



In 1905, President Teddy Roosevelt established the U.S. Forest Service, marking the first meaningful protections for our natural resources and open space in America. That act, and thousands more like it, are the reasons we can enjoy the great outdoors today. In Illinois, our state parks are great parks – and thanks to your support, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has begun a new initiative to make our great state parks even better.

Illinois has so much to offer, and I encourage everyone to celebrate the wild freedoms we have in the outdoors. From the Cache River wetlands of southern Illinois, to the rugged trails of Starved Rock in the Illinois River valley, to the Lake Michigan shore at Illinois Beach, every Illinoisan and visitor to our state can enjoy the natural beauty and the accompanying outdoor recreation opportunities at our state parks.

The “State Parks, Great Parks” initiative is made possible thanks to new funding for state parks approved by the Illinois General Assembly and Governor Pat Quinn in 2012 as part of the IDNR Sustainable Funding legislation. We promised to invest \$2 from every motor vehicle registration in Illinois into improving our state parks, and with “State Parks, Great Parks,” we’re delivering on that promise.

Our state parks have so much to offer – from lakes and rivers, to forests and prairies. They’re great places to enjoy hiking, camping, wildlife watching, fishing, hunting, boating, or simply relaxing.

The essence of “State Parks, Great Parks” is to make our state parks places you want to visit and enjoy time and time again, now and for years to come.

I encourage you to learn more about our Great State Parks at our new website www.dnr.illinois.gov/recreation. Then, grab your friends and family and see for yourself why we have so much to celebrate in the Illinois outdoors.

Yours in Conservation