



Governor Quinn is asking for your input with the launch of www.budget.illinois.gov, a website which asks the citizens of Illinois for suggestions he can use for his budget.

This is **our opportunity** to protect and grow conservation funding in Illinois, but only if you act now by logging onto the website and going to the “suggest a solution” tab. Once there you can comment about how important conservation funding is to you.

If you think legislators need to know how important conservation is to you and their constituents, please consider the following:

The message:

Wildlife habitat and open space in Illinois need and increased and consistent funding source, the pheasants, quail and clean water need you. Other Midwestern states (MN, IA) have recently recognized the importance of sustained, dedicated funding for natural resources benefiting wildlife, clean air, healthy waters and the recreational activities of their citizens. It is time Illinois does the same.

You might consider including some of the following points:

- A May 2009 survey found 79% of Illinois Citizens supported substantial investments in land and water conservation, even given the dire budget situation of our state.
- Illinois ranks in the bottom 5 states in protected open lands. Only \$3 per capita is spent on open space and wildlife habitat funding in Illinois.
- Outdoor recreation is big business:
 - In 2006, retail sales for hunting supplies in Illinois exceed \$388 Million annually with a ripple effect of \$693 Million. It generated \$49 Million in state and local tax revenue, \$58 Million in federal tax revenue, \$237 Million in salaries and wages and 8,421 jobs.
 - In 2006, retail sales related to sportfishing in Illinois exceeded \$816 Million with a multiplier effect of \$1.5 Billion. It supported 14,040 jobs with \$485 Million in salaries. It also generated \$116 Million in state and local tax revenue and \$90 Million in federal tax revenue.
 - A 1996 Illinois report found that wildlife watching in Illinois generated \$173 Million in retail sales, 20,716 jobs, \$475 Million in salaries and wages, \$54 Million in state taxes and \$51 Million in federal taxes.
- There are 316,000 hunters, 873,000 anglers and 1.2 Million Illinoisans who watch wildlife in Illinois.
- In a society facing increasing obesity, especially in our children; outdoor recreation can greatly improve health and wellness, especially through prevention.

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