

Part III - Statement Of Program Service Accomplishments

I. AIR QUALITY PROGRAM

An important part of our air quality program involves monitoring actions taken by federal, state and local governments that will impact the quality of the air breathed by the citizens of Missouri and surrounding states. Great Rivers is frequently involved in matters that adversely affect air quality. Measures taken by Great Rivers include drafting comments to proposed rules, issuing position papers about the pollutants, and, as a last resort, handling litigation for clients seeking to improve air quality.

A. Ground Level Ozone

Great Rivers represents the Sierra Club in its suit against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over the ozone levels present in the City of St. Louis and surrounding areas in Missouri and Illinois. The suit is pending in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. The outcome of the litigation will affect the more than two million people living and working in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

B. Global Warming

Great Rivers is monitoring actions taking place at the federal and state levels, as actions being proposed may have financial and environmental repercussions for the state of Missouri.

II. FLOODPLAIN PROTECTION PROGRAM

Our floodplain protection program consists of bringing legal challenges to environmentally detrimental floodplain development and the over-engineering of rivers by means of levees and dams which destroy floodplains and aggravate flooding risk. These activities affect all of the people who inhabit and work in the watersheds of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers which drain major portions of the central and northwestern United States.

III. WETLANDS PROTECTION PROGRAM

A primary component of our wetlands protection program consists of monitoring permit applications to dredge and fill wetlands. Great Rivers issues comments on proposals and assists environmental groups and individuals in their legal challenges to protect wetlands.

A. Preservation of wetlands

Great Rivers represented the Missouri Coalition for the Environment in its suit against the Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) over its permitting of a mega-mall in the Missouri River floodplain, and the filling of 30 acres of wetlands. The wetlands at the site constituted a productive and valuable public resource. They served significant biological functions such as feeding, nesting, spawning, rearing and resting sites for aquatic and land species. They also served as valuable storage areas for storm and flood waters, which are purified as they slowly percolate through the soil to nearby water bodies or the groundwater below.

IV. WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

Great Rivers seeks to protect and preserve the waters of Missouri and surrounding states. Our water quality program begins with monitoring proposed federal, state and local actions that will adversely affect water quality. Great Rivers is frequently involved in matters that adversely impact water quality. This includes assisting environmental groups, citizens' organizations and individuals in their legal challenges designed to protect the quality of the waters.

A. Protection of Scenic Rivers

Great Rivers represents the Missouri Coalition for the Environment and several individuals in their lawsuits against the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the United States Department of the Army arising from the Army's transfer of chemical weapons training from Alabama to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. The negative effects include emissions of chemical, biological and radioactive emissions into the rivers of the Ozarks. The pollutants will impact the quality of waters that flow through hundreds of miles of the Ozark Mountains. Thousands of people use these rivers recreationally and will be affected by the pollutants.

V. LAND USE PROGRAM

Our land use program consists of assisting environmental groups, citizens groups and individuals in their efforts to preserve and protect open space, forests and wilderness areas. Great Rivers issues comments on proposed rules that may affect environmentally sensitive areas, and as a last resort, represents environmental groups in litigation to enforce the laws.

A. National Forest Protection

Great Rivers assisted with the legal representation of the national environmental group, Heartwood, in its suit to stop a timber sale in national forest land. Heartwood

sued the U.S. Forest Service after it allowed the sale without first surveying for endangered species. The case is on appeal. The preservation of endangered species is one of the critical issues affecting the human species.

B. Waste Disposal

Great Rivers represents the SHOW-ME organization (“Safe Handling of Waste Managed Environmentally”) in a lawsuit demanding that the Department of Natural Resources follow the habitual violator requirements of Missouri’s Solid Waste Management Law. These requirements are in place to ensure that solid waste disposal areas are not operated in a manner detrimental to the environment. SHOW-ME works to protect the health and welfare of all people living in Washington and Jefferson Counties.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

Great Rivers is committed to monitoring permitting actions for sites proposed for development that will unfairly burden minority or low income populations. Great Rivers has evaluated proposed developments to determine whether permitting authorities have unfairly targeted disadvantaged populations. Great Rivers has asserted environmental justice claims against the City of St. Louis and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

VII. PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

Great Rivers seeks to protect the public health by preventing further deterioration of the region’s air and water quality, and by reducing and preventing exposure to toxic substances. Our public health program consists of aiding organizations that seek legal assistance in connection with their work to protect the public health.

A. St. Louis Lead Prevention Coalition

Great Rivers routinely provides legal services to the St. Louis Lead Prevention Coalition, an organization seeking to reduce and eliminate lead exposure in the St. Louis metropolitan area. The work of the St. Louis Lead Prevention Coalition affects thousands of people in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

B. Earth Share of Missouri

Great Rivers is assisting Earth Share of Missouri in its appeal of a denial of its application to be a choice on the Combined Charitable Giving Campaign of the employees of the University of Missouri.