

Investing in Ohio's Natural Wonders

Ohio is blessed with many natural wonders, including state parks, wildlife, rivers, and lakes. Governor DeWine believes that these God-given gifts make Ohio unique and wonderful, and he believes it is extremely important to preserve the environment for future generations to enjoy.

Governor DeWine's executive budget protects Ohio's natural wonders by:

Creating the H2Ohio Fund to ensure safe and clean water across Ohio by providing the resources necessary to plan, develop, and implement targeted, long-term water solutions. Water is vital, yet communities throughout the state regularly face challenges such as algae blooms, failing septic tanks, nutrient pollution, and threats of lead contamination. The fund would be spent over 10 years for water programs impacting Lake Erie and other rivers, lakes, and waterways and could amount to approximately \$900 million.

Investing in the future of Ohio state parks by recommending an additional \$43 million in state park improvements to expand capacity, upgrade utilities and safety measures, and to renovate cabins, lodges, campgrounds, and trails. An additional investment of \$4.5 million would be dedicated to funding for natural areas and preserves to fight harmful invasive species and to increase public outreach and activities.

Continuing to expand the Ohio Department of Natural Resource's Oil and Gas Program with appropriations increasing from \$14 million in fiscal year 2016 to more than \$50 million in fiscal year 2020. The increased funding will enable significant progress on plugging orphan wells, with a goal of fixing 300 wells during the biennium.

Reducing air pollution through a proposed \$31 million annual effort by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to replace aging diesel school and transit buses, heavy duty trucks, and cargo handling equipment, and to repower diesel engines in tug boats and locomotives. Governor DeWine wants clean air for Ohio's citizens, and this proposal could eliminate 400 tons of air pollutants.

Restoring Mentor Marsh, which is Ohio's first nature preserve. Governor DeWine is proposing an investment of \$1 million for the EPA's continued efforts to restore the marsh. A recent lawsuit settlement of more than \$10 million, when received, will also be appropriated through the Controlling Board to bolster ongoing restoration efforts.

Investing \$20 million per year in the Soil and Water Phosphorous Program within the Ohio Department of Agriculture to assist in reducing total phosphorus and dissolved reactive phosphorus in the Western Lake Erie Basin.

Investing nearly \$500,000 in fiscal year 2020 within the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for dam safety, water management, and floodplain management.

Additionally, Governor DeWine's executive budget recommends \$5 million annually for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and \$1 million for environmental education programs.

