Ecologists urge backing bottle bill

by LEA TONKIN

Here's your chance to do something about the litter and solid waste disposal problems, said representatives of the Illinois Environmental Council.

The organization urges Illinois residents to turn out for a Springfield hearing Wednesday on the "bottle bill," HB 1838. State Rep. Daniel Pierce, D-Highland Park, called a meeting of the Illinois House of Representatives Committee on Environment, Energy and Natural Resources to consider the measure.

The bottle bill, sponsored by Pierce, would impose a deposit on all soft drink and beer containers. It's a measure supported by Palatine's Pollution and Environmental Problems organization and other environmental groups. State or federal bottle deposit legislation can solve litter problems and reduce energy used in bottle production, supporters say. Opponents of the legislation, including bottle manufacturers and labor unions contend the bottle bill would cause serious economic problems.

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READY FOR A field trip? The Des Plaines Valley Geological Society plans an outing Saturday to the Dixon Mounds Museum near Lewiston, Ill. It is an anthropology museum of American Indian artifacts exhibits. The group will meet at noon at the museum.

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IT'S A QUESTION of timing: The Lake Michigan Federation said Monsanto Chemical Company's recent announcement that it will eventually phase out polychlorinated biphenyls raises more questions than it answers. Used in products such as electric transformers and inks, polychlorinated biphenyls pollute streams and lakes. Officials from the Chicago-based federation said Monsanto failed to announce a timetable for the curtailment of the substance's production. The pollutant is identified as a cause of cancer and "serious adverse effects," in man.

"As soon as we are satisfied that the electrical power supply industry's needs for usable, acceptable alternate dielectric fluids have been met by whomever,, Monsanto will voluntarily shut down its polychlorinated biphenyls manufacturing unit," said F. J. Fitzgerald, Monsanto vice president and managing director of the Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Co.

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YEARS AGO, YOU could shine a light out on a Florida pond and see one set of eyes, said L. F. Rossignol of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. "Now you shine a light out on that same pond and you'll see four or five sets of eyes." He's talking about the comeback of the alligator. The toothy critter has enjoyed a baby boom since it was classified an endangered species.

The U. S. Dept. of the Interior may reclassify the gator as a "threatened" species, opening the door for legalized hunting. Meanwhile, an increasing number of swimmers and boaters complain of attacks by alligators. The Florida Audubon Society and other environmental groups oppose gator hunting. "As soon as the legal hunters get to work, the poachers will also," said Peter Pritchard, society vice president.

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STATE AIR POLLUTION control regulations for coal-burning plants were recently thrown out by the State Supreme Court. The ruling sustains ambient air standards, however, said Illinois Environmental Protection Agency director Richard Dricoland.

All air pollution sources must also obtain construction and operating permits. Sulphur dioxide and particulate emission standards were invalidated. Dricoland praised Commonwealth Edison Co. for its announcement that it will comply with the suspended regulations.

The electric utility said in some instances more time and money are necessary to solve environmental problems. Edison's assistant vice president Robert Bolger recently testified before the Illinois Commerce Commission, outlining the company's cleanup programs at coal-burning plants and other facilities.

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WANTED: VAMPIRE BAT MAN. Someone trained in zoology to determine effects of nocturnal nips of bats on cattle and swine in Belize. This is just one of the job openings listed by the Smithsonian Peace Corps Environmental Program.

Botanists, parks planners and other persons skilled in environmental sciences can apply. For information write: Dr. James Sherburne, Smithsonian-Peace Corps Environmental Program, Dept. 0-1, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. 20560.



POPULATION EXPLOSION. The alligator comeback in Florida caused the state game commission to propose a limited gator hunt.

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