

# American Bottom Conservancy



## Protecting the people and resources of the American Bottom

For more information, contact:  
**Kathy Andria, President**

### Mission & Scope of Activities

The American Bottom Conservancy (ABC) is an environmental group that seeks to protect the unique natural and cultural resources of the American Bottom Area of the Mississippi River.

ABC promotes resource conservation, environmental education, and accountable development on behalf of those who live and work in the American Bottom and St. Louis area metro. ABC collaborates with local governments and neighborhood groups to promote their mission. ABC is also actively involved in the legislative processes related to environmental justice issues.

ABC was officially formed in 1999 and incorporated as an Illinois Not-for-Profit in 2000 after members had worked together on

environmental issues for more than a decade.

The organization currently has over 100 members, who reside all over the St. Louis metro region. Many members live in the environmentally-distressed Metro East area. However, there are also a number of scientific and environmental professionals who belong to the organization.

ABC's board meets every other Tuesday evening, but the organization is supported by a broad-based network that will mobilize the support of more members when needed.

While ABC has benefited from substantial grants in the past, the organization is presently facing diminishing financial resources.

### Major Accomplishments

ABC has scored several important victories as an environmental watchdog.

In 2005, ABC helped bring about a settlement against Illinois Power in suit by the EPA and State of Illinois. ABC played a role in advising how the \$15 million settlement will be spent on mitigation projects.

A \$3 million dollar settlement in a suit against a cement kiln will fund the purchase of Eagle Park Marsh near Granite City, IL.

ABC is currently mobilizing resistance to the siting of an EnviRes waste oil processing plant adjacent to a levy in 10 acres of wetlands in East St. Louis

ABC works with a number of partners, including:

- Sierra Club
- Area Neighborhood Associations
- Washington University Law Clinic
- Environmental Law and Policy Center of Chicago

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## Other Board Members:

Elaine Necklet

Donnell Lewis

Jack Norman

Verana Owen

## Short-term goals

- Apply for 501(c)3 status
- Develop bylaws
- Build Cahokia Mounds trail
- Create a call list of for community members
- Interview local lake users who catch and eat PCB and mercury-tainted carp, catfish and bass.

## Long term goals

- Establish a community center to train area residents in environmental injustice issues and environmental monitoring
- Create a position for a student from planning, landscape architecture, or environmental engineering to provide technical advice.
- Hire a lawyer and a financial advisor to serve on the board

## ABC's victories are facilitated by:

1. Coalitions among community groups
2. Citizen organizing
3. Getting information to the public

## Sources:

Interviews with Kathy Andria

Wikipedia.org

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## About the American Bottom

The American Bottom is a floodplain of the Mississippi River in southwestern Illinois, stretching from Alton, Illinois to the Kaskaskia River. Portions of St. Clair, Madison, Monroe, and Randolph Counties are in American Bottom. The area is about 175 square miles, and is mostly protected from flooding by a levee and drainage canal system. Across the river from Saint Louis, sections of the Bottom are urban and heavily industrial. However, many swamps and Horseshoe Lake are testify to the underlying riparian features.