



Illinois Assessment of Parks and Conservation Funding Needs and Economic Benefits

March 2019



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The Trust for Public Land

The Illinois Association of Park Districts

The Nature Conservancy

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About Us

The Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land's mission is to create parks and protect land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Every park, playground, and public space we create is an open invitation to explore, wonder, discover, and play. The Trust for Public Land has been connecting communities to the outdoors and residents to one another since 1972. Today, millions of Americans live within a 10-minute walk of a park or natural area the organization helped create, and countless more visit those spaces every year.

Illinois Association of Park Districts

The Illinois Association of Park Districts is a nonprofit service, research and education organization that serves park districts, forest preserves, conservation, municipal park and recreation, and special recreation agencies. The association advances these agencies, their citizen board members and professional staff in their ability to provide outstanding park and recreation opportunities, preserve natural resources and improve the quality of life for all people in Illinois.

The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy's mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. Since the organization's founding in 1951, the Nature Conservancy has protected more than 117 million acres of land and 5,000 miles of rivers worldwide – and organization operates more than 100 marine conservation projects globally. The Nature Conservancy has more than 1 million members and works in all 50 United States and 72 countries around the world – protecting habitats from grasslands to coral reefs, from Australia to Alaska to Zambia. The Nature Conservancy address threats to conservation involving climate change, fire, fresh water, forests, invasive species, and marine ecosystems.



Dear friends,

Open space in Illinois is vanishing at an alarming rate while access to outdoor recreational opportunities is strained. All Illinoisans are impacted by this critical issue. Indeed, this report documents hundreds of millions of dollars in capital needs for land conservation and parks across Illinois by those who work together as stewards of publicly accessible recreational and natural spaces. These stewards are the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, local park districts, forest preserves, conservation districts, and nonprofit conservation agencies.

The needs of these agencies are staggering and far exceed the funds available in our state grant programs and appropriations. For example, the Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant program has served as the bedrock of conservation and recreation funding for more than 30 years, but the number of applications and requested funds greatly exceed the available grant dollars. The Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF), originally created for acquisition and stewardship of high quality natural areas, has been strained recently due to fluctuating revenues and the consistent redirection of funds for operational support. At the same time, funding for other programs such as the Open Lands Trust (OLT) and Park and Recreational Facility Construction (PARC) grant program have not been funded since the last statewide capital program ten years ago.

There are important reasons to reverse the state's trend of underfunding these critical investments and to put Illinois back on a path to wisely protecting its natural heritage and increasing access to parks and recreation. Investing in land conservation in Illinois is a sound economic choice. Providing natural goods and services like clean water, clean air and flood control creates economic value. Investments in land conservation and parks also support economic activity and job growth in a variety of other ways including recreational tourism, purchases of sporting goods, and boosts in nearby property values, to name a few. In addition, these programs generated hundreds of millions of dollars in matching funds from local, federal and non-governmental sources since 1998.

Our citizens widely support more funding for parks, recreation and conservation. A 2009 statewide survey found that over 75 percent of Illinois voters supported a \$350 million state capital bond for investment in land acquisition and water conservation as part of a proposed \$26 billion capital budget. At the local government level, Illinois voters consistently support funding for conservation and preservation of our outdoor heritage – between 1998 and 2018, forest preserve, park districts, and other local jurisdictions, mostly in the greater Chicago area passed close to fifty ballot measures which collectively generated more than \$1.3 billion in new land conservation spending.

This report illustrates the need to dedicate more land and funding for natural areas, publicly accessible parks and recreational facilities. Preserving open space and recreation opportunities is an issue that unites Illinoisans. As we look forward, we must not neglect the need to protect our quality of life and natural places at the expense of development and other budget priorities

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aaron Koch".

Aaron Koch
Chicago Area Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter Murphy".

Peter Murphy
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Carr".

Michelle Carr
State Director

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This report would not be possible without the help from the following individuals:

Jason Navota of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning; Peter Murphy and Jason Anselment of the Illinois Association of Park Districts; Kathy Barker, Amy Madigan, and Connie Waggoner of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources; Susan Donovan and Ashley Maybanks of The Nature Conservancy; Dave Holman of the Prairie State Conservation Coalition; Will Abberger, Andrew du Moulin, Sophie Horn-Mellish, Aaron Koch, Jen Plowden, Jessica Welch, and Wendy Muzzy of The Trust for Public Land.

Lastly, we sincerely thank the members of the Illinois Association of Park Districts who provided survey results for the needs assessment.

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Why Study Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Needs in Illinois?

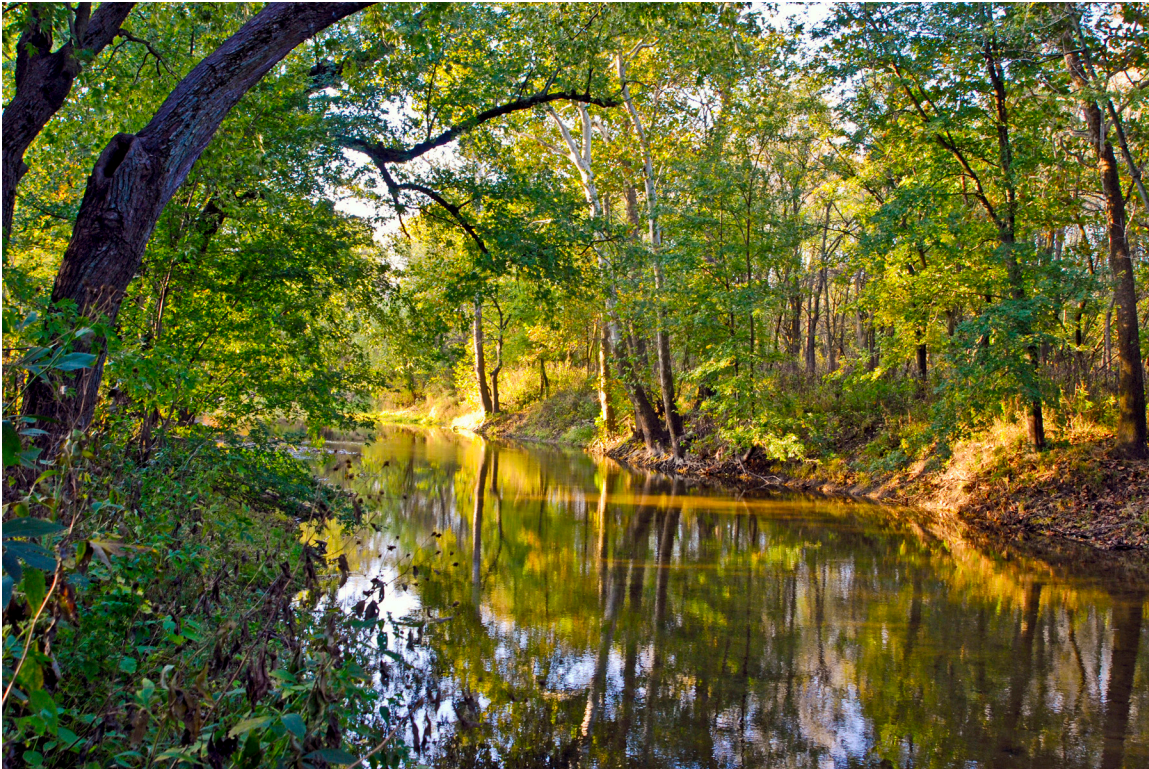
In 2002, The Trust for Public Land and the Illinois Association of Park Districts released “Illinois Land at Risk” – an assessment of park and open space needs across the state. That report highlighted the staggering need for state funding for open space – a need that remains today.

The loss of natural lands and open space is a national trend that is especially evident in Illinois. Open space and natural areas are vanishing at an alarming rate in the state. Between 2000 and 2015, the Chicago region developed 40,000 acres of natural areas and 100,000 acres of farmland. That represents a 12 percent addition to the region’s overall development footprint during a time when employment remained flat, population increased by only 4.6 percent.¹ The entire state has lost more than 735,000 acres since 1997.²

Ecosystem services play another critical role in Illinois. In the Chicago Metropolitan Agency CMAP for Planning’s greater Chicago study area:

- The 40,000 acres of natural lands lost to development represent a loss of five percent of the of conservation and restoration opportunities and an estimated loss of \$186 million annually of four critical ecosystem services: flood control, groundwater recharge, water purification, and carbon storage;³
- The newly protected lands in the CMAP region are estimated to provide \$363 million annually in just four ecosystem services: flood control, groundwater recharge, water purification, and carbon storage;⁴
- The remaining unprotected lands in the region provide an estimated \$3.1 billion annually in the four ecosystem services evaluated.⁵

Adequate and accessible open spaces for Illinois residents to enjoy remain at risk. The recent State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for Illinois (2015-2019) underscored that the state has a low per capita amount of lands and facilities available for outdoor recreation, both in urban and rural areas, compared to other states. In the greater Chicagoland area, the region that receives the most state dollars for land conservation and parks, 42 percent of residents do not have adequate access to open space, which CMAP defines as 4 acres per 1,000 people for dense urban areas.⁶



Smaller municipalities and park districts are more likely to be without open land for the public to enjoy. A 2014 University of Illinois survey found that park districts with populations of less than 5,000 were least likely to have natural areas and that 25 percent of responding park districts indicated they held zero acres of natural areas.⁷

Although Illinois legislators had the foresight to invest in the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD), the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF), and the Open Land Trust (OLT), which historically provided a crucial level of steady funding, this investment is not enough. Of the more than 35.2 million total acres in the State, only 1.5 million, or less than 4 percent, were open to the public for outdoor recreation.⁸

Many of the state's key parks and conservation funding programs have been cut in recent years due to the ongoing state fiscal crisis, leaving a high level of conservation need among organizations providing these services to Illinois residents. Lack of consistent funding jeopardizes the abilities of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and local governments to continue expanding open space and outdoor recreation opportunities for all Illinoisans to enjoy. Large demand for land conservation funding across the state shows how imperative it is to re-commit state resources to parks, open space and the natural areas that Illinois residents enjoy.

