

Dear Members of the State Legislature,

We contact you today as representatives of the Lake Improvement Association for Grand Lake Saint Marys. Our group represents 1500 members in the Grand Lake Saint Marys region.

We are writing to you to urge you to increase funding to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. As you are likely aware, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources plays a crucial role in maintaining and protecting the state's natural resources, including our parks and wildlife.

The state parks throughout Ohio are essential to the well-being of our citizens and the economy. These parks offer a variety of recreational activities for Ohioans, including hiking, fishing, camping, and boating. They are a vital resource for families and individuals who are looking to connect with nature and experience the great outdoors. Our parks also serve as a critical economic engine, attracting millions of visitors each year and generating significant revenue for local businesses and the state's economy.

Unfortunately, despite the critical role they play in our communities, Ohio's State Parks are facing significant challenges. Our parks are in dire need of additional funding to maintain and improve their facilities and infrastructure. With the growing number of visitors each year, our parks are struggling to keep up with the demand for updated and modern amenities and safety improvements. In many cases, our parks are falling behind the standards set by neighboring states, which could negatively impact tourism and our economy.

Therefore, we urge you to increase funding to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Doing so would allow the department to maintain and improve our state parks and ensure that they continue to serve as valuable resources for our communities. By investing in our parks, we are not only improving the quality of life for Ohioans but also supporting our economy and preserving our natural resources.

As you know, Grand Lake St. Marys has historically been plagued with toxic algae. As the epicenter of research into this growing statewide and national crisis - and with the support of our legislature - our community has made enormous strides to understand and remediate toxic algae to improve water quality for current and future generations. Many of these initiatives rely on state funding and, with rising costs, we ask that you continue to fund critical efforts needed to

sustain past successes and foster ongoing improvements in water quality across the state.

In conclusion, we believe that the State Parks of Ohio, and its preservation is crucial to maintaining the state's heritage and supporting local businesses. We urge you to take the necessary steps to increase funding for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to ensure that it remains a feature of Ohio for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lake Improvement Association of Grand Lake Saint Marys