal ash as a building material — the same technique that led to the Kingston collapse. It is very important that in planning for dry ash storage TVA consider this major risk associated with its wet ponds, along with other risk factors, to make sure that they are not putting the health of the citizens and communities of the Tennessee River Valley in any greater danger.



TVA's infamous Kingston Plant



Coal Ash in the Tennessee River

NEW MERCURY RULE

- On December 21, 2011 the Environmental Protection Agency demanded that coal-fired power plants implement available technologies to reduce their emissions by 90 percent. EPA estimates that of the roughly 1,400 coal and oil fired power plants, 40 percent have not yet implemented new technologies. As expected the coal industry is fighting back.

DID YOU KNOW?

RIVERKEEPER is on Facebook: 

Visit Tennessee Riverkeeper on Facebook and click "Like" to support the cause online.

facebook.com/TennesseeRiverkeeper

From Knoxville to Paducah:

The Tennessee River is the largest tributary of the Ohio River. It flows into the Ohio River at Paducah, Kentucky.

French Broad RIVERKEEPER

Hartwell Carson is the French Broad Riverkeeper and Board President of Tennessee Riverkeeper. The French Broad is one of two headwater tributaries of the Tennessee River.
<http://wnca.org/programs/water-quality/>

RIVERKEEPER REPORT

BY DAVID WHITESIDE



Leachate runoff from a landfill.

TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2011

September 30, 2011 - Tennessee Riverkeeper filed a lawsuit against the owner of Gunter's Landing Lagoon for 1,077 illegal sewage discharges into Lake Gunter'sville since January 2009. *(Photo Right)*

OCTOBER 2011

October 1-15, 2011 - Analyzed pollution data from discharge monitoring reports filed by permitted industries and sewer plants throughout the Tennessee Valley. Ongoing legal file review by Riverkeeper staff.

October 27 - Investigated illegal pollution coming from a waste water treatment plant in Ardmore, on the border of AL. and TN. *(Photo Below)*

October 31 - Met with Gunter'sville city officials and attorneys to discuss illegal sewage entering Lake Gunter'sville via Gunter's Landing.

NOVEMBER 2011

November 7-17, 2011 - Collaborated with non-profit Flint River Conservation Association.

November 11 - Applied for grant from New York Life Foundation's "Volunteers for Life" program.

November 16 - Coal pollution expert, Donna Lisenby elected to our Board of Directors.

November 28 - Ryman Auditorium event outreach with the band String Cheese Incident and fans.

DECEMBER 2011

December 12, 2011 - Coal pollution campaign strategic planning with Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, Watauga Riverkeeper, and French Broad Riverkeeper.

December 17 - Mailed annual update letter to Riverkeeper membership.

December 21-23 - Investigated pollution from a landfill discharging leachate.

December 27 - Investigated pollution report and evidence concerning stormwater runoff from a major developer in North Alabama.

JANUARY 2012

January 2012 - Developed 2012 annual strategic plan for Tennessee Riverkeeper. Presided over annual strategic plans for Black Warrior and Coosa Riverkeeper.

January 2012 - Produced short documentary on biodiversity in the watershed.

January 21 - Concert fundraiser with *Wheeler's* in Decatur, AL at "The Brick."

January 30 - Produced video with Greg Reeves, of Decatur City Council. *(Above)*

FEBRUARY 2012

February 1-12, 2012 - Analyzed pollution data from discharge monitoring reports.

February 14 - Ardmore WWTP legal action for 2,024 violations. *(See Right)*

February 16 - Spoke to Sierra Club of North Alabama on River and enforcement.

February 17 - Outreach with the band O.A.R. and fans at concert in Nashville.

February 28 - Investigated illegal pollution from landfill. *(Photo Above)*

February through March - Investigated illegal leachate pollution from a landfill.



Gunter's Landing on Lake Gunter'sville, Alabama



Greg Reeves of Decatur City Council

Ardmore Sewer Plant

- On Feb. 14, Riverkeeper served notice of intent to sue the Water Works Board of the town of Ardmore for 2,024 violations, exceeding limitations for Ammonia, Biochemical Oxygen Demand and Total Suspended Solids.



Discharge pipe from Ardmore WWTP

OUR SUPPORTERS

New Board Member: Donna Lisenby

Riverkeeper welcomes Donna Lisenby to our Board of Directors. Donna has worked with Waterkeepers for over 10 years, currently serving as the Watauga Riverkeeper in North Carolina. The Watauga is a tributary of the Holston River, which is one of the two major headwater tributaries of the Tennessee River. *(Photo Right)*



Meredyth Coal Mine Pollution Update

On January 26, 2012, the U.S. District Judge Karen Bowdre held that Riverkeeper's case was mooted by ADEM's recent consent order imposing a fine of \$33,500 against the defendants and requiring compliance with the Clean Water Act. Tennessee Riverkeeper is continuing to keep an eye on this serial polluter and will take action in the future if required to assure compliance.

O.A.R., Madison House, & String Cheese Incident

Thanks to the bands O.A.R. and The String Cheese Incident as well as Madison House, Inc. and Red Light Management for inviting us to promote Riverkeeper and Waterkeeper Alliance during their concert tours. David Whiteside and volunteers set up a booth at the venues and were able to talk to hundreds of fans about Tennessee Riverkeeper.



L to R: *Bill Nershi, Sam Bush, David Whiteside at the Ryman in Nashville.* *Riverkeeper's lawsuit against Meredyth Mine cites 2,052 pollution violations.*

About TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER

The mission of Tennessee Riverkeeper is to protect the Tennessee River and its tributaries by enforcing environmental laws and educating the public. The communities of the Tennessee Valley are all interconnected neighbors upstream and downstream and everyone needs clean water, whether you're black or white, rich or poor, Republican or Democrat. Riverkeeper advocates for the watershed to ensure that future generations will inherit safe, clean water in their communities.

Tennessee Riverkeeper monitors polluters and their pollution permits, responds to citizen complaints, and uses water sampling data to further

T-SHIRTS

(Right) "Save the Tennessee" in navy blue. (\$15)

(Below) "Eagle logo" in white. (\$15)



To order please email:

TennesseeRiverkeeper@gmail.com

please specify shirt design and size.



**Ongoing Riverkeeper Fundraiser
Recycling Empty Ink Cartridges**



Tennessee Riverkeeper works with volunteers and businesses to recycle used printer ink cartridges. This keeps these unwanted items out of landfills, while raising funds for non-profit Riverkeeper. We have drop bins at the Daily Brew and Vintage Vinyl Record Store in Decatur, AL. Or please mail them to:

PO BOX 2594 -- DECATUR, AL 35602



Twitter: [@TNRRiverkeeper](https://twitter.com/TNRRiverkeeper) or twitter.com/TNRRiverkeeper





TENNESSEE RIVERKEEPER

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www.TennesseeRiver.org



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NAME(S): _____

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RIVER INTERESTS: _____

PLEASE CHECK A CATEGORY

- _____ Slackwater Darter\$25
- _____ Redfin Darter\$50
- _____ Boulder Darter\$100
- _____ Alabama Cavefish.....\$250
- _____ Hellbender Salamander.....\$1000
- _____ other amount\$ _____
- _____ Volunteer.....(list hours and type of work) _____

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You can also become a member at our website: www.TennesseeRiver.org