Key Findings

- Parks and open space lands are important to the Illinois economy.
- State funding has not kept pace with many neighboring and peer states in recent years.
- Parks and conservation agencies throughout the state have large acquisition needs requiring billions of dollars. Over the next five years, forest preserve, conservation and park districts (excluding the Chicago Park District) estimate that to meet their projected goals, they will need to acquire over 15,978 acres. Those acquisition, construction, renovation, and improvements will cost nearly \$2.7 billion.
- Over the next five years, the Chicago Park District estimates that in order to meet its needs, it must acquire approximately 807 acres and spend an estimated \$600 million for facility construction, renovation and improvement.
- From 1998-2015, the State of Illinois made meaningful investments in parks and conservation (\$38 million to protect 9,930 acres since 2009) but spending has fluctuated greatly and funds have been cut drastically in recent years. Funding came through OSLAD, NAAF, and OLT.
- IDNR requires approximately over \$1.1 billion for agency capital needs including land acquisition.
- Illinois voters have shown strong support for public spending on parks and open space, approving dozens of local ballot measures for these purposes over the past twenty years, generating over \$1.3 billion for parks and conservation.

At the heart of the most successful state parks and conservation programs is a substantial, long-term, dedicated source of state revenue. With a reliable source of funds, state governments can establish meaningful conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources, are geographically distributed and otherwise meet important statewide goals and values. State governments with significant funds are much better positioned to secure funding from federal governments and attract local government or private philanthropic partners.

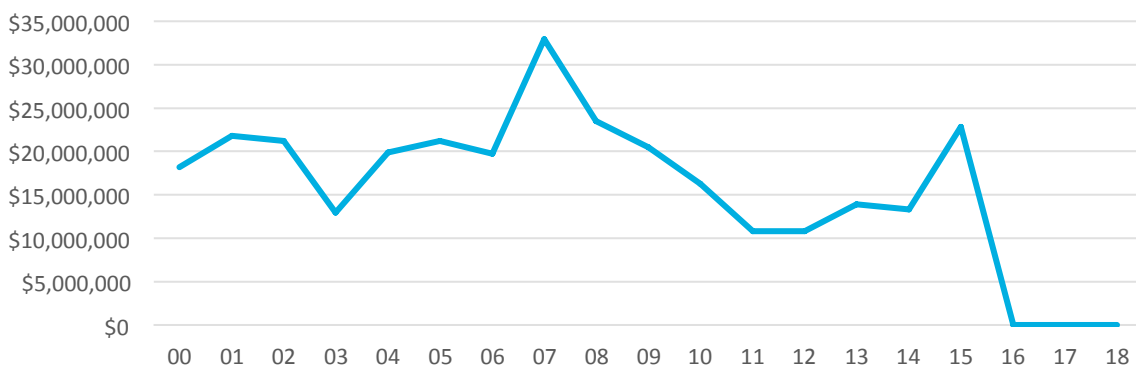
Parks and Land Conservation in Illinois

State Programs

Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Program

The Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) program provides matching grants to local governments for the acquisition and development of parklands and open space, traditionally through a statutorily dedicated real estate transfer tax. A 50 percent local match is required. Since 2000, IDNR awarded over 1,000 grants totaling \$300 million, including over \$51 million to acquire over 4,100 acres for conservation purposes.⁹ Modest federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) dollars are also administered through OSLAD. The current 2019 grant round was the first since 2015. Historically, the number of applications greatly exceeds the available grant dollars. In the 2019 grant round the program had \$29 million with 108 applicants requesting \$35 million in project funding.¹⁰

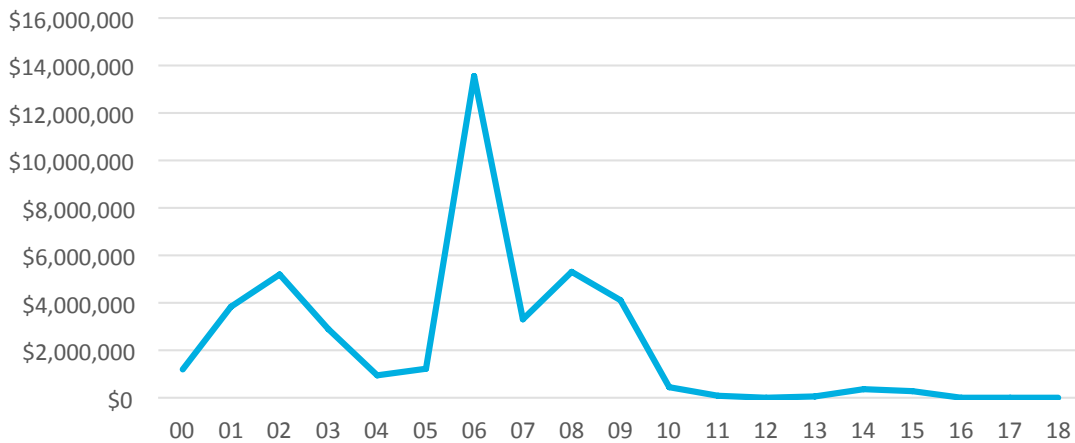
Funding for Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development Program



Natural Areas Acquisition Fund

Established in 1989, the Natural Area Acquisition Fund (NAAF) provides funding for acquisition, stewardship, and preservation of high quality natural areas. Since 2000, NAAF provided nearly \$43 million in funding to acquire over 18,000 acres of high quality natural habitat. NAAF receives 15 percent of real estate transfer tax revenue. Since 2010, less than \$1.5 million total has been spent on land acquisition. This stems from both fluctuating real estate transfer tax revenues and political choices that have redirected NAAF funds for operational support.

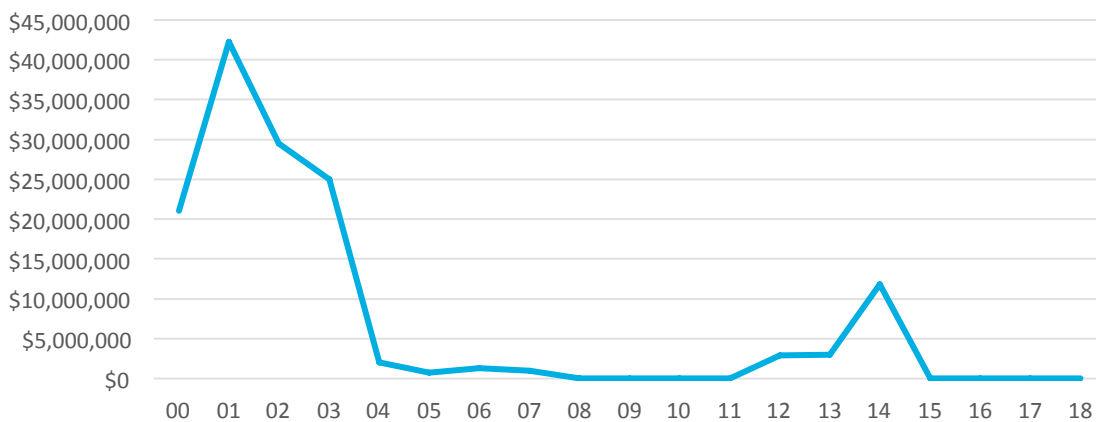
Funding for Natural Areas Acquisition Fund



Open Lands Trust

The Open Lands Trust (OLT) funds the acquisition of land from willing sellers for public conservation, open space, and natural resource related outdoor recreation purposes. Previously, funding was split between matching grants for local governments and direct acquisitions by IDNR. Created in 1998, 94 percent of OLT spending occurred from its first funding authorization by the General Assembly. OLT spent \$135.7 million to acquire over 42,000 acres between 1998 and 2003, and \$22 million to acquire nearly 7,700 acres from 2004 to 2014.

Funding for Open Lands Trust



Park and Recreational Construction Grant Program

The Park and Recreational Facility Construction Grant Program (PARC) was established in 2009 with \$150 million in total appropriations. The program provided significant matching grants to local governments of up to 75 percent for bondable projects such as acquisition, development, construction, and rehabilitation of new or existing park and recreation facilities. The maximum grant per project was \$2.5 million. Unlike other state programs, PARC funds could be used for park development. \$50 million was disbursed in the first ever round of grants in 2011 and the program awarded more than \$75 million in 2014. The program was funded through the Illinois Jobs Now! Capital Program. While the PARC program provided a much needed source of funding as part of the 2009 statewide capital program it has not received funding since 2014.

Trail Programs

IDNR administers multiple trail programs. Most notable is the Bike Path program, which provides up to a 50 percent match to local governments for bike corridor acquisition, development, or renovation projects. Since 2000, IDNR has awarded about \$25 million through the Bike Path Program, which is funded through a portion of vehicle permit fees. The Bike Path Program had been largely unfunded; it disbursed approximately \$3 million in 2008 and \$1 million in 2014. A new round of grant applications will be accepted in 2019 with a new infusion of \$13 million.¹¹ IDNR also administers the federal Recreation Trails Program, which provides federal funds of up to 80 percent for motorized and non-motorized trail projects.

Illinois Natural Areas Inventory

IDNR maintains the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI), an index of the state's most rare and unique natural sites. Completed in 1978, the INAI guides acquisition priorities for state agencies. INAI sites are also targets of local forest preserve and park districts, land trusts and private foundations interested in conservation. The state completed an update in 2011 and added over 150 sites to the INAI. This update also highlighted the importance of stewardship; lands continually managed since 1978 showed little or no drop in natural quality, while sites with little or no management dropped in quality. Seventy sites were ultimately removed from the Inventory because the decline in quality. The INAI however, is constantly being updated. The Natural Areas Evaluation Committee meets at least three times a year to add, delete, or modify sites on the INAI. These are typically done by staff with the IDNR or Illinois Nature Preserve Commission (INPC), Illinois Natural History Survey, volunteers, or very smaller contracts. The INAI is also updated after each INPC meeting and Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB) listing changes.¹²

Nature Preserves System

The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC), a division of IDNR, regularly evaluates land under consideration for property tax incentive conservation programs. Qualified lands also receive support from INPC, benefitting from increased legal protections and professional stewardship.

Nature preserves protect the highest quality natural lands in the state. This program extends legal protection to valuable lands without costs associated with fee acquisition (i.e. lands purchased outright) or easement. Property owners receive stewardship assistance and a property tax reduction to \$1 per acre. Nature preserves are protected in perpetuity and landowners retain title. Typically, 12-15 sites are incorporated as nature preserves annually.¹³

- As of May 2018, there are 389 dedicated nature preserves covering 58,879 acres.

