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December 17, 2003

NAME
ADDRESS
ADDRESS
CITY STATE ZIP

Dear WHOEVER,

You are among a very special group of people -- the founding membership of Potomac Riverkeeper (PRK). You are playing a vital role in establishing Potomac Riverkeeper as the Potomac's best chance for a pollution-free future. I want to thank you for your commitment.

You know that the dream of a swimmable and fishable Potomac River is still just that -- a dream. You know that PRK's focus on citizen action, advocacy, and enforcement can help ensure that the Potomac River is protected from raw sewage, lead contamination, poultry waste, acid mine drainage, and nutrient overloads that choke aquatic life.

I also believe you know that ongoing support from people like you is absolutely critical if we are to establish PRK as the river's unwavering watchdog. Please continue to support the efforts of the Potomac Riverkeeper by sending a generous year-end contribution today.

The mission of Potomac Riverkeeper is a big one -- to protect and restore all 383 miles of the Potomac River and its tributaries, from its headwaters in West Virginia to the Chesapeake Bay. Following the successful Riverkeeper model first established on the Hudson River, PRK is part of the Waterkeeper Alliance, representing more than 200,000 citizens like you who know that more must be done to protect our waterways from polluters.

It was only last March when I became the full time director of the Potomac Riverkeeper and since that time, thanks to support from people like you, PRK has started to put polluters on notice that we are a group to be reckoned with. I am pleased to report that already PRK has:

- Filed a letter of Intent to sue the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the National Capital Skeet and Trap Club for polluting the Great Seneca Creek with lead pellets -- in some areas the creek is four inches thick with lead contamination.
- Through a partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Environmental Law Center, began the first-ever comprehensive review of discharge permit violations in the Potomac watershed. From this review PRK will determine the worst offenders and work with them to find solutions.
- Initiated an investigation of a sewer treatment plant in Charles Town, West Virginia that has missed meeting its permitted fecal coliform discharge limits 11 out of 12 months.
- Expanded a river monitoring network program, now with more than 60 monitors who will report the state of the Potomac River basin on a regular basis.
- Investigated a riding stable that may be illegally discharging pollution into Rock Creek.

These efforts would not have been possible without your support. And we will not be able to reach our goals for 2004 without your continued assistance. The challenges before us are significant:

- Industrial poultry farming is on the rise and with it the problems associated with poultry waste disposal and the generation of nutrients and pathogens.
- Active and past coal mining continues to pose risks of acid mine drainage to the North Branch of the Potomac River.
- Municipalities with combined storm water and sanitary sewers still dump raw sewage into the Potomac after major rain events.
- While the "legal" sewage treatment plant pollution problems need to be addressed, there are many, many "illegal" sewage problems. By the time the spills for 2003 are totaled, Maryland alone will have recorded hundreds of millions of gallons of untreated sewage dumped into our watershed. This does not include the numbers from Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia. While many of these spills are considered "legal" and must be addressed by policy changes, much of the problem of harmful bacteria in the water occurs because PLANTS do not meet their permits.
- Urban sprawl is consuming forests and fields, claiming valuable habitat and buffer areas, creating shoreline blight, dumping tons of sediment, and forcing water utilities to drain even more water from the Potomac.
- Several new power plants are being considered for the middle Potomac, bringing with them the impacts of thermal pollution and consumptive use of the river's water that could harm the river's health and aquatic life.
- Tons of nutrients and toxics are dumped in the river annually by a gigantic pulp and paper mill upstream of Cumberland, Maryland, affecting aquatic life for miles.

We certainly have our work cut out for us. Looking ahead TO 2004, PRK, with your help, will continue to build the infrastructure needed to address these issues and be a constant and diligent watchdog for the entire Potomac River watershed. With your help we will:

- Continue to review discharge permits and concentrate on exposing top violators.
- Engage in litigation whenever necessary to ensure that those who are breaking the law and polluting the river clean up their act, permanently.
- Expand our network of community alliances to establish strong ties to local communities up and down the river.
- Set up a toll-free telephone number for reporting problems and violators.
- Expand our network of local riverkeeper patrols for every 50-mile stretch of river.

Most importantly, with your continued support we will direct our programs to the biggest threats, where intervention will be most effective. With your help, PRK can be a permanent, full-time, on-the-water presence to ensure that a pollution-free river is more than just a dream. Please consider a special year-end contribution of \$250, \$100, \$50, OR whatever you can give. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ed Merrifield
Riverkeeper and Executive Director

P.S. We have just been offered an exciting opportunity to DOUBLE your gift. The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment has agreed to match your contribution dollar for dollar! So please, be as generous as you can. Only with your continued financial support can Potomac Riverkeeper be the river's watchdog, exposing polluters wherever they exist!

YES, I want to help clean up the Potomac, please accept my special gift of

\$35 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 Other \$_____

Name_____Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

Please contact me about volunteering. Telephone:_____Email:_____

Make checks payable to Potomac Riverkeeper, PO Box 1164, Rockville, MD 20849. Contributions are tax deductible.