

# Illinois

Our Land, Our Water, Our Heritage

# #SaveLWCF

America's most important conservation and recreation program will expire in less than a year unless Congress acts. For 52 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has protected national parks and open spaces in every corner of the United States. But in less than 52 weeks, it could be gone forever and along with it, future protection of the places we love.

[LWCF](#) has invested more than \$213 million to protect Illinois' outdoor places, public access to trails, historic sites, sportsmen access, and to build close to home parks. From national wildlife refuges and national forests to ballfields and city parks, LWCF has protected places like Lincoln Home National Historic Site, Shawnee National Forest, Illinois Beach State Park, Cook County Forest Preserves, and working forests at Byron Rock River in Ogle County.

Illinois' \$25.8 billion [outdoor recreation industry](#) is an economic powerhouse – supporting 200,000 jobs which generate \$7.8 billion in wages and salaries and produces \$1.7 billion annually in state and local tax revenue.

## Emiquon, Chautauqua, and Meredosia National Wildlife Refuges

These three national wildlife refuges, which are managed under the Illinois River National Wildlife and Fish Refuges Complex, comprise over 9,600 acres in central Illinois and all have benefited from a combined \$20.5 million in LWCF funding. In the 1920s the area was diked, drained, and converted for agricultural production. After restoration work, it is now a functioning floodplain wetland complex and plays a vital role in perpetuating biological diversity in the Illinois River Basin. For thousands of years, waterfowl and other migratory birds by the millions rested and fed in these wet Illinois River bottoms during their annual migration from northern breeding grounds to southern winter homes.



*Illinois River National Wildlife and Fish Refuges Complex Credit: TNC*

**“The investments of the Land and Water Conservation Fund have created or enhanced many Illinois state parks, working farms and forests, wildlife refuges, national forests, historic battlefields, and cultural sites. It has also improved access for hunting, fishing, hiking, and other recreational opportunities. Healthy natural places not only contribute to a strong Illinois economy, but our well-being as residents of Illinois: wetlands improve water quality and help prevent flooding and healthy forests and tree canopies clean our air. LWCF is a fundamental piece in Illinois’ commitment to our green spaces, our parks and trails, and the natural areas that make ourselves and our communities whole and healthy.”**

**— Michelle Carr, State Director of The Nature Conservancy in Illinois**

## The Grove National Historic Landmark

The Grove, located in the Chicago suburb of Glenview, is part of the estate of visionary horticulturist and educator Dr. John Kennicott, and is designated as a National Historic Landmark. Since 1975 it has received over \$2 million in LWCF funding from the NPS State and Local Assistance Program. LWCF funding was used to purchase the homestead back in 1975 and LWCF investments continue to improve and restore the land back to how it looked in 1836 when the Kennicott family lived there. Most recently, in 2017 LWCF funds were used to acquire a critical parcel needed to reassemble the original acreage owned by the Kennicott Family and preserve the ecosystem on the property. The Grove is a vital part of the Glenview community, hosting children on educational field trips, providing leisure experiences, and protecting native flora and fauna.



*The Grove, Credit: Glenview Park District*

**#SaveLWCF to protect the places we love in Illinois!**

[www.lwcfcoalition.org/lwcf52weeks/](http://www.lwcfcoalition.org/lwcf52weeks/)