Landowners may also register their land as an Illinois Land and Water Reserve through an agreement similar to a conservation easement. This offers a level of protection lower than that of nature preserves. In order to be considered, IDNR must first find registration of the property to be in the public interest. Eligible sites include areas on the INAI, and locations that meet a minimum threshold of preservation – also lower than for nature preserves. Registered properties are evaluated at 8 and 1/3 percent of fair market value.

- As of May 2018, there are 188 land and water reserves totaling 52,525 acres.¹⁴

JENNIFER EMERLING



Local Governments

Illinois is unique in its reliance on local government jurisdictions. Park, forest preserve districts, and conservation districts in Illinois play a critical role in the state's land conservation and outdoor recreation framework. Approximately 80 percent of total spending on land conservation from 1998-2016 in Illinois came from local jurisdictions.¹⁵

Altogether, there are approximately 360 park districts, 14 forest preserve districts, and 5 conservation districts in the state. Most of these jurisdictions raise revenue for services using a combination of user fees and property taxes. Over two-thirds of Illinois residents believe that park districts spend their tax dollars wisely.¹⁶ In addition, Illinois residents rate park and forest preserve districts as the most favorable out of other local taxing bodies. Residents consistently hold favorable opinions of park and forest preserve districts while public opinion of other levels of government has dropped.¹⁷

SELF-REPORTED LOCAL JURISDICTION ACTIVITY, 2014-18 ¹⁸ (IN MILLIONS)				
Type of Local Jurisdiction	Acres Aquired	Dollars Spent on Acquisition	Dollars Spent on Renovation, Resotration, and Capital Improvement	Dollars Spent on Capital Investment for New Facilities
Forest Preserve and Conservation Districts	4,997	\$76.9	\$73.1	\$84.1
Park Districts (Not including Chicago) and Municipal Park Departments	2,002	\$65.1	\$591.6	\$438.9
Chicago Park District	243	\$17.0	\$85.0	\$90.0
Total	7,242	\$159.1	\$709.7	\$551.1



Local Voter Support for Parks and Land Conservation

Illinois voters have consistently demonstrated strong support at the local government level for investing in land conservation as shown in exhibit 5 and 6. Between 1998 and 2018, forest preserve, park districts, and other local jurisdictions, mostly in the greater Chicago area passed close to fifty ballot measures which collectively generated more than \$1.3 billion in new land conservation spending. However, there is no dedicated local funding for land conservation in many parts of the state.¹⁹

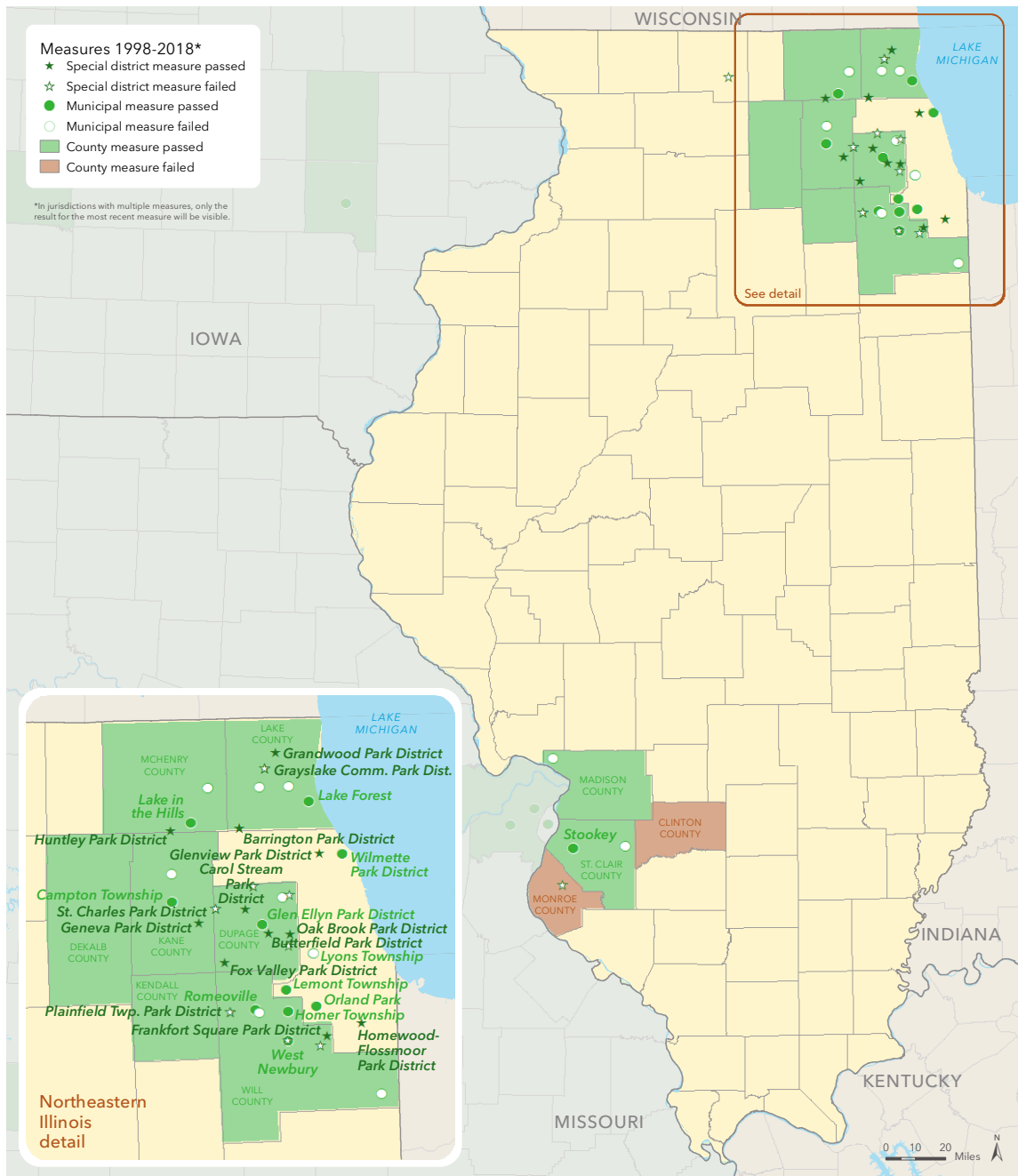
A 2009 survey of Illinois voters found that 79 percent supported a \$350 million dedication in the state capital budget for land and water conservation programs.²⁰ This support cut across party lines and all regions of Illinois. Additionally, over 80 percent of voters responded that the state could protect land and water without sacrificing a strong economy, a notion buttressed by the consistent local support at the ballot since 2000.

In a 2013 survey, 69 percent of Illinois residents supported paying more in property taxes to improve and maintain park district facilities, 60 percent supported paying more to acquire more open spaces for trails and 57 percent for restoring and protecting natural areas and habitats.²¹

These older surveys reflects more recent national trends as referenced in the 2018 “The Language of Conservation”:²²

- Today more voters (70%) support state or local government programs that support conservation even if it requires a small increase in taxes;
- More than 4 in 5 voters believe the public receives its money worth when we invest in nature protections;
- A majority of voters (84%) say that we can protect land and water and have a strong economy at the same time.

Local Measures Passed for Land Conservation and Parks 1998-2018²³



LandVote in Illinois

STATE, COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND SPECIAL DISTRICT MEASURES 1998-2018

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ILLINOIS LAND CONSERVATION BALLOT MEASURES APPROVED 1998-2018

Jurisdiction Name	Date	Finance Mechanism	Total Funds Approved	Conservation Funds Approved	% Yes
Oak Brook Park District	11/6/18	Bond	\$17,900,000	\$17,900,000	68%
Glenview Park District	3/20/18	Bond	\$17,000,000	\$1,000,000	65%
Forest Preserve District of Kane County	4/4/17	Bond	\$50,000,000	\$50,000,000	54%
Butterfield Park District	11/4/14	Bond	\$2,985,000	\$1,500,000	70%
Kane County Forest Preserve District	4/5/11	Bond	\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000	54%
Lake County Forest Preserve District	11/4/08	Bond	\$185,000,000	\$185,000,000	66%
Fox Valley Park District	2/5/08	Bond	\$44,850,000	\$22,500,000	65%
St. Charles Park District	2/5/08	Bond	\$25,000,000	\$2,000,000	59%
Kane County Forest Preserve District	4/17/07	Bond	\$85,000,000	\$85,000,000	64%
Kendall County Forest Preserve District	4/17/07	Bond	\$45,000,000	\$45,000,000	68%
McHenry County Conservation District	4/17/07	Bond	\$73,000,000	\$73,000,000	57%
DuPage County Forest Preserve District	11/7/06	Bond	\$68,000,000	\$68,000,000	65%
Glen Ellyn Park District	11/7/06	Bond	\$11,900,000	\$2,500,000	54%
DeKalb County Forest Preserve District	3/21/06	Property tax	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	52%
Campton Township	4/5/05	Bond	\$28,385,000	\$28,385,000	74%
Kane County Forest Preserve District	4/5/05	Bond	\$75,000,000	\$75,000,000	65%
Romeoville	4/5/05	Transfer tax	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	50%
Will County Forest Preserve District	4/5/05	Bond	\$95,000,000	\$95,000,000	53%
Lyons Township	11/2/04	Bond	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	52%
Stookey	6/1/04	Bond	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	54%
Grayslake Community Park District	3/16/04	Bond	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	62%
Huntley Park District	4/1/03	Bond	\$5,700,000	\$5,700,000	54%
Kendall County Forest Preserve District	11/5/02	Bond	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	64%
Lake Forest	11/5/02	Bond	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000	69%
Barrington Park District	3/19/02	Bond	\$11,500,000	\$11,500,000	61%
Frankfort Square Park District	3/19/02	Bond	\$5,001,396	\$1,250,349	69%
Wilmette Park District	3/19/02	Bond	\$25,000,000	\$25,000,000	55%
Campton Township	4/3/01	Bond	\$18,765,000	\$18,765,000	54%
Lemont Township	4/3/01	Bond	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	62%
McHenry County Conservation District	4/3/01	Bond	\$68,500,000	\$68,500,000	52%
Carol Stream Park District	11/7/00	Bond	\$12,000,000	\$2,400,000	67%
Lake County Forest Preserve District	11/7/00	Bond	\$85,000,000	\$85,000,000	67%
Lake in the Hills	11/7/00	Other	NA	NA	61%
Madison County	11/7/00	Sales tax	\$28,000,000	\$14,000,000	51%
Orland Park	11/7/00	Bond	\$20,000,000	\$3,348,000	54%
Plainfield Township Park District	11/7/00	Bond	\$5,925,000	\$5,925,000	71%
St. Clair County	11/7/00	Sales tax	\$32,000,000	\$16,000,000	62%
Barrington Park District	3/21/00	Property tax	\$9,600,000	\$4,800,000	61%
Geneva Park District	3/21/00	Bond	\$7,900,000	\$7,736,200	77%
Grandwood Park District	3/21/00	Property tax	NA	NA	54%
Glen Ellyn Park District	4/13/99	Bond	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	NA
Homer Township	4/13/99	Bond	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	65%
Kane County Forest Preserve District	4/13/99	Bond	\$70,000,000	\$70,000,000	66%
Lake County Forest Preserve District	4/13/99	Bond	\$55,000,000	\$55,000,000	66%
Will County Forest Preserve District	4/13/99	Bond	\$70,000,000	\$70,000,000	57%
Homer Township	11/3/98	Bond	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	60%
Homewood-Flossmoor Park District	3/17/98	Property tax	\$18,000,000	\$11,000,000	63%

