

NEWS

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Office of the Vice President

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STATEMENT BY VICE PRESIDENT GORE
ON IMPROVING THE ILLINOIS RIVER

The agreement announced today with the state of Illinois to restore and preserve the Illinois River demonstrates how government can work in partnership with private landowners to promote both a sound economy and a healthy environment. It will help Illinois farmers do what they know is right -- protect our water and our wildlife.

This agreement, through the Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, will provide \$250 million to help preserve thousands of acres along waterways throughout the Illinois River watershed.

By providing farmers incentives to retire these lands, the agreement will reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients reaching the Illinois and its tributaries. This will help restore fish and other wildlife, reduce flooding damage, improve river navigation and assure cleaner water for Illinois families. The river will thrive, and so will the economy it sustains.

President Clinton and I are committed to working with states and with landowners on innovative ways to grow our economy while protecting our environment. I welcome Illinois as our newest partner in this program, and look forward to similar agreements with other states.

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