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## **Sierra Club Statement on Joppa Closure and Settlement Agreement with Vistra Energy**

**Illinois** -- As part of a settlement agreement with the Sierra Club, Vistra Energy announced today that it would be closing its Joppa coal plant by September 1, 2022 - three years earlier than Vistra had previously announced. The agreement resolves groundwater litigation Sierra Club brought in 2018 before the Illinois Pollution Control Board to hold Vistra Energy accountable for dozens of exceedances of state groundwater standards documented at groundwater monitoring wells surrounding coal ash ponds at the Edwards, Coffeen, and Joppa coal plant sites. The agreement commits Vistra Energy to pay a portion of property taxes for three additional years to local taxing bodies following the closure of Joppa and to install additional groundwater monitors at its Edwards and Joppa sites.

***In response, Sierra Club Illinois Director Jack Darin released the following statement:***

“This agreement with Vistra Energy is an important step forward in securing critical transition support, over \$1 million in additional property tax payments, for the local Illinois communities that will be impacted by the closure of the Joppa coal plant. The agreement will not only prevent millions of tons of dangerous air pollution from one of the oldest coal plants in Illinois, it will also require Vistra to install additional groundwater monitors that will help Sierra Club and our local members advocate for the safest coal ash closure plan under Illinois’ new coal ash regulations recently adopted by the Illinois Pollution Control Board.

The retirement of the Joppa plant next year is the latest urgent call for Illinois to begin now to help workers and communities facing the inevitable transition away from fossil fuels. The Clean Energy Jobs Act (CEJA), which awaits a vote in the Illinois House, has a comprehensive plan to assist the workers and local taxing bodies that will be impacted when the Joppa plant closes, and generate new clean energy development in its place. Springfield must act on CEJA by May to deliver the just transition these communities and workers deserve.”

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