Data provided by The Trust for Public Land's LandVote Database. Accessed November 2018, www.landvote.org. "Conservation funds approved" are dollars approved for land acquisition and may be less than the "total funds approved" through the referendum.

2018 National Statewide Funding Efforts

In 2018 alone, five states created significant additional new statewide funding for land conservation (numerous other states also continued appropriations and funding for their land conservation programs).

- In June, California voters approved a \$4.1 billion bond with 58 percent support. The bond will fund state and local parks, environmental protection and restoration projects, water infrastructure projects, and flood protection projects.
- The Colorado legislature reauthorized the Colorado Lottery, through the year 2049 (the 25-year extension is added to the Lottery's current expiration date, which is 2024). Lottery proceeds are distributed through the Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund (\$63.7 million last year), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (\$14.3 million last year) and the Conservation Trust Fund (\$57 million last year). Colorado Trust Fund proceeds are distributed on a per capita basis to towns, counties, cities and special districts for parks and recreation. Last year the lottery generated \$135 million for parks, trails, playgrounds, open space and conservation. Using 2017 numbers, a 25-year extension would generate \$3.375 billion.
- In August, the Massachusetts legislature enacted a five-year, \$2.2 billion Environmental Bond bill that includes \$487 million for land and park programs, as well as new policies and funding for climate programs. New authorization includes \$225 million for grants to municipalities and nonprofits for conservation and recreation; \$25 million for trails; \$32 million for Transfer of Development Rights projects; \$90 million for state land agencies for acquisition; \$55 million for transit-oriented development; and \$60 million for urban parks and farms.
- Georgia voters overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment dedicating \$200 million from the state sales tax on sporting goods for local parks and conservation. On the November ballot, this measure passed overwhelmingly with 83 percent support. It has been 20 years since Georgia voters rejected an amendment to fund conservation statewide.
- In November, Rhode Island voters passed their fifteenth general obligation bond measure since 1989. A statewide \$47.3 million "Green Economy Bond" passed with 79 percent support. The measure will fund open space, coastal resiliency, dam removals, river restoration, drinking water, and other conservation priorities.

Recent Midwest Examples

- In 2016, an overwhelming 80 percent of Missouri voters renewed, for a fourth time, a 1/10th of one-cent sales tax for parks and soil conservation. Voters first approved the constitutionally dedicated tax in 1984. This tax is in addition to a permanent constitutionally dedicated 1/8th of one-cent sales tax dedicated to land conservation, which was approved in 1976. These taxes combined generate about \$200 million annually.
- In 2010, 63 percent of Iowa voters approved a constitutional amendment to create the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. The amendment directed the legislature to enact a 3/8th of one-cent sales tax to fund the Trust, however legislation to create this funding source is still being debated.
- In 2008, 56 percent of voters in Minnesota approved a 25-year constitutional amendment dedicating a 3/8th of one-cent sales tax increase for natural resource protection and arts. The measure is expected to generate over \$7 billion during its lifetime. This sales tax is in addition to constitutionally dedicated lottery fund for conservation. These funds expire in 2024 and there are currently efforts underway to renew this decades old funding source.

Local Conservation Finance Trends: Nationally and in Illinois

Nationally, voters of all political stripes continue to show strong support for local conservation funding. In 2018, local voters in 24 states approved 55 of 63 measures for parks and land conservation, generating over \$3.24 billion. Property taxes continue to be the financing mechanism used most by local governments across the country. In Illinois, bonds are the most commonly used however bond typically cannot be used for operations and maintenance. The success rate of these conservation measures in Illinois (63 percent) is well below the 76 percent rate nationally, however since 1998 the forest preserve districts have a perfect record.

According to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) “given the decrease in state and federal funding in recent years, local funding initiatives –for example, local and county open space referenda – will likely continue to be the backbone of natural land protection and stewardship funding. Yet additional funding will be needed to achieve natural resources goals, and innovative financing strategies offer further opportunities to fund open space while addressing other regional goals.”²⁴ However, as mentioned in the “key findings”, at the heart of the most successful state parks and conservation programs is a substantial, long-term, dedicated source of state revenue.

U.S. Local Conservation Finance Ballot Measures 1998-present					
Finance Mechanism	Number of Measures	Pass	% Pass	Total Funds Approved	Conservation Funds Approved
Property tax	1055	746	71%	\$12,737,546,107	\$7,705,846,189
Bond	789	663	84%	\$22,058,858,488	\$10,490,700,091
Sales tax	166	125	75%	\$53,550,379,863	\$8,701,606,734
Other	74	52	70%	\$6,749,259,543	\$1,233,304,282
Income tax	89	65	73%	\$626,059,012	\$427,159,012
Real estate transfer tax	32	27	84%	\$3,138,225,154	\$2,728,573,686
Total	2,205	1,678	76%	\$98,860,328,167	\$31,287,189,994

Illinois Local Conservation Finance Ballot measures 1998-present					
Finance Mechanism	Number of Measures	Pass	% Pass	Total Funds Approved	Conservation Funds Approved
Bond	59	40	68%	\$1,373,811,396	\$1,271,409,549
Property tax	11	4	36%	\$32,600,000	\$20,800,000
Sales tax	4	2	50%	\$60,000,000	\$30,000,000
Transfer tax	1	1	100%	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000
Other/Advisory	1	1	100%	\$0	\$0
Total	76	48	63%	\$1,476,411,396	\$1,332,209,549



Land Trusts²⁵

Prairie State Conservation Coalition

The conservation land trust community in Illinois plays a crucial role in augmenting state and local conservation efforts. The Prairie State Conservation Coalition, comprised of 34 local land trusts, estimates that Illinois land trusts have helped preserve nearly 200,000 acres over the last fifty years, working independently and in partnership with state and local government agencies, and other groups, achieve their conservation goals.²⁶

According to GIS data²⁷ and a 2018 land trust survey conducted by The Trust for Public Land and the Prairie State Conservation Coalition, land trusts and other similar private, nonprofit conservation organizations actively protect approximately 80,000 acres including about 55,000 acres owned outright and an additional 25,000 under conservation easement. Land trusts indicated that public access is allowed on approximately 90 percent of their total holdings; some highly sensitive areas, such as bat maternity caves, are closed to public access.

Of the land acquired by land trusts and other private, nonprofit land conservation organizations, over 6,000 acres are permanently protected as dedicated Illinois Nature Preserves and over 8,000 acres are dedicated Land and Water Reserves giving these areas the highest legal protection in the State of Illinois. Acquiring and legally protecting these lands implements the IDNR *Wildlife Action Plan*, which sets strategies for long term conservation of wildlife habitat and focuses on preventing at-risk species from being listed as threatened or endangered.

Stewardship

According to the Vital Lands Network, the biggest future issue facing conservation is stewardship of protected lands. The recent update of the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) showed that those areas that had been managed since 1978 showed no drop in natural quality. Those sites that had little or no management dropped in quality and some dropped so low that they were removed from the INAI.

In these trying fiscal times, conservation land trusts can partner with IDNR to protect taxpayer's past investments in natural areas by providing a new model for future stewardship of critical lands while continuing to provide access for outdoor recreation.

The Illinois Natural Areas Stewardship Act was passed in 2017.²⁸ It created Illinois' first grant program for land trusts funded from existing state conservation funds. This program will enable the IDNR to enhance stewardship of dedicated nature preserves and registered land and water reserves. Land trusts have access to private dollars from foundations and individual donors that

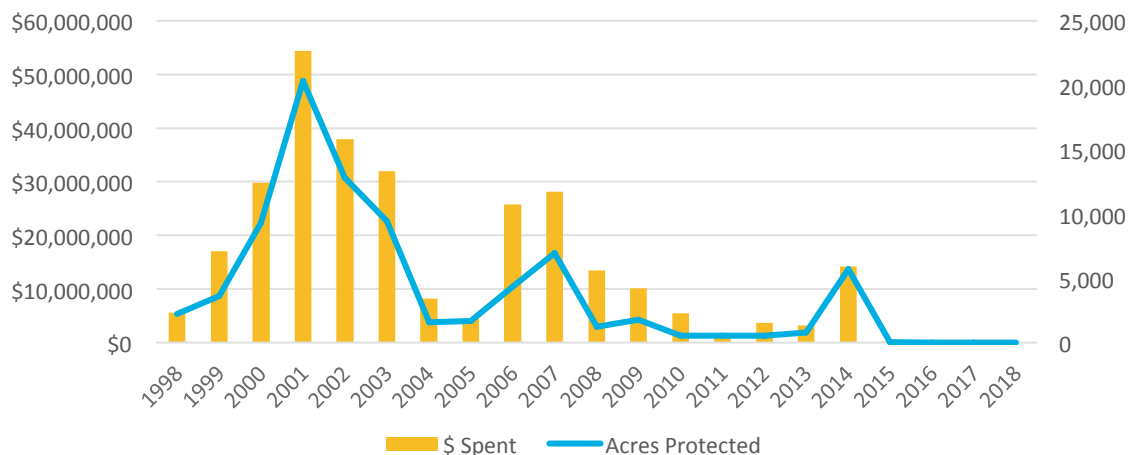
IDNR does not have. These private funds can augment tax dollars to do more with declining tax revenue, enabling the statewide network of over thirty conservation land trusts help to implement the state Wildlife Action Plan at a scale and pace that IDNR could never achieve with their own resources.

