



PO Box 1521 Knoxville, Tennessee 37901
office: 865/522-7007 fax: 865/329-2422 website: www.tcwn.org

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Contact: Valerie True
Danielle Droitsch
Phone: 865-522-7007
Cellular: 865-607-2138

GROUPS TO CHARGE OVERDUE FINES TO GOVERNOR SUNDQUIST AND PRESIDENT BUSH ON 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT

To commemorate the Clean Water Act a coalition of groups and citizens will issue overdue fines to the U.S. Federal Government and the State of Tennessee who are now 18 years late fulfilling the goals of the federal Clean Water Act.

When the Clean Water Act (CWA) was passed in 1972, Congress declared, "The objective of this Act is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." Under the CWA, all waters were to be fishable and swimable by 1983. There was to be zero discharge into navigable waters by 1985 and discharge of toxic pollutants in toxic amounts was to be halted immediately.

"Most people are unaware that we are far from fully implementing the Clean Water Act," said Danielle Droitsch, Executive Director of Tennessee Clean Water Network. "Until we enforce and implement this law, we will continue to see degraded streams, lakes, and rivers."

TCWN has submitted a fine to President Bush and Governor Sundquist in the amount of \$1,642,500,000 for being out of compliance with the Clean Water Act for 18 years. The fine was computed based on the maximum daily fine for industries out of compliance with the law is \$25,000 a day.

"The Clean Water Act set high goals for our Nation's waters, goals that are completely sensible and reasonable---that citizens should be able to use their waters for all reasonable purposes and that the natural systems in streams should not be destroyed. However, government regulators still allow streams to be trashed, despite those clear goals. No further delays in living up to the Clean Water Act are acceptable." David W. Sligh, American Rivers Southeast Field Office.

According to Tennessee Clean Water Network (TCWN), Tennessee has yet to see many of the promises in the Act fulfilled and enforced. Only a third of Tennessee's

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rivers are monitored for pollutants, and of those monitored waters, two-thirds (7,540 miles) do not meet national standards for water quality. A new report by U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), *In Gross Violation*, finds that more than 31% of industrial and municipal facilities across Tennessee exceeded their Clean Water Act permit limits for toxic chemicals over a recent three year period. The report details 39 instances in which they violated their permits by at least five times the legal limit.

“To add insult to injury, on the eve of this landmark anniversary, the Bush administration is actually in the process of dismantling the Clean Water Act. Almost every aspect of the law is being weakened by this administration, from prohibitions on dumping industrial waste and raw sewage into waters to saving critical wetlands,” said Droitsch. “Most recently, the administration announced that it plans to rewrite the rules to limit the number of waters that are protected by the Clean Water Act entirely. This is the most serious assault on clean water in decades.”

Tennessee Clean Water Network, Tennessee Environmental Council, Tennessee PEER, American Whitewater, South Chickamauga Creek Greenway Alliance, American Rivers and concerned citizens challenge President Bush and Governor Sundquist to make good on the promise of clean water today.

[Local water quality information is available by contacting TCWN]

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