

*Please copy the text below and email it to the email addresses below as well as to your appropriate representatives and senators.*

The Lower Illinois River, one of two trout rivers in Oklahoma, is in serious jeopardy!

The Lower Illinois River is the tail water that flows from Lake Tenkiller near the town of Gore,OK. None of the water in Lake Tenkiller has been allocated to the preservation of the ecosystem in the Lower Illinois River. At present time, any water that flows into the Lower Illinois River is "borrowed" water.

Someday, in the not so distant future, that borrowed water will not be available. When and if that event happens, we will no doubt experience a fish kill and the destruction of the fragile ecosystem in the Lower Illinois River. We know this, because this has happened in the past.

The Lower Illinois River, as a recreational destination, is a critical part of the economy in Sequoyah County, the surrounding communities and the state of Oklahoma. So, when that event occurs, the recreational revenue that flows into the town of Gore and the surrounding communities and businesses along the way will also dry up. Gasoline purchases, Toll Road fees, Bait and Tackle and Restaurant dining dollars that are spent by fishermen, campers, boaters and outdoor enthusiasts will be spent elsewhere. Probably not even in the State of Oklahoma.

Action, on your part and on the part of your colleagues, needs to take place, NOW, to find and permanently secure water designated specifically for a minimum flow of at least 50 cubic feet per second. (100 cfs would be better.) Without this action, we will experience dead fish in the Lower Illinois River and the possible destruction of the Lower Illinois River ecosystem.

Now is the time for you to gather the right people within your department, the USACE and South Western Power Administration to come together and determine a final solution to make sure that this destruction of plant and animal life in the Lower Illinois River never happens.

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Please contact these State officials and request that their agenda includes strong recommendations for legislation that will include this dedicated flow in all future Tenkiller Lake water allocations.

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