Spending for Parks and Land Conservation - A Look Back

State spending for land conservation in Illinois has dropped sharply in recent years, with some notable exceptions, and fluctuated greatly. After reaching a high in the early 2000s (\$54 million spent in 2001), annual state investments plummeted to \$4.5 million in 2005. State spending rebounded to \$28 million in 2007, but did not exceed \$10 million again until 2014. These spending fluctuations and lack of steady funding have significant implications for land conservation for a variety of reasons. Land acquisition is an opportunity-based market endeavor that has required a substantial local investment to complement state capital and/or dedicated funds in Illinois. The sharp decline illustrated in the graph below is a result of the state's divestment in programs that leveraged local and/or private resources for land protection and open space, resulting in many lost opportunities.

There are a series of complex processes required to identify state land for acquisition, including local government protocols for public oversight and raising matching private dollars, that require sustained engagement between the state, local public agencies, and the private land trust community. The interruption of the state's funding stream detailed above creates a compounded negative effect illustrated in the below graph.²⁹

Acres Protected and State Dollars Spent on Land Conservation (1998-2018)



Illinois State Parks and Lands³⁰

IDNR experienced steady budget cuts over the course of the 2000s. As of 2018, IDNR employed 1,070 full time employees down from 2,300 in 2001. During that time, the department budget also decreased from approximately \$100 million to about \$38 million. These cuts greatly hinder IDNR's ability to provide stewardship and public safety on state-owned lands. The result has been a lack of adequate staffing to keep sites, including the state park system that attracts nearly 40 million visitors each year, open to the public.

The \$2 motor vehicle registration fee, passed in the 2012 Sustainability Bill (SB 1566 / Public Act 97-1136) provides nearly \$20 million in dedicated funding annually for state parks. This funding continues to allow IDNR to invest in minimal facility maintenance and sustainability projects statewide.



Comparison of State Spending on Land Conservation

Illinois ranks in the lower middle among Midwestern and Great Lakes states in dollars spent per capita on land conservation. Although Illinois is ahead of Indiana, Michigan, and Missouri, which have small land conservation programs, Illinois ranks far behind states such as Wisconsin and Minnesota, which have dedicated sources of state funding for conservation.

Illinois spent an average of \$1.28 per person per year from 1998- 2015. The state spent an average of \$2.30 per person per year spent from 1998- 2003, the time period when land acquisition programs in Illinois were at their highest levels. Illinois remained well below per capita spending in peer states such as New York (\$3.04), Minnesota (\$3.58), and Pennsylvania (\$4.37) from 1998-2003. In the years that followed, from 2004-2015, state spending in Illinois decreased to \$0.77 per person per year, while neighboring Midwest states, such as Iowa and Wisconsin, and Ohio increased their financial contributions to land acquisition for conservation.

COMPARISON OF STATE SPENDING ON LAND CONSERVATION, 1988-2015 ^{*31}			
State	Dollars Spent per Capita	Dollars Spent per Year	Total Dollars Spent
Pennsylvania	\$73.93	\$52,504,189	\$945,075,402
Wisconsin	\$61.03	\$19,592,141	\$352,658,538
Minnesota	\$54.87	\$16,828,036	\$302,904,648
New York	\$42.25	\$46,345,222	\$834,213,992
Ohio	\$28.19	\$18,189,452	\$327,410,144
Iowa	\$26.64	\$4,640,114	\$83,522,056
Illinois	\$23.04	\$16,388,966	\$295,001,390
Michigan	\$12.58	\$6,940,456	\$124,928,211
Missouri	\$8.08	\$2,736,203	\$49,251,648
Indiana	\$5.39	\$1,986,987	\$35,765,759

* Data not complete through 2015 for all states

Park and Land Conservation Needs

Growth in Illinois: Looking Forward

As the state looks ahead to budget priorities and planning initiatives, decision-makers must consider the needs of the conservation and parkland providers. These include IDNR, forest preserves, conservation and park districts, and land trusts that together manage conservation lands that facilitate access to outdoor recreation opportunities.

Although population growth in Illinois has slowed, it is increasingly concentrating in regional centers across the state. This places a greater burden on local governments to provide adequate recreation opportunities and open space, as well as protect natural areas threatened by growth. Despite current population losses, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) forecasts that the region will add 2.3 million new residents and 920,000 new jobs by 2050.³²

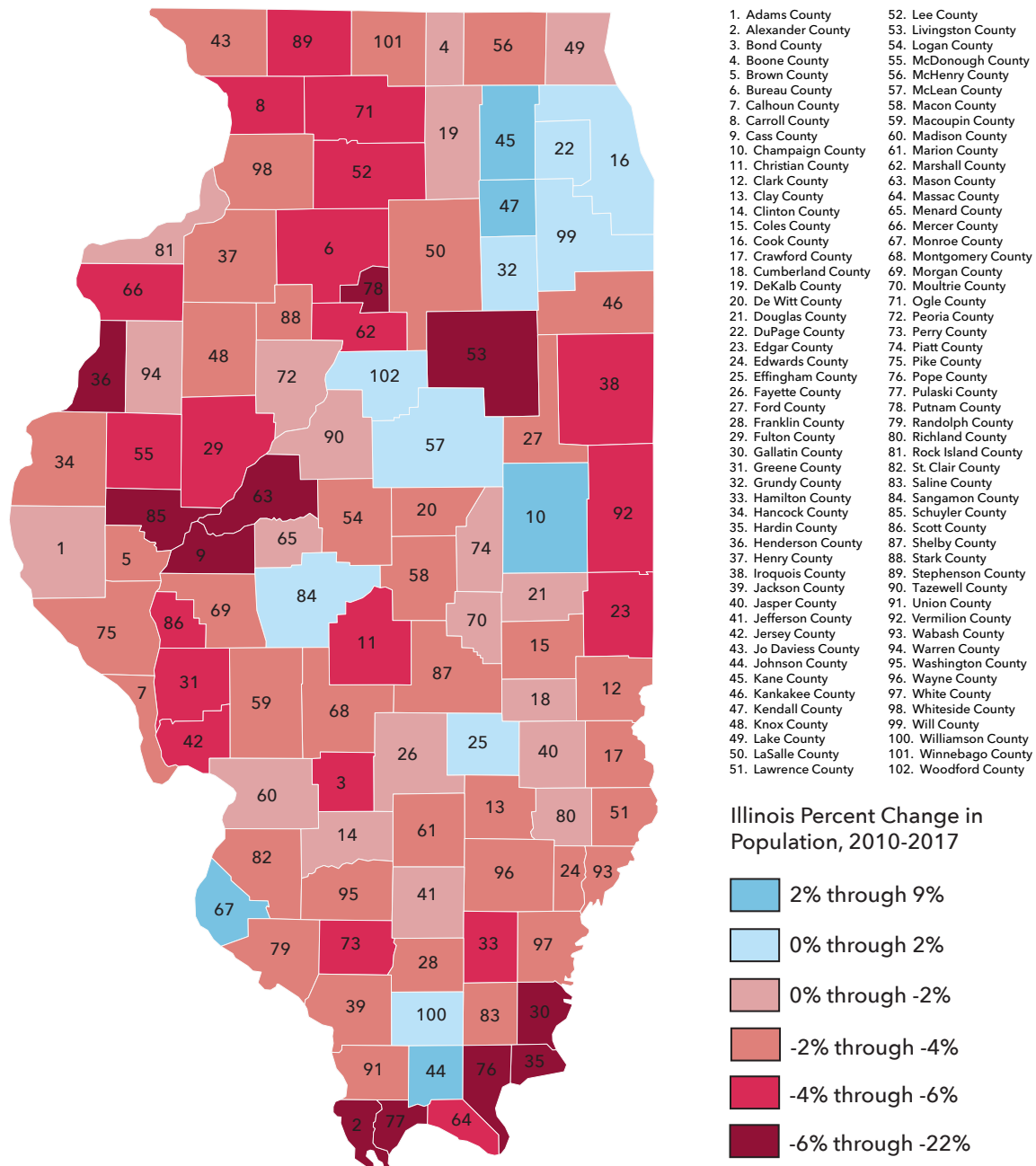
According to CMAP, while 61,500 acres of natural and agricultural lands have been permanently preserved in the region from 2001 to 2015, an additional 140,000 acres of such lands were developed – an area roughly equivalent in size to the City of Chicago.

CMAP found that currently only 42 percent of people in the greater Chicago area have adequate access to open space. They cite strategies such as converting vacant land into green space as ways to increase this figure. CMAP also provided targets to increase public access to open space, as shown in the graph below.

Planning for climate change will also be an important issue affecting the state in coming years. As CMAP states: “sound planning and decision-making can maximize the crucial role that the region’s natural landscapes, including trees and parks within our developed landscapes, play in promoting resilience. Trees, for example, store millions of tons of carbon, and provide shade, which cools our communities and reduces energy consumption.”³³

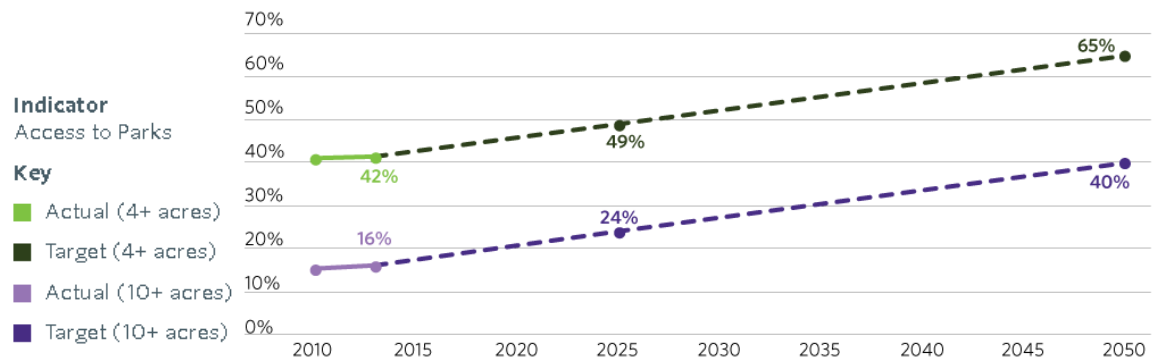
Given the rapid rate of development and conversion of land from natural areas to residential subdivisions and strip shopping, more lands need to be conserved for open space, outdoor recreation, and farmland opportunities. The U.S. Department of Agriculture found that between 2016 and 2017 the number of farms in Illinois dropped by over 1,200 and over 100,000 acres had been taken out of production or developed. This continued a similar trend from prior years.³⁴

Percent Change in Population by County in Illinois 2010-2017



Data from U.S. Census Bureau from 2010 Census of Population and 2016 County Population Estimates. Accessed at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service at: <https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx?ID=17827>

Targets of % of Population in the Chicago Metro Area with Adequate Park Access



Data from CMAP analysis of data from the CMPA Land Use Inventory and the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Census

RON GORDON



Park and Land Agency Needs

Methodology and Findings

In order to better understand the anticipated needs for parks and conservation, as well as the cost of meeting them, The Trust for Public Land gathered information from various park and conservation entities to formulate a comprehensive understanding of the overall needs across the state. In the fall/winter of 2018, The Trust for Public Land, the Illinois Association of Park Districts, and The Nature Conservancy conducted assessments of the five-year needs and plans of IDNR, and park, forest preserves and conservation districts.³⁵

This needs assessment includes:

- Capital and acquisition expenses over the last five years; Additional acres planned for purchase;
- Cost for acquiring those acres;
- Cost for renovation or restoration of currently held acres and facilities; and
- Costs for new recreational facilities.

IDNR Needs³⁶

IDNR's capital needs for bondable projects excluding land acquisition, total over \$1 billion with the acquisition of the state historic sites, the capital budget impasse, and inflation. This includes needs for state parks, facilities, and other agency capital demands.

The current land offers at IDNR, for all willing sellers, total over 29,225 acres at an estimated cost of \$150 million.

IL CONSERVATION AND PARKS NEEDS BY CATEGORY AND AGENCY TYPE				
	Acres	Cost (\$ millions)		
		Acquisition	Capital Improvement	New Facility Construction
Park Districts and Municipal Parks Departments	2,718	\$261.5	\$884.7	\$868.0
Forest Preserves and Conservation Districts	12,453	\$433.1	\$77.8	\$91.0
Chicago Park District	807	NA	\$233.9	\$159.1
Total	15,978	\$694.6	\$1,196.4	\$1,118.1



Park District Needs

- Over the next five years, park districts (with the exception of the Chicago Park District) plan to acquire over 2,718 acres at a cost of \$261.5 million for conservation and parks in order to meet acquisition needs.
- Over the next five years, Illinois park districts estimate that they will need \$884.7 million for capital improvement projects and an additional \$868 million for new facility construction.
- Park districts also plan to expand their trail holdings by more than 352 miles and estimate they will need to spend \$113 million trail acquisition and development.
- The Chicago Park District estimates that it will acquire 807 acres over the next five years. CPD estimates its capital needs for new facility construction at \$233.9 million and capital improvement for restoration and renovation at \$159.1 million.

Forest Preserve Needs

- Over the next five years, forest preserve and conservation districts estimate they will need to acquire approximately 12,452 acres of land at a cost of \$433.1 million to meet conservation and park land acquisition needs.
- Forest preserve and conservation districts expect to spend about \$77.8 million on capital restoration and renovation, and approximately \$91 million on the construction of new facilities.
- Forest preserve and conservation districts plan to acquire 39 miles of trails at a cost of roughly \$28 million.

ILLINOIS TRAIL NEEDS BY AGENCY TYPE

	Miles	Cost (\$ millions)
Park Districts and Municipal Parks Departments	352	\$113.0
Forest Preserves and Conservation Districts	39	\$28.0
Chicago Park District	NA	NA
Total	391	\$141.0

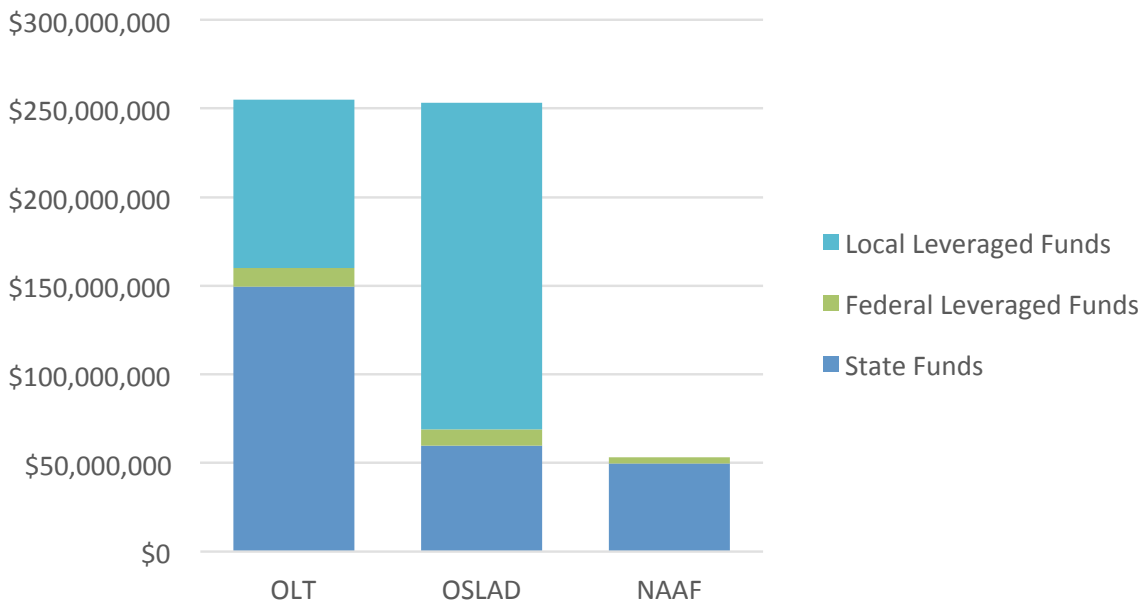
Leveraged Federal and Local Funding

State investment in land conservation leverages funding from federal and local sources. By attracting support from other sources, the state does not have to bear the entire cost burden of a land conservation project and therefore maximizes its investment. By leveraging funds, more local projects may be sponsored, creating additional economic benefits.

From 1998 to 2015:

- State investment in land conservation through OLT leveraged \$106 million in additional federal and local sources of funding.
- State investment in land conservation through OSLAD leveraged \$193 million in additional federal and local sources of funding. This is the amount leveraged on land conservation alone. The total amount leveraged by the State through OSLAD is much greater. When other OSLAD funding for capital projects is factored in, the amount of leveraged funding would be several hundred million dollars more.
- State investment in land conservation through NAAF leveraged a total of \$3.76 million in additional federal sources of funding.

State Conservation Funding Leveraged by Federal and Local Funding (1998-2015)³⁷



Economic Benefits of Land Conservation in Illinois

Natural Goods and Services

Residents of Illinois derive significant economic benefits from land conservation across the state. Some of the key economic benefits of land conservation come in the form of natural goods and services.³⁸ These include but are not limited to flood control, water quality enhancement and protection, air pollution removal, carbon sequestration and storage, habitat for fish and wildlife (both game and nongame), food production, and other necessary functions.³⁹ For example, these undeveloped lands:

Protect Drinking Water

The state's conservation lands help maintain and improve water quality in Illinois. By providing vegetation and pervious soils, these areas can capture runoff, enhance infiltration, and remove sediments and pollutants. A growing body of research suggests that high-quality source water and well-controlled flow can lead to treatment cost savings.⁴⁰

Provide Flood Protection Services

Flooding can lead to major road washouts, extensive debris on and damage to state and local road infrastructure and facilities, and damage to private residences. In recent years, severe storms and flooding have resulted in major disaster declarations in Illinois. The most recent major disaster declaration that involved flooding occurred in May 2013, impacting 3,520 residences and resulting in an estimated \$23.8 million in individual assistance costs.⁴¹ Conserving land in floodplains can help avoid related expenses by preventing development in flood-prone areas. Wetlands and natural areas near rivers and streams also prevent costly property damage by absorbing and storing potentially devastating floodwaters.

Store Carbon and Reduce Air Pollution

Conservation lands in Illinois contain trees and other vegetation that reduce air pollution as well as sequester and store carbon. The value air quality enhancements provided by trees has been extensively studied. Statewide, urban or community land in Illinois has an estimated 77 million trees, which store about 14.7 million metric tons of carbon worth \$335 million and remove 13,600 metric tons of air pollution, valued at more than \$108 million.⁴²

Land Conservation Supports the Economy

In addition to the natural goods and services provided by land conservation, state-funded conservation lands are critical components of a broader landscape of conservation in Illinois. Through the leveraging of other funding streams and the strategic choices of conservation acquisitions, the state's programs buttress a mosaic of conservation lands that support numerous industries, including those that rely on intact open landscapes, providing economic benefits beyond the provision of natural goods and services. For example, residents and nonresidents enjoy high-quality opportunities for outdoor recreation, hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching. Land conservation also provides critical support for farming, and forestry industries, which create and sustain thousands of jobs for residents of Illinois and underpin the local and statewide economies. Land conservation also boosts economic development, improves quality of life, and helps local governments balance the costs of community services. This section details the magnitude of these industries and describes the importance of land conservation to the economy.

Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

Land conservation in Illinois contributes to a thriving outdoor recreation economy. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, 56 percent of Illinois residents participate in outdoor recreation. Together, residents and nonresidents spend \$25.8 billion each year on outdoor recreation, which generates \$1.7 billion in state and local tax revenue. Spending on outdoor recreation also supports 200,000 jobs with an associated \$7.8 billion in wages and salaries. In fact, more jobs in Illinois directly depend on outdoor recreation than on the insurance industry.⁴³

Lands protected by the state of Illinois also support viable populations of fish, game, and other wildlife species. These lands are accessible for wildlife watching, fishing, and hunting, which are critical to the state's economy and culture. In fact, Illinois ranks ninth in the nation for the number of resident hunters. In 2011 there were nearly 459,000 resident hunters who spent \$1.25 billion hunting related retail sales. In the same year, there were 512,000 hunters across the state, and these hunters spent a combined 7.84 million days hunting.⁴⁴ The economic contribution of all hunting activity across the state was \$1.32 billion in retail sales, which had a total multiplier effect of \$2.20 billion and supported 18,000 jobs with \$699 million in salaries and wages.⁴⁵ Looking beyond hunting, there were 1.04 million anglers and 3.02 million wildlife-watching participants in Illinois as well. These anglers and wildlife-watchers spent \$973 million and \$1.31 billion on trips and equipment, respectively. Considered together, there were 3.8 million wildlife-related recreationalists who spent a total of \$3.8 billion on wildlife related recreation expenditures in Illinois.⁴⁶



Access to nature is essential to the tourism economy in Illinois more broadly as well. In a 2016 survey of visitors to the state, 24 percent reported participating in nature related activities, including visiting parks, beaches or waterfronts, viewing wildlife, and camping. Additionally, seven percent of State visitors participated in outdoor sports, like biking, hiking, fishing, and hunting.⁴⁷ Considering that domestic and international travelers directly spend on the order of \$37.9 billion in Illinois each year, access to nature and outdoor activities is key.⁴⁸

Parks are critical for providing access to the outdoors. Illinois has federal, state, and local parks that serve this purpose and this provides economic benefits to local communities. For example, in 2017, 232,000 park visitors spent an estimated \$13.8 million in local gateway regions while visiting National Park Service lands in Illinois. These expenditures supported a total of 196 jobs, \$7.3 million in labor income, \$12.6 million in value added, and \$20.3 million in economic output in the Illinois economy.⁴⁹

Farming and Forestry

Land conservation supports farming and forestry in Illinois by helping to maintain the intact working landscapes on which these industries depend. Farmland protection has played a major role in preserving the land base that is vital to Illinois agriculture. Farmland conservation supports the state's agricultural economy by keeping these lands in production. Farmland conservation also helps provide qualified farmers with access to high-quality agricultural land, assists with the start-up or expansion of commercial agricultural businesses, promotes the conservation of existing farms, and aids the transition of conserved or non-conserved farms to the next generation of farmers.

The farming economy is important to Illinois. There are 71,000 farms in the state, encompassing 26.6 million acres. The market value of agricultural products sold in 2012 was \$17.2 billion, with the state ranking seventh in the U.S. for total value of agricultural products sold and third for crops, and second for grains. Top crop commodities include corn, soybeans, wheat, winter wheat, and forage land used for hay.⁵⁰

Farming in Illinois provides the base for a variety of agriculture industries, including food processing and the manufacturing of farm machinery, chemicals, and fertilizer. Farming and farming-related industries account for \$121 billion or 9.6 percent of the state's total output. In fact, 24 counties in Illinois derive at least one third of their total output from farming or related industries. Statewide, these industries account for nearly 433,000 jobs or about one in every 17 jobs.⁵¹

Forestry is another economic sector in Illinois that is supported by investments in land conservation. Over 4 million acres of forestland span the state, which grows several hardwood species. In fact, 97 percent of Illinois' forests are classified as hardwoods. Within the state, forest-based earnings total over \$4.5 billion each year. Employment in the sector includes 68,000 jobs and contributes nearly \$30 billion in annual sales.⁵² Land conservation helps ensure that working lands remain undeveloped, but even forestland without conservation easements benefit from nearby land conservation because the protected land provides economic stability by ensuring the permanence of forestry and supporting industries in the area.

Economic Development

Investments in land conservation support economic development in the state in several ways. First, these programs support the creation and maintenance of conservation lands, parks, trails, rivers, and farms. Access to these lands provides diverse recreational, educational, and health opportunities for residents and visitors and enhances quality of life. The high quality of life, in turn, attracts talent, employers, and investment to the state. Second, residents take advantage of the state's outdoor recreation opportunities. By purchasing equipment and gear to use while participating in those activities, residents boost local businesses and contribute to Illinois' recreation economy. Finally, businesses that sell an outdoor recreation experience depend on protected waterways and lands to lead hunting, fishing, rafting, and adventure trips. These businesses offer jobs, attract visitors, and contribute to the state's economy.

Fiscal Health

Land conservation also saves local communities money through avoided costs on expensive infrastructure and other municipal services required by residential property owners, such as schools, police, and fire protection. Research conducted in 151 communities across the United States shows that the median cost to provide public services for each dollar of revenue raised is \$1.16 for residential lands and \$0.37 for working and open land. These studies over the last thirty years demonstrate that working and open lands generate more public revenue than they require back in public services. Further, on average, residential lands do not cover their costs, which must be subsidized by other land uses.⁵³

Conclusion

The State of Illinois must act now and take steps to protect the outdoor heritage and recreation opportunities that Illinois residents value. Population growth and demand for outdoor recreation are skyrocketing – while state spending on land conservation is at its lowest level in decades.

Illinois residents value land conservation and their outdoor heritage, as seen through consistent voter support for open space and park district referenda, yet opportunities to conserve valuable spaces are left unmet each year as state grant programs languish due to a lack of funds and receive far more requests than available dollars allow.

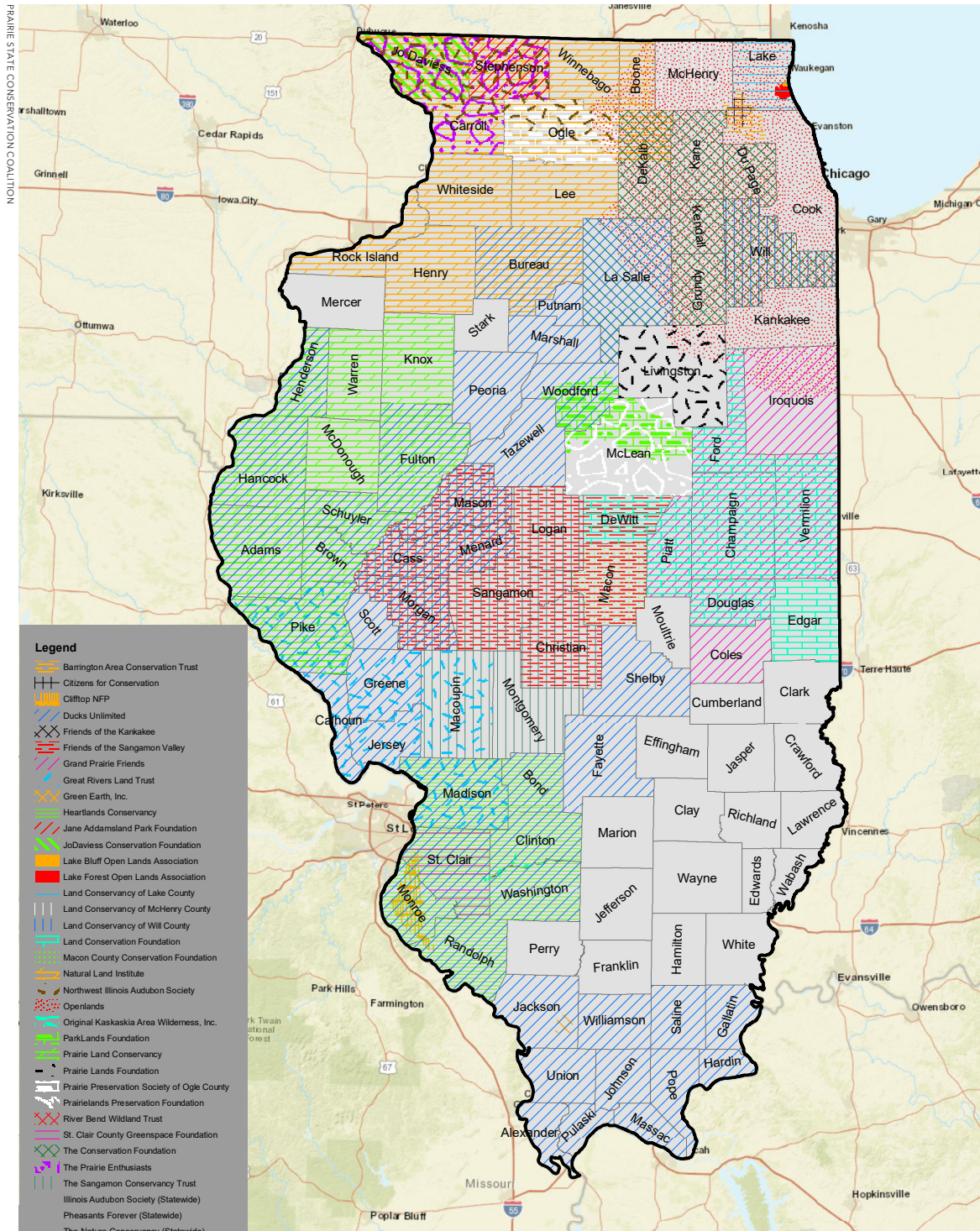
State investment in land conservation provides a steady return on investment for many years to come and supports economic activity across the state through a multibillion dollar outdoor and wildlife recreation economy. We can and should do more to dedicate funding for public parks and ensure adequate access to open space for residents across the state – both now and for future generations.

JENNIFER EMERLING

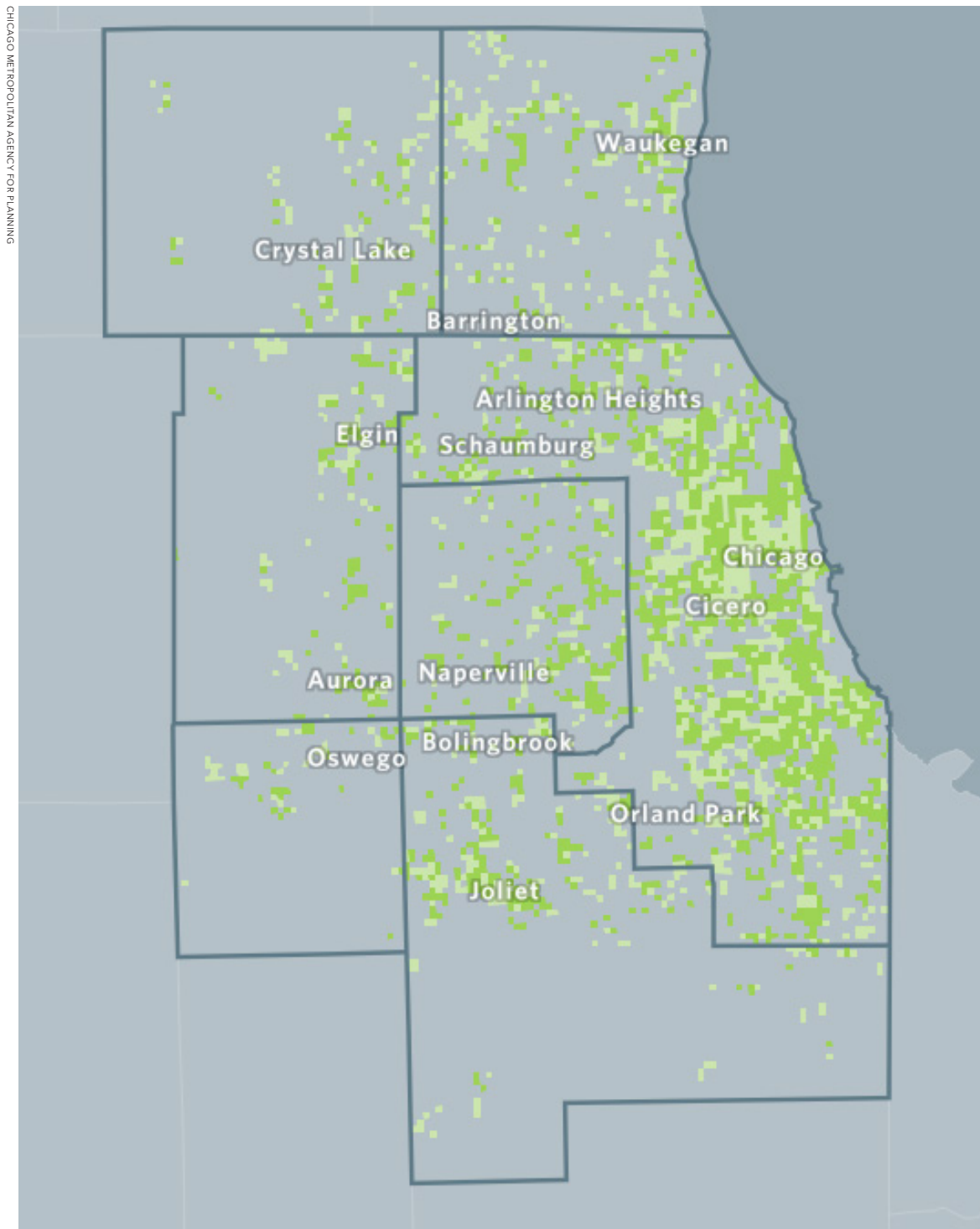


Appendix

Illinois Land Trust Service Areas⁵⁴



Areas with Lowest Level of Parkland (less than 4 acres per 1,000 people)⁵⁵



Endnotes

- ¹ <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/2050/environment/land-preservation>
- ² <https://www.agriculture.com/farm-management/farm-land/disappearing-farmland-little-protection-exists-for-midwest-farmland>
- ³ "Lands in Transition," Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (accessed November 2018, <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/onto2050/strategy-papers/lands-in-transition>), page 8.
- ⁴ Lands in Transition, page 20.
- ⁵ Lands in Transition, page 21.
- ⁶ "ON TO 2050: Comprehensive Regional Plan," Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (accessed November 2018, <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/2050/environment/land-preservation>).
- ⁷ Megan Owens, Robin Hall, and Jarrod Scheunemann, "2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory," Office of Recreation & Park Resources - University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign - Department of Recreation, Sport & Tourism, June 2014 (accessed October 2014, <https://illinois.edu/lb/files/2014/10/15/54523.pdf>).
- ⁸ Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2015-2019, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, p.13 (accessed October 2018, <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/publications/Documents/00000823.pdf>).
- ⁹ Data provided by Illinois Department of Natural Resources, November 2018.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Data provided by Illinois Department of Natural Resources, November 2018.
- ¹² Personal communication with John Wilker, Natural Areas Program Manager / Regional Heritage Administrator - Central.
- ¹³ INPC Vision and Benefits (accessed November 2018, <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/INPC/Pages/Vision-and-Benefits.aspx>).
- ¹⁴ Minutes of the 229th Meeting," Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (accessed November 2018, https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/INPC/Documents/229th_Minutes%20Approved.pdf).
- ¹⁵ The Trust for Public Land, Conservation Almanac (accessed November 2018, <http://www.conservationmanac.org>). Local spending is from 1998-2015, the most recent year available.
- ¹⁶ "Parks and Forest Preserves Bring Value to Our Communities," Illinois Association of Park Districts.

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- ¹⁸ Results compiled from TPL-IAPD Survey of IAPD members, Cook County Forest Preserve District and Chicago Park District.
- ¹⁹ The Trust for Public Land, LandVote and ParkVote (accessed November 2018, <http://www.landvote.org>). Represents only measures, which contain some portion for land acquisition.
- ²⁰ Poll conducted by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates in May 2009.
- ²¹ "Parks and Forest Preserves Bring Value to Our Communities," Illinois Association of Park Districts.
- ²² Public Opinion Strategies and FM3 Research, "The Language of Conservation: Updated Recommendations on How to Communicate Effectively to Build Support for Conservation," October 2018. (accessed at https://alliancerally.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Rally2018_C05-Language-of-Conservation.pdf).
- ²³ The Trust for Public Land, LandVote (accessed November 2018, www.landvote.org).
- ²⁴ <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/2050/environment/land-preservation>
- ²⁵ Information provided by the Illinois Chapter of the Nature Conservancy.
- ²⁶ "Illinois Conservation Land Trusts Protect 200,000 Acres of Open Land," Prairie State Conservation Coalition (accessed October 17, 2014, <http://www.prairiestateconservation.org/news/PSCC%20IMPACT%20STORY%20Web.pdf>).
- ²⁷ Dave Holman, Prairie State Conservation Coalition.
- ²⁸ (525 ILCS 31/1) Illinois Natural Areas Stewardship Act (8-25-17).
- ²⁹ The Trust for Public Land's Conservation Almanac currently tracks conservation activity from 1998 to 2015. All numbers reported in the text and tables are rounded to three significant digits unless otherwise noted. Because of rounding, some report figures and tables may appear not to sum.
- ³⁰ Information provided by Illinois Department of Natural Resources, November 2018.
- ³¹ The Trust for Public Land analyzed spending on active state programs for land conservation. These programs are listed on individual state pages at www.conservation Almanac.org This analysis does not reflect donated parcels where the associated spending is \$0. This includes spending from 1998-2015, the most recent comprehensive data available. Per capita figures reflect the most recent Census data.
- ³² On to 2050 (accessed at <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/2050/our-region-today>).
- ³³ Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (<https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/2050/environment>).

- ³⁴ 2017 USDA Farms and Land in Farms Annual Report, <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/nass/FarmLandIn//2010s/2017/FarmLandIn-02-17-2017.pdf>
- ³⁵ The Trust for Public Land emailed an online survey to all IAPD members. 157 park and special recreation districts representing 39 counties responded. 11 forest preserve and conservation districts responded. In a separate survey, The Trust for Public Land emailed an online survey to all PSCC members.
- ³⁶ Personal communication with IDNR staff, December 2018.
- ³⁷ For OSLAD, amounts represent only land conservation funds and not total State funds or local leveraged funds.
- ³⁸ Natural goods and services are sometimes referred to as ecosystem services, natural capital, nature's benefits, or environmental goods and services.
- ³⁹ This does not include additional values, such as option value, bequest value, existence value, spiritual value, or aesthetic value, which are significant challenges to accurately measure.
- ⁴⁰ Todd Gartner et al., "Protecting Forested Watersheds Is Smart Economics for Water Utilities," *Journal of American Water Works Association* 106, no. 9 (2014): 54-64.
- ⁴¹ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Preliminary Damage Assessment Report: Illinois - Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, and Flooding FEMA-4116-DR, https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1918-25045-6684/dhs_ocfo_pda_report_fema_4116_dr_il.pdf
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- ⁴³ Outdoor Industry Association, Illinois, https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/OIA_RecEcoState_IL.pdf
- ⁴⁴ This includes resident and non-residents.
- ⁴⁵ Southwick, Hunting in America, <https://www.fs.fed.us/biology/resources/pubs/wildlife/HuntingEconomicImpacts-NSSF-Southwick.pdf>
- ⁴⁶ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. While 2016 survey results are available at the national level, the 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation did not collect data at the state level, so there are no state-level reports. Thus, 2011 is the most recent year for which data are available.
- ⁴⁷ D.K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd., 2016 Leisure Visitor Profile for the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago, <https://www.enjoyillinois.com/assets/Illinois-and-Chicago-2016-Leisure-Visitor-Profile.pdf>.

- ⁴⁸ Illinois Bureau of Tourism, U.S. Travel Association, The Economic Impact of Travel on Illinois Counties, 2017.
- ⁴⁹ National Park Service, "Visitor Spending Effects - Economic Contributions of National Park Visitor Spending," <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/vse.htm>
- ⁵⁰ NASS/USDA, 2017 State Agriculture Overview: Illinois, https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/Ag_Overview/stateOverview.php?state=ILLINOIS
- ⁵¹ Decision Innovation Solutions, 2015 Illinois Agriculture Economic Contribution Study, <http://www.illinoislivestock.org/media/DIS%20Study%202015.pdf>
- ⁵² University of Illinois Extension, "Illinois Forestry: Illinois Forest Facts," accessed December, 6, 2018, https://m.extension.illinois.edu/forestry/illinois_forest_facts.cfm
- ⁵³ American Farmland Trust, Farmland Information Center, Cost of Community Services Studies, Washington, DC: American Farmland Trust, 2016, accessed December 6, 2018, <http://www.farmlandinfo.org/sites/default/files/>
- ⁵⁴ Prairie State Conservation Coalition Land Trust Directory, <http://www.prairiestateconservation.org/pscc/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Land-Trust-Statewide-Map1-18.pdf>
- ⁵⁵ <https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/2050/maps/parks